

given to us by new revelation in the dispensation of the fulness of times, we go out among the people, not because of the commission given to the apostles in the meridian of time, but because the Lord God of heaven has said to men in this dispensation, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." I am very happy to say the missionaries so teach, although it may be at times in halting words, and in fear and trembling. Men and women are delivering this message and are bearing witness that through the power of God, through the inspiration of the Spirit of the Lord, they know whereof they speak. I thank the Lord that I have the confidence in my own soul that I am not preaching the doctrine of men. I am not laboring for the glory of man nor for the plaudits of men. I am laboring in the fear of God, because upon me that divine authority has been conferred, and I am under obligation to cry repentance, to the best of my power, among the children of men and to help lead men, if possible, from the darkness that is in the world, to the truth that has been revealed. In doing that, with my companions, I have partaken of that joy with them that passeth understanding, and we do know that we are trying to bring to mankind a glorious message that is for their benefit and salvation.

May God help us all to love the truth, believe in it and maintain it in our conduct here and in our speech before the people for ever and ever, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

ELDER REY L. PRATT

Of the First Council of Seventy and President of the Mexican Mission

I sincerely trust, my brethren and sisters, that I may have the benefit of your faith and prayers and that the Spirit of the Lord may actuate me while I shall speak to you for a few moments this morning. Sometimes we are so taken by surprise that our breath nearly leaves us; but I have an implicit and abiding faith in the Lord that if we put our trust in him and labor to the best of our ability he will prepare the way for us whereby we may accomplish the things that he commands us to do.

I take it, my brethren and sisters, that, as people having the gospel of Jesus Christ and a testimony of it, the Lord calls upon us to bear that testimony and make known his word to the world, and to bear testimony one to another of the inspiration of the Lord and the knowledge that has come to us concerning this great gospel plan that is instituted in the world for the salvation of men.

During the past six months my mind has been centered very much upon the Book of Mormon. It has fallen to my lot to publish an edition of that book in the Spanish language. Our work is now completed, so far as the printing of the book is concerned. I think the last form was printed yesterday, and we have now only the binding to attend to. We shall soon have in circulation the third edition of the Book of Mormon in the Spanish language. My hope and desire is that this

edition may soon be exhausted and that the circulation of that book among the Spanish-speaking people may increase, for in the Spanish language are to be reached the descendants, many millions of them, of those people who wrote the book. It seems to me that in the work that I have been engaged in—getting out this particular edition of the book—there has come a vision of a very wide distribution of that book among the seed of Father Lehi, who dwell in the land south of us. Many thousands of copies have been distributed in the past, and a very great many people have been made to know of the truthfulness of that record.

In this connection my mind reverts to the promise of the great Prophet Moroni concerning the obtaining of a testimony of the divinity of that book, and I should like to read that to you this morning. You will find it recorded in the tenth chapter of the book called Moroni:

“And now I, Moroni, write somewhat as seemeth me good; and I write unto my brethren, the Lamanites, and I would that they should know that more than four hundred and twenty years have passed away since the sign was given of the coming of Christ.

“And I seal up these records, after I have spoken a few words by way of exhortation unto you.

“Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, that ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and ponder it in your heart.

“And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

“And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.”

I have always believed in the Book of Mormon, my brethren and sisters. Before I ever read the Book of Mormon, I believed that it was a divine record. It was taught to me by my parents, and it was taught to me in the Sunday School and in the Primary classes that I attended as a little boy. I have read this book many, many times. It seems to me that I have considered it from most every angle; and,—I say it with a great deal of thankfulness,—I have been placed in a position in my missionary labors to challenge the book from an archaeological standpoint, and have been able to see firsthand the remains of former civilizations that have dwelt upon this continent. I have stood in the shadows of the mighty ruins of the past, that are stupendous in their magnitude and in their grandeur. I have visualized the people that built those great buildings, and it has seemed to me, beyond any question of a doubt, that they could justly be associated with the Book of Mormon people. From that angle has come to me a great bolstering faith and knowledge that the Book of Mormon is true. I have thought that I had read it with a prayerful heart in years that have passed, and felt sure that I had received the inspiration of the Spirit of the Lord that this book is a divine record. But I wish to bear you my testimony that during the last few months, since May,

especially, when I have been so particularly engaged in bringing out this work, I have prayed to the Lord anew that he would evidence to me, even more strongly than ever before, if such were possible, the divinity of this work; and I stand before you, my brethren and sisters, and testify, after having read the book five consecutive times since May, that I know beyond all doubt that the Book of Mormon is what it purports to be. It is the divine record of a forgotten people, brought forth through the instrumentality of Joseph Smith. The Holy Ghost has witnessed this unto me and I wish that I could make you sense the spirit in which I feel it. It is consuming in its nature. It makes me tremble to contemplate what this knowledge means to me.

My brethren and sisters, the Book of Mormon is one of the greatest works in all the world. With the witness that I speak of there has come to me other knowledge, without which the testimony of the divinity of the Book of Mormon would not be of much value; but, the Book of Mormon being true, the truthfulness of it having been borne in upon my soul, I know through that as one medium—and I know, it through other mediums—that God lives as an entity, a tangible being, in whose form I am fashioned and in whose likeness I am made. I know, beyond all peradventure of a doubt, that he is in very deed my Father, that I can call upon him as such, and that when I come before him in prayer, in sympathy, he will hear; and if my prayers are for righteous things he will grant unto me those things for which I ask. Through this book, knowing that it is true, I also have this witness, and to me it is valid, that Jesus is the Son of God; that he is the Redeemer of the world; that he was born of woman and lived in the world among men and ministered unto them and established the gospel; that he was nailed upon a cross and suffered for the sins of all men, redeemed them from the grave, broke the bonds of death, and instituted the resurrection, becoming the first fruits of it; and he lives, for this book testifies that he lives.

I know, by this same process of reasoning, that if the book is true, he, through whose instrumentality it was brought forth, is and was a prophet of God. So I have no hesitancy in testifying that Joseph Smith, the man whom the Lord chose to bring forth this book, and to open up this greatest of all gospel dispensations, was his prophet and that he spoke as a chosen instrument in the hands of God. If he was a prophet of God, the revelations that through him have come and which are recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants, are likewise the word of God. If he were instrumental in the hands of God in translating this great work, which is true, he was likewise instrumental in the hands of God in bringing forth the Pearl of Great Price and the precious gems of religious thought, knowledge and history, that we have in that wonderful book which constitutes, with the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants, the standard Church works to which we refer in points of doctrine and in points of history pertaining to the Lord's great work in the world.

I know that these things are true, my brethren and sisters. I

rejoice in them, and I have an abiding faith and a strong testimony, that is as strong as my knowledge that I live and speak to you today, that not only was Joseph Smith a prophet of the Lord, but that each one who has succeeded him in the presidency of this Church is likewise and has been, a prophet of the Lord.

I bear you my witness, my brethren and sisters, that I know that the gospel is upon the earth and that God's Church exists, fully organized and fully authorized. There has been a restoration of the holy priesthood. There has been a restoration of the keys of the kingdom of God upon the earth, and those keys are here in our midst. I want to leave you my testimony, my brethren and sisters, that I know that the Church today is guided by the spirit of inspiration and by the spirit of revelation and by the spirit of prophecy just as much as it ever has been guided in any age or at any time, including all former gospel dispensations, even in this greatest of all gospel dispensations, opened by the Lord through the Prophet Joseph Smith. I bear you my witness that it stands us all in hand to give heed to the teachings, admonitions, and advice of the servants of the Lord by him authorized and by him acknowledged to minister in the Church and keep it in order. I raise my voice in warning against those who presume, because of any motive, be it whatever it may, to better the conditions in this Church other than through sustaining the authority that the Lord has given, through whom will come the revelations to guide and to direct this Church.

I pray for the blessings of the Lord to be upon this people. I pray for the blessings of the Lord to be upon the missionaries who are in the world, laboring so valiantly. Those young men and those young women are fine characters. They are laboring zealously for the spread of truth. They need your assistance, and the world needs their teachings, for they are teaching the gospel that has been restored. Not only does the world need the teachings and the ministry of those who are out there, but, my brethren and sisters, if you could only see what we see, who are out on the firing line, you would know that we do not repeat it as a mere form when we say that there is a crying need for thousands more to be in the ministry of the Lord, to take care of the ministry in the world. I have cried that from my standpoint in the Mexican Mission for years, and we have had the support that I believe could be rightly given us; but recently for the past two months while in Independence, I have had occasion to visit with President Bennion in some of the nearby branches of his mission, and have held conference with him nearly every Sunday that I have been down there. It has not interfered with my week-day work, and I have been pleased to visit with him in the great mission over which he presides. In many of these trips we would start out late Saturday evening through the country by automobile, or by train. I have made inquiry of President Bennion, "What about missionaries through all of these towns, through all of these villages, through all this country-side?" And he has remarked, "Brother Pratt, we haven't them here. We haven't the

men to take care of the work that there is for us to do." I have talked with a great many people who would be anxious to have missionaries come into their midst. The harvest, my brethren and sisters, truly is great. The work is great. The necessity for sincerity, calling for honest effort, is apparent everywhere in the Lord's work. May we acquit ourselves as men and as women having this great knowledge, and bear off our responsibilities; for, as I frequently say to the missionaries in our mission, "Brethren and sisters, the responsibility of teaching the gospel in this mission is upon you right now. It is no use for you to criticize what is in the past, nor will it do any good for you to be particularly worried about what shall follow after you leave; but the responsibility of preaching the gospel, right now and here, is upon the little group that is gathered together in this mission." So likewise the responsibility of this work today, my brethren and sisters, rests upon the membership of the Church today, and the Lord will hold us accountable for our stewardship, for our participation, and for our faithfulness in his work.

May he continue to add his blessings to us, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

ELDER GEORGE ALBERT SMITH

I have rejoiced beyond my power to express, at what I have heard and what I have felt this morning. As the good brother who was hard of hearing remarked, upon one occasion, when somebody asked him why he went to church when he couldn't hear a word, "It isn't what you hear, it is what you feel that makes you better." I have enjoyed the influences that are present. My memory has gone back to the time when this building was first erected and as a child I helped to decorate the roof with festoons of paper flowers,—at least I helped make the flowers. I have seen the improvement in its lighting go on from then until now. I remember the old gas jets around the gallery that were used to illuminate this building. I think we have now arrived at perfection of lighting for the comfort of all who assemble, and I congratulate those who have installed the fine system that makes this room as delightful as it is possible for it to be, as far as light is concerned.

GRATITUDE FOR BLESSINGS OF THE GOSPEL

The testimonies that have been borne this morning have rejoiced my soul. I am thankful that I belong to a church that numbers among its members men and women who know that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, that in this latter-day he has spoken again from the heavens, that the authority of his holy priesthood has been conferred upon men, and that we who are members of this Church have taken the preparatory step toward a home in his celestial kingdom. I am thankful for this knowledge, and when I listened this morning to the report of our beloved President, telling of the progress and development of the Church in a material way, I was greatly pleased.