

THIRD DAY

MORNING MEETING

The fifth session of the conference commenced promptly at 10:00 a. m., Tuesday, April 8th, with President Heber J. Grant presiding.

The music for this session was furnished by the Latter-day Saints College Festival Chorus, Elder George H. Durham, conductor.

The chorus and congregation sang the hymn, "O ye mountains high."

Elder Edward H. Snow offered the invocation.

The chorus sang the anthem, "Arise, shine, for the light has come."

ELDER JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

I feel, my brethren and sisters, that I need your faith and help this morning, and the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord. I have no set theme to present to you, but if I may be led by the spirit of truth I desire to bear witness of the truth and re-affirm before you my faith.

REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH

I believe in God the Father and in his Son Jesus Christ and in the Holy Ghost. I believe, without any reservation, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Redeemer of the world. I believe that through the shedding of his blood he brought redemption to this earth and to all things upon its face, and, through obedience to the Gospel he has given unto all men the privilege of the remission of their sins; for he has suffered for all, that they might not suffer if they will repent. I believe that through obedience to the Gospel all who believe on his name and endure in faith to the end shall be saved in the celestial kingdom in the presence of the Father and the Son.

I believe it is the purpose of the Father to bring to pass the redemption of all men from death and from hell, except those who turn away from the light and the truth after having received it, thus becoming sons of perdition. I believe that our Father has prepared a place for every man according to his works and worthiness, but only through obedience to his laws in their fulness will men come back into the presence of the Father and the Son to receive an exaltation as sons and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

I believe sincerely and absolutely in the mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith. I have faith, yes, the knowledge, that he was called of God and is a prophet and that he stands at the head of this great Dispensation of the Fulness of Times. I believe he was chosen to this mission before the foundation of the world was laid, and that he filled it acceptably before the Lord, in diligence and faith, in the midst of constant persecution. He was called to give to the

world the light and fulness of the Gospel that through it men might be saved and come back into the kingdom of God.

GRATEFUL FOR VISIONS OF THE PROPHET

I am very grateful for the first vision, in which the Father and the Son appeared to the youthful prophet and again restored to man the true knowledge of God. I am grateful for the coming of Moroni, revealing the everlasting Gospel, and making known again to the world the fact that God is the same yesterday, today and forever; that the heavens are not sealed and God will and does inspire men in this age and generation as well as he did in times of old. I believe that the people upon the earth today are just as precious in the sight of the Lord as were the people who lived anciently, and just as much entitled to guidance as they who lived in former times, when the Lord revealed himself to them in person and through his prophets. I believe that the reason the Lord has not revealed himself to man in the ages that are past, when the Gospel was not on the earth, is that man rejected him and refused to be guided by his divine truth.

GRATEFUL FOR RESTORATION OF KEYS OF AUTHORITY

I am grateful for the coming of Peter, James and John, and, preceding them, John the Baptist, to restore the priesthood of God, that authority might be on the earth through which men receive remission of their sins and may come back into the kingdom through their faithfulness. I am exceedingly thankful for the Church and that again the Lord has established in the earth the same organization which existed primitively and which was taken from the earth because of the wickedness of men, and not, as I have said, because God willed it; not because he has shown favoritism, but because the people themselves refused to hear the prophets and turned from the truth.

I am very grateful for the coming of Moses, Elias and Elijah, restoring further keys, and in fact for the coming of all the prophets from the days of Adam to the time of Peter, James and John. For by these prophets the keys of all the dispensations past have been restored in this Dispensation of the Fulness of Times, that the work of the Lord might be made complete according to the promises made by our Lord and by his servants. Paul has said the Lord purposed in himself "that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth."

I am very grateful for the temples; for the sealing power which Elijah restored to Joseph Smith, which made it possible for the family to be preserved as a unit forever, husbands and wives having claim upon each other, and children having claim on their parents, through obedience to the ordinances of the temple of the Lord. I am grateful that the knowledge has been revealed and the authority given for the redemption of the dead who have died without a knowledge of the Gospel, but who would have received it had that opportunity come; in

fact, for all the ordinances of the house of the Lord by which the fulness of salvation comes.

THANKFUL FOR NEW WITNESSES

I am thankful for the great volume of scripture which has been revealed, restoring to the Hebrew scriptures many of the most plain and precious parts that were taken away through the wickedness and unbelief of the world. I am thankful for the witnesses the Lord raised up who have testified in this dispensation that God lives, for they saw him and conversed with him and with his holy angels. Above all, I am most grateful for the testimony of the truth which I have received myself that all these things are true.

BORN OF GOODLY PARENTS

I am grateful that I have been born of goodly parents who taught me to walk in the light of the truth. From my earliest recollection, from the time I first could read, I have received more pleasure and greater satisfaction out of the study of the scriptures, and reading of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the work that has been accomplished for the salvation of men, than from anything else in all the world. The Lord has given me a testimony of the truth which I pray may abide with me forever. I know that Joseph Smith was and is a prophet of the living God, and that he holds the keys of this dispensation. More than this—and I hope I may be pardoned for the references I am about to make—I am grateful for my lineage. I am very thankful to my Father in heaven that I am the son of my Father and the son of my grandfather. May I say to you that I am not boasting, but I am speaking, I hope and fully believe, in the spirit of humility in saying this. I cannot express my gratitude fully that my father remained faithful and obedient to the Gospel and the Church all his days, and that he taught his children to love the truth and to be loyal to the message delivered through the Prophet Joseph Smith, and to honor the name they bear. Let me say something which I think is not generally known.

HYRUM SMITH HELD KEYS JOINTLY WITH THE PROPHET JOSEPH

My grandfather, the Patriarch Hyrum Smith, was called to hold the keys of this dispensation jointly with the Prophet Joseph, his younger brother. The Lord has said that in the mouths of two witnesses shall all things be established. When the Jews accused our Lord of not fulfilling the law, because he stood alone and had no witness to speak for him and testify to the divine nature of his mission, he answered them:

“Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.

“And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

“It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

“I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.”

Joseph Smith could not have stood alone, else his work would have failed, just as the work of the Savior required the confirmation of another witness, and who could testify for Christ other than his Father? And so the Lord called another man to stand with Joseph Smith and to hold the keys of salvation in this dispensation as a witness with him. The Prophet Joseph was alone in his first vision. He was alone when the Angel Moroni first came to him and revealed the Book of Mormon, but whenever keys were to be bestowed; when the Lord had light and information to reveal in which the power of priesthood was to play a part, Joseph Smith and one other witness received the blessings.

OLIVER COWDERY'S APPOINTMENT

It was Oliver Cowdery who was appointed to stand with Joseph Smith to hold the keys of this dispensation. It was Oliver Cowdery who, with Joseph Smith, received the priesthood of Aaron under the hands of John the Baptist. It was Oliver Cowdery who received the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood with Joseph Smith from Peter, James and John. It was Oliver Cowdery who knelt with the Prophet Joseph in the Kirtland temple in 1836, when Moses and Elias and Elijah came with the keys of their dispensations. I am convinced that if we had the full record, we would discover that Oliver Cowdery was associated with Joseph Smith the Prophet when the keys of all the other dispensations were revealed and restored in this dispensation. In this manner Oliver Cowdery was appointed and ordained to stand with the Prophet Joseph Smith as an associate and witness, holding all the authority and keys of this most glorious of all dispensations—the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times.

KEYS OF POWER AND AUTHORITY TAKEN FROM OLIVER

Unfortunately—at least unfortunately for Oliver Cowdery, who was called to this wonderful and responsible position, jointly associated with Joseph Smith holding all the authority and presidency in this dispensation—Oliver, in a spirit of rebellion and darkness, turned away. He lost his fellowship in the Church, the power of the priesthood was taken from him, and for a season he stood excommunicated from the Church. Fortunately he eventually overcame this spirit of darkness and humbly came back and received his membership in the Church, but never again was he privileged to receive the keys of power and authority which once were placed upon him.

ANOTHER WITNESS CHOSEN

That this testimony of witnesses might be continued and made complete, the Lord chose another to take the place of Oliver Cowdery, and that other witness was the Patriarch Hyrum Smith. By revelation through Joseph Smith, Hyrum was called and ordained to the priesthood and standing once held by Oliver Cowdery. Hyrum Smith received a double portion, not only was he called to become the Patriarch of the Church, which was his birthright, but at the same time the Lord said to him:

"And from this time forth I appoint unto him that he may be a prophet, and a seer, and a revelator unto my church, as well as my servant Joseph;

"That he may act in concert also with my servant Joseph; and that he shall receive counsel from my servant Joseph, who shall show unto him the keys, whereby he may ask and receive, and be crowned with the same blessing, and glory, and honor, and priesthood, and gifts of the priesthood, that once were put upon him that was my servant Oliver Cowdery;

"That my servant Hyrum may bear record of the things which I shall show unto him, that his name may be had in honorable remembrance from generation to generation, forever and ever."

In accord with this calling and commandment, the Prophet Joseph Smith conferred upon Hyrum Smith all the keys, authority and gifts of the priesthood which he, the Prophet, held, and which were formerly held by Oliver Cowdery. The Lord also revealed to Hyrum Smith all that was necessary to make him completely and to the full degree, a witness with his brother Joseph, as a prophet, seer, revelator and president of the Church, and to stand through all time and all eternity at the head of this dispensation with his brother Joseph, a witness for Jesus Christ.

JOINT MARTYRS

Thus, we see, Hyrum Smith became a president of the Church with Joseph Smith, which place Oliver Cowdery might have held had he not wavered and fallen from his exalted station. I am firmly of the opinion that had Oliver Cowdery remained true to his covenants and obligations as a witness with Joseph Smith, and retained his authority and place, he, and not Hyrum Smith, would have gone with Joseph Smith as a prisoner and to martyrdom at Carthage.

The sealing of the testimony through the shedding of blood would not have been complete in the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith alone; it required the death of Hyrum Smith who jointly held the keys of this dispensation. It was needful that these martyrs seal their testimony with their blood, that they "might be honored and the wicked might be condemned."

JOSEPH'S OPINION OF HIS BROTHER

Now if I may take just a moment or two longer—there are many things I would like to say, but time forbids—I would like to read to you the opinion of the Prophet expressed of his brother Hyrum, who was almost six years older. This is what the Prophet says:

"Brother Hyrum, what a faithful heart you have got! Oh may the Eternal Jehovah crown eternal blessings upon your head, as a reward for the care you have had for my soul! O how many are the sorrows we have shared together; and again we find ourselves shackled with the unrelenting hand of oppression. Hyrum, thy name shall be written in the book of the Law of the Lord, for those who come after thee to look upon, that they may pattern after thy works."

On another occasion the Prophet said:

"I could pray in my heart that all my brethren were like unto my beloved brother Hyrum, who possesses the mildness of a lamb, and the integrity of a Job, and in short, the meekness and humility of Christ; and I love him with

that love that is stronger than death, for I never had occasion to rebuke him, nor he me, which he declared when he left me today."

THE CHILDREN OF THE PROPHET

All my life I have prayed and hoped that the Lord would touch the hearts of the children of the Prophet Joseph Smith and bring them to repentance. I still pray that he may do so. No man would hold out the hand of fellowship more quickly than I would to welcome them into the fold of truth. But I cannot countenance their actions in opposition to this great work which the Lord established through the Prophet Joseph Smith. While I regret the fact that they stand aloof and in opposition to the fulness of the Gospel which that Prophet restored, yet I pray and hope that the time will speedily come when some of them, at least, will see the error of their ways, and come humbly seeking the favor of God, and membership in the Church. They who will not repent, but who persist in the opposition to the truth, may they be confounded; may that which they propose come to nought; may all their works fail and may they soon stand exposed in the full error of their ways before the world.

May the Lord bless the family of the Prophet Joseph Smith and bring them to repentance. May he bless the descendants of Hyrum Smith that they also may walk in the light of the everlasting Gospel. May they never falter nor turn from the path in which their father walked, and may they honor and uphold his good name. And so I pray for all who receive the Gospel, for we are all brothers and sisters. May the Lord guide and bless all who love the truth. May we who have received the Gospel always stand steadfast, turning neither to the right nor to the left in the serving of the Lord, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER JAMES E. TALMAGE

The dominant feeling in my heart, my soul, is and has been, throughout this conference, so far as it has advanced, and will be, I trust, to the end and thence onward, one of surpassing gratitude, thanksgiving and praise, combined with a deep consciousness of humility. I think I have never felt more truly humble in my life than during the proceedings of this great conference. I prize my membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints beyond all else on earth. It is sufficient to me to be a member of the Church, and in that great estate, I feel reverently humble. With you I have felt the power of the Spirit of God in these gatherings. This centenary is being celebrated by other than those whom we see with our physical eyes. There are more here than you see—messengers, reporters, spirits of high degree, who have been sent to take part with us in the commemoration of this wonderful century now brought to a close.

"MORMONISM" A NEW LIGHT

The world may well ask what has this system called "Mormonism"