

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"

given to mankind more than the world had before? At this major milestone in the course of the history of the Church it is natural that we indulge in retrospect, and I think a hundred years is a span of sufficient length to give us a fair perspective of that which lies behind us. We are able to see and interpret now, more clearly than was possible while the events were in progress, those great developments that followed each other in orderly succession, many of them fraught with suffering and witnessed by blood and tears.

The world calls this religion "Mormonism;" so let it be; we shall use the term, it's convenient. We are always on our guard against the possible misapprehension attending its use, but we may use it safely. "Mormonism" has taught those who would be taught, those who would hear, all in the world who would listen, new conceptions concerning God. Is that not a gift worth prizing? I feel that through its influences I have come to know God better than would have been possible otherwise, even though I had the learning of the sages, the power of the orator and the voice of an angel. The revelation of this century past has thrown its light, like that of a great torch, into many of the dark passages of olden construction. "Mormonism," as I view it, is at once a system of the strictest fundamentalism coupled with all that is rational and good in the broadest modernism of the day. It has confirmed the declarations of ancient writ that the God we worship is a God of justice, but it has defined unto us in a way that man had never learned to know before, what kind of justice is God's justice. It has banished the stern tyrant upon his throne, sending one to heaven and ten to hell, all for his glory, and has shown that God's justice is just as truly the embodiment of mercy as it is the demand for right and righteousness.

#### CONDEMNATION, SALVATION, EXALTATION

It has taught me that the God I worship is the personification of love, but not that maudlin love that oftentimes blinds our eyes to facts and leads us to inconsistent actions. Not one whit of the ancient gospel has been abated, but new meaning has been shown through the words of his prophets in these latter times, down to this very day. The ancient edict stands, as voiced by the Lord Christ to the eleven immediately before the departure of the Savior: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." That last word is an awful one. If we do not understand its true import, it is terrifying, and that very affirmation, declaration, law, has been restated in this day and age; but thanks be to the Lord of Hosts, he has given us to understand what he means by damnation. It is no less real than it ever was, but men have not always understood it aright. What is it to be damned? Does it mean that all who come under that sentence shall be cast into hell, there to dwell forever and forever? The light of the century, given by the Lord, declares the falsity of that construction.

#### GRADATIONS IN THE HEREAFTER

Salvation is graded ever upward until it culminates in the glorious

condition of exaltation. Though the term salvation is used in scripture in a general way, and we must learn to discriminate between salvation and exaltation as we read, so damnation is graded; else what did the Lord mean as recorded in the twelfth chapter of Mark, when he spoke of the leaders of the people who were untrue to their trust, when he spoke of those who used their power and position to oppress and to work evil; when he said of such: "These shall receive greater damnation?" Well, if there be a greater damnation there are lesser degrees of damnation and the term is used in the sense of deprivation and forfeiture. That man enters into a degree of damnation who has forfeited his opportunities and therefore has rendered himself incapable of the advancement that would otherwise be possible.

The Lord has told us of places prepared for those entitled to salvation. He has told us that those who will keep all the laws and commandments of God can come where he is and shall be heirs of celestial glory and power. And he has told us of lesser degrees unto which others who have failed to rise to the occasion of laying hold on the blessing of eternal life, in its fulness, shall come; and concerning the last of these kingdoms of glories, known to us as the Telestial, the Lord has said that it excels all that the human mind can conceive in glory, and yet the one in the Telestial Kingdom is condemned so far as his actions have rendered him incapable of attaining to the higher glories and blessings which mean power and advancement.

#### LAW, NOT CAPRICE, IN DIVINE ADMINISTRATION

"Mormonism" has taught me that God holds himself accountable to law even as he expects us to do. He has set us the example in obedience to law. I know that to say this would have been heresy a few decades ago. But we have the divine word for it: "I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise." (Doc. and Cov. 82:10.) He operates by law and not by arbitrariness or caprice. He is no tyrant to be propitiated and placated by honeyed words. He cannot be moved by wordy oratory. He is not a judge sitting to be influenced by the specious pleas of crafty advocates; and yet there is an eloquence that moves him; there is a plea that influences him. The eloquence of prayer from a broken heart and a contrite spirit prevails with him.

"Mormonism" has eliminated the thought of irregularity, caprice or favor from the doings and dealings of God with his children. He will take all circumstances into account and will give unto every man that which is his. Well, one may say, if that be the orderly procedure, natural and inevitable, what need of a judge to pronounce sentence? What need of a God? Great need indeed, for he has provided these conditions, these places, these certainties. He has made possible salvation and exaltation. The more we learn of God and his attributes, the wiser are we, not only for time but for eternity. God has revealed himself in this day with a literalness that puts beyond all question the fact of his goodness and Godliness. He has gone so far as to make plain unto us that he is no respecter of persons, and that while he has

a covenant people upon the earth, others shall come from the east and from the west and from the north and from the south and shall enter into the kingdom of God if they will only do what he requires of them as conditions necessary for that enfranchisement. The conditions of citizenship in the kingdom of God are fair and just and open unto all men: "We believe that through the atonement of Christ all mankind may be saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel." And except for those few, to whom reference has been made this morning, who have betrayed their trust and who have forfeited the very ability to repent—and they are few—every soul that has ever been tabernacled in flesh upon the earth shall be redeemed and shall be saved in his degree of worthiness and desert.

#### HELL HATH BOTH ENTRANCE AND EXIT

During this hundred years many other great truths not known before, have been declared to the people, and one of the greatest is that to hell there is an exit as well as an entrance. Hell is no place to which a vindictive judge sends prisoners to suffer and to be punished principally for his glory; but it is a place prepared for the teaching, the disciplining of those who failed to learn here upon the earth what they should have learned. True, we read of everlasting punishment, unending suffering, eternal damnation. That is a direful expression; but in his mercy the Lord has made plain what those words mean. "Eternal punishment," he says, is God's punishment, for he is eternal; and that condition or state or possibility will ever exist for the sinner who deserves and really needs such condemnation; but this does not mean that the individual sufferer or sinner is to be eternally and everlastingly made to endure and suffer. No man will be kept in hell longer than is necessary to bring him to a fitness for something better. When he reaches that stage the prison doors will open and there will be rejoicing among the hosts who welcome him into a better state. The Lord has not abated in the least what he has said in earlier dispensations concerning the operation of his law and his gospel, but he has made clear unto us his goodness and mercy—through it all, for it is his glory and his work to bring about the immortality and eternal life of man.

#### THE LORD IS PLEASED WITH HIS CHURCH

With such profound truths made plain to us in the course of these hundred years what may we not hope for confidently, trustfully, in the future? With all my heart I praise the God of hosts who has brought this Church to its present state. He is well pleased with it, speaking of the Church collectively, but not individually, for there are too many of us who are not living up to the fulness of his requirements; but the Lord is pleased with his Church. He has endowed it with blessings beyond our power to compute or describe and there are yet greater blessings awaiting us, which shall be given to lead us onward and upward if we will, and with us all men who will become of us, all the honest in heart everywhere, unto a fulness of joy and glory;

and that means no mere adulation, or demonstration of external splendor, but power and influence for good throughout eternity.

May we individually be acceptable unto the Lord even as his Church is acceptable, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus, the Master, our Redeemer. Amen.

A soprano solo, "I saw another angel fly" (Rev. 14:6-7), was sung by Evelyn Gray, with trumpet obligato by Stanford Howells. Music composed by George H. Durham.

### ELDER JOSEPH W. McMURRIN

*Of the First Council of Seventy and President of the California Mission*

I sincerely pray, my brethren and sisters, that during the brief time I occupy in this conference meeting I may be under the direction of the Spirit of the Lord, for that Spirit can take of the things of God and make them clear to the understanding of us, his children.

I praise the Lord for the precious things that have been presented for our consideration in this great centennial conference that is being held. We should all praise God for the splendid truths that have been brought to our attention. We must all know and feel that our Father in heaven is mindful of his work, his people, and his servants who direct his work. We can feel sure that his work and his will, by the power of the Holy Spirit, are being brought to the attention of those who have entered into covenant with God and have received, in this great dispensation, the glorious Gospel given for the salvation of the children of God.

I have come in contact, during the past few days, with a goodly number of missionaries, particularly missionaries who are laboring with me in the California Mission, and have heard from them many expressions of gratitude for the blessings that have come to them as representatives of the work of God, in the preaching of the Gospel they have been commissioned to teach. Ofttimes I have heard declarations from them indicating that they have received in a fulness the fulfillment of the promises that were conferred upon them when they were set apart and sent out to be ambassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ in the preaching of his restored Gospel. Those promises have been marvelously fulfilled. I feel that I too can testify, as my companions frequently testify, that the promises made to me have had complete fulfillment.

A few years ago I was sent to labor in the California Mission. President Heber J. Grant pronounced blessings upon my head that seemed to me to be too great for realization. I had labored for many years in other missions, particularly in the European missions, and entertained the thought that is common to missionaries that the field where I had labored was the greatest field in the world. The European Mission, to me in those days of my young manhood, was the mission