

ELDER LEVI EDGAR YOUNG

*Of the First Council of Seventy and President of the
Temple Block Mission*

I am happy to be present at this meeting after my lectures at the University of Utah today. We have registered at the State institution over three thousand of the youth of the State; and I have a pride in the boys and girls, for they have faith in life; they have their dreams and hopes, and they will develop into fine citizens and will carry on the institutions of civilization which their fathers and mothers have founded. They will learn as we all learn that they will not go far without being brought face to face with the commanding figure of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world. They will see the Creator of divine life in him; a truth that is linking together the peoples of the world into an immortal purpose.

In this day of mad rush and strife; when noise and glitter influence the human mind; this mighty rushing to and fro; this clash of many strifes; this feverish hastening towards some unknown goal; Jesus Christ gives the intelligible answer in revealing the infinite possibilities of the human soul. The leaven of his doctrine is ever working in the social body of which we are part, and his influence leads the van in every forward movement for the welfare of mankind. It is a plain fact of history that the influence of Jesus Christ upon the world has opened up vast tracks of spiritual opportunity of which the wisest men have never dreamed. He has uplifted and enriched the common life; he has filled the soul with immortal hope. He has brought peace to the desolate heart; he has made the quest for truth a divine adventure. He has made known the abiding joy of service for others; and most of all he has justified the upward reach of man, as he struggles from lower to higher things, which shows that Christ brings life and light into the hearts of men.

"Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." These are the words of our blessed Savior; and as you think of them, you will recall the wonderful discourse of Jesus with the woman of Samaria by Jacob's well. He tells the woman about the "living water," which he can give to all who ask for it. "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again . . . but the water I shall give him shall be a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." These words are life-giving to us all; and when I think of them, I think of the ideals we are standing for today.

We have with us on this great occasion Miss Ruth Pyrtle, head of the National Educational Association, who will be introduced to you by President Grant. I should like to say to Miss Pyrtle that we hold sacred above all else the names of God the Father and Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. It was Jesus who taught: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The doctrines of Christ are the living waters of our lives. God be praised for them. May we appreciate them.

As I contemplate them, I think of many of the world's great historical movements, among which are the establishment of the government of the United States and later the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the establishment of his Church by divine authority. Then the gift to the world of the *Book of Mormon*. It is a history of the religious development of ancient Israel on the American continent, and is a holy book.

First, as to the government of the United States. Our government was founded by inspiration, and the constitution of the United States was written as an expression of the freedom of the ages; a freedom that had been worked out and bled for by a people who looked always to God.

When the Pilgrim fathers first set foot on the soil of America, they wrote this divine statement concerning their object and ideals of government.

"In the Name of God, Amen. We, whose names are under written, the loyal subjects of our dread Sovereign, King James, by the grace of God, Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, etc.

"Having undertaken for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and the honor of our king and countrie, a voyage to plant the first colonies in the northern part of Virginia, doe, by those presents, solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof, to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, offices, from time to time as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colonie. Unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness thereof, we have here unto subscribed our names at Cape Cod, the 17th of November, in the year of the reign of our sovereigne lord, King James of England, France, and Ireland the eighteenth, and Scotland the fifty-fourth, Anno Domini, 1620."

These great ideals, the Mormon people have ever striven to live up to, and only recently has a noted American scholar declared that the people of Utah—the Mormons—stand for the noblest ideals of free government.

Then came the founding of the government of the United States, the culminating event in a sense of the establishment of free institutions. This Government was founded by the inspiration of God, for the founders prayed for inspiration, and they were inspired. When the members of the First Continental Congress convened at Carpenters Hall in Philadelphia, they turned to God for divine help. The Reverend Mr. Duche was called upon to pray one morning, and in his supplications to God, he said:

"O Lord, our Heavenly Father, high and mighty King of Kings, Lord of Lords, who dost from Thy throne behold all the dwellers upon the earth, and reignest with power supreme and uncontrolled over all kingdoms, empires and governments, look down in mercy, we beseech Thee, upon these American States who have fled to Thee from the rod of the oppressor, and thrown themselves upon Thy gracious protection, desiring to be henceforth dependent only upon Thee.

"To Thee have they appealed for the righteousness of their cause. To Thee do they now look up for that countenance and support which Thou alone canst give. Take them, therefore, Heavenly Father, under Thy nurturing care. Give

them wisdom in council and valor in the field. Defeat the malicious designs of our cruel adversaries. Convince them of the unrighteousness of their cause, and if they still persist in their sanguinary purpose, O let the voice of Thine own unerring justice, sounding in their hearts, constrain them to drop their weapons of war from their unnerved hands in the day of battle.

"Be Thou present, O Lord of Wisdom, and direct the Council of the honorable Assembly. Enable them to settle things upon the best and surest foundation, that the scene of blood may speedily be closed; that order, harmony and peace may effectually be restored, and truth and justice, religion and piety, prevail and flourish amongst Thy people.

"Preserve the health of their bodies, the vigor of their minds. Shower down upon them, and the millions they here represent, such temporal blessings as Thou seest expedient for them in this world and crown them with everlasting glory in the world to come. All this we ask in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Saviour. Amen."

After we gained our independence, and later had written the constitution of the United States, our government was organized with George Washington as president of the new Republic. With the advent of the government of the United States came many new movements in the history of mankind. Upon this continent was found a people whom Europeans designated as Indians. They are of interest to us in that their forebears were Jews from Jerusalem. A great and enlightened people they had been, and on this continent they built up a civilization which today is the wonder of the world. According to Charles Eastman, a full blooded Sioux Indian, we have these words concerning the religion of the Indians:

"The original attitude of the American Indian toward the Eternal, the 'Great Mystery' that surrounds and embraces us, was as simple as it was exalted. To him, it was the supreme conception, bringing with it the fullest measure of joy and satisfaction possible in this life. The worship of the 'Great Mystery' was silent, solitary, free from self-seeking. It was silent because all speech is of necessity feeble and imperfect; therefore the souls of my ancestors ascended to God in wordless adoration. . . . Among us all men were created sons of God and stood erect, as conscious of their divinity. . . . Being a natural man, the Indian was intensely poetical.

The solitary Communion with the Unseen which was the highest expression of our religious life is partly described in the word HAMBEDAY, literally 'Mysterious feeling,' which has been variously translated as 'fasting' and 'dreaming.' It may better be interpreted as 'consciousness of the divine.'

"The first 'Hambeday' or religious retreat marked an epoch in the life of the youth, which may be compared to that of confirmation or conversion in Christian experience. Having first prepared himself by means of the purifying vapor bath, and cast off as far as possible all human or fleshly influences, the young man sought out the noblest height, the most commanding summit in all the surrounding region.

"Knowing that God sets no value on material things, he took with him no offerings or sacrifices, other than symbolic objects, such as paints and tobacco. He appeared before the Great Mystery. . . . Sometimes he would chant a hymn without words, or offer the ceremonial pipe. In this holy trance or ecstasy, the Indian mystic found his highest happiness, and the motive power of his existence.

"Then he came down from the mountain and again entered the vapor bath to prepare himself and be clean before he met his fellow men.

"It was the duty of the parents to direct their children and to assume the priestly power. The Indian was a religious man from birth. It was supposed that the mother's spiritual influence counted for most. The mother's first lessons were *Silence, Love, Reverence*. Later she added generosity, courage, chastity.

"As a child," says Eastman, "I understood how to give; I have forgotten that grace since I became civilized. . . . The fruits of worship are *Self Control, True Courage, Endurance, Patience, Dignity, and Reverence*. 'Guard your tongue in youth' said the old Chief Wabashaw.

"The moment that man conceived of a perfect body, supple, symmetrical, graceful, and enduring—in that moment he had laid the foundation of the moral life."

The coming forth of the Book of Mormon is a great event in history, for it tells about the religious teachings of the forefathers of the American Indians. It is a book of holy scriptures, and it contains the word of God to his people. Prophets there were in those days, and the Book of Mormon tells us that these divinely and inspired men taught the *Kingdom of God and its Coming; The Fatherhood of God and the infinite Value of the Human Soul; and the Higher Righteousness and the Law of Love*. These are all to be obtained by obeying the laws and commandments of God, which are fundamentally, Faith in God the eternal father, and in his Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost; the principles of repentance and holy baptism by immersion by one having divine authority; and the conferring of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands by one holding the Priesthood of God.

So we are this day celebrating great events in the world's history. The Gospel of Jesus Christ will never go from the earth; it is safely lodged in the hearts of men. The Gospel will save the world from degradation and sorrow; from wrong and ignorance. Our Government of the United States will also live. It has already been an inspiration to the world in ideals of liberty and freedom. It will continue to be so if we will but try to live up to the ideals of its founders. This government says to all peoples: Come, you are children of God. Here is the world of God. Enter. There shall be no king; no subject; no master. There shall be no lord, no vassal. All are free to worship God according to the dictates of conscience.

One hundred years ago, a celebrated French savant, the Abby Genty, published an essay on the Result of the Discovery of America by Europe. The essay closes with the words: "The independence of the Anglo-Americans is the event most likely to accelerate the revolution which is to renew the happiness of the world. In the bosom of this new nation are the treasures which are to renew the world." He names the relief to crowded Europe as one of the blessings which is to come to mankind: the emancipation of slaves, the end of conquest; and the conversion of the world to Christianity.

The Abby Genty was right. Here will the world find a government of the people and for their eternal good; here will people look for their Zion—the kingdom of righteousness. The day may be far off; it may be near; but the Zion of the Lord will be established on this continent, and the kingdom of God shall reign in the hearts of man. For these ideals we are striving. Amen.

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

We are honored in having with us today Mrs. Ruth Pyrtle, who is the head of the National Educational Association of America. I