

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

It is certainly a very inspiring sight to look at this immense audience, with so many standing. I am grateful for the wonderful growth of the Church—571,000 people in the stakes of Zion alone.

I recall my first trip to New York, after having been made an apostle, and the ridicule that I met from many people with whom I conversed. Then we had under the jurisdiction of the United States fewer than 200,000 Church members. There were 60,000,000 people in the country at that time, now there are 120,000,000, a 100 per cent increase in this great country of ours, and the Church has increased in numbers from less than 200,000 in the United States to 571,000 in the various stakes. Zion is growing and prospering at home and abroad, and I am grateful for it.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS UNDER DIFFICULTIES

As I remarked at the Relief Society Conference yesterday, I never think of the life and labors of the Prophet Joseph Smith but I am filled with wonderment at the remarkable things that he accomplished during the fourteen years from the time of the organization of the Church until his death. Without the help of God our Heavenly Father and the guidance of his Son Jesus Christ, I do not believe that any mortal man could have accomplished anything in comparison with what he did; in fact I know it could not have been done.

It is marvelous what he accomplished, notwithstanding the mobbings, drivings, the tarrings and featherings, the lawsuits, and the arrests—he was arrested more than forty times as I remember it—the incarcerating in jail, and everything with which he had to contend.

REVELATIONS IN LIBERTY JAIL

The enemies of the work of God, as you all know, imprisoned the Prophet in Liberty jail, where he received two very remarkable revelations. They are known as Sections 121 and 122 of the Doctrine and Covenants, also a remarkable document which was published regarding the persecutions of the Saints (Section 123). The mob could not prevent the Prophet from receiving communications from God. To my mind, Section 121 is one of the greatest revelations that God has given to us through the Prophet Joseph. In Section 122 we read:

The ends of the earth shall inquire after thy name, and fools shall have thee in derision, and hell shall rage against thee.

While the pure in heart, and the wise and the noble, and the virtuous, shall seek counsel, and authority, and blessings constantly from under thy hand.

And thy people shall never be turned against thee by the testimony of traitors.

And the people of God have never been turned against the Prophet Joseph Smith, nor have they been turned against Brigham Young, nor John Taylor, nor Wilford Woodruff, nor Lorenzo Snow, nor Joseph F.

Smith, nor your humble servant. I think I am absolutely safe in saying that 99 and a fraction per cent of the Latter-day Saints have sustained the men who in the providences of the Lord have stood at the head of this Church from the days of the Prophet until the present time.

Section 122, in which the Lord speaks to the Prophet Joseph about his trials and tribulations, concludes by saying:

If thou art called to pass through tribulation; if thou art in perils among false brethren; if thou art in perils among robbers; if thou art in perils by land or by sea:

The Son of Man hath descended below them all. Art thou greater than he?

Therefore, hold on thy way, and the priesthood shall remain with thee; for their bounds are set, they cannot pass. Thy days are known, and thy years shall not be numbered less; therefore, fear not what man can do, but God shall be with you forever and ever.

GOD WITH THE CHURCH

God has been with the Church from the day of its organization, and will continue to be.

I read from Section 121:

How long can rolling waters remain impure? What power shall stay the heavens? As well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri river in its decreed course, or to turn it upstream, as to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints.

Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?

Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson—

That the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon principles of righteousness.

The powers of heaven have been handled in this Church from the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith until today upon the principles of righteousness.

FRIENDLY COMPLIMENTS

I received many letters when I was called to be an apostle of the Church, some of them from men not of our faith. I remember distinctly one that I received from a man who had known me from my young manhood. He was the general manager of one of the big insurance companies of the world. He said:

Heber, I have known you from your youth. I know that you are fundamentally honest from the crown of your head to the soles of your feet. I have never had a very good opinion of the leaders of the "Mormon" people because I believed that they were a bright, shrewd lot, taking advantage of the ignorance and religious enthusiasm of the people to become wealthy, but now that you are one of the fifteen men to stand at the head of the "Mormon" Church I apologize to the other fourteen. I know if there were anything crooked or anything shady, or anything wrong in the Church, you would give the whole thing away.

I think it was Josh Billings, who said:

Never judge a man by his relatives, he cannot help them, they are crowded on to him, but judge him by the company he keeps, because he chooses his own.

I rejoice in the statement made to me by David Wood the day after Anthony W. Ivins was made an apostle. He said:

I am glad you are running your Church to suit me. If you had come into my office yesterday and said, "Dave Wood, you have lived among us for twenty-five years, and you have been a friend to the Mormon people at home and abroad, in the United States and in foreign countries, and I have been sent down to your office to say to you, as you know the leading people of the Church from Canada on the north to Mexico on the south, that we are ready and willing to show our appreciation of your friendship by letting you name the best man in the Mormon Church to be an apostle," I would have hollered "Ivins" without batting an eye or taking a breath.

Compliments of this kind are paid by honest, faithful men regarding the choice of individuals for positions of leadership in the Church.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THOSE CALLED TO OFFICE

I wish to bear witness here today that every man who is chosen to be one of the General Authorities, or to preside over a stake or a ward, or in the Improvement Associations, and every woman who is chosen to preside in the Primary Association, or in the Relief Society, and those chosen for the Sunday School work, we aim to get the very best that there is, and the offscourings of the earth can go on howling as long as they like and as loud as they will, it will not make any difference.

I again quote from Section 121:

Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson—

That the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness.

That they may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man.

I bear witness to you here today, and to all the world, that there has never been any exercise of authority in this Church except by persuasion and by long-suffering.

Behold, ere he is aware, he is left to kick against the pricks, to persecute the Saints, and to fight against God.

I shall not read the balance of this wonderful revelation for the reason that I shall have the privilege of broadcasting to the world on

Sunday for the enormous (?) length of seven minutes, and it will take me just about that long to read the balance of this section and some others of truths that are contained in the Doctrine and Covenants.

BLESSINGS THROUGH OBEDIENCE

I am very thankful indeed for the revelation which says:

There is a law irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated—

And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated.

I can say that the blessings of the Lord have been poured out in rich abundance upon every man who has stood at the head of this Church, because they have all sought righteously for the inspiration of the Spirit of God to guide them in all they have undertaken to do.

CHANGE IN SENTIMENT

I rejoice in the wonderful change that has taken place since my first trip to New York. There was a feeling of animosity in the hearts of many people. Men would double up their fists and shake them at me saying if they had their way they would put the Mormons in this tabernacle and turn the guns of Fort Douglas upon them.

I remember the spirit of animosity that existed in Phoenix, Arizona, the first time I was there, and I contrast it with my visit there just a few weeks ago, when I had the pleasure of being present at the organization of the Phoenix Third Ward. There was not a member of the Church living in Phoenix, so far as I am aware, at the time of my first visit. At the time of my recent visit to that city we had two wards in Phoenix, and another was organized while I was there. I also had the pleasure of dedicating two meeting houses in the Maricopa Stake, and calling at the Temple and preaching for a few moments in that wonderful building, which cost us three-quarters of a million dollars. I also had the privilege of ordaining a couple of bishoprics while there.

While in New York recently I had the privilege of inspecting a building that we have now leased for some years, a large twenty-story building with a chapel in it. It is a splendid place. As I contrast the miserable little building in which we rented some rooms, about twenty-foot frontage, the first time I was in New York, with the chapel in which we are now located in a magnificent building in that city, it makes my heart rejoice.

I rejoice in the change that has come about in Washington—the beautiful structure that we have in that city now, in comparison with what we had the first time I was there. When Brother Reed Smoot first went to Washington I think he said that at the first meeting they held there, which was in his home, only five people were at the services. We now have in the capital of the nation one of the most flourishing branches in all the Church, and about 1,000 members.

I call to mind that when I went to California for the first time I was assured by the few Latter-day Saints who were in Oakland and San Francisco that they believed the total membership of the Church in California would not quite reach a hundred. Today we have two stakes in Los Angeles, and we have decided to divide them, as there are too many members in each stake for one stake president to be able to take care of them. We have another stake of Zion in San Bernardino, one in San Francisco, one in Oakland, one in Sacramento, and another in Gridley, and, with the members of the California mission, I am convinced beyond a doubt that we have between forty and fifty thousand people in California belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The first time I was in Rexburg, the total Church population north of the Oneida Stake, was only 1,300 people. Today, going north and west and up into Canada, I am sure we have a hundred thousand people in that territory who belong to the Church.

RECORD IN SCOUTING

I am very grateful indeed for the remarkable record that our young men have made in Boy Scouting. It fell to my lot to attend an annual gathering of the Boy Scouts in New York some time ago. In one of the meetings the president said: "We would like to hear from Mr. Grant, although it is time for lunch, for the reason that the Church over which he presides has made the most remarkable and splendid record in Scouting of any church or community, in proportion to its numbers, and I hope the people here will be willing to wait and listen to Mr. Grant for a half hour."

I got up and said: "There is no need for me to say anything. Chart after chart has been exhibited here, showing our accomplishments. I would be almost ashamed to praise our boys as much as the speakers have done who have preceded me, and I therefore suggest that we go to lunch."

I rejoiced in being present at the recent meeting of the executives of the Boy Scouts, and it was marvelous the fine compliments that were paid to our people and to the executives who are members of the Church who are being employed in the different sections, working for the Boy Scout movement, from New York to California. Our young men are making a splendid record; we are becoming known, the young and old of this Church, as God-fearing men and women.

When I was only a young man I rejoiced in the splendid tributes that were paid to us by the late Bishop Daniel Tuttle. He went east and told the truth about us, that we were "a God-fearing, upright, conscientious people, serving God." While he did not agree with us he admired our integrity, and said that truth and righteousness always prevailed amongst us.

I am very thankful that the Book of Mormon has been printed in Braille, and that the blind will have the privilege of reading it. I am

convinced that that wonderful book, full of inspiration from Almighty God to the men who wrote it, will cause many a person to rejoice who has never been able to read the Book of Mormon heretofore.

GENEALOGICAL AND TEMPLE WORK

I thoroughly enjoyed meeting with the Genealogical Society last night. I had understood that there was going to be a long KSL broadcast connected with it, talking about dramatizing the 110th Section of the Doctrine and Covenants, but that part of it lasted only a few minutes. The meeting was practically a short one, but I was very pleased with what I heard. I am delighted with the wonderful work that is being done in our temples in the accomplishments of our people in hunting up the records of their forefathers and performing the saving ordinances for them in the temples of God.

I have never attended a temple dedication in my life but what there was a marvelous outpouring of the Spirit of God upon those who spoke there, and it has fallen to my lot to be at the dedication of the Logan temple, the Manti temple, the Canadian temple, the Hawaiian temple, and the Arizona temple, and the Lord was good to us on those occasions. They were the most outstanding and inspirational meetings that it has ever been my privilege to attend.

A SEMINARY IN WYOMING

It fell to my lot only last Sunday to visit Wyoming. We have erected at Laramie, a very beautiful and fine structure as an institute, adjoining the University of Wyoming. Never before in my life have I been treated more kindly, and with more respect than upon that occasion. I rejoice in the compliment paid to us by the governor of the state, in that he traveled from Cheyenne, his headquarters, to Laramie, to be present, and he made a most complimentary speech with regard to our people. I never have heard any finer things said regarding professors in a school than the tributes paid by the president of the University of Wyoming to our young men who are teaching in the Wyoming University. He praised very highly the president of our branch at Laramie, Brother Albert G. Bowman. Brother Bowman has been there now, if I remember correctly, for twenty years, if not longer, and he and the other young men who are employed in that school have made a record for themselves and they are appreciated, and it was so declared. The president of the University said that not only were the young men, the professors who are teaching in the school, of the highest grade, but he paid compliments to all of our people who are attending the school.

In the evening there was a reception in our institute building. It is very well adapted for the work that we expect to do there. Notwithstanding the inclemency of weather, the governor of the state and the president of the university, and other prominent people were present, and there was a spirit of fellowship and good-will existing there the equal of anything I have experienced in my life.

THE WORTH OF SOULS

I pray God to help me and you and every soul to live the gospel of Jesus Christ, to labor with all the zeal that we have. I am grateful, indeed, for this remarkable statement in the Doctrine and Covenants, in a revelation contained therein, in which Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer were appointed to name the men who were to be members of the first quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

And now Oliver Cowdery, I speak unto you, and also unto David Whitmer, by way of commandment; for, behold, I command all men everywhere to repent, and I speak unto you even as unto Paul, mine apostle, for you are called even with that same calling with which he was called.

Remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God;

For, behold, the Lord, your Redeemer, suffered death in the flesh; wherefore he suffered the pain of all men, that all men might repent and come unto him,

And he hath risen again from the dead, that he might bring all men unto him, on conditions of repentance.

And how great is his joy in the soul that repenteth!

Wherefore, you are called to cry repentance unto this people.

And if it so be that you should labor all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father!

And now, if your joy will be great with one soul that you have brought unto me into the kingdom of my Father, how great will be your joy if you should bring many souls unto me!

Behold, you have my gospel before you, and my rock, and my salvation.

A GOSPEL OF FORGIVENESS

May God help each and every one of us to remember that the gospel of Jesus Christ is not only a gospel of conversion, but it is a gospel of forgiveness. We have it recorded that though a man's sins be as scarlet, if he will repent, they shall all be as white as snow. I rejoice in that remarkable revelation which says:

I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men.

May the Lord help us one and all to grow in the light, and knowledge, and testimony, and love of the gospel of Jesus Christ, that our light may so shine that others seeing our good works may join the Church.

TESTIMONY

I desire upon this occasion, and upon all occasions, to bear witness in all solemnity and in all humility to the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and to the divine mission of each and every one of the men who have been chosen to succeed him, and above all I desire to say that I know that God lives, I know that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, the Redeemer of the world. God help you, and me and all to live the gospel is my humble prayer, and I ask it in the name of our Redeemer. Amen.