

fishness of the world fades away, and upon the conquest of selfishness hinges all human welfare.

#### ZION TO BE BUILT BY OVERCOMING SELFISHNESS

I want to call the attention of the Latter-day Saints to the fact that there are always two sides to Gospel principles, the one pertaining to this earth for our guide and help here, and the other dealing with the eternal spiritual realities, the eternal principles of the Gospel by which men touch the unseen world. What a standard to all the world we would be if we all were masters of ourselves, of our appetites, if we could set aside earthly joys for spiritual welfare! If we really loved our fellowmen, if we were really impelled by unselfishness in all that we do, then we would be a standard to the nations, the power of the Lord would be ours, and Zion would be built through our efforts.

God bless us in all that we do in behalf of this great work. I bear testimony to the truth of the restored Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, its prophetic power and service, from Joseph Smith to our present leader, and I do it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

#### ELDER RULON S. WELLS

##### *Of the First Council of the Seventy*

All the days of my life—and they are now many—I have been brought up under the influence of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. My heart is full of gratitude that I have a membership in this Church. I remember from my very youth many of the testimonies that have come to me by reason of that membership. Many, many times has the Lord manifested unto me the truth of His everlasting Gospel as it has been restored to the earth through the instrumentality of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, in the day and age in which we live.

#### A TESTIMONY AT AN EARLY AGE

It was only, very likely, a few days or weeks after my baptism, which occurred shortly after I was eight years of age, that I received a testimony. I did not then know definitely just what it was; I hardly appreciated what it meant, but the Lord manifested to me the truth of this work in my boyhood. I recollect very well a remarkable incident which occurred as I was coming home from school one day (the school being located across the street eastward from the present location of the West High School, in the building then known as the Union Academy, under the tutorship of Doctor Doremus), returning by my usual route up North Temple Street, then known as Jordan Street, on the south bank of City Creek, which was a winding, deep canyon stream going down Jordan Street until

it entered into the Jordan River. City Creek was bounded on either side by wild rose bushes and willows. As I was wandering home after school I came to a place immediately north of where the Temple now stands—"The Temple not built, but scattered 'round in native rock upon the ground"). As I went down close to the edge of the creek and then arose to a higher elevation it seemed to me that I was almost lifted to heaven. I felt the power of the Spirit of the Lord upon me. I did not then know what it was, but I was made happy and full of joy and gladness, even to overflowing. A boy, a lad of nine years of age, to receive such a deep impression that to this day it has remained with me, vivid in my memory, even to the smallest details!

I learned to recognize what this feeling was when in later years I traveled as a missionary and the Spirit of the Lord came to me and manifested its power by giving me words of utterance in setting forth the principles of eternal life. And, I said to myself, "that is just exactly the same feeling that I had as a boy when I stood upon the bank of City Creek north of where the Temple now stands. The Lord poured out His Spirit upon me and I felt it in every fiber of my being. And now here as I am called abroad to proclaim this everlasting Gospel, comes this same testimony, and I know that it came from God."

#### A PRAYER IN THE CANYON

That is only one of the many testimonies that I have had. I do not mind now telling one or two, for I have had many of them in the course of my experiences, but they have been for me. When I went upon my first mission I was blessed by President Brigham Young. He laid his hands upon my head on the twenty-second day of October, 1875, and blessed me and ordained me a Seventy and set me apart for my first mission, which was in Switzerland and Germany. I went upon my mission, but prior to my departure I had been working at my father's saw-mills in Big Cottonwood Canyon. I hardly knew that Conference was in session in October, 1875. One day a strange feeling came over me as I stood upon the top of a large pile of lumber, filling orders that had come from Salt Lake City to my father's lumber mill. And an impulse came to me to "get down from this pile of lumber and go up to the office" which was a lumber shanty serving the three-fold purpose of my bedroom, store and office, where I kept the accounts of the men that were employed around the mill. I also had the task of measuring the logs as they came to the mill, and the lumber as it came from the mill. These loggers indulged in a great deal of profanity and when we remonstrated with them they claimed the oxen understood no other language. I mention this so you will understand the environment in which I then found myself. Without knowing why I followed that impulse, I descended from the tall pile of lumber and went into the office, and as soon as I did so I closed the door, and approaching the

middle of the room (there was nothing to lean upon at all) I fell down upon my knees and prayed unto God that He would send me where He wanted me to go. I did not know why I said that; I was not aware of the Conference then being held, nor had I any intimation whatever of receiving a missionary call, but at that very time (I do not know that it was the identical minute, but it is quite possible the Conference was in session, and my name was being called with many others to go upon a mission.) the Lord compelled me to get upon my knees and ask for this blessed privilege of being the bearer of glad tidings in the days of my young manhood, to go out into the world. What was this manifestation? Surely it must have been that same Spirit that took possession of me in my boyhood days.

The following day my mother rode on horseback up to the saw-mill to let me know that I had been called upon my mission.

Let me here say that at this time I was occasionally associated with people entertaining non-Mormon views, some of them being infidels and atheists, but in every discussion I found myself defending the existence of God. I may have been somewhat neglectful of my duties, although I was always more or less of a religious turn of mind, and had been reading some books that probably were not as wholesome as they might have been—Ingersoll and other infidels—and my mind had become a little bit disturbed.

#### A REMARKABLE DREAM

While on my way to my mission field, crossing the ocean on the Steamship *Dakota*, I went down into the salon of the ship one day, and lay upon one of the cushioned benches surrounding the eating tables, where I fell asleep. While asleep the Lord appeared to me in a dream and I saw Him standing before me; and by His side was William W. Taylor, one of the other missionaries, a son of President John Taylor, a boy like myself going upon his first mission. He stood by the side of the Savior, and the Savior extended His hand to me and grasping my hand, holding it tight, looked at me in the face and said: "Will you ever doubt again?" Brother Taylor, who stood beside Him said: "I believe that is enough for him." With that, the Lord let go of my hand and I awoke.

That is only another instance of how the Lord has been training and preparing me for my life's ministry, and I know that this is His work. I could recite many other experiences that I have had in my long life, many wonderful testimonies given to me. I have not published them; I have not given them out in public meetings; I do not remember ever having done so before. I hope that I may be pardoned if I ask of you now, my brothers and sisters, to accept of this testimony one hundred percent, for I know that this is the work of the Lord and that He has commissioned His servants to carry the Gospel to the nations of the earth, for it is to be preached as a witness unto all nations before the end shall come.

## ADMIRATION FOR LEADERS

I bear testimony that this is the work of the Lord and I uphold and sustain this work and the men who have been chosen to stand at the head. How I have admired their administration, and how I do admire President Grant and his counselors and our file leaders who are now leading the affairs of this Church! How I do admire the wonderful work that is being carried on by these men of God! I do more than admire them; I love them with a love unfeigned, and I know that they are true servants of God. May the Lord help us all and bless us according to our needs, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

*Supplement to Elder Rulon S. Wells' Sermon*

## AN ASSURANCE OF THE LORD'S APPROVAL

I have in mind another very extremely interesting experience which preceded my call to the First Council of the Seventy. I told a personal friend of mine who was commenting on my Conference address of this experience, and she remarked that I should have included it also in my talk, so I am taking the liberty now of relating it although it was not delivered in my Conference Talk!

April 6th, 1892, the capstone of the Temple (Salt Lake) was laid, and during the year that followed a campaign to secure sufficient money to finish the Temple was inaugurated and carried to a successful conclusion, and, as well known, the Temple was dedicated April 6, 1893, just forty years after the laying of the corner stone in 1853. Like many others I took part in this campaign and assisted in making the collection from members of our Ward, I being one of the workers in the 18th Ward. Also like others I had a strong desire to put myself in a proper condition for entering the Temple at the time of its dedication. I wanted to receive another manifestation of the Lord's approval of me, and I prayed to Him earnestly that I might receive the assurance that I was approved of Him. I did not ask that I might see an angel or hear a voice from heaven, I only wanted to know that I had His approval of me as a member of His Church, worthy of attending the dedication of the Temple. I knew nothing of the vacancy existing in the First Council of the Seventy until I was notified in a note received from Brother George Reynolds, who was then private secretary of the First Presidency, who notified me that I had been selected to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of Jacob Gates as one of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies. This notification was received on April 5, 1893, and my name was presented at the Conference held that day, and I was set apart the same day. On April 6 I sat with my brethren of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies on the stand and while sitting there I commented to myself: "Well, I have heard no voice, and I have seen no angel, but here I am, and I feel I have been accepted and approved of God."

The Brigham Young University Chorus sang an anthem, "Open Our Eyes" (W. C. Macfarlane).