

ELDER GEORGE ALBERT SMITH

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I trust that I may enjoy the inspiration of the Almighty in what I may say this afternoon. My soul has been stirred during the meetings of this Conference. I have rejoiced at the remarks of my brethren, the sweet singing and the tones of the great organ.

In no other place in the world can you witness a sight such as we see on this Temple Block today. The weather has been delightful, the new vegetation is coming on, the flowers are in bloom and we have a rare garden of youth at the back of us in this choir loft.

I feel as I look into the faces of the men who have been forced to return from our foreign missions (due to the unwisdom of some of our Father's children in those lands) that I am glad they are at home. We have done a great deal of missionary work in Europe during the past one hundred years. I do not know whether the Lord has now decided to have us do more of our missionary work in other places where people have not yet had an opportunity to hear the Gospel. We have had thousands of missionaries in Europe and many people have had opportunity to hear the truth, as they have in the United States of America. Our Heavenly Father has said that He will not be mocked, and there will come a time when disaster will overtake the unrepentant sinner.

BELIEF IN A GOD OF MIRACLES NECESSARY

Some time ago I had a man ask me if the Latter-day Saints believed in Jesus Christ. I probably would have been shocked, but that was not the first time I have had that question asked. Even with the radio and our modern means of transportation, there are thousands of our Father's children in the world who do not know what we believe. They do not know that we worship the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the same Heavenly Father who preserved the Children of Israel in their flight from Egypt when Pharaoh's hosts were drowned in the sea. They do not know that we pray to the same God that was worshipped by Israel while they were traveling from Egypt to the promised land. He was a God of miracles. Feeding the Children of Israel with manna was a simple operation for Him to perform. In His own way He has supplied food for His children always. He provided food for the Latter-day Saints when they came to this then wilderness and has fed us ever since, many times miraculously.

We believe in the God who counseled the people, through Moses, and led them to their destination. Upon one occasion when Moses announced a policy some of the prominent men of the camp refused to conform to his advice and rebelled. They said: "We hold the Priesthood just the same as you do." They seemed not to realize that it was the Lord's advice they were ignoring and not Moses! But the result was that while they were still defiant the earth opened and they were swallowed up in its depths.

Another group of the same camp criticized Moses for what had occurred and a plague broke out among them and thousands of them died before it was stayed by the power of the Lord.

We believe in that God who not only teaches us what we should do, but permits destruction to come upon us when we violate His laws.

I am thinking as I stand here of the experience of the three Hebrew Children who passed through the fiery furnace and lived. That was a miracle wrought by the Lord in that day, as was the preservation of Daniel when he was cast into the den of hungry lions.

You remember also the experience of those who came to America from the tower of Babel at the time of the confusion of tongues. Some of them pleaded with the Lord that they might retain their own language and they brought it with them to this country under the direction of this same Heavenly Father; and later they, because of their failure to do what they should, lost their identity upon the land and were destroyed.

The same Heavenly Father directed Lehi to bring his people to this country and marvelously preserved them, giving them an instrument called the Liahona whereby they could tell which direction they were going, and it worked only when they kept the commandments of God. That is the way the inspiration of the Almighty works with you; it is when you keep His commandments and not otherwise. If we are worthy of it He never fails to give it to us.

THE LOVE OF GOD THE SAME IN ALL AGES

Think of the things that have happened in the world during past centuries. Loving all His children our Lord has tried to have His truth so disseminated that His children would accept it and, remarkable as it may seem, those who believed in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and obeyed Him have become the foremost nations of the world.

In the Meridian of Time His only Begotten Son in the flesh was born. He turned water into wine and performed other miracles. He was cruelly slain, but was resurrected, and demonstrated that he still had a body of flesh and bones. He partook of fish and honeycomb with His disciples and visited them repeatedly as a resurrected being. He gave His life, making it possible for all mankind to be raised from the dead.

America has been greatly blessed. I wonder if we appreciate how much the Lord has favored us. Our Heavenly Father told the Jaredites who came here from the Tower of Babel, and later told Lehi and his people that this was a land choice above all other lands, and if they kept His commandments they should prosper upon the land. Jesus of Nazareth came to visit the Western Hemisphere after His resurrection from the dead. He taught the people many truths and His teachings were so effective that for two hundred years they who dwelt upon this land were a righteous people.

And again, even in our day, the Savior of the world and His Father appeared to the youth Joseph Smith in their immortal glorified bodies and renewed to the world the knowledge of a personal God.

We accept what the Bible teaches with reference to God the Father and Jesus Christ, His Son, and what the Book of Mormon teaches with reference to the same Godhead. We believe that in our own time they have again appeared, so that all doubts as to their existence has been removed. We believe that the Father and the Son came after they had prepared the way for the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ here in America.

Just think of the coming of the Pilgrim fathers to this land, and how the Lord preserved them and made it possible for them to extend their power when the United States was born. Think of how He blessed and raised up the very men who prepared the Constitution of the United States.

All down through the ages this same kind Father has been working with His children and in this, the fulness of times, Jesus Christ our Lord came and directed the organization of this Church and said that it should be called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The Church was organized in 1830 and began to grow rapidly. But the adversary sought to impede its progress by falsehood, mobbing, murdering, and driving its members repeatedly. Finally the Church built the City of Nauvoo, the largest then in the State of Illinois. The organization was completed; the Temple was built; Joseph the Prophet had finished his work and been martyred. The time had come for the people to cross the Plains and establish themselves in the Rocky Mountains. It was the Lord's way. They had finished their work back there. They were driven again, this time far from so-called civilization. Our Heavenly Father preserved them. They were fed quails even as Israel was fed manna. They were led by the same God that led Israel and began the civilized settlement of this western land under His guidance.

When they came into the valley and planted crops, crickets swarmed down to devour them. Starvation threatened the faithful outcasts, but the God of Israel intervened and sent the seagulls to destroy the crickets and the harvest was saved. The people had been preserved by a miracle.

The waters in these valleys have been increased unto the people as the necessities required to mature crops, and the community has acknowledged God as the source of the gift.

Missionaries have been sent to the four corners of the earth by this Church and they have proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Many have not had training in the great universities of the world. Their education has been largely limited to the practical experiences of life, but they have had what is more potent in inspiring the human family, the companionship of the Holy Ghost.

THE ADVERSARY OPPOSES THE LEADERS OF GOD'S WORK

All down through the centuries that are past there have been those who have opposed the leaders appointed by the Lord. They defied Moses and were destroyed. They crucified Jesus of Nazareth, and disappeared from the world, while His name illumines the pages of all history. They cried out against Joseph Smith, the Prophet, and sought his death and

succeeded in destroying his mortal life, but his name will go ringing down through the ages as a man who tried to keep the commandments of God and teach His Truth, while the names of his murderers are held in derision or have been blotted out as God said they would.

President Young had many annoyances and distresses come to him. The greatest pioneer leader the United States has seen was hated by misguided people because he led the Church when Joseph was martyred. Not only did he have the wisdom of man, but the inspiration of the Almighty. There were those who sought his life and would have taken it if they had had opportunity. He was charged with evil and there were those who persisted in following him and annoying him, and why? Because he was a servant of the Lord and all of the Presidents of this Church have been criticized by those who abused and hated them. The adversary of all righteousness is not satisfied to let the man who stands at the head of a great dispensation go unscathed. He works with men, not men who have unusual intelligence, but ordinary men, exceedingly ordinary men in most cases, and he puts evil into their hearts and into their minds.

Think of the way they abused President Joseph F. Smith. Our daily newspapers here at one time were full of scurrilous articles, falsehoods. He was charged with things that were absolutely untrue. Why? Because he was the representative of God upon the earth.

THE LORD'S WAYS ARE DIFFERENT FROM MAN'S

And so it has been down to our day. There are among us today some misguided men. I have no anger in my heart for them. I pity them because they do not know better. They are finding fault with the leadership of the Church, particularly the President of the Church. And I stand here to say that no President that we have had has been more loyal to the Gospel of Jesus Christ than President Heber J. Grant. No President that we have had has been more willing to give his all that the Truth might be known among the nations of the earth, and yet there are those who are influenced by the adversary of all righteousness, who would belittle him and destroy his influence. I say unto you that his name will continue to be held in honor as a servant of the living God, while those who traduce him and misrepresent him will disappear from the earth, and the Lord has said their sins will be visited upon their children unless they repent.

Today when I saw by uplifted hands of this great congregation the unanimous vote sustaining the President of the Church I was thrilled. You will see nothing like it in the world; no other organization functions as this does. Why? Because this is the Lord's Church. It is carried on in the Lord's way; it is different from the work of man. It is not our Church—it is the Church of Jesus Christ.

How beautiful it is to sit here in this great house, apart from the distresses that afflict mankind, and wait upon Him who is our Heavenly Father, the Father of our spirits. We come into His presence in this house that has been sanctified by the devotion of some of the greatest

men and women who have ever lived, who have stood in this stand and proclaimed the Truth. The Church continues to grow and strengthen. The adversary will deceive some of those who are members of the Church. He has done it from the beginning. They have so far misinterpreted what our Heavenly Father desires that they array themselves not against His servants only but against the Lord Himself and thus impede the progress of His work, for which they will suffer the penalty.

SAFETY IN KEEPING GOD'S COMMANDMENTS

Today we have heard reports from the mission fields of the earth, mission fields that have been closed, because many of the people who live in those lands have refused to keep the commandments of God, and the adversary has put into their hearts to do the thing that has brought war into the world. Our own nation may not be free. The only hope for continued peace and prosperity in America will be if our people retain their senses. When I say *our people* I mean American men and women who live upon this land that God said should only be recognized as His favored land when people kept His commandments. God the Eternal Father is our King; He is our Law-giver. President Grant is but the humble instrument in His hands, but he is the instrument, humble though he may be, with power to tell us what to do, and it is well for those who desire a place in the Celestial Kingdom to follow his leadership of the Church. I want to say that just as long as our Heavenly Father has sustained the Presidents of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints since its organization, those who have followed their leadership have been blessed and those who have apostatized and transgressed the law have lost their opportunity and their privilege and in many cases it passed away never to return.

GRATITUDE FOR BLESSINGS

I stand here within a few hundred yards of where I was born. I have seen the towers of the Temple rise. I was here when this building was decorated with festoons of paper flowers by the people. I was here when the organ was completed. I have lived here in this city to see it grow from a village to one of the most notable cities in the world. And I want to say that every man and every woman who has lived here and has kept the commandments of God has had an assurance that this is our Father's work which bears the name of His Beloved Son.

And so today ought I not to be grateful, as I look at these fine young people and think of the opportunities that have come to them in our northern State, Idaho, and elsewhere, and realize that there are thousands of others who are being similarly trained and blessed? My heart is filled with gratitude to God that I was born in this age, that my loved ones have had opportunity to partake of these blessings that come only from the Father of us all, and they will be eternal if we will be faithful.

I pray that the Spirit of the Lord may be in your hearts and in your homes. Attend to your prayers. Pray to Him who is the Author of your being. Do not be misled by the sophistries of men and the foolishness

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of those that imagine things that are vain, but know this, that it is your privilege, it is within your power to know not only today and tomorrow, but every day, that God is God, and that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph was a prophet, and that the leader of this Church is the representative of God upon the earth. You will know that only when you are keeping the commandments of our Heavenly Father.

Now let us unite together always, as we have, in prayer and thanksgiving here today. Let us appreciate the blessings of our lives and set our own homes in order so that they will be sanctuaries to our own boys and girls and those who come there as strangers. Let the light of peace and love abound with us, that every soul we contact will be richer because of us. That is our privilege.

God grant that we may continue to worship the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in honor through His beloved Son Jesus Christ, to the end that we may gain exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom when our life's labors are completed, I humbly pray in the name of His beloved Son Jesus Christ, Amen.

ELDER CHARLES A. CALLIS

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

On Wednesday, of this week, President Heber J. Grant graciously permitted me the privilege of visiting him for a few moments. Our beloved President is rapidly mending in health. He loves his people.

A SPECIAL APPOINTMENT

A little over a month ago I was honored by the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve with an appointment to visit the Oahu Stake and the Hawaiian Mission and the Japanese Mission in Hawaii. It was one of the finest missionary journeys I have ever had. The Islands are noted for their surpassing beauty and every island is covered with creation and life.

The Conference was blessed by the Lord. There was a very large attendance. The Presiding Bishop of the Church, LeGrand Richards, made a notable contribution to the success of that important gathering. President Ralph E. Woolley and his talented wife, Romania, are doing a splendid work in that distant outpost of the Church, and the Mission Presidents with their faithful wives are laboring with zeal to advance the work of God. It rejoiced my heart to see your sons and daughters in that Mission preaching the restored Gospel in the spirit of piety and with unwavering faith in God. They love the people—the Hawaiians, Japanese, Chinese, Portuguese, Samoans and Filipinos. The missionaries love these people with the love of Christ and verily that love is mutual.

EARLY MISSIONARY WORK IN HAWAII

In one of our great hymns there is a line like this: "Mingling