

a response which for eloquence I have never heard surpassed. It was the eloquence that comes from the heart, not from the lips. He said, "Apostle Callis, we could not go to Honolulu to attend that big Conference, but you have come to us and you have fed us; you have come to the least of your brethren, and inasmuch as you have done it unto us, you have done it unto the Lord Jesus Christ." And he continued, "We are happy. We cannot greet you with a handshake. Some of us have received the Gospel since we were on this island, and the joy and the comfort we receive from the Gospel has more than compensated us for our affliction, our infirmities. God will bless you, Brother Callis, for coming to the least of these your brethren." He closed the meeting while my tears were fast falling, and then to think though I loved this people, I had to pass through them while they withdrew to one side; could not touch them, could not shake hands with them. Oh, brethren and sisters, how blessed we are! It seems to me that God in Heaven is preparing a house for His afflicted children, a resurrected body, the glories of which have not entered into their minds to conceive.

#### TESTIMONY OF GOD'S GOODNESS

I humbly testify that this work is of God; that Christ is appealing unto all nations, and ere long they will receive His teachings for He is the Holy One of Israel. He is the Savior of the world. This Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Joseph Smith, mingling with Gods, is planning for his brethren, for this people. God bless him forever.

I testify that President Grant is an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is God's choice for President of this Church, and he is a Prophet, Seer, and Revelator, loved by his people, honored by the Lord, and one whose love cannot be shaken for his people and for his God. I so testify in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

#### ELDER SAMUEL O. BENNION

*Of the First Council of the Seventy*

This is an inspiring sight. I believe I have never been more filled with thankfulness unto the Lord for the strength of Zion than at the present time. I recognize here in this building the leaders of the Church in all parts of the country, men and women who have gathered together to get more information concerning their work to take back to the different Stakes of Zion and the world, and it is a glorious sight. I endorse the expression by some who have preceded me relative to the fine and inspirational words of welcome that came to us from President Heber J. Grant. I marvel at the strength and power of the man. I know that if God were not with him, he could not have stood the many responsibilities that have been his, and I believe with all my heart that the faith and prayers and devotion of the Latter-day Saints have kept him from being destroyed, and that the Lord has preserved his life.

## AN INSPIRED LEADERSHIP

I marvel at the leadership of the Church. I am thankful that President McKay is alive and so well after such an illness, an illness which seemed to have power to strike him down but failed. I am sure that all who listened to President Clark yesterday were thrilled with the power of his message, that they could not help but say in their hearts "There is the voice of God," the leadership that the Lord inspired him to take in this Conference, covering so well the things that need to be expressed and understood by the Latter-day Saints.

It is always an inspiration for me, brothers and sisters, to attend these Conferences and hear the testimonies of the leaders of the Church as they bear witness to the truth of the restored Gospel.

When they speak as they do during these Conferences, they do so as men having authority, for they are divinely empowered to declare this restored message of latter days. They are God's representatives, bearing witness in modern times, as His ancient prophets did in their day.

## WITNESSES FOR CHRIST

The Lord has declared that in the mouths of witnesses shall all things be established. This has been a rule of the Gospel in all ages. It was so in the days of Moses and Aaron, it was so in the days of the Master, and it is equally so today.

In the Meridian of Time the Apostles of the Lord became eye witnesses to the works of the Master. They accompanied Him throughout His ministry, saw His acts of kindness, and heard Him teach the multitudes which followed Him. Some of His disciples were with Him at the time of His transfiguration, and in His final suffering. They saw Him betrayed by Judas, and later crucified. They were witnesses of His burial in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, and finally they were eye witnesses of His resurrection. They saw Him after He came forth from the tomb, and heard His voice. Some felt Him, so that they knew He was not merely a spirit. They saw Him eat, and at last beheld Him ascend to His Father in heaven. They were in every sense of the word, witnesses of the Lord. By their experience they could testify to the world concerning Him.

When the time came for the appointment of one to succeed Judas, who betrayed the Lord, Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples and said:

Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us \* \* \* must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection.

And when they had drawn lots, the lot fell upon Matthias, "and he was numbered with the eleven Apostles."

I would have you note here that when Matthias was called to the Apostleship he was called to be a living witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was definitely the mission the

Lord had in mind for His ancient Apostles, for He said to them at one time: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

As Peter bore his testimony at one time concerning the risen Lord, he declared that Jesus would come again to the earth at the time of the restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouths of all His holy prophets since the world began.

#### MODERN WITNESSES

We are now living in the time of the restitution of all things. The Gospel has been restored to the earth, together with the power by which its ordinances are to be administered. If all things were to be restored, then this principle of witnesses must likewise be restored, so that in our day men may receive the testimony of eye-witnesses of the Lord and His work.

We declare that this principle has been restored, and that in modern times mortal men have become eye witnesses of the Lord and His work, and that through having seen and talked with Him these men were able to give testimony similar to that borne by Peter and Paul in ancient times.

As Moses of old talked with God face to face, as the ancient Apostles saw and talked with the Lord after His resurrection, so did Joseph Smith, the modern prophet and some of his most intimate associates see the Lord, becoming eye-witnesses of Him and His work.

Concerning one of these experiences which occurred in the Kirtland Temple, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery wrote the following:

We saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, before us; and under His feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber. His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of His head was white like the pure snow; His countenance shone above the brightness of the sun; and His voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying:

I am the first and the last; I am He who liveth, I am He who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father.

Concerning another such experience, we have the following testimony:

We, Joseph Smith, Junior, and Sidney Rigdon, being in the Spirit on the sixteenth day of February in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-two—by the power of the Spirit our eyes were opened and our understandings were enlightened, so as to see and understand the things of God—even those things which were from the beginning before the world was, which were ordained of the Father through His Only Begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, even from the beginning; of whom we bear record, and the record which we bear is the fulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who is the Son, whom we saw and with whom we conversed in the heavenly vision.

Through other experiences also, the leaders of our Church

became witnesses of the Lord, divinely empowered to testify to all the world of the restoration of the Gospel, of the fact that God lives, and that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, for they saw Him and talked with Him as did the ancient Apostles.

But these are not the only instances in which men became witnesses of the work of the Lord.

#### MORE THAN ONE WITNESS NECESSARY

As it is declared, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses so shall all things be established, so witnesses were chosen for other phases of the work of God in these last days.

It is a striking thing that at no time were any of the keys of the Priesthood restored in our time when only one man was present. Always there were two. Oliver Cowdery and Joseph Smith were together when John the Baptist restored the Aaronic Priesthood. Likewise they were together when the Melchizedek Priesthood was restored. When the keys of the gathering of Israel, of the dispensation of the Gospel in the days of Abraham, and the keys held by Elijah were brought again to the earth, these two men were together to receive them, so that in compliance with this law of witnesses, there would be more than one voice to declare the truth to the world, and so that being two, one would corroborate the other and thus establish the truth of what they said.

Since the coming forth of the Book of Mormon was to form such a prominent part of the restoration plan, and since it carried in and of itself such an important message to the world, the Lord saw fit to provide it with the testimony of witnesses.

Its origin was not to be declared solely upon the word of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Eleven other men were chosen to be witnesses of that book. Each one saw the plates with his own eyes, and signed a testimony to that effect.

Three of these witnesses were shown the plates by an angel who appeared to them and displayed the engraved writings before them as a voice from heaven declared the record was true, and that the translation thereof was correct.

#### DAVID WHITMER'S TESTIMONY

For years I resided in the middle west where also lived men and women who knew David Whitmer, one of the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon. I have talked with some of these people concerning him and his testimony, and although they were not members of the Church, they united in saying that David Whitmer remained faithful to his testimony to the very end.

At one time it was reported that he had denied this testimony, but when he heard of it, he published a new declaration concerning the Book of Mormon. In this new pronouncement, he affirmed positively the truth of his original testimony, saying that he had seen the angel, that he had seen the original plates from which the

Book of Mormon was translated, and that his testimony as published in the Book of Mormon was true. At this time he was not a member of the Church, having been excommunicated previously.

OLIVER COWDERY AND MARTIN HARRIS

Oliver Cowdery and Martin Harris, the others who signed the testimony of the Three Witnesses, likewise remained true and faithful to their testimony concerning this book. They always affirmed, wherever they were, that they had signed their names as the Book of Mormon bears evidence. Oliver Cowdery died in Richmond, Missouri, while he was visiting with his brother-in-law, David Whitmer, for David Whitmer married his sister. He, Oliver, had joined the Church again in Omaha, or Florence, where the Saints were gathering, and took a last trip down to see his sister. There he sickened and died and did not come West. But Martin Harris came West, and affiliated with the main body of the Church.

TESTIMONY COMES THROUGH THE POWER OF THE HOLY GHOST

As the early leaders of the Church were witnesses of the restored Gospel, so we today witness that we too know of the truth of these things. Latter-day Saints throughout the world also testify that they know the restored Gospel of Christ is true. By the power of the Holy Ghost, the Lord has borne witness to their spirits that Mormonism is divine, and by the same power do we here today reaffirm our own faith in this work.

We say to all men who wish to know whether these things are true to ask of God who giveth to all men liberally, and, in the language of the Prophet Moroni, if we shall ask in faith, nothing doubting, believing in the Lord, He shall manifest the truth of it by the power of the Holy Ghost, and this is the way that all men may know the Gospel of Jesus Christ; that is, by the testimony of this great witness, the power of the Holy Ghost.

I give to the children of men in this audience and to all who may be listening, men with whom I may associate and men whom I do not know, who are listening in, I bear my testimony that this is the work of God and the same evidence that comes to me will come to you, it will come to all men who will make an investigation and will humble themselves before God. The true greatness of His power shall be made manifest and all who do it and keep the commandments of God shall, in the language of the great Nephite Prophet, be saved in the everlasting Kingdom of the Lamb of God. Amen.

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An anthem, "How Lovely Are the Messengers," (Mendelssohn) was sung by the Ricks College Choir.