

and doing His will and if we strive to do that continually we shall grow in influence and power through drawing near to Him and seeking to serve the Lord, and to do so in the name of His Beloved Son. Thereby we may all grow in the spirit and power of this work. That is a responsibility that rests upon all of us, who are members of the Church everywhere, and upon our children, the young people, that thereby every-one of them may grow in the love of the truth, the love of the Lord and the desire to do His will and keep His commandments.

#### TESTIMONY OF THE TRUTH

I testify of these things to you and pray the Lord to bless you and bless us all in our desires to do right and live His will. I testify and declare that this is the work of the Lord. It is intended for the welfare of mankind, for their eternal salvation and exaltation. I testify also that the Prophet Joseph Smith was indeed a prophet of the Lord. He has set the example to us in this dispensation of the blessings which follow the observance of the commandments of the Lord which he received from God. That same spirit and that same influence is manifested by the brethren who preside over the work now, and all of those who have presided over the Church in former days. I testify to these things and pray the Lord to bless us all, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### ELDER RULON S. WELLS

*Of the First Council of the Seventy*

There are three reasons recorded in the scriptures why Satan was cast out of Heaven, and with him those who rebelled against God and followed after Satan. Those three reasons were, as I recall them: first, that they were in rebellion against God; second, that they sought to arrogate unto themselves the credit, the honor and the glory which belong to God alone; and, third, that Satan sought to destroy the free agency of man, which God has given to every man, as we have heard here from the brethren who have preceded me.

#### GOOD AND EVIL CANNOT BE DONE UNDER COMPULSION

It is impossible for any man to commit sin under compulsion, and it is impossible for him to do good under compulsion; that is, I mean, this: there is no evil in doing wrong under compulsion, neither is there any virtue in doing good under compulsion. We are only responsible for that which we do willingly in the exercise of our free agency. God will hold us responsible for all that we do of our own volition and He has endowed us with certain gifts that will enable us to distinguish between good and evil.

You will find recorded in the seventh chapter of the Book of Moroni wherein we are told in the sixteenth paragraph, that "the spirit of Christ is given to every man that he might know good from evil," and ever since the days of the Garden of Eden and the partaking of the forbidden fruit by our first parents the eyes of mankind have been opened to a knowledge

of good and evil. The Lord has given us that knowledge by bestowing upon all that spirit of Christ that is poured out upon all men, and we know when we do wrong. No man can ever say that he did an evil thing because he had to do it, for if he had to do it there would be no evil in it; but if he does it with the consent of his own mind, then and then only can it be called "committing sin." The same thing will apply to doing good. They are good deeds only when they are done willingly. We will be judged according to the light and knowledge which God has given to us.

Another great blessing that God has given to us for our guidance is that every one who has received the truth and entered into covenant with the Lord through the holy waters of baptism has received the gift of the Holy Ghost, which is the Spirit of Truth that will lead us into all truth, that our minds may be lit up thereby and our understandings enlarged.

Compulsion does not belong to the theory of government in the Kingdom of God. There are many man-made governments where they seek to control the actions of others, even in their religion and everything else. All this is contrary to the mind and will of God. He desires that every man shall be free "to choose his life, and what he'll be, for this eternal truth is given, that God will force no man to heaven."

So you see, my brethren and sisters, the Lord has not left us without divine guidance. We have a battle to fight; Satan was cast out of Heaven because he rebelled against God and sought to lead away and did lead away many of God's children, even one-third of the hosts of Heaven.

#### THE SAVIOR'S PLAN FOR MANKIND

In reply to the question which God propounded, "Whom shall I send?" (this pertaining to the sending to this world one to carry out the purposes of the Almighty Father) our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, known to ancient Israel as Jehovah said:

Here am I, send me. . . . Father thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever.

What a difference from the attitude of Lucifer, the son of the morning, otherwise called Satan, and sometimes called the devil, more frequently than not! What a difference in the attitude and the spirit! Said Lucifer:

Here am I, send me, I will be thy Son and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost; and surely I will do it, wherefore, give me thine honor.

He was ambitious, he wanted to arrogate to himself all the honor and the glory, and he wanted to use compulsion, and save us whether we wanted to be saved or not. Force will never convert the human mind; this can be done only in the exercise of our free agency and not otherwise.

All through the teachings of our Savior we are taught the wonderful lesson of doing the will of God. The Lord taught us to pray to our Heavenly Father, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven." When that day comes the will of God will be done, but

not under any compulsion whatever. If we ever arrive in Heaven we will find that we have so adapted ourselves to the will of God that our minds will be lit up, we will have the Spirit of God which reveals to us the things of God, and we will know the will of God and act in accordance with it, or we will never get there.

#### OBEDIENCE TO THE WILL OF GOD REQUIRED IN ALL THINGS

And so I say this, that it is the will of God that we are to obey, and we have the means of ascertaining and learning it without any undue influence or coercion being used with us. "Thy will be done." The order and will of God—there is order in the Kingdom of God; there is order in Heaven; in this whole universe there is order; law prevails throughout the universe. There is an equilibrium in all this universe which is upheld and sustained by the will and power of God, by His laws, and sometimes we refer to them as the laws of nature. Let one of those laws be suspended and there will be confusion and disaster. Either there would be violent collisions among the heavenly bodies, or the members of this sidereal universe would fly off into an endless space, never again to return. There is order everywhere prevailing. I think it was Aristotle or one of the great philosophers who made the remark that order was the first law of heaven. I heard that contradicted the first time by President George Q. Cannon. I do not know whether it was original with him or not, but this is what he said: "No, order is not the first law of Heaven; obedience is the first law of Heaven, and order is the result." That is what I like, that coincides with my view. Obedience, then, of which we have heard so much, is the thing that will set us in order and will set the world in order. The universe renders obedience to the will of God, obedience to the law of Heaven, obedience to the Divine powers that preside over the universe. That is the way to unify ourselves and to find access to God. There will be no compulsion in it.

The order as we find it in the universe prevails in Heaven, and therefore we should seek to know what the order and will of God are in all things pertaining to our lives here upon the earth, and we will have the Spirit of the Lord to guide us and the revelations of the Lord that have been given to men, that we might know good from evil. This Spirit pervades the universe, and it was by this Spirit that the universe was made—the Heavens and the earth.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him; and without him was not anything  
made that was made.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men. (John 1:1-4.)

That is the true light which lighteth every man which cometh into the world, the light of Christ. "Let us walk in the light even as He is in the light," and we are told we shall then "have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse us from all sin."

## THE COVENANT MADE BY GOD

The Gospel provides the plan of life and salvation to every one that will render obedience to it.

The Lord makes covenant with His chosen people. The people of God have always been called a covenant people. We first entered into covenant with God in that primeval day before the world was made when God assembled before Him His sons and daughters and revealed unto them the plan of life and salvation—the glorious plan that has been revealed from Heaven, known as the New and Everlasting Covenant, which means the same thing as the Gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness.

Under the terms of this covenant God requires us to keep His commandments. As it is set forth in the Book of Abraham, and translated by Joseph Smith, the Prophet, through the gift and power of God: "We will go down and make an earth whereon these may dwell," (thus says the Lord referring to His assembled children) "And we will try them herewith to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them. They who keep their first estate shall be added upon \* \* \* \* and they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads forever and ever."

We are now in our second estate, and if we do "all things" whatsoever the Lord our God shall command us, then we are promised in the covenant that we shall have glory added upon our heads forever and ever—a never-ending glory that shall continue to come to us throughout all the eternities that lie before us; a never-ending glory and life in the presence of God and His sons and His daughters, being heirs of God, even joint heirs with Jesus Christ, and with Him inherit all things that the Father hath. In other words, we shall be glorified and enter into the Celestial kingdom of God, and obtain that highest and greatest gift of God unto men—eternal life in His Celestial kingdom—or as Elder Joseph Fielding Smith told us, "eternal lives."

When we speak of the New and Everlasting Covenant our minds immediately turn to the marriage covenant. This is truly a very important part of it, but it is only a part. The fulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the everlasting covenant (See D. & C. 66:2.) They mean one and the same thing. Obedience, then, to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness and primitive purity as restored to the earth in these last days through the instrumentality of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, is our part in the Everlasting Covenant, and if we render this obedience by doing all things which the Lord, our God, has commanded us, then He is bound under the terms of the Covenant to do His part which He has promised to do, which is adding "glory upon our heads forever and ever." This simply means a never-ending glory that shall be added upon our heads throughout all the eternities that are to come. This is salvation, as contemplated under the New and Everlasting Covenant, for which our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ made the supreme sacrifice, redeeming us from death and the grave (both natural death of the body and spiritual death which was banishment from the presence of God.) It will be obvious therefore that when salvation comes it is through Him and Him only.

We cannot save ourselves for the "greatest gift of God to man is the gift of salvation," "for by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

#### THE SAVIOR'S PART IN THE PLAN OF SALVATION

Again let me emphasize that we need a Savior. After the transgression in the Garden of Eden the Lord said:

Behold, the man is become as one of us to know good and evil; and now lest he put forth his hand and partake also of the tree of life, and eat and live forever (in his sins), therefore I, the Lord God will send him forth from the Garden of Eden.

And he was literally driven out of the Garden of Eden. But, God did not forsake him; nevertheless he was banished from the presence of God, a condition which still prevails. We no longer see the face of God; we do not talk with Him face to face as did Moses and others, including Joseph Smith the Prophet, but we are banished, and it came upon Adam and all of his posterity. That is one phase then of salvation, to have that overcome. The other phase is the natural death of the body—"In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," and when that day comes and we shall attain to the allotted age of man, which is sometimes called seventy years—it may go to a hundred or even beyond that, I myself have gone nearly seventeen years beyond that allotted age—the time will come when we will shuffle off this mortal coil, and our bodies will be laid in the silent tomb; there to mingle with mother earth and to return to that mother earth from whence we came, but our spirits shall go back to God in His paradise if we are faithful, but anyway to the spirit world to await that glorious day when the trump shall sound and the dead shall arise and be clothed upon, if they have been faithful, with immortality and eternal life, but with immortality in any event in the due time of the Lord.

So don't you see we are wholly and totally dependent upon the Lord to save us from these conditions; they are wholly beyond the power of any man. Which one of us can bring his own body out of the grave? How can we be brought back to God? How can these things be? The Savior answers that in very terse terms. Said He: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Neither is there any name given under Heaven save the name of Jesus Christ whereby man must be saved.

May the Lord help us, therefore, to seek the counsels that come from God and be guided by the Holy Spirit to enter into covenant with the Lord and keep ourselves sweet and clean and unspotted from the sins of the world. Just as surely as the day follows the night we shall be brought back to God to inherit all these wonderful blessings which He has promised unto them that love Him and keep His commandments. May God grant it, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.