

Saturday, October 3

printed in the second number of the *Evening and Morning Star*, back in July, 1832, as I recall:

The old world was destroyed for rejecting the revelations of God given to them through Noah. The Israelites were destroyed in the wilderness for despising the revelations given to them through Moses; and Christ said that the world, in the days of the apostles, would be condemned for not receiving the word of God through them: Thus we see that the judgments of God in the past ages have come upon the people, *not so much for neglecting the revelations given to their forefathers, as for rejecting those given particularly to themselves.* (*Doc. Hist.*, vol. 1:277)

Since the restoration there has never been a time in the history of this people when the leadership of this Church has not given direction concerning those things which vitally affect the temporal and spiritual welfare of this Church and this people; and the present and the immediate past are no exceptions to this general statement. Those who have not seen the way in which that direction has pointed have not seen it, either because they have been too indifferent, or because they have chosen not to see it.

I hope that this fact will be burnished upon our hearts and not only upon ours but upon the hearts of all of our young people, as they leave the shelter of our homes, of necessity, as they become uprooted from their native soil in this surge of humanity that floods here and there, these days, that they may be led to know, with us, that truth is not a

matter of convenience; that principles and ideals are not a matter of geography or environment; that there is only one set of rules—that a thing that was not right at home is not right away from home—if it was not right where we came from, it isn't right anywhere.

MAY we go with them—these young people of ours—with our prayers and our letters—with our teachings before they leave, and with the example of our own lives always to fortify them, so that they may look back to us, to their homes, to their Church for strength and comfort in critical times.

Concerning all that has been spoken and shall be spoken during this conference, and at all times, by the leadership of this Church, I close with the words of Joseph Smith, the Prophet:

Therefore I declare unto you the warning which the Lord has commanded to declare unto this generation, remembering that the eyes of my Maker are upon me, and that to Him I am accountable for every word I say, wishing nothing worse to my fellow men than their eternal salvation.

May God help all of us to have strength, in the days to come, no matter what may lie before us, to adhere to those principles which were dearer to our fathers than life itself. No matter how we may be called upon to shift the superstructure of our lives, and to change the superficial habits of our living, may we never shift our foundations, I ask, in the name of Him whose work this is, even the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER STEPHEN L RICHARDS

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

IN June I had the privilege of visiting some of the shrines of the Church, places made sacred by memorable events in the history of the restored gospel. I am happy to report that wherever these places are owned or controlled by the Church they are maintained in good condition, creditable to the great cause and momentous things they commemorate. So significant to Latter-day Saints is every shrine that a discourse might be built around each one. That, of course, is

infeasible. I must be content merely to give you a little of my reflection and feeling as I came into the atmosphere of these historic places.

Many of them are in western New York, centering around the city of Palmyra. The Prophet's boyhood home, the Sacred Grove, the Hill Cumorah, scenes associated with the translation and publication of the Book of Mormon, the Peter Whitmer home where the Church was organized, and the site of the first baptisms—all are

within short drives of Palmyra. Not far distant on the banks of the Susquehanna River is the area in which the Priesthood was restored.

In this historic section perhaps nothing is quite so conspicuous and impressive as the Hill Cumorah. Capped by the beautiful monument which the Church has erected, it is the outstanding landmark of the countryside. A well-designed cottage-bureau of information at the base of the Hill with beautifully landscaped grounds, a commodious parking space for cars, and the illumination of the monument at night which gives to it and to the statue of the Angel Moroni which crowns it the appearance and atmosphere of an ethereal apparition projected high and impressively into the night sky, all combine to make this spot a mecca for tourists. When, as has been the yearly custom, the missionaries stage a sacred pageant on the crest of the Hill, representing figures and events of the past, culminating in the coming forth of the new witness for Christ, and when the trumpeters in the stillness of the night, stationed at the base of the imposing monument, sound their clarion call heralding the advent of the new dispensation of the fulness of times, thousands of spectators, gathered from far and near, coming mostly out of curiosity, are hushed in speechless and awful reverence for the sacred and mighty thing the representation portrays.

IN the Sacred Grove there comes to one of faith, a solemnity and feeling that are indescribable. It is believed that many of the large stately trees that gave shade and seclusion to the humble boy a hundred and twenty years ago still live. Standing beside these ancient silent witnesses who know the truth it is not difficult to secure confirmation and added support for testimony and conviction. That something which we call the soul of man responds to such an environment. His inner feelings are stirred, the spark of divinity within him is kindled anew, and each one of the seventy persons gathered together in a five-and-a-half-hour missionary meeting in this ex-

quisitely beautiful Grove knew, as perhaps he had never known before, that the experience of Joseph within these woods was actual, that he did behold the Father and the Son, that he heard Them speak and that his incomparable mission in life was divinely given to him.

Each historic scene brought similar feelings and confirmation. There was rejoicing in our hearts as we contemplated the great labors and accomplishments of the Prophet as we tried to reconstruct important episodes in his life. The supernatural translation of the Book of Mormon, its publication, the attestation of its divinity, the bestowal of the Aaronic and the Melchizedek Priesthoods, the organization of the Church with its unique and efficient government, the marvelous missionary work carried forward under his direction, reaching out into most of the nations of the world when travel and communication were extremely difficult, the unparalleled accretion to the Church resulting from the wide acceptance of the restored gospel by brave souls the world over, the inspired interpretation of the gospel message with its new and beautiful concepts which for centuries had escaped a professedly Christian world—these and many other comparable meditations filled our hearts with inexpressible gratitude.

THROUGHOUT our visit, however, there was ever a strain of sadness. We realized that every accomplishment had been attended with persecution and with sorrow. This was particularly emphasized on our way home in Nauvoo, Carthage, and Winter Quarters.

It was inspiring to behold the magnificent site of Nauvoo. The state of Illinois has constructed a scenic highway along the banks of the Mississippi. Nowhere is the view more impressive than at the bend of the river where Nauvoo is located. What a thrill must have come to Joseph and his friends as they saw this city grow with its lovely homes and business institutions, its adjoining farmlands, its churches, schools and recreational facilities, climaxed by the million-dollar temple that symbol-

Saturday, October 3

ized perhaps more than anything else the devotion, the sacrifice, and the true faith of the Saints. Nauvoo is pretty much a ghost city today, but enough remains to help us visualize what it was when it was the largest city in the state—a bigger city than Chicago was. It died with the depredations of the mobocrats nearly a century ago and has never revived.

Carthage is only a few miles distant. It was here that our feelings were most deeply touched. The jail which for many years was used as a residence has been restored by the Church as nearly as may be to its original condition. It is now surrounded by lawn, shrubs, and flowers, and a cottage for the keeper has been erected nearby. Many visitors come to this place. They are taken up the narrow stairway to the upper floor where the mob ascended on that fateful June 27, 1844, to reach the object of their malice. Visitors are taken into the room in which the Prophet and his friends were incarcerated. They are shown the faint trace of the martyred Hyrum's blood on the oak floor and the window through which the Prophet was shot and fell as he gave himself to seal his testimony for the cause he loved more than his life.

It is but natural, being in this building and recalling the tragedy enacted there, that I should think of my grandfather. I thought of his devotion to the Prophet, his offer to give his very life for him, how he declined to part from him even at the risk of great personal danger, his care of the wounded John Taylor, and his taking the bodies of Joseph and Hyrum back to Nauvoo. I knew that he had had the closest personal relationship with Joseph and that if there had been anything untrue about him he would have discovered it. I know that Willard Richards had the utmost confidence in the Prophet and an absolute conviction of the divinity of the latter-day work. This realization, as I visited this sad but hallowed scene of our history, seemed to intensify within me my responsibility to be true and as helpful as my capacity would permit to the cause for which my grandfather gave his devotion, his loyalty,

First Day

and his life. I prayed to God that it might be so and that all of us in the Church who are the descendants of these noble men and the beneficiaries of their sacrifice and devotion might also be true and worthy.

ON our journey westward we came to the cemetery at Winter Quarters near Omaha, Nebraska. Within the grounds the Church has placed beautiful statuary and other embellishments to commemorate the heroic dead, more than six thousand of whom lost their lives in westward migration to establish Zion in the Rocky Mountains. The chief statue is a representation of a pioneer man and his wife bowed in grief over a shallow grave wherein is laid the body of their child. The feeling that this work of art brings is one of deep sorrow. You must weep with the mother who is to leave her little one on the lonely prairie, never again even to see the spot where her child is buried. But rising above the sorrow are a great courage and a consoling faith that take the stricken parents resolutely forward in their quest for freedom and right and make them know that in the end "all is well." On a large flat plaque are inscribed the names of about six hundred who were buried in this cemetery. Among the names I found my own kin and those of many other families prominent in the settlement of our western commonwealth.

It was all very sad, and I kept thinking how much of the tragedy might have been avoided if only kindness and tolerance and brotherly love had been in the hearts of men. There was a pathetic side to every historic scene attributable to man's inhumanity, bigotry, and selfishness, but in my reflections I consoled myself with the thought that no great thing has ever come into the world without trial and tribulation, and that the greater the cause, the greater the sacrifice necessary to establish it.

Today we find ourselves engaged in a worldwide struggle to preserve liberty and tolerance, the foundations of peace in the earth. Let it be remembered that these were the very principles for which our progenitors have

made the tragic sacrifices of which I have briefly reminded you. Every shrine of the Church is a monument to freedom and truth. There have been no more sincere and valiant defenders of true democracy than the Latter-day Saints. No higher concepts of the liberty of man, the Sonship of God, and the brotherhood of race have been given to the world than those which

have emanated from the Prophet of the last dispensation.

It is my humble prayer that God will reward the heroism, the sacrifices, and the devotion of the past with the perpetuation of liberty and goodness in the world, and that peace—peace founded in truth and in virtue and in Christian brotherhood—may speedily come, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

After the singing by the congregation of the hymn, "High On The Mountain Top," the benediction was pronounced by Elder Stephen L. Chipman, President of the Salt Lake Temple.

Conference adjourned until 2 o'clock p. m.

FIRST DAY

AFTERNOON MEETING

Conference reconvened at 2 o'clock p. m.

PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

President Grant is present and presiding at this meeting. He has asked that I conduct the services.

There are present on the stand this afternoon President Grant, his two Counselors, members of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, the Assistants to the Twelve Apostles, the Patriarch to the Church, the Presidents of the First Council of Seventy, and the Presiding Bishopric.

The congregation will please join in singing "Praise to the Man Who Communed With Jehovah." Elder Richard T. Condie will direct us, Elder Frank W. Asper is at the organ.

The congregation sang the hymn, "Praise To The Man."

Elder James H. Riley, President of the Weber Stake, offered the invocation.

PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

The dominant principle in Christ's Church is service: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me," said the Savior. There are many of the features in the life of Joseph Smith which show that he exemplified that Christlike principle in his life. One you will remember was when he said, "I go like a lamb to the slaughter,"—"If my life is worth nothing to my friends, it is worth nothing to me." The same principle he exemplified when he and his brother Hyrum, John Taylor, and Willard Richards were in Carthage jail. During a solemn moment the Prophet said: "John, sing 'A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief.'"