

A century ago, the most majestic character of history gave us with other scriptures, the Doctrine and Covenants. In that book, man is carried to his high destiny. Man is divine. He is in the image of God. He has endless spiritual power and grace. Herein is the Prophet Joseph Smith's masterful idea. The soul's relationship to God. His was a sorrowful life, but he nurtured through all hazards the divine truths God revealed to him, and finally came triumphant when he left us these immortal words:

And now, remember the words of him who is the life and light of the world, your Redeemer, your Lord and your God. (D. & C. 10:70.)

His teachings lead us to the dominion of joy, as witnessed here today.

And so my brethren of the Holy Priesthood, go forth and remember:

He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? (Micah 6:8.)

ELDER SPENCER W. KIMBALL

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brothers and sisters: To preface my remarks may I quote Paul:

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. (I Cor. 2:1-2.)

Today I wish to bear witness of Jesus the Christ and to quote the word of the Lord.

I read recently in a local paper of a pastor of a church in Illinois, who said that he felt the same reverence for Santa Claus that he did for Jesus Christ. He said:

I consider both of them to be folk tales, but in different categories.

He finds one difference, however; he does not question the fact that "a man named Jesus" did exist, and he regards Santa Claus as a "figure of the imagination."

In the magazine, *Time*, in a recent issue, a noted professor emeritus in one of our largest universities, was quoted at length on his rationalizing. To Jesus of Nazareth he gives human warmth; a great capacity for love; unusual understanding. He calls him a great humanist, a great teacher, a great dramatist. As a typical rationalization, he explains that Lazarus was not dead, but was merely

... brought "back to health" by Jesus, the power of mind and learning, and by the "therapy of his own abundant vitality!"

JESUS LIVES ETERNALLY

I want to bear testimony today that Jesus is not only a great teacher, a great humanist, and a great dramatist, but is in very deed, the Son of the Living God, the Creator, the Redeemer of the world, the Savior of mankind. I want to testify further that he not only lived in the Meridian of Time for approximately thirty-three years, but that he lived eternities before this, and will live eternities beyond it.

He first comes into our knowledge in the pre-existent state, when with a host of spirits, he stood before his Father in solemn assembly.

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. (John 1:1, 2.)

PRIMEVAL GATHERING

The vision of this primeval gathering is recorded as follows:

Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones; And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto me: Abraham, thou art one of them: thou wast chosen before thou wast born. And there stood one among them that was like unto God, and he said unto those who were with him: We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these may dwell; And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them. (Pearl of Great Price, Abraham 3:22-25.)

And one of the number proffered to go down to the earth and by compulsion, save all men, but another "like unto God" came forward with a plan of free agency by which the plan of redemption and exaltation would be offered by him to the people of the earth. And this latter plan, proposed by Jehovah, or Jesus Christ, was accepted.

. . . and the Word was God. . . . All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1: 1, 3.)

JESUS THE CREATOR

The time finally came when the earth was to be created.

And then the Lord said: Let us go down. And they went down at the beginning, and they, that is the Gods, organized and formed the heavens and the earth. (Abraham 4:1.)

And Jesus the Christ created the earth and gave it light and established upon it the plant and animal life, and finally man, created in his image.

In confirmation, he says long centuries later to the Nephites:

. . . I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. (III Nephi 9:15.)

After the creation, the Redeemer bears witness again to Adam:

And in that day the Holy Ghost fell upon Adam, which beareth record of the Father and the Son, saying: I am the Only Begotten of the Father from the beginning, henceforth and forever, that as thou hast fallen thou mayest be redeemed, and all mankind, even as many as will. (Pearl of Great Price, Moses 5:9.)

REDEEMER'S VISIT TO ENOCH

Generations later the Redeemer came again to the earth to visit his choice servant and mighty leader, Enoch, who because of his righteousness, was permitted to hear the voice of Jehovah. Enoch bowed himself to the earth before the Lord, and spake:

... Why is it that I have found favor in thy sight, and am but a lad, and all the people hate me; for I am slow of speech; wherefore am I thy servant? (Moses 6:31.)

And the Lord spake unto Enoch, and said unto him: Anoint thine eyes with clay, and wash them, and thou shalt see. And he did so. (*Ibid.*, verse 35.)

And he beheld the spirit world and all creations not visible to the natural eye. From hills and high places, Enoch warned them, and

... no man laid hands on him; ... for he walked with god. (*Ibid.*, verse 39.)

In concluding his preaching to his people, he bore this testimony:

... I stood upon the mount, I beheld the heavens open, and I was clothed upon with glory; And I saw the Lord; and he stood before my face, and he talked with me, even as a man talketh one with another, face to face. (Moses 7:3, 4.)

The transgressions of the people of Enoch's generation continued unabated, for Noah comes forth to continue throughout the long years of his ministry, a vigorous warning and preachment against the sins of the world, which had become ripe in iniquity.

And thus Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord: for Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generation; and he walked with God. (Moses 8:27.)

EXPERIENCE OF BROTHER OF JARED

Again at the time of the tower of Babel, the Lord Jesus came to earth when the Jaredites prepared to cross the ocean for the promised land, now known as America, and they went into the mountains and "did molten out of a rock sixteen small stones" (Ether 3:1), and the prophet entreated the Lord to touch these stones that they might shine forth in the darkness of the enclosed vessels to give light while they crossed the sea. And as the Lord touched each stone

... the veil was taken from off the eyes of the brother of Jared, and he saw the finger of the Lord; and it was as the finger of a man, like unto flesh and blood. (Ether 3:6.)

The prophet fell to the earth with fear lest he should be smitten,

... for I knew not that the Lord had flesh and blood. And the Lord said unto him: Because of thy faith thou hast seen that I shall take upon me flesh and blood; and never has man come before me with such exceeding faith as thou hast; for were it not so ye could not have seen my finger. . . . And when he had said these words, behold, the Lord showed himself unto him, and said: . . . Behold, I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people. Behold, I am Jesus Christ. . . . Seest thou that ye are created after mine own image? . . . Behold, this body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; . . . and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit will I appear unto my people in the flesh. (Ether 3:8, 9, 13-16.)

JEHOVAH SPEAKS TO NEPHI

Again Jehovah speaks. Some centuries later in what is known as the first year of the Christian era, the people on the American continent were watching for fulfillment of prophecy and for the signs of the coming of the Messiah. The wicked ones figured that the day had passed, but Nephi, being greatly concerned, prayed devoutly unto the Lord all day, at the end of which there came to him the voice of the Lord, saying:

Lift up your head and be of good cheer; for behold, the time is at hand, and on this night shall the sign be given, and on the morrow come I into the world, to show unto the world that I will fulfil all that which I have caused to be spoken by the mouth of my holy prophets. (III Nephi 1:13.)

And that night the darkness did not come, and two days and a night were as one day, and the righteous people knew that that day would see the birth of the Savior of the world. A new star appeared as further evidence that the Christ was born.

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. . . . (John 1:14.)

BIRTH OF JESUS

And far across the ocean in the land of Judea that same star shone forth and led the wise men from the East to a stable out of Bethlehem. Here they found a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. Mary had become the mother of the Son of God. The shepherds called and paid homage, the angels sang hosannas and the Savior was born into mortality, into his flesh and blood tabernacle. And "his name was called Jesus." (Luke 2:21.)

And the child Jesus was presented in the temple and blessed by the righteous Simeon.

Little is known of the childhood of Jesus, but it is related:

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him. (Luke 2:40.)

Again we hear of him in the temple at Jerusalem at twelve years of age:

And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. (Luke 2:47.)

He said to his concerned mother:

... wist-ye not that I must be about my Father's business? (Luke 2:49.)

Of his days of preparation we are informed:

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man. (Luke 2:52.)

HIGHLIGHTS OF MORTAL LIFE OF JESUS

The mortal life of Jesus Christ is well known to us so we mention only a few highlights at this time.

John the Baptist, come from the wilderness and preached repentance.

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. (Matt. 3:13.)

And when Jesus came up out of the water

... the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. (Matt. 3:16, 17.)

We follow our Savior down the dusty roads of Judea over the rocky paths of the highlands and the sandy beaches of the seas, into the synagogues to reprove and rebuke, in the byways to call to repentance.

We find the Redeemer at the marriage at Cana turning water into wine; at the temple at Jerusalem where with his handmade scourge of small cords, he drove from the temple the desecrating traders and money-changers, saying to the cowards:

... make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. (John 2:16.)

The mortal life of the Lord was a hard one. He said:

... Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. (Luke 9:58.)

He was followed by great multitudes of interested disciples, curious sign-seekers, and critical annoyers with always the vicious lurking in the group, seeking his very life.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not. (John 1:11.)

Even in his old home town he was not appreciated, but was thrust out of the synagogue, out of the city, and led to the brow of the hill to be killed, but he escaped.

And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. (Matt. 4:18-20.)

And he saw James and John mending their nets and likewise called them and subsequently called other eight from all walks of life to lead his Church, and he "named them apostles."

MIRACLES PERFORMED

The numerous miracles of the Redeemer brought him early attention. The curious followed with wonder; the believers looked on with awe, and because of his increasing popularity, his enemies followed to catch him in lawbreaking, that they might dispose of him.

He blessed loaves and fishes and fed thousands of hungry people. He placed his fingers in the ears of a deaf person, saying "be opened," and the man heard clearly. He "spit and touched" the tongue of one with an impediment in his speech, "and he spake plain." He touched the eyes of the blind saying, "According to your faith be it unto you, and their eyes were opened."

The multitudes marveled saying, "It was never so seen in Israel," as he cast out the devil. His enemies found him healing on the Sabbath and accused him when they heard him say to the man with a withered hand:

. . . Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other. (Matt. 12:13.)

"We never saw it on this fashion," the people said as they saw the roof opened, a sick man let down at the foot of Jesus and saw him carry away his bed at the command: "—take up thy bed and go thy way—" and "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee."

He stopped a funeral procession and touching the bier of the son of the widow of Nain said, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." And he that was dead sat up and began to speak.

He astounded the people when he said to the dead daughter of Jairus, "Damsel, I say unto thee arise." They had laughed him to scorn, but now they were shocked when the damsel arose and walked.

The woman who for twelve years of affliction had "spent all her living on physicians, neither could be healed by any" . . . "came behind him and touched the border of his garment"—and immediately was healed.

Again he forgave the sinner, stilled the tempest, cleansed the lepers, stirred souls, and raised the dead; even his friend Lazarus who was four days dead, and "by this time stinketh"—when the voice of Jehovah commanded: "Lazarus come forth."

CLOSING EVENTS OF MASTER'S LIFE

And toward the end of his ministry:

. . . Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. . . . While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and be-

hold a voice out of the cloud which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. (Matt. 17:1, 2, 5.)

Knowing that his hour had come he repaired to the room which had been prepared, and there he gave to his disciples the Last Supper, after which he retired into the Garden of Gethsemane, where he poured out his soul unto his Father:

... O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. (Matt. 26:42.)

Then mobsters came, headed by the betrayer.

They stripped him and put on a scarlet robe; they pushed down upon his head a crown of thorns, and placed a reed in his right hand and bowed the knee and mocked and spit upon him, and smote him on the head, and led him to Calvary to be crucified.

Between thieves he was nailed to the cross, and they parted his garments.

Those that loved him crouched about his feet and wept in their helplessness. As his life ebbed, he called:

... Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do. (Luke 23:34.)

... Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: And having said thus, he gave up the ghost. (Luke 23:46.)

They took his body carefully down, and wrapped it in linen and laid it in a sepulchre.

The three days ended, and Jesus came forth as he had promised. His disciples, both women and men, had been to the tomb and found it empty and were surprised, still not comprehending the fact of the resurrection.

The same day he appeared in the locked room with his apostles and revealed himself to them, convincing them that he lived again. Many hundreds were similarly convinced.

Now his Church was organized, the program clarified, and leaders developed into whose hands he could leave his kingdom. And when his followers were gathered together in Jerusalem:

... he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. (Acts 1:9-11.)

CHRIST'S VISITATION TO WESTERN HEMISPHERE

On the western hemisphere, also, was darkness and destruction, cities burned, mountains leveled, and plains raised, and in the suffering and lamentations of the people a voice was heard among the inhabitants, explaining the disasters and saying:

Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I created the heavens

and the earth, and all things that in them are. . . . I came unto my own, and my own received me not. . . . I am the light and the life of the world. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. . . . Behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin. (III Nephi 9:15, 16, 18, 21.)

Again the Nephites were conversing about Jesus Christ, the sign of whose death had been given to them, and a small, penetrating voice came out of heaven, which pierced them to the very soul and caused their hearts to burn, and the voice again uttered these memorable words:

Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name—hear ye him. (III Nephi 11:7.)

And as they looked toward heaven:

. . . they saw a Man descending out of heaven; and he was clothed in a white robe; and he came down and stood in the midst of them; and . . . he stretched forth his hand and spake unto the people saying: Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world. . . . I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, . . . the whole multitude fell to the earth; for they remembered that it had been prophesied among them that Christ should show himself unto them . . . saying . . . thrust your hands into my side . . . feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world. (III Nephi 11:8-12, 14.)

And all the people felt the prints of the nails and of the sword and

. . . did know of a surety and did bear record, that it was he, of whom it was written by the prophets, that should come. (III Nephi 11:15.)

And they worshipped him.

And he organized his Church here, and called his twelve apostles and taught them the doctrines and blessed their children. He restored sight to the blind, strength to the infirm, and wholeness to those who were ill, and after his impressive and continued appearances among them,

. . . there came a cloud and overshadowed the multitude that they could not see Jesus. And while they were overshadowed he departed from them, and ascended into heaven. (III Nephi 18:38, 39.)

Another day he returned, and when he blessed them, they were transfigured and became

. . . white as the countenance and also the garments of Jesus. . . . (III Nephi 19:25.)

A third time he retired to pray

And tongue cannot speak the words which he prayed, neither can be written by man the words which he prayed. . . . he came again to the disciples, and said unto them: So great faith have I never seen among the Jews; wherefore I could not show unto them so great miracles, because of their unbelief. (III Nephi 19:32, 35.)

Such great faith was manifest by his apostles that he touched with his finger the nine who were not to tarry. Again he departed from the earth.

VISION GIVEN TO JOSEPH SMITH

And time passed and the darkness of ages was beginning to be dissipated; the new world of America had been discovered, and honorable God-fearing people had settled upon it. The war had been waged and freedom gained, and religious liberty granted, and the Lord Jesus Christ appeared on earth again to restore and re-establish his kingdom upon the earth, and a young boy with an open and unbiased mind, knelt one beautiful spring morning in a grove, and prayed for light, and though the evil power attempted to destroy him, he was relieved by the appearance of a pillar of light above the brightness of the sun.

Joseph Smith continues story:

... It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name, and said—pointing to the other—"This is my beloved Son, hear him." (*History of the Church*, Vol. I, p. 5.)

There followed warnings, instructions, and commandments and finally, as Joseph says:

When I came to myself again, I found myself lying on my back, looking up into heaven. (*Ibid.*, p. 6.)

Following this vision came numerous other visitations from heavenly beings, in the restoration of the gospel and the establishing of his kingdom upon the earth.

The work went forward, the Church was organized, the Book of Mormon was printed, the revelations were given, twelve apostles were called, the temple in Kirtland was built, and during the dedication of it in 1836:

... Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery retired to the pulpit, the veils being dropped, and there bowed in silent prayer. After rising from their knees the Savior appeared to them standing on the breast-work of the pulpit and blessed them, accepting the building in his name. (*Essentials in Church History*, pp. 191-192.)

TESTIMONIES OF CHRIST'S DIVINITY

And so, having traced the appearances of the Redeemer from pre-existence to date, we look forward now to his second coming as he promised. This promise will be literally fulfilled as were his many other promises, and in the meantime, we praise his holy name and serve him, and bear testimony of the divinity of his mission, with the prophets through the generations!

We testify with John the Baptist, who, as he saw the Lord approaching to him, saith:

... Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. (John 1:29.)

Not just a man of human warmth, but the Lamb of God.

We bear witness with Nathanael, an Israelite in whom was no guile:

... Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. (John 1:49.)

Not merely a great teacher, but the very Son of God.

We testify again with John the Beloved, who seeing Jesus on the shore, said with conviction, "It is the Lord!" not only a great humanist, but the Lord God of heaven.

And with Simon Peter, who, when asked by the Lord, "But whom say ye that I am?" said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," (Matt. 16:15, 16), and received this statement from the Savior:

... Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. (Matt. 16:17.)

And finally, we bear witness with the Prophet Joseph Smith who was willing to give his life for his testimony, which comes to us in his own words as follows:

I had actually seen a light, and in the midst of that light I saw two personages, and they did in reality speak to me; . . . I have actually seen a vision, and who am I that I can . . . deny what I have actually seen? For I had seen a vision; I knew it, and I knew that God knew it, and I could not deny it, neither dared I do it, at least I knew that by so doing I would offend God, and come under condemnation. (*History of the Church*, Vol. I, pp. 7, 8.)

I repeat my testimony:

I know that Jesus, through eternities past and future, is the Creator, the Redeemer, the Savior, the Son of God. I bear it in his holy name. Amen.

ELDER ANTOINE R. IVINS

Of the First Council of the Seventy

It is a thrilling sight, my brothers and sisters, to stand before you on this occasion, and I trust that you will give me your faith and prayers, that the short time I occupy, my words may be directed by the Spirit of God.

It is two weeks today since Sister Ivins and I finished a tour of the East Central States Mission which was the third mission that I had inspected during this season. I have met the sons and daughters of many of you, and I bring you, from them, a good word. I want to tell you that they are interested in their work, they are devoted to