

advice that come constantly from our leaders to put our houses in order and let our sons and daughters take care of their mothers and fathers. Let us bring into the families of which Brother Benson so beautifully spoke this morning, that love and affection and that devotion which will not permit outside interests to come in and perform any of the family functions, whether they be temporal or spiritual. And there isn't a son or daughter in Israel who will not be blessed with the abundance of which we have spoken here this afternoon if he will but contribute of that which the Lord has given him to the maintenance of less fortunate members of his family. And I promise you that there wouldn't be a family in this Church, if we would live up to this principle, but what in and of itself without assistance from any outside source, would be self-sustaining.

May the Lord help us to become such, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

The Relief Society Singing Mothers and the congregation joined in singing the hymn, "O Say, What Is Truth?"

ELDER ELDRED G. SMITH

Patriarch to the Church

This is the first privilege I have had for many years to attend all the sessions of a general conference. I believe about the last time I was able to attend all the sessions was when I sat on the stairway which used to lead from this stand down to the lower rooms. It has been a long time since that stairway existed. However, I appreciate the privilege of attending this conference and hope the faith and prayers of you people will be in my behalf while I hold this position.

REASON FOR PROGRESS

I am reminded—and it has already been mentioned today—that this is our centennial year, and we have been looking back over the past and had called to our attention in many ways the growth and development and achievements over the years. Wherever the Church has been, there has been outstanding progress. Surely this Church has been blessed with something above all others. What blessing could it be? What is the motivating power behind the success of this people? What is it that carried the pioneers through all their hardships, their trials and persecutions, their loss of all which the world holds dear? What gave them the courage to follow their leaders across a vast and dangerous wilderness and settle in the most barren place of all? What made them sacrifice the little they had to build temples and this tabernacle in which we worship God? What made the men go out as missionaries and leave their families in dire straits? What made the women willing to send

their men and assume the great burden of bearing, rearing, and supporting their families alone? What is this great power?

THE POWER OF TESTIMONY

There is no blessing on the earth to be more desired than a testimony that God lives, that Jesus Christ is his Son, and that this gospel is the divine plan of life and salvation. With this sure knowledge in our hearts it gives a meaning and a purpose to our lives which guide even our smallest actions and give us courage to endure all things in the hope for the future. This great power and blessing is a true and living testimony which is worth any sacrifice to keep the commandments of God, and God has promised to bless those who do his will.

Brigham Young said:

If all the talent, fact, wisdom, and refinements of the world had been sent to me with the Book of Mormon and had declared in the most exalted earthly eloquence the truth of it, undertaking to prove it by learning and worldly wisdom, they would have been to me like the smoke that rises only to vanish away. But when I saw a man without eloquence, or talents for public speaking who could only say, "I know by the power of the Holy Ghost, that the Book of Mormon is true, that Joseph Smith is a Prophet of the Lord," the Holy Ghost proceeding from that individual illuminated my understanding, and light, glory and immortality were before me. I was encircled by them, filled with them, and I knew for myself that the testimony was true. (*Golden Nuggets of Thought*, Ezra Marler, p. 35.)

That is the kind of testimony that members of this Church have. That is the kind of testimony that gives us the power and the courage to go forward and accomplish the things which have been done in the past and which helps us today, a gift from God through the Holy Ghost, a burning knowledge within. I thank God for those testimonies which have brought us many blessings and privileges. I thank God for the testimonies of the great souls, living and dead, who have succeeded these early members. All down through Church history we have the lives and the examples of our leaders to inspire us to greater effort.

And so it is today. A nobler group of men cannot be found on earth because they have the priesthood of God and a testimony to guide them. Nor is this blessing confined to the leaders of the Church. I am constantly inspired by the beautiful spirit, the fervent testimony, the great desire to accomplish God's will in those whom I meet from day to day. They truly have a testimony as great as the pioneers.

I feel very humble and very grateful when I think of all the splendid people working for God throughout this Church. We cannot help but progress if we keep these testimonies, and I thank all you good people for your faith and prayers in my behalf, and I pray that I may always be remembered in your prayers, for I cannot do the

work assigned to me without the blessings of the Lord and your faith and prayers in my behalf.

I thank God for the testimony which burns within my soul, that I know this is the true gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, that Joseph Smith was a true Prophet of God, and the others who have succeeded him to our present prophet and President, George Albert Smith, are called of God. I bear you this testimony and by virtue of my office and calling pronounce the blessings of God upon you, his people, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER ALBERT E. BOWEN

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

This morning President Smith sketched for us a little of the history of our people over a hundred years. He could but sketch it, of course, but in the outline he drew, he was able to stimulate thinking within us that induced each one of us to fill in the outline from his own store of knowledge. The thought stimulated in me as I listened was in the form of a question. What started it all? What were the beginnings of it?

THE BEGINNINGS

He called our attention to a monument that is building in these grounds in honor of the handcart companies who started out from Iowa City on their journey to Salt Lake. I remember that my father, then a youth of nineteen, put all his earthly possessions on one of those little carts and pulled it or pushed it all the way to this city.

But Iowa City was not the beginning. From Wales he had come there. And the beginning was not in Wales. The beginning was not in Nauvoo where the people began their march across this continent. Behind that was an event in the state of New York where a boy knelt down to pray and where, in answer to that prayer, the God of heaven came bringing with him one whom he introduced as his Son, and whom he bade the praying boy to hear.

Neither was that the beginning. We should have to go back centuries to find that, eighteen of them at least, to the day when the star which guided the wise men stood over the manger, and the heavenly chorus sang, "Glory to God in the highest." That had antecedents, too, but I shall have no time to go back into them. I choose, rather, to begin with that event. That was the earthly beginning, if I may use that phrase, of the migration of our forebears to this land. That was when the Word was made flesh and came to dwell among men, and out of that circumstance derives the power and authority, the teaching, the inspiration that have moved all else to this hour.

MISSION OF THE SAVIOR

The Babe of Bethlehem entered upon his great mission alone. He went alone to be baptized of John. Alone he went from there