

my Maker. I want to tell you that I am grateful for the blessings of the Lord. I know that it will do our hearts good to try to live a little better today than we have in the past. That is our plan of improvement. The Lord has asked us to come unto him humbly and repent of our wrongdoings. Therein we can be made strong.

If I have wronged any man or woman, if they will let me know, I will do my best to right that wrong. I hold no malice in my heart toward any man, and I hope no man will hold any malice toward me. I appreciate the blessings that come in serving the Lord. I pray that he will help me to do my best to serve him and to keep his commandments.

It is a pleasure to know the brethren with whom I am associated. I can bear you my testimony that they are men of God, trying as hard as they can to live the true principles, working hard day and night in the service of their Father in heaven.

For a number of years, some of my friends have said that I was working too hard, and they cautioned me to take it a little easy, but now as I look back over the last fifteen years, the work I was doing was just play and fooling around compared with the work that I have to do in keeping up with my brethren of the General Authorities. I hope that you will pray for us as we pray for you.

GRATITUDE FOR MISSION PRESIDENTS

The other day in the temple, we listened to all the mission presidents bear their testimony and give a report of their work, and my heart was touched to see the great love that these mission presidents have for the young men and women laboring under their care as missionaries. Oh, as fathers and mothers, we should be ever grateful, indeed, that our sons and daughters can go into the mission field and labor with these fine mission presidents who love these missionaries as they would love their own sons and daughters.

May God bless us that we may serve him and keep his commandments, that we may follow the admonitions that the President of the Church gave us this morning. May we truly love each other and make life as pleasant as we can for those who are unfortunate.

May God bless us during the sessions of this conference, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER MILTON R. HUNTER

Of the First Council of the Seventy

It is an awe-inspiring sight to stand here this morning on this beautiful Sabbath day and face this vast audience. I humbly pray that the Spirit of God will attend me and direct what I shall say. During the few moments that I occupy, it is my desire to give an interpretation of a prophet of God, with special emphasis upon the Prophet Joseph Smith. I am always thrilled to hear that beautiful song, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet," that was sung a few mo-

ments ago, because I know that we have today prophets standing at the head of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

DEFINITION OF A PROPHET

If I were to ask you the question, "What is a prophet of God?" it is probable that your immediate reply would be: "A prophet of God is an individual who through divine inspiration or revelation predicts future events." You may even quote the Apostle Peter, wherein he said:

For the prophecy came not in old times by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. (II Peter 1:21.)

How does Joseph Smith compare with the great prophets of all ages as a predictor of future events? When we consider the fact that the Doctrine and Covenants is filled with revelations from the Lord to the Prophet and that many of them deal with future events which certainly could be regarded as prophecies; also, when we consider the fact that other scriptures were brought forth in this dispensation through Joseph and that they contain many prophecies; and in addition to this, that he uttered numerous other predictions, we are forced to conclude that few, if any, prophets who ever lived have made more prophecies than did Joseph Smith. I, therefore, would rate him among the greatest of all the prophets as a predictor of future events.

We should also keep in mind the fact that the prophecies of true prophets of God, uttered as a result of divine inspiration, or revelation, must and will all be fulfilled. In fact, in the holy scriptures we are told that the way to distinguish between true and false prophets is whether or not their predictions come to pass. To quote the words of Deuteronomy:

And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken?

When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him. (Deuteronomy 18:21-22.)

JOSEPH SMITH A TRUE PROPHET

According to the word of the Lord, Joseph Smith was a true prophet because the prophecies and promises revealed to him "shall all be fulfilled." In this respect he compares very favorably with any or all of the holy prophets of old. God declared in his preface to the Doctrine and Covenants the following:

Search these commandments for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled. (D. & C. 1:37.)

Let us consider a few examples of prophecies made by Joseph Smith and their fulfilment. When but a boy slightly past fourteen

years of age, Joseph returned to the house from the Sacred Grove on that memorable spring morning in 1820. He told the members of his family that he had seen the Eternal Father and his Only Begotten Son in a vision. During the course of that vision, he had been informed by the Savior that the true Church was not upon the earth (D.H.C. 1:2-6) and that if he lived a worthy life he was given

... a promise that the fullness of the gospel should at some future time be made known unto [him] me. ("The Wentworth Letter," cited in *ibid.*, 4:536.)

Imagine a boy, untrained and unschooled as far as earthly schooling is concerned and at such a tender age, making such a prophecy. As all of you know, this prophecy was soon fulfilled. The gospel of Jesus Christ was revealed to him, and he did establish a Church—the Church which God declared to be

... the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, with which I, the Lord, am well pleased, speaking unto the church collectively and not individually. (D. & C. 1:30.)

NAME KNOWN FOR GOOD AND EVIL

Three and one-half years later, at the time of the visitations of the angel Moroni to Joseph Smith, he made another prophecy which I believe was just as astounding in its nature as was the prediction that he should establish the "true and living Church." Joseph said that the heavenly messenger had told him that he would receive an ancient record, and that he would translate it and publish a book. Also, to quote Joseph's own words:

... *that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, or that it should be both good and evil spoken among all people.* (D.H.C. 1:11-12; italics speaker's.)

Imagine an obscure frontier youth who had probably no more than a casual acquaintance with perhaps a few hundred people at the most, not only prophesying that he would translate and publish a book but that his name would be had for good and evil among all nations. Again, time has proved Joseph Smith to be a true prophet of God. He did publish that book under the title of the Book of Mormon; and, as all of you know, it has for more than a century baffled thousands of its avowed enemies.

Almost immediately after receiving his earliest visitation from heavenly beings, the Prophet Joseph Smith began to be persecuted for the claims that he had made. Throughout the entire course of his life many people hated him to the point of trying to bring about his death. This fact they finally accomplished by bringing him to a martyr's grave. As early as 1834 the first of almost an innumerable procession of books, written by evil people inspired by the devil for the purpose of destroying the Prophet, his influence, and the work of the Lord, came from the press. Each of these books has been short-lived;

but the work of God and the honor and glory of his great Prophet will go on unhampered forever.

On the other hand, throughout Joseph's lifetime many other people loved him so dearly that they would have laid down their lives willingly for him if necessary. They maintained that the Holy Ghost had borne positive assurance to their souls of Joseph's divine appointment and of the restoration of the true gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus thousands of intelligent converts have allied themselves with the Prophet Joseph and have adhered to the cause of Mormonism in the face of persecution, poverty, loss of homes and property, and even threats of martyrdom. In fact, many of the Saints have sacrificed their lives for the cause of righteousness.

Joseph Smith's testimony has divided the world into two camps. Whenever he is being considered, there is no neutral ground upon which to stand. His claims are so vital that people either accept them in their entirety without reservations or flatly reject them. There are individuals, however, who are completely indifferent to his claims, and oftentimes to religion in general. Those individuals must be classed with the group that reject Joseph's claims.

Thus throughout the entire course of more than one hundred years, this prediction uttered by the Prophet Joseph Smith, that is, that his name should be known "*for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues,*" has been continuously fulfilled.

REVELATION GIVEN IN MISSOURI JAIL

In the spring of 1839, after the Prophet had spent several months lying in a dungeon in a Missouri jail, the voice of God came unto him saying:

My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment;

And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes.

And they who do charge thee with transgression, their hope shall be blasted, and their prospects shall melt away as the hoar frost melteth before the burning rays of the rising sun;

Cursed are all those that shall lift up the heel against mine anointed, saith the Lord . . . (D. & C. 121:7, 8, 11, 16.)

The ends of the earth shall inquire after thy name, and fools shall have thee in derision, and hell shall rage against thee;

While the pure in heart, and the wise, and the noble, and the virtuous, shall seek counsel, and blessings constantly from under thy hand.

And thy people shall never be turned against thee by the testimony of traitors.

. . . Thy days are known, and thy years shall not be numbered less; therefore, fear not what men can do, for God shall be with you forever and ever. (Ibid., 122:1-3,9.)

PREDICTIONS FULFILLED

Such predictions as the Civil War prophecy, the Stephen A. Douglas prophecy, the Rocky Mountain prophecy referred to by the

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President of the Church this morning, and numerous other predictions and their fulfilment could be cited to show that Joseph Smith was truly a great prophet of God. Evidence impels us to rank this man of God as one of the greatest prophets that have ever lived. In fact, in the Doctrine and Covenants we read:

Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer of the Lord, has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it. (Ibid., 135:3.)

THE CALLING OF PROPHETS

Another distinctive characteristic of a prophet of God is that he is chosen, appointed, and called by the Lord. He draws his knowledge from the divine fountain of truth; therefore, he speaks in the name of the Lord and as one having authority. Let us give a few examples. The Prophet Amos, in his masterful discourse at Bethel, prefaced each of his predictions by "Thus saith the Lord." (Amos 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4, 6.) Isaiah relates his call to be a prophet as follows:

... I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here I am; send me.

And he said, Go, and tell this people. (Isaiah 6:1, 8-9.)

The call of Jeremiah to be a prophet illustrates beautifully the fact that prophets are chosen, appointed, and called by the Lord. To use Jeremiah's own words:

Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak for I am a child.

But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. (Jeremiah 1:4-7, 9.)

In the book of Moses we read about Enoch's call to be a prophet as follows:

And it came to pass that Enoch journeyed in the land, among the people; and as he journeyed ...

... he heard a voice from heaven, saying: Enoch, my son, prophesy unto this people. (Moses 6:26-27.)

In addition to being called of the Lord, true prophets teach the people what the Lord commands them. Jesus Christ, the greatest of all the prophets, declared:

For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I

Speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak. (John 12:49-50.)

Throughout history many of the great prophets have been visited by holy angels and some of them have seen God and have conversed with him as one man converses with another. For example, we read in the Pearl of Great Price:

And I, the Lord God, said unto Adam, (Moses 4:17.)

Again we read:

And I, the Lord God, spake unto Moses, (Ibid., 4:1.)

And he saw God face to face, and he talked with him, and the glory of God was upon Moses; therefore Moses could endure his presence. (Ibid., 1:2.)

Abraham wrote:

Thus I, Abraham, talked with the Lord, face to face, as one man talketh with another. (Abraham 3:11.)

Referring to the Prophet Alma, Amulek said:

As I was journeying to see a very near kindred, behold an angel of the Lord appeared unto me and said: Amulek, return to thine own house, for thou shalt feed a prophet of the Lord; yea, a holy man, who is chosen man of God. (Alma 10:7.)

"THUS SAITH THE LORD"

After the death of the Savior and his apostles, the heavens were closed, and for many centuries God ceased to appoint holy prophets among men. Finally, as I have already stated, a living oracle was sent to earth again in the person of the Prophet Joseph Smith. The Eternal Father, his Only Begotten Son, and numerous holy angels talked with Joseph face to face, even as they had done with the prophets of old. Thus the word, the will, and the commandments of God came from heaven to mortals again in exactly the same manner as they had come in past ages. At the beginning of the majority of the revelations received by the Prophet Joseph, such statements as the following appear:

Hearken unto the voice of the Lord your God, while I speak unto you. (D. & C. 25:1.)

And again:

Listen to the voice of Jesus Christ, your Lord, your God and your Redeemer. (Ibid., 27:1; see also 29:1.)

Also:

Thus saith the Lord God, the Mighty One of Israel. (Ibid., 36:1.)

As an example of the numerous visions of heavenly beings that Joseph beheld, I quote the following:

And we beheld the glory of the Son, on the right hand of the Father, and received of his fulness;

And saw the holy angels, and them who are sanctified before his throne, worshipping God, and the Lamb, who worship him forever and ever. (Ibid., 76:20-21.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith, like all the holy prophets who preceded him, always prefaced his teachings with the divine dictum of "Thus saith the Lord." Truly of him it can be said as it was said of the Man of Galilee, ". . . Never man spake like this man." (John 7:46.) Since Joseph Smith received what he gave to the people directly from Jesus Christ, such should be the case.

The Lord declared in modern revelation that the words spoken by prophets when they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost should be considered as scripture. To quote:

And whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation. (D. & C. 68:4.)

LIVING ORACLES

I wish to emphasize the fact that this revelation is not limited to Joseph Smith and the other great prophets who preceded him. We have standing at the head of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints today living oracles through whom God reveals his will. Certainly the words of this revelation apply to President George Albert Smith, to his Counselors, to the Twelve Apostles, and to the Patriarch to the Church just as much as they did to Joseph Smith, or to Isaiah, Jeremiah, Moses, Nephi, Alma, Peter, Paul, or to all of the other ancient prophets of God.

A TEACHER OF DIVINE TRUTHS

The greatest job that a prophet has to accomplish is to be a teacher of the divine truths revealed to him from on high. He is to be God's mouthpiece here on earth—God's spokesman, the revelator of the plan of salvation. Through the keys and power of the priesthood which he holds, the kingdom of God is established upon earth and all the ordinances requisite for the salvation and exaltation of the human family are performed. It is in their capacity of teacher and dispenser of the mind and will of God that the holy prophets in all ages have made their greatest contributions. During his three short years of missionary service, Jesus Christ did more to affect the destiny of the human family than have all the kings that ever sat upon thrones or all the armies that ever marched. Moses' great contribution was in giving Israel the law. Nephi, Paul, Alma, and the other prophets perpetuated the true Church in their times. And Joseph Smith was the prophet of God who was called and foreordained to usher in the last dispensation of the gospel, the greatest of the dispensations. (II Nephi, chapter 3.)

When we consider the three volumes of scripture given to the world through the Prophet Joseph Smith, and when we consider that all the knowledge, powers, keys, doctrines, and ordinances that had ever been given to the prophets from the time of Adam to the present day were restored to him, then we can fully realize that Joseph certainly was one of the greatest prophets that ever lived. I make the claim that he was the greatest of the prophets except Jesus Christ.

LOVE OF FELLOWMEN

Finally, a prophet of God loves his fellow men intensely, even to the point of giving his life willingly for them if necessary. Before the death of the Savior, he had full knowledge that the Jews had rejected him and that they would bring about his crucifixion. Yet, as he sat upon a hill overlooking Jerusalem a few days prior to his death, he prophesied to his apostles regarding the destruction of the holy city and the scattering of his people because they had rejected their Lord and Savior. So intense was his love for those who had become his enemies that "Jesus wept." He had taught the people:

... Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. (Matt. 5:44.)

While hanging on the cross he put those teachings into effect. He looked down upon the jeering mob standing at the foot of the cross and then, casting his eyes toward heaven, prayed:

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

So it was with the Prophet Joseph Smith. When he, Hyrum and others were making plans to flee to the Rocky Mountains for safety, Emma sent word for Joseph to return because the Saints were accusing him of being a coward. Knowing full well that they would be killed if they should return, he turned to his brother Hyrum and said: "If my life is of no value to my friends it is of none to myself," (D.H.C. 6:549) and so they returned to Nauvoo. It was his deep love for the Saints that impelled him to return and voluntarily to give his life as a sacrifice for them. The following day while on their way from Nauvoo to Carthage, Joseph made this memorable statement:

I am going like a lamb to the slaughter, but I am as calm as a summer's morning. I have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward all men. If they take my life I shall die an innocent man, and my blood shall cry from the ground for vengeance, and it shall be said of me, "He was murdered in cold blood" (Ibid., 555.)

TESTIMONY SEALED WITH BLOOD

Three days later the assassins' bullets found lodgment in the body of the Prophet of God. As he fell from the windows of Carthage jail, he died with the words on his lips, "O Lord, my God!"

He began his career as a prophet with the glorious vision of the Father and the Son and ended his earthly career with the name of Deity on his lips. As did the Savior of the world, he sealed his testimony with his blood. Regarding Joseph's death, God revealed to Brigham Young the following:

Many have marveled because of his death; but it was needful that he should seal his testimony with his blood, that he might be honored and the wicked might be condemned. (D. & C. 136:39.)

And like all of the great and holy prophets of old, the Prophet Joseph, being dead, yet lives on forever. Today a million people sing:

Hail to the Prophet, ascended to heaven!
Traitors and tyrants now fight him in vain;
Mingling with Gods, he can plan for his brethren;
Death cannot conquer the hero again.

From the bottom of my heart I want to bear my testimony that I know that Joseph Smith was one of the greatest prophets that ever lived upon this earth. May the Spirit of God be with you and me that we might live according to the teachings that he gave us, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President George Albert Smith:

President Milton R. Hunter of the First Council of Seventy has just addressed us. It may be interesting to some of you, because of the fact that he has spoken of the Prophet, to know that one of the Prophet's descendants, a great granddaughter, is visiting here today. Her home is in the East. We are glad to have her with us.

The next speaker will be Elder Graham H. Doxey, former president of the East Central States Mission.

ELDER GRAHAM H. DOXEY

Former President of the East Central States Mission

My brethren and sisters, I very sincerely hope that you can't hear by heart beat but that you can hear my words, for I do want to affirm to you my testimony of this gospel.

When the Presidency called Sister Doxey and me to the office to be interviewed regarding the mission and we were told that we were called to preside over the East Central States Mission, I didn't know where that was. So it may be interesting to you to know the East Central States Mission includes the very wonderful states of Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia, or it did include those states. I have the unique experience of reporting on the East Central States Mission and yet actually reporting upon two missions, for recently