

I am happy to be home with you again, God bless us, is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**President George Albert Smith:**

You have just listened to President Thomas D. Rees, who has filled two missions in Australia, and he has been telling you about that island continent the size of United States of America, and about your sons and some of your daughters who work there in the interest of the Church.

## ELDER JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

My dear brethren and sisters, I need your assistance and the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord. I would like to read a little from the book of Malachi, whom I may designate as a prophet of the restoration, for he has a great deal to say about the restoration.

In the third chapter we read:

### A PROPHET OF THE RESTORATION

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. (Malachi 3:1.)

Throughout the world the idea prevails that this prediction has reference to the first coming of Christ in the days of his ministry, but this is not the case, it has reference to his second coming, for the predictions which follow were not fulfilled at his first coming, but are to be fulfilled when he comes in power, at and preceding the second coming. We read:

But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap:

And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.

And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts. (*Ibid.*, 3:2-5.)

Now we understand, and the whole world could understand, that the offering of Judah in the days of Christ's ministry, was not pleasant. Levi was not at that time cleansed, but Judah and Levi turned away from the Lord. It is in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times that these things are to be fulfilled.

In the fourth chapter Malachi speaks again of the coming of the Son of God, in these words:

For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. (*Ibid.*, 4:1.)

This will happen when our Savior comes in his glory to take vengeance upon the ungodly and take his place as King of kings and Lord of lords. Then this prophet Malachi goes on to say that before that day can come, which will be terrible, Elijah the prophet was to come, and these are the words as we have them in this King James translation:

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:

And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. (*Ibid.*, 4:5-6.)

#### GREAT AND DREADFUL DAY NEAR

The whole world ought to take notice of this prediction, but the world does not understand it. Surely the signs of the times point to the fact that the great and dreadful day is near, even at our doors. The fig tree, figuratively, is putting forth her leaves. The turmoil, trouble, the war and bloodshed that we have seen, and which we still see, all point to the fact that this day for the coming of the Son of God is near. Therefore, Elijah the prophet is due to appear. I am sure you agree with me that he has already appeared, for we have it so recorded by the testimony of witnesses. It was on the third day of April, 1836, when he came to the Kirtland Temple, to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, and conferred upon them the keys of his priesthood and told them that he came in fulfillment of the prophecy of Malachi, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to their fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse.

Therefore, the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands; and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors. (D. & C. 110:16.)

#### RESTORATION BY ELIJAH

Well, of course, the world does not believe that Elijah came to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery; but they have no record in the world that he has come to anyone else. There has been no appearance and no claim of an appearance, and a restoration of his priesthood to anyone else. May we not, then, with perfect consistency, put forth the claim that he did come on that occasion and that he did restore his keys of authority to these two humble men, which turned the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the chil-

dren to their fathers? No one else has ever disputed this claim by the giving of another claim. And why could he not come to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery as well as to anybody else? I testify to you that he did come, and if the world want to know it also, they can. We have an abundance of evidence that this story is true. If Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery had lied, it would have been impossible for them to have turned the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers. Surely, they would not have any power to do that. It is true that following the declaration by them that Elijah did come, the hearts of the children commenced to turn to their dead fathers. There is strong presumptive evidence that this was because these keys were restored. This is a demonstrative fact, that the hearts of children have turned to their fathers.

#### ACTIVITY IN GENEALOGY

I have a little information here that I think is important, and this coming of Elijah is one of the vital things in the history of this world. It is vital to me and to you and to every other soul upon the face of the earth. Before the days of the coming of Elijah in 1836, there was no endeavor of any import to search the records of the dead. What was done, here and there, was usually where some estate was involved. The people were not turning their hearts to their dead fathers. They were not searching the records. They were not compiling them. There were no organizations or societies on the face of the earth, as far as I can learn, gathering records of the dead, before the year 1836. In 1837, however, one year later, Great Britain passed laws providing for and compelling the preservation of records of the dead. In the year 1844, the New England Historical and Genealogical Society was organized in Boston, and I think this was the first organization of the kind in the world. In 1869, the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society in the city of New York was organized. Then followed rapidly other societies up and down the Atlantic coast of the United States, from Maine to Georgia. Then these organizations began to spread inland, and this spirit took hold of the people in other parts. I have visited some of these societies in various parts of the United States, and they have extended now from the east to the Pacific Ocean. In Great Britain, genealogical societies have been organized in practically every county in that land and in Scotland. These records have been kept and filed also in other countries in Europe, the countries from which the Latter-day Saints have come. The spirit has taken hold of the people, not only in the Church, but also of many who are not of the Church, and they, too, are searching the records, and compiling them, of the dead.

#### PREVALENCE OF GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH

In the year 1902, I had the privilege of going east on a genealogi-

cal mission. My father wanted me to go because there was some confusion in our family line in those early days, which he wanted me to straighten out. I went back to Essex County, Massachusetts. At Topsfield, where our ancestors first settled in the United States, I became acquainted with Mr. George Francis Dow, a very prominent gentleman of Massachusetts. I told him the purpose of my visit to that part of the country. He invited me to his home. I asked him where I could find the best sources for information in my search. He said: "You do not have to go anywhere. I have all that information. I have compiled it." So he put in my hands this record, and I found it already prepared. He was working on many other lines also. While there I met a Mr. Perley, a prominent lawyer of Salem, Massachusetts. He likewise was engaged in genealogical research. I had a long conversation with him. He told me that he had undertaken a great work for the benefit of the descendants of people who settled in Essex County. "It is my ambition," he said, "if I can do it, to search out the records of every individual who came to Essex County before the year 1700. I said to him, "Mr. Perley, you have cut out for yourself a big work, haven't you?" He replied, "Yes, and I am afraid I'll never finish it." Then I said to him, "Why are you doing this work?" He thought a moment and looked rather puzzled and then replied, "I do not know why, but I got started, and I cannot stop." I said, "I can tell you why you are doing this and why you cannot stop, but if I did, you would not believe me and would laugh at me." "Oh," he said, "I don't know. If you can tell me, I am sure I will be interested." Then I told him of the prophecy concerning Elijah and the fulfilment of this promise to the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, April 3, 1836, in the Kirtland Temple, and how this spirit of research had taken hold of many people, and they had turned their hearts to the seeking after the dead in fulfilment of this great promise which was to come before the second coming, so that the earth would not be smitten with a curse. Now the children were turning their hearts toward their fathers, and we were doing the ordinance work for the dead that they might find redemption and have the privilege of coming into the kingdom of God, although dead.

When I got through, he laughed and said, "It is a very pretty story, but I do not believe it." Yet he admitted that there was something compelling him to carry on this research, and he could not stop. I have met a great many others who also started and could not stop, men and women who are not members of the Church. So we find today thousands of men and women searching out the records of the dead. They do not know why, but it is so that we can obtain these compiled records and go into our temples and do the work for our dead.

President Clark told us that the Church is putting forth considerable sums for the purpose of collecting records in Europe that we might search out our ancestors and go into the house of the Lord and do work for them.

Now here is something which I think is interesting. In 1935, Mr. T. B. Thompson published *A Catalogue of British Family Histories*. It included the titles and years of publication of some two thousand seventy-one families and was supposed to be a complete list of all such published records up to that date. Here are his figures from the date of the invention of printing:

- From 1450 to 1600, were published 2 family histories.
- From 1600 to 1700, were published 18 family histories.
- From 1700 to 1800, were published 72 family histories.
- From 1800 to 1836, when Elijah came, were published 100 family histories.
- From 1837 to 1935, were published 1,879 family histories.

### THE KEYS OF SEALING POWER

These were records in Europe, and since the year 1836, there have been published in Great Britain and the United States thousands of records of the dead. I have some other things I would like to present but cannot at this time. Let me call your attention to the fact, however, my good brethren and sisters, that Elijah restored to this Church and, if they would receive it, to the world, the keys of the sealing power; and that sealing power puts the stamp of approval upon every ordinance that is done in this Church and more particularly those that are performed in the temples of the Lord. Through that restoration each of you, my brethren, has the privilege, of going into this house or one of the other temples (I believe most of you have done so) to have your wife sealed to you for time and for all eternity, and your children sealed to you also, or better, have them born under that covenant. What a glorious privilege it is to know that the family organization will remain intact. It is not destroyed. It does not come to an end wherein we have complied with the divine law by virtue of the keys which are held by the President of the Church. We may go into the house of the Lord and do these things and be baptized for our dead, those who have died, the scriptures say, and we have heard it repeated at this conference, who died without the knowledge of the gospel. Our duty is to search out our dead, and I am very grateful that the Church is helping us in these matters by securing the records of the dead that we might have them, and our duty is to perform the necessary ordinances in their behalf in our temples.

### STATEMENT OF PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH

The Prophet Joseph Smith has said:

The Bible says, "I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

Now the word *turn* here should be translated *bind* or seal. But what is the object of this important mission? or how is it to be fulfilled? The

keys are to be delivered, the spirit of Elijah is to come, the Gospel to be established, the Saints of God gathered, Zion built up, and the Saints to come up as saviors on Mount Zion.

But how are they to become saviors on Mount Zion? By building their temples, erecting their baptismal fonts, and going forth and receiving all the ordinances, baptisms, confirmations, washings, anointings, ordinations and sealing powers upon their heads, in behalf of their progenitors who are dead, and redeem them that they may come forth in the first resurrection and be exalted to thrones of glory with them; and herein is the chain that binds the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, which fulfills the mission of Elijah. . . .

The Saints have not too much time to save and redeem their dead, and gather together their living relatives, that they may be saved also, before the earth will be smitten, and the consumption decreed falls upon the world.

I would advise all the Saints to go with their might and gather together all their living relatives to this place, that they may be sealed and saved, that they may be prepared against the day that the destroying angel goes forth: and if the whole Church should go to with all their might to save their dead, seal their posterity, and gather their living friends, and spend none of their time in behalf of the world, they would hardly get through before night would come, when no man can work; . . .

The question is frequently asked: "Can we not be saved without going through with all these ordinances, etc.?" I would answer, No, not the fullness of salvation. Jesus said, "There are many mansions in my Father's house, and I will go and prepare a place for you." *House* here named should have been translated kingdom; and any person who is exalted to the highest mansion has to abide a celestial law, and the whole law, too. (D.H.C. 6:183-184.)

I call your attention to these things. The Lord bless you, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### President George Albert Smith:

The Ricks College Choir will now sing "O Savior of the World," by Goss.

The closing prayer will be offered by President Lewis R. Critchfield of the Cassia Stake, Oakley, Idaho, after which this conference will stand adjourned until two o'clock this afternoon.

The meeting this afternoon will be broadcast as already indicated this morning.

This afternoon the audience should be in their seats not later than ten minutes before the hour of beginning the meeting.

The choir singing for this session of the conference has been by the Ricks College Choir with Elder John M. Anderson conducting and Elder Alexander Schreiner at the organ. They have certainly done a fine job, and we are glad they come from a country where it snows so they won't be discouraged with us.

The Ricks College Choir sang: "O Savior of the World," after which the benediction was pronounced by President Lewis R. Critchfield, of the Cassia Stake.

Conference adjourned until 2 o'clock p.m.