

Saturday, October 1

Second Day

Even the most pragmatic materialist in the face of present-day scientific knowledge, is led to the inevitable conclusion that the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmaments showeth his handiwork.

As the children of Israel foreswore the worship of the golden calf and returned to the faith of Jehovah, so have we foresworn the crass mechanistic materialism and returned to that faith in God, of which the Psalmist of old sang: "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." (Psalm 24:1.)

To paraphrase the words of Paul: Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that there should be a God? Why should it be a thing incredible with you, that he should speak to men and show himself to them? Why should it be a thing incredible with you, that he should record the history of his people on plates of gold? Why should it be a thing incredible with you that a little boy of fourteen years should go into a grove of trees near his home, pray to God in all humility and receive an answer?

I testify to you, and I testify to all men, that God has made known to me that he lives, and I know it as well as I know that I live. He has given me testimony that Jesus of Nazareth was

his literal Son in the flesh, and that he is our Savior, and our Redeemer.

And he has given to me testimony that Joseph Smith truly knelt in prayer and in answer received the glorious visitation in which he talked face to face with the Father and the Son.

And he has given me personal testimony that the Book of Mormon is true. I know it as well as the three witnesses or the eight witnesses who held the plates in their hands. I know it. God has made it known to me, and I give you my testimony. It is not incredible.

And I, together with the young people of the Church, "am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."


May we be faithful and true to our trust, true to the restored gospel, and not be incredulous, is my humble prayer, in Jesus' name. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom you have just listened is Elder Mark E. Petersen of the Council of the Twelve. Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church, will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Milton R. Hunter.

ELDER ELDRED G. SMITH

Patriarch to the Church

Y BROTHERS AND SISTERS: It is a thrilling experience to be in these conferences. Nevertheless, I humbly seek an interest in your faith and prayers in my behalf.

I have heard President Clark a number of times refer to his theme song, as he calls it, that of unity, and with his permission I would like to join his chorus. We should all join his chorus, not alone in words, but in action. Paul taught the same doctrine when he wrote to the Ephesians:

I therefore . . . beseech you that ye walk worthily of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all, (Eph. 4:1-6.)

When I talk about unity in the gospel, I am often reminded of an experience that I had while on a mission in Germany. When this German Choir sang for us yesterday in the conference meetings, I was reminded again of those experiences, especially when I was assigned to work in Celle in the Hanover District in Germany. Once a month we went to the little town of Uelzen, which was a self-sustaining branch. We went there to get their reports and to help them as we could. Since my companion

was assigned to the branch at the same time I was, this first visit to Uelzen was a new experience for both of us.

We took our seats in the first meeting we attended in the front of the hall. The branch president announced that the meeting would be started by the choir singing such and such a song. I looked about and found no choir up in front, but before I could ask any questions or discover an answer to the problem in my mind as to where the choir was coming from, my companion and I found ourselves the only ones sitting in the audience. The entire congregation, except for my companion and me, had gone up to the front and sang as a choir. It is no wonder we have Saints who can come here and produce a chorus such as we had yesterday.

I found from the reports that they not only all sang together, but they also worked together. I found that there was 100 percent membership of the branch paying 100 percent tithing, and that was not just the month that I went there on that one visit, but that was the report I got all the time I was there. Attendance in their meetings was the same. They worked together in everything they did. I discovered, also, that there were two women in the branch at that time whose husbands had gone to America, and that the branch had agreed together, before these two men left, that they would all work together; they would keep the commandments of the Lord to the best of their ability; they would do all that was required of them without excuse; nothing would stop them from fulfilling the responsibilities given to them. Those who remained in the branch would see to it that the wives of these two men were taken care of, that they would not be in need. |

The two men who left for America agreed that they would do likewise in living the commandments of the Lord and that they would find jobs and work hard and save their money and send for their wives as soon as possible. It was not long until I was transferred from that section of Germany, and then soon after, I was released to come home.

Some twenty years later, after I became Patriarch to the Church, I had an appointment to give a blessing to a

young girl. When she arrived, her mother was with her. I found that the mother was one of those two sisters whose husbands had left Uelzen when I was over there. I had a long talk with this sister and her daughter. The daughter, of course, had grown up from a small child, and her mother told me this story: that one by one, or two at a time, as occasion came, different members of the branch would have the opportunity of leaving and coming to America, until finally, before World War II broke out, there was not one member of the Church left in that branch in Uelzen. They had all come to America safely before the war broke out.

Then she told me also that in the end of the war, when the American soldiers invaded that section of Germany, for some reason unknown to her, the German soldiers set up a resistance in Uelzen which resulted in a four-day battle. The bombings and general destruction were such that there was not a house left in the section where most of the Saints had lived, yet there was not a member of the Church left in Uelzen—a result and reward of unity, working together to keep the commandments of the Lord.

I could tell another story of another branch in Germany where they worked more as individuals. None of them left Germany, and as a result of the war the entire city was destroyed. I received a letter from one of the members there who told me that even some of the members lost their lives, their friends, and some of the members of their families lost their lives in that war and the destruction in that city. They were good Saints, but they had not learned the lesson of working together as the Saints in Uelzen had learned.

This is a challenge to us, brothers and sisters, that we might do as they did in Uelzen—not just to move to another section, but that we might live the commandments of the Lord as they did. They did it for a special purpose, and the Lord blessed them in their efforts. We have a responsibility today to unite together in keeping the commandments of the Lord. We need to be united in keeping his commandments

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more now than ever before because the eyes of the world are upon us now more than ever before.

With this tour of the Tabernacle Choir in Europe, some of us might think, "Well, that was just the Tabernacle Choir. That was something they did. I do not have to take part in that." There is not one of us who is a member of the Church who does not take part in it, and we cannot afford to let the choir down. We have to live the commandments of the Lord to bolster up what they have done in Europe, for now truly, as we sang yesterday in our conference meeting:

"High on the mountaintop
A banner is unfurled;

Ye nations now look up;
It waves to all the world."

To keep that banner flying, we must stand unitedly valiant in the faith, and I pray that the Lord will bless us that we might be united; that we will be unitedly valiant in keeping the commandments of the Lord, and in sustaining our testimonies of this gospel, for this is the strength and the power of the gospel, and this I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch of the Church, has just spoken to us. Elder Milton R. Hunter of the First Council of Seventy will be our next speaker.

ELDER MILTON R. HUNTER

Of the First Council of the Seventy



Y DEAR brethren and sisters: I humbly pray that I shall be guided by the Spirit of the Lord in the brief remarks that I make this afternoon.

I hold here in my hand what I consider to be three of the most valuable treasures in the world. From a monetary standpoint, they are beyond price. If all of the people in the world would make complete application of what these three treasures contain, utilizing them to the fullest, I believe their contents would do more good for the human family than do all the armies in the world, all the kings that sit on thrones, all the governments that rule, or any other things that we might attain in this world. I am holding in my hand the Latter-day Saints' triple combination of holy scriptures—the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. They contain the word of God as revealed in the latter days from heaven through the Prophet Joseph Smith, for the salvation and exaltation of all the members of the human family who will receive their divine teachings and render obedience.

Members of the Church of Jesus Christ accept one more book as scripture—the Holy Bible—and hence they

regard it as authoritative and binding on their lives. I shall not speak of that scripture today but confine my remarks to the scriptures given to the world by the power of the Lord through his Prophet Joseph Smith.

The first of these three scriptures of the Latter-day Saints, as it appears in the triple combination, is the Book of Mormon. This volume contains the gospel of Jesus Christ as the ancient Americans received and understood it.

The most vital purpose that the writers had in mind in preparing the Book of Mormon was that it should serve as a new witness for Christ, especially a new witness for Christ to the Jews and gentiles in the latter days.¹ It was written to verify the messiahship of the Only Begotten as proclaimed in the Old and New Testaments.

Towards the close of his life, Nephi, the first writer on the Nephite records, handed the plates to his brother Jacob and instructed Jacob to record carefully

... preaching which was sacred, or revelation which was great, or prophesying, . . . and touch upon them as much as it were possible, for Christ's sake, . . .²

¹2 Nephi 26:12; Mormon 5:9-14.

²Jacob 1:4.