

Sunday, October 12

Third Day

Bible without knowing that there is a companion volume of scripture that must be united with it, which is to become one in the hands of God—and when you think of a record of over 500 pages of history and words of prophets who have lived upon this land of America, and when you read the promises to Joseph of a new land in the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills, and his blessings which were to be greater than the blessings of his progenitors, you cannot help but wonder why the Lord would have made such promises unto that chosen of the House of Israel, without providing for the recording of the fulfilment of those promises. So we have the record of the fulfilment of all these promises.

I leave you one more passage of scripture before I close, and that is in the third chapter of Malachi, where the Lord said he would send his messenger to prepare the way for his coming, that he would come swiftly to his temple, and who would abide the day of his coming, because he would be as refiner's fire and fullers' soap.

I call attention to the fact that he did not come to his temple in the Meridian of Time, and I ask you today, where is a people in all the world that are building temples to the Most High? You know the record of this Church, the number of temples that have been dedicated in recent years. This great temple that stands upon this block, and yet the churches know not what temples are for, nor do they have a knowledge of the ordinances that are to be performed therein. We would not know either, except that we live in the day that Peter spoke of, to prepare the way of the Lord when there was to be a restitution of all things spoken by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began, truly the day of fulfilment.

In closing I leave you a testimony of a man who sat in my office recently, who spent thirty years as a minister of the gospel. Then he met the Mormon elders. He said, "I had always thought I had as much authority as any man to perform the ordinances of the gospel, until I met the Mormon elders and then I knew that I must accept baptism at their hands." And then he added: "Brother Richards, when I think of how little I had to offer my people as a minister of the gospel compared to what I now have in the fulness of the gospel as it has been restored, I want to go back and tell all my friends what I have found. Now, they will not listen to me. I am an apostate from their church."

But such are the testimonies of people, who, as Jesus said "hunger and thirst after righteousness." He also said:

"My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (John 7:16-17.)

I bear you witness, and make the promise to all who are not members of this Church that if they will investigate our message and ask God, the Eternal Father, that they can know beyond a shadow of a doubt that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and that the truth has been restored in its fulness to the earth to prepare the way of the coming of the Lord.

This testimony I give to you in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder LeGrand Richards, a member of the Council of the Twelve, has just spoken to us. Brother Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy will now address us.

ELDER BRUCE R. McCONKIE

Of the First Council of the Seventy

Brother LeGrand Richards, one of the forceful and eloquent preachers of righteousness in this latter-day kingdom, has just spoken to us in a powerful

manner, setting forth the restoration of the everlasting gospel in our day. Now, if I may be guided by the same Spirit, and be under the same power, I have it

in my heart to make a brief expression relative to the stability, growth, and eventual destiny of the great latter-day kingdom that has been established as part of the restitution of all things.

When I speak of the kingdom, I mean the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which, in the most complete, real, literal, and accurate sense, is the kingdom of God on earth. For a text I will read some words originally written by the great prophet Isaiah, words which later were quoted by the resurrected Christ as he ministered among the Nephites. When Jesus quoted these words, he put them in their perspective, in their context. He had just announced that the restitution of all things was to take place; that the gospel was to come again in its fulness; that Israel was to be gathered; and that the kingdom of God on earth was to be established in the last days. Then he quoted these words from Isaiah, words which are addressed to the Church and which specifically describe the stability, growth, and eventual destiny of the Church.

Thus saith the Lord unto the Church of Jesus Christ:

"Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes;

"For thou [meaning the Church] shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

"Fear not, for thou [meaning the Church] shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame; . . ." (3 Nephi 22:2-4.)

"For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee [meaning, of course, the Church], neither shall the covenant of my people be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." (*Ibid.*, vs. 10.)

The everlasting covenant is the gospel. This promise is, then, an assurance that the gospel of Jesus Christ will remain in and be administered by the Church and kingdom as set up and established in this day.

"And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

"In righteousness shalt thou be established; [and then this next, pertaining to a yet future day] thou shalt be far from oppression for thou shalt not fear, and from terror for it shall not come near thee.

"Behold, [this pertaining to our day] they [meaning the wicked] shall surely gather together against thee, not by me; [certainly there will be trials, troubles, persecutions, and the like, but having so recognized, then comes this glorious promise and assurance]: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. . ." (*Ibid.*, vs. 13-15.)

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and thy righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." (*Ibid.*, vs. 17.)

Now, I think we all understand that this great latter-day kingdom has been set up for the last time, never again to be destroyed, and that never again will the necessity arise for another and future restoration. The ordinances and principles of salvation, the requirements which men must abide in order to gain a celestial inheritance, are ever, eternally, and always the same. God is no respecter of persons, and every person from Adam to the last man must abide the same identical law in order to qualify for a celestial inheritance.

But there is one great thing about this dispensation which differs from all the dispensations of the past. It is that this time, with the opening of the heavens and the revealing of the gospel in our day, there came the positive, unqualified assurance that the gospel was to remain on earth; that the kingdom was to be secure; that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was to remain among men to prepare a people for the second coming of the Son of man.

We are familiar with the visions that Enoch received. You will recall that he saw our day. He saw the restoration of the gospel, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, truth springing out of the earth and righteousness looking down from heaven. He saw the hosts of scattered Israel gathered to a holy city. He saw the tribu-

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lations, the wars, the desolation, the troubles that would prevail in this day, and then the voice of God spoke to him and said: ". . . great tribulations shall be among the children of men, but my people will I preserve." (Moses 7:61.) That is an immutable, positive assurance.

Some things we get, provided we abide the law which entitles us to receive them. Some promises come from the Lord without conditions attached to them. We die whether we like it or not. That is immutably decreed. We will be resurrected and have immortality. There is no question of that; we cannot avoid it. In that same category is the promise that the Lord will preserve his people in this day.

We are familiar with the great vision and revelation that Daniel had, in which he saw the successive kingdoms of the world set up by the power of men's hands, and then finally saw this kingdom, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, set up by revelation, without the hand of man. And then he said that this kingdom would never be given to another people; that it would grow and increase and break in pieces all kingdoms and fill the whole earth.

Well, after the Lord had set up this Church and restored the gospel, he said by his own mouth to the Prophet Joseph Smith: "The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth." (D & C 65:2.) That is an immutable, irrevocable promise. That promise we have.

May I quote one sentence which the Prophet Joseph Smith, writing by revelation and inspiration, included in that famous document, "The Wentworth Letter." He said: ". . . No unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the pur-

poses of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done." (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 540.)

You and I are in this kingdom at its beginning. The groundwork is being laid. Out of small beginnings come great things. We have had tremendous progression and growth; we are established and recognized in the world already; but there will be an eventual day when the whole earth will be converted to the truth, when every living soul will come into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

We are in the kingdom of God now which is exclusively an ecclesiastical kingdom. This kingdom is going to grow and increase, multiply and abound, and nothing can stop it, until the day comes that it will be both an ecclesiastical kingdom and a political kingdom, and it will govern in all things,—spiritual, civil, temporal, and political. The kingdoms of this world are going to become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ.

President John Taylor said this: "It has been asked . . . whether this kingdom will fail. I tell you in the name of Israel's God it will not fail. I tell you in the name of Israel's God it will roll forth, and that the things spoken of by the holy prophets in relation to it will receive their fulfilment. But in connection with this I will tell you another thing: A great many of the Latter-day Saints will fail, a great many of them are not now and never have been living up to their privileges, and magnifying their callings and their priesthood, and God will have a reckoning with such people, unless they speedily repent." (*Gospel Kingdom*, p. 137.) He said many similar things.

One more quotation, this one from President Wilford Woodruff:

"When the Lord gave the keys of the kingdom of God, the keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood, of the apostleship, and sealed them upon the head of Joseph Smith, he sealed them upon his head to stay here upon the earth until the coming of the Son of man. Well might Brigham Young say, 'The keys of the kingdom of God are here.' They were with him to the day of his death. They then rested upon the head of an-

other man—President John Taylor. He held those keys to the hour of his death. They then fell by turn, or in the providence of God, upon Wilford Woodruff.

"I say to the Latter-day Saints, the keys of the kingdom of God are here, and they are going to stay here, too, until the coming of the Son of Man. Let all Israel understand that. They may not rest upon my head but a short time, but they will then rest on the head of another apostle, and another after him, and so continue until the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the clouds of heaven to 'reward every man according to the deeds done in the body.'

"I say to all Israel at this day, I say to the whole world, that the God of Israel, who organized this Church and kingdom, never ordained any President or Presidency to lead it astray. Hear it, ye Israel, no man who has ever breathed the breath of life can hold these keys of the kingdom of God and lead the people astray." (*Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, pp. 73-74.)

Now these things are amply attested to. The revelations and inspired utterances of living oracles give us the full account. We should know these things from the records which are before us. Then, also, we should go to the Lord, in faith and in mighty prayer, and get in our hearts the revealed assurance that this work is true. Brother Richards quoted: ". . . my doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (John 7:16-17.) Every living soul in this world who will abide the law that entitles him to know by personal revelation from the Holy Ghost of the divinity of this work, of the stability and destiny of this kingdom, can get that knowledge, and I for one have that knowledge and so certify to you in sincerity and solemnity, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy, has just concluded speaking.

The Choir and congregation will now sing, "How Firm a Foundation," conducted by Elder Jay E. Welch. After the singing, Bishop Carl W. Buehner will address us.

The Choir and congregation joined in singing the hymn, "How Firm A Foundation," Elder Jay E. Welch conducting.

President David O. McKay:

Bishop Carl W. Buehner of the Presiding Bishopric will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Henry D. Taylor, Assistant to the Twelve.

BISHOP CARL W. BUEHNER

Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

My dear brethren and sisters, after the concluding session of conference yesterday afternoon, I was congratulated six times on the fine talk I had given at that session of conference, and wanting to be an honest man, I should like now to pass on those compliments to those who gave my talk yesterday afternoon.

It has been most inspiring to be in attendance at this conference. I have had a long time to think. Some observations that have gone through my mind I felt might be interesting to you, even though most of these things have al-

ready been said in a better way than I will ever be able to say them.

The first observation I should like to make is the terrific impact that a general conference of the Church has upon its membership and upon the many thousands of people who are friendly toward the Church. We will leave this great conference, I am sure, more enthusiastic and more desirous of furthering the purposes of our Heavenly Father. We will be better men and women because of our attendance here and of hearing the word of the Lord go forth