

Monday, April 6

By him and through him and his gospel, God the Father has made it possible for you and me to overcome the world.

Yes, my friends, Jesus is the Christ. He lives. He did break the bonds of death. He is more than "a great moral teacher." He is our Savior and Redeemer, the very Son of God. And he will come again. ". . . this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11.)

His Church Restored

Yes, this same Jesus has already come to earth in our day. The Resurrected Christ—glorified, exalted, the God of this world under the Father—appeared to the boy Joseph Smith in 1820. This same Jesus who was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of Moses, the Creator of this earth, has come in our day. He was introduced by the Father to Joseph Smith in these words:

"This Is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!"
(Joseph Smith 2:17.)

The appearance of God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ to the boy Prophet is the greatest event that has occurred in this world since the resurrection of the Master. As the restored Church of Jesus Christ we humbly and

gratefully bear this witness to all men. This message is a world message. It is the truth. More than two million members of the Church throughout the world bear this solemn testimony.

Today thousands of faithful missionaries at home and abroad freely carry this all-important message to the world. Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of mankind, the Redeemer of the world, the very Son of God. He is the God of this world, our advocate with the Father.

Today 16,000 missionary-messengers of truth, and the more than two million members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—the Mormon Church—bear witness that God has again spoken from the heavens, that Jesus Christ has appeared again unto man, that the resurrection is a reality.

Today I testify to the truth of the message which they bear and add my solemn witness, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Hugh B. Brown:

The moving testimony to which we have just listened was given by Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve and President of the European Mission.

Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve will now speak to us. He will be followed by Richard L. Evans of the same Council.

ELDER MARION G. ROMNEY

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I would like to say a few things this afternoon about revelation, which underlies all that God has done in the earth with his children. I invite you to join your prayers with mine that while I speak, you and I may both enjoy the spirit of inspiration. That we do so is imperative, because to talk about revelation without the spirit of inspiration would be futile.

God Communicates with Men

First, as to the Principle:

Prayer is the means by which men

communicate with God. Revelation is the means by which God communicates with men. Revelation is indispensable to an understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The very nature of the gospel is such that without the active and constant operation of the principle of revelation, it could not be understood nor could it be had.

The gospel deals with total truth—". . . knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come." (D&C 93:24.) Such truth is not to be had through man's ordinary learning processes. His sensory powers

are calculated and adapted to deal only with the things of this earth. Without revelation, man's intellect is wholly inadequate for the discovery of the ultimate truth with which the gospel deals.

Paul spoke of this to the Corinthians when he said:

"... my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

"... your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

"For what man [continues Paul] knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." (1 Cor. 2:4-5, 11.)

Opens the Mind and the Spirit

The principle of revelation is the key which opens the mind and spirit of man to an understanding of the gospel. There is no other key to such knowledge. Thinkers have philosophized; poets have dreamed; and scientists have experimented; but only God speaks with a sure knowledge of all truth.

Some years ago I listened to a lecturer who argued long and deviously and came to the conclusion that there was no such thing as religious knowledge. Within his premises, he was right. He had no religious knowledge, and he could not obtain any because he had ruled out revelation.

It is my witness to you, however, that by the power of God, truth concerning the eternal verities with which the gospel deals has been in the past, is now being, and will in the future continue to be communicated to men from heaven by revelation. "Revelation" is the "governing law of conduct"—the age-old established rule of action or principle by which God communes with men.

Man Must be Born Again

Now a word as to the Nature of Revelation:

Since revelation is by nature spiritual, man, to receive it, must be spiritually born again. You will recall how ear-

nestly Jesus sought to put this point over to Nicodemus, repeatedly telling him that except a man be born again, he could neither see nor enter the kingdom of God.

Man is a dual being. He is composed of a spirit and a body. His body came into being with his entrance into this world of mortality. His spirit as an individual person was begotten unto God in the spirit world. Through a long period of growth and development, each person's spirit came to know God and spiritual things, including the gospel, obedience to which is a prerequisite to attaining eternal life. Men, however, enter mortality spiritually blind. Never in this life do they recover memory of pre-mortal spiritual things. What they here learn of them must be revealed anew.

"To see if they will do . . ."

One of God's purposes in granting men mortal life is that they might be tested "... to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them; . . . they who keep their second estate [meaning this mortal estate] shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever." (Abraham 3:25-26.)

Since attaining this glory is conditioned upon obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel, and since men come into life ignorant of these principles and ordinances, justice demands that they be given opportunity to learn about them. God, being not only just but merciful, provided revelation as the means by which man might be so advised.

Moral Agency

The Lord also saw to it that men were so constituted that by the proper exercise of their moral agency with which he also endowed them, it would be natural for them to respond to revelation. Otherwise, it would not be just to hold them accountable for their failure to respond thereto.

I know the scriptures say that "the natural man is an enemy to God, . . ." (Mosiah 3:19.) And so he is when he rejects the promptings of the Spirit and follows the lusts of the flesh. But he

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is not an enemy to God when he follows the promptings of the Spirit.

I firmly believe that notwithstanding the fact that men, as an incident to mortality, are cast out from the presence of God and deprived of past memories, there still persists in the spirit of every human soul a residuum from his pre-existent spiritual life which instinctively responds to the voice of the Spirit of Christ until and unless inhibited by the free agency of the individual. If I had time, I could cite many authorities on this point.

Manifestations of Revelation

Now, as to the Manifestations of Revelation:

Revelation comes to men in an unlimited number of ways. Three separate mediums are mentioned in the first recorded account of revelation—the spoken word, the visitation of angels, and the power of the Holy Ghost. As a consequence of his transgression Adam was cast out from God's presence. But he was not forsaken. As he and Eve toiled and prayed, ". . . they heard the voice of the Lord from the way toward the Garden of Eden, . . ." (Moses 5:4.) "And after many days an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, . . ." (*Ibid.*, 5:6.)

The Holy Ghost

"And in that day the Holy Ghost fell upon Adam, which beareth record of the Father and the Son, . . ." (*Ibid.*, 5:9.)

The spoken word has been heard on many occasions. Moses heard it from the burning bush; Samuel in the temple. The Nephites heard the voice of the unseen Jesus.

Visitations of Angels

As to the visitation of angels, we have many examples. One which moves me as much as any is the record in the third chapter of Ether of the appearance of Jesus in his spirit body to the brother of Jared.

You will remember how, as Alma was traveling from Ammonihah to Aaron, an angel appeared to him and said, referring to the time of Alma's conversion, "I am the same angel that

appeared to you before." (See Alma 8:15.)

We read in the 110th section of the Doctrine and Covenants about the visitation to the Prophet and Oliver of Moses, Elias, and Elijah.

The Unspoken Word

Another manifestation of revelation is the unspoken word, a good illustration of which is given us by Enos. He says: ". . . while I was thus struggling in the spirit, behold, the voice of the Lord came into my mind again, saying: . . ." (Enos 10.) Then he tells us what the voice of the Lord put in his mind. This is a very common means of revelation. It comes into one's mind in words and sentences. With this medium of revelation I am personally well acquainted.

Impelling Impulse

Another medium is an impelling impulse of the nature received by the Prophet when he read James 1:5. "Never [said he] did any passage of scripture come with more power to the heart of man than this did at this time to mine. It seemed to enter with great force into every feeling of my heart." (Joseph Smith 2:12.)

Dreams

Another means is dreams—Jacob's ladder, for example, Joseph's dream of the sheaves, Pharaoh's dream of the lean and fat years. There were Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Daniel's dream, Lehi's dream. Joseph, the husband of Mary, was warned in a dream to take Mary and Jesus into Egypt.

Visions

Another medium of revelation is visions. You know about Nephi's vision, the Prophet's great vision recorded in the 76th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, and President Joseph F. Smith's vision of work for the dead in the spirit world.

Flashes of Ideas

Flashes of ideas that come into one's mind represent another type or manifestation of revelation. Listen to this statement of the Prophet Joseph:

"A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the spirit of revelation; for instance, when you feel pure intelligence flowing into you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas, so that by noticing it, you may find it fulfilled the same day or soon; (i.e.) those things that were presented unto your minds by the Spirit of God, will come to pass; and thus by learning the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation, until you become perfect in Christ Jesus." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 151.)

"Study it out"

One of the most familiar types of revelation is the one which the Lord took so much pains to teach to Oliver Cowdery. The lesson begins in the 6th and 8th sections of the Doctrine and Covenants and concludes it in the 9th section. Oliver wanted to translate, and the Lord finally gave his consent. But Oliver didn't translate because he didn't work hard enough. When he complained about it, the Lord said:

"Do not murmur, my son, for it is wisdom in me that I have dealt with you after this manner.

"Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me.

"Ask if it be right . . ."

"But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right.

"But if it be not right you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought. . . ." (D&C 9:6-9.)

This is the kind of revelation we can all live by. One need not make serious mistakes in life. Such can be avoided by following this formula. It will guide us in all our activities if we will become sensitive to it.

The foregoing are but some of the means of revelation.

In connection with this principle of

revelation, the Prophet Joseph Smith further said:

"We consider that God has created man with a mind capable of instruction, and a faculty which may be enlarged in proportion to the heed and diligence given to the light communicated from heaven to the intellect; . . . the nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer are his views, and the greater his enjoyments, till he has overcome the evils of his life and lost every desire for sin; and like the ancients, arrives at that point of faith where he is wrapped in the power and glory of his Maker, and is caught up to dwell with Him." (DHC 2:8.)

The Great Exemplar

In qualifying to receive revelation, as in all righteousness, Jesus is our great exemplar. He so qualified himself that he received through revelation "a fulness of the glory of the Father."

With respect to this point, John the Beloved bore this witness:

". . . I beheld his glory, as the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, . . .

"And I, John, saw that he received not of the fulness at the first, . . .

". . . but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness; . . .

"And I, John, bear record that he received a fulness of the glory of the Father." (D&C 93:11-13, 16.)

Keep Commandments

To me, among the most inspiring passages of all scripture is the comment of Jesus on this testimony of John's, which, as you will remember, was dictated to the Prophet by the Savior. After quoting John's testimony, Jesus said to the Prophet Joseph Smith:

"I give unto you these sayings that you may understand and know how to worship, and know what you worship, that you may come unto the Father in my name, and in due time receive of his fulness.

"For if you keep my commandments you shall receive of his fulness, and be glorified in me as I am in the Father; therefore, I say unto you, you shall receive grace for grace." (*Ibid.*, 93:19-20.)

Now this is Christ's promise to the Prophet, and it is his promise to us.

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“. . . no man receiveth a fulness unless he keepeth his commandments.

“He that keepeth his commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things.” (*Ibid.*, 93:27-28.)

Receive Light and Truth

We receive a little revelation; we obey it; we receive a little more, obey it, and repeat the cycle over and over again.

This is the pattern by which the promise of the first paragraph of this great revelation may be obtained. As you now listen to this promise, let your souls be filled with hope.

“Verily, thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am.” (*Ibid.*, 93:1.)

In these remarks I have, as you of course have noted, omitted any reference to revelation in connection with the great advances of science in our age. This I have done deliberately. I know that all men live and learn by the light of the Spirit of Christ; I know that all progress in science and other fields of secular learning is made possible by the light of Christ. I do not, however, think that our distinctive message about

revelation lies in such fields of learning but rather in the field of religion.

“God Has Opened the Heavens”

Our message is that we are living in the great and last dispensation of the gospel of Jesus Christ; that God has opened the heavens anew; that by direct revelation through the means we have been considering, he has revealed himself, restored his gospel, set up his Church with power and authority to preach the gospel and administer the saving ordinances thereof; and that he is now, today, continuing to direct by revelation his great program for the blessing and the salvation of the human race.

Our great mission is to declare this message with such simple clarity and inspired conviction that men of all lands will hearken, investigate, and prayerfully seek until, through personal revelation to themselves, they obtain a saving witness for themselves. That we may successfully discharge this mission, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Hugh B. Brown:

He to whom you have just listened is Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve. Elder Richard L. Evans of the same Council will now speak to us.

ELDER RICHARD L. EVANS

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

President McKay and my beloved brethren and sisters:

From the time of President McKay's opening address until this moment, we have been strengthened and refreshed in spirit. We have heard our President's appeal against pernicious, enslaving habits and for preserving the integrity of the home and maintaining moral standards. Last night late, I reread the President's opening address, which I feel was one of his finest. These sentences I have taken from his text:

“. . . that our homes are kept unpoluted and unbroken by infidelity; that

children therein will be trained to keep the commandments of the Lord, to be honest, true, chaste, benevolent, and virtuous, and to do good to all men.”

“. . . the Word of Wisdom . . . goes deeper than the ill effects upon the body and strikes at the very root of character. . . .”

“No other success can compensate for failure in the home.”

“The most vicious enemy to home life is immorality.

“The word of the Lord to his Church is: ‘Keep yourself unspotted from the sins of the world!’”

We have heard Brother Lee's appeal