

PRIMARY ASSOCIATION

LaVern Watts Parmley, President
 Leone Watson Doxey, First Counselor
 Lucile Cardon Reading, Second Counselor
 with all members of the Board as at present constituted.

TABERNACLE CHOIR

Isaac M. Stewart, President

Richard P. Condie, Conductor
 Jay E. Welch, Assistant Conductor
 W. Jack Thomas, Tour Manager

ORGANISTS

Alexander Schreiner, Chief Organist
 Robert N. Cundick
 Roy M. Darley
 Frank W. Asper, Organist Emeritus

President N. Eldon Tanner:

President Hugh B. Brown of the First Presidency has just presented the General Authorities, general officers, and general auxiliary officers of the Church for your sustaining vote.

We wish to thank you, brethren and sisters, for this unanimous sustaining

vote. We are grateful for your faith and your loyalty to the great cause in which we are engaged.

Elder Spencer W. Kimball of the Council of the Twelve will be our first speaker this afternoon, and he will be followed by Elder S. Dilworth Young of the First Council of Seventy.

Elder Spencer W. Kimball

Of the Council of the Twelve

President McKay, my brethren; brothers and sisters and friends:

I pray that my brief remarks this day may touch believing hearts.

The Holy Bible

My reference Bible is described as "The Holy Bible . . . translated out of the original tongues: and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, by his Majesty's special command"—King James Version.

This is a transcendently wonderful volume, a combination of about 66 books, 1,189 chapters, with 1,545 pages.

We of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints "believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly. . . ." (Article of Faith 8.)

When I was about 14 years of age, I read this marvelous volume from Genesis to Revelation.

I believe the Bible. I love the Bible. It stimulates me. It lifts me. It inspires me. And, I never tire reading its pages.

There is one phrase that brings me up short as I finish the Book of Malachi. In bold type are these words, "THE END OF THE PROPHETS." Regardless of what the compilers meant, I do not believe that Malachi was "the end of the prophets." As I finished the New Testament, I found once more in bold letters the words, "THE END." I do not believe that even the Book of Revelation was the end.

Then I pondered. If it was meant that there were no more prophets or no more revelations, then that implication would be terrifying.

Friday, September 30

First Day

Another of the Articles of Faith says, "We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God." (Article of Faith 9.)

In the Old Testament, from Adam until Malachi, the prophets were testifying of the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the God of the Old Testament, and it was he who conversed with Abraham and Moses. It was he who inspired Isaiah and Jeremiah; it was he who foretold through those chosen men the happenings of the future even to the latest day and hour.

And then the New Testament is what it implies—a new, additional witness and testimony of Jesus Christ and the divinity of his work and of the necessity of living the gospel that he outlined and proclaimed.

I like the words of William Cowper:

"God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform. . . .

"Deep in unfathomable minds of never failing skill,

He treasures up his bright designs and works his sovereign will.

"Blind unbelief is sure to err, and scan his work in vain

God is his own interpreter, and he will make it plain."

I believe with Peter: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Pet. 1:21.)

How this confused world needs revelation from God!

Transportation and communication shorten time and distance, yet the world goes on. With war and pestilence and famine, with increased numbers, poverty, desolation, and with more graft, dishonesty, and immorality, certainly the people of this world need revelation from God as never before. How absurd to think that the Lord would give to a small handful of people in the Palestine world his precious direction through revelation and that now, in our extremity, he would close the heavens as he told

the children of Israel he would if they would not live his commandments. The Lord said:

"And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass. . . ." (Lev. 26:19.)

And the prophet Moroni quotes his father Mormon as asking:

". . . has the day of miracles ceased?

"Or have angels ceased to appear unto the children of men? Or has he withheld the power of the Holy Ghost from them? Or will he, so long as time shall last, or the earth shall stand, or there shall be one man upon the face thereof to be saved?

". . . Nay, for it is by faith that miracles are wrought; and it is by faith that angels appear and minister unto men; wherefore, if these things have ceased wo be unto the children of men, for it is because of unbelief, and all is vain." (Moro. 7:35-37.)

If the Bible were "the end of the prophets," it would be through lack of faith, and that is the reason the heavens at times were closed and locked and became as iron and the earth as brass.

The Lord will not force himself upon people; and if they do not believe, they will receive no visitation. If they are content to depend upon their own limited calculations and interpretations, then, of course, the Lord will leave them to their chosen fate.

Moroni quotes again: ". . . if these things have ceased, then has faith ceased also; and awful is the state of man, for they are as though there had been no redemption made." (Moro. 7:38.)

There were the centuries of the dark ages when the heavens were as iron, when there were no revelations recorded; but more than a century ago, the iron ceiling was shattered, since which time revelations have been continuous.

The Book of Mormon

Other books of scripture came into being. Vital and priceless records of ancient America with the teachings of Christ, another testimony of his divinity, were translated. And this Book of Mormon we declare to be divine scripture.

The Pearl of Great Price

And then there fell into the hands of Joseph Smith some ancient scriptures from the catacombs of Egypt that were the writings of Abraham while he was in Egypt and that were written by his own hand upon papyrus, from which they were translated and are known as the Book of Abraham; this book we declare to the world to be authentic and of divine origin. We also have the Book of Moses, an account of the ancient days, contemporary with the Book of Genesis but a more complete record of that period as revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith.

The Doctrine and Covenants

Since that momentous day in 1820, additional scripture has continued to come, and numerous pertinent and vital revelations have been flowing in a never-failing stream from God to his prophets on the earth. These scriptures are called the Doctrine and Covenants. We declare them to be divine and official and authentic communications from the Lord to men through divinely appointed prophets and that there never has been and never shall be an end to the prophets so long as men have faith and believe and live righteously.

There are those who would assume that with the printing and binding of these sacred scripture records, that would be "the end of the prophets." But again, we testify to the world that revelation continues and that the vaults and files of the Church are full.

Revelations come from month to month and from day to day, and since 1830, they have continued. As long as time shall last, a prophet, recognized of God, will continue to interpret the mind and will of God.

Since we know positively that God lives and is the same yesterday, today, and forever, we can gauge the faithfulness and spirituality of men by the degree and fullness of the communications between them and God.

Revelations, ancient and modern

Harper's *Bible Dictionary* defines revelation, saying:

"... and only God can make God known. Revelation is the process whereby God makes himself known to men. . . . Revelation presupposes on the part of men a capacity of response. . . . Response calls for faith. . . .

"The scriptures are the record of God's self-revelation and its results. . . .

"Revelation is therefore inseparable from faith, and unless a faith response is evoked there is no proper revelation." (Madeleine C. Miller and J. Lane Miller, *Harper's Bible Dictionary* [New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1952], pp. 613-14.)

As the thoughtful student reads the numerous experiences of the modern leaders and the revelations and dreams and visions, it is apparent that they compare well with all those of the ancient past.

The visions of Wilford Woodruff and Joseph F. Smith would certainly be on a par with the visions of Peter and Paul. The visions and revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Kirtland Temple and in the Sacred Grove in New York were awesome, like the manifestations to Peter, James, and John on the Mount of Transfiguration.

Certainly, if there is no variability in the Lord, if there is no shadow of changing, and if, as he said, he is the same yesterday, today, and forever, then we may fully expect that the same revelations, visions, healings, and tongues are all available today as in any other day, providing there is the necessary faith.

Joseph Smith's revelations were spectacular. After many centuries of spiritual darkness in the world, it was necessary that the Lord Jesus Christ restore his program on the earth, and that the Father return to introduce the Son, who would then establish the gospel of restoration.

Revelation does not always mean "walking with God," nor "face-to-face," nor "lips-to-ear." There are many kinds of revelation—some more and some less spectacular.

The vision to Peter, James, and John, the pillars of the early Church, was awesome. They followed Jesus into the high mountain, where "his face

Friday, September 30

First Day

did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." (Matt. 17:2.) Here these three great prophets saw Moses and Elias, long since dead, and were with Christ and heard the voice of Elohim introducing his Beloved Son, Jehovah.

Magnificent and eternity-embracing were the revelations to Abraham, known as "the friend of God." Angels ministered to him and the Lord spoke to him. He said:

"I, Abraham, talked with the Lord face to face as one man talketh with another; and he told me of the works which his hands had made." (Abr. 3:11.)

". . . the Lord spake to Moses face to face as a man speaketh with a friend." (Exod. 33:11.)

Indicating the different types of revelation, the Lord revealed through Aaron and Miriam:

". . . If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

"My servant Moses is not so. . . .

"With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold. . . ." (Num. 12:6-8.)

The vision of the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1820 was spectacular and magnificent when the Father introduced his Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to the boy prophet. Joseph Smith saw and heard. He said:

". . . I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*" (Joseph Smith 2:17.)

Realizing the skepticism of his contemporaries, he continued:

". . . it was nevertheless a fact that I had beheld a vision. . . .

". . . I had actually seen a light and in the midst of that light, I saw two Personages, and they did in reality speak to me; and though I was hated and persecuted for saying that I had seen a vision, yet it was true; and while they were persecuting me, reviling

me, . . . I was led to say in my heart: "Why persecute me for telling the truth? I have actually seen a vision; and who am I that I can withstand God, or why does the world think to make me deny what I have actually seen?" For I had seen a vision; I knew it, and I knew that God knew it, and I could not deny it, neither dared I do it; at least I knew that by so doing, I would offend God, and come under condemnation." (Joseph Smith 2:24-25.)

Elder John A. Widtsoe says of this:

"There was no mysticism about it. Joseph saw, in full light, the personages of the vision and heard their words. The vision was beyond philosophic quibbling." (John A. Widtsoe, *Joseph Smith*, p. 5.)

Nothing short of this total vision to Joseph could have served the purpose to clear away the mists of darkness of the centuries. Merely an impression, a hidden voice, or a dream could hardly have dispelled the old vagaries and misconceptions of the ages.

Moroni again said:

". . . I speak unto you who deny the revelations of God, and say that they are done away. . . .

". . . he that denieth these things knoweth not the gospel of Christ; yea, he has not read the scriptures; if so, he does not understand them.

"And now if ye have imagined up unto yourselves a god who doth vary, and in whom there is shadow of changing, then have ye imagined up unto yourselves a god who is not a God of miracles.

"But behold, I will show unto you a God of miracles, . . . and it is that same God who created the heavens and the earth, and all things. . . ." (Morm. 9:7-8, 10-11.)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has its prophets and has had them since the beginning of the restoration in 1830. Listen to Brigham Young:

"I have the keys and the means of obtaining the word of God on the subject. . . .

"Joseph conferred upon our heads all the keys and powers belonging to the Apostleship which he himself held . . . and no man or set of men

can get between Joseph and the Twelve in this world or in the world to come.

"How often has Joseph said to the Twelve, 'I have laid the foundation and you must build thereon, for upon your shoulders the kingdom rests.'" (*Documentary History of the Church*, Vol. 7, p. 230.)

Brigham Young, the leader of the exodus across the plains, also said:

"I do not wish men to understand I had anything to do with our being moved here, that was the providence of the Almighty; it was the power of God that wrought out salvation for this people, I never could have devised such a plan." (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, p. 41.)

Most recorded revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants and in the Bible were from deep feelings and an impressive consciousness of direction from above. But some were more direct. The believer of the Bible would hardly question the call of Enoch, nor the call of Saul of Tarsus, nor that of Barnabas. And yet, those same Bible readers would take upon themselves the assumed authority to preach and teach and perform ordinances without special authority from God.

Brigham Young received a vision before building this beautiful temple on this block. Here are his own words:

". . . five years ago last July, I was here and saw in the Spirit the Temple not ten feet from where we have laid the Chief Corner Stone. I have not inquired what kind of a Temple we should build. Why? Because it was represented before me . . . it will have six towers to begin with instead of one. . . ." (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 1, p. 33.)

If all the spectacular manifestations and visions and pertinent dreams and healings and other miracles were written in books, it would take a great library to hold them.

Comparable to the numerous revelations of the past would be the one of Wilford Woodruff, President of the Church in the last century:

"I had some remarks last Sunday upon . . . revelation. Read the life of Brigham Young and you can hardly

find a revelation that he had wherein he said, 'Thus saith the Lord.' But the Holy Ghost was with him; he taught by inspiration and revelation. . . . Joseph said, 'Thus saith the Lord' almost every day of his life, in laying the foundation of this work. But those who followed him have not deemed it always necessary to say, 'Thus saith the Lord.' Yet they have led the people by the power of the Holy Ghost. . . .

"It is by that power that we have led Israel; by that power President Young presided over and led the Church. By the same power, President John Taylor presided over and led the Church. And that is the way I have acted according to the best of my ability in that capacity. . . . He is giving us revelation, and will give us revelation until the scene is wound up.

"I have had some revelations of late and very important ones to me and I will tell you what the Lord has said to me. . . .

". . . The Lord . . . has told me exactly what to do . . . I went before the Lord, and I wrote what the Lord told me to write. . . ." (*Deseret News*, Nov. 7, 1891.)

The work goes forward—and one prophet succeeds another.

Joshua succeeded Moses, who had laid his hands upon him and ordained him. And then the Lord said:

"There shall not any man be able to stand before thee [Joshua], all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." (Josh. 1:5. Italics added.)

Upon Elisha fell the mantle of Elijah.

And likewise, the mantle of Joseph Smith fell on Brigham Young when he seemed to be transformed before the people who seemed to hear the voice of Joseph and see the person of Joseph. This remarkable miracle was attested to by great numbers of people. The mantle of Joseph fell from Brigham to John Taylor, to Wilford Woodruff, to Lorenzo Snow, to Joseph F. Smith, to Heber J. Grant, to George Albert Smith, and to our Prophet today, President David O. McKay.

Friday, September 30

First Day

Revelations have continued: Brother Merrill, president of the Logan Temple, received a comforting manifestation; Elder Melvin J. Ballard's call, as told by President Grant, was remarkable. President Joseph F. Smith's vision in 1918 on the redemption of the dead was most comprehensive; the temple work for the signers of the Declaration of Independence is illuminating; President Grant's Arizona experience is remarkable; Heber C. Kimball's experience of unusual discernment in the Endowment House—these and numerous experiences of latter-day authorities all are testimony that, as George Q. Cannon said, *there has never been a single minute since 1830 when the people were left without the revealed guidance of the Lord.* (JD, Vol. 26, p. 64.)

The Almighty is with His people

The Almighty is with this people. We shall have all the revelations that we shall need if we will do our duty and keep the commandments of God. If men could just realize that there may be sound even though few ears hear it. There are revelations even though most minds be materialistic and most hearts impenetrable.

Remember that of all who traveled the "way to Damascus" that notable day, only Paul heard and recognized the face and voice of our Redeemer.

Elder S. Dilworth Young Of the First Council of the Seventy

Many years ago President Charles W. Penrose of the First Presidency attended a sacrament meeting in Richards Ward in Salt Lake City. Just before the meeting commenced President Penrose walked down the aisle toward the pulpit, accompanied by the bishop. About halfway down he stopped, turned to the bishop, and inquired of him, "Who put that sign there?" "That sign" was a placard that was attached to the front of the pulpit and that read:

"Order is the first law of heaven"

The bishop didn't know but supposed that the sign had been installed by one of the auxiliaries. Nothing

And that of all the numerous professionals and court attachés in Babylon's court, only Daniel received the dream of Nebuchadnezzar and its interpretation; and while Belshazzar and others saw the handwriting on the wall, only the Prophet Daniel could give it meaning.

Remember:

If there be eyes to see, there will be visions to inspire.

If there be ears to hear, there will be revelations to experience.

If there be hearts which can understand, know this: that the exalting truths of Christ's gospel will no longer be hidden and mysterious, and all earnest seekers may know God and his program.

I bear witness that there will never be an "end of the prophets," as implied in my Bible, but that Christ's Church moves on through the revelations of God to its divinely called leaders. This I know in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner:

Elder Spencer W. Kimball of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us. Elder S. Dilworth Young of the First Council of Seventy will now address us, and he will be followed by Elder William J. Critchlow, Jr., Assistant to the Twelve.

more was said. The march down the aisle continued, and the meeting duly commenced.

"Obedience, the first law of heaven"

I do not know what subject President Penrose intended to speak on when he arrived at the chapel, but when he arose to speak, he said that order is not the first law of heaven, but that obedience is. He spent the next 45 minutes marshalling instances and scripture to prove his thesis. The main point that impressed me, a boy at the time, was that by obedience order may be established and that