

ing. My brother Gus and I are the only two of a family of 15, and I am grateful for him and his untiring work in the Church, which he has pursued throughout all his life.

I do not feel to speak longer, but in closing may I read just one verse that has impressed me for many years as reflecting the true teachings of the Master in our dealings one with another. The spirit of every word can be found in his parables and teachings:

"May I be no man's enemy, and may I be the friend of that which is eternal. . . . May I never devise evil against any man: if any devise evil against me, may I escape . . . without the need of hurting him. May I love, seek, and attain only that which is good. May I wish for all men's happiness and envy none. . . . May I win no victory which harms me or my opponent. . . . May I respect myself. . . . May I always keep tame that which rages within me." (*This Age of Confusion*, p. 296.)

May joy and happiness continue as a

possession of those who love and are obedient to the gospel, and may the gospel be the hope and the opening of the door of light to the honest in heart who seek its golden truths the world over, that they may be thus numbered with the children of our Heavenly Father in this great latter-day work. I bear you my testimony that I know without any question that this is the work of our Heavenly Father; I am grateful for the semaphores of life that have pointed the way, and I await now only the opportunity to continue that service in the kingdom of God. I bear this witness in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Alvin R. Dyer has just addressed us.

We will now hear from Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of the Seventy, and he will be followed by Elder James A. Cullimore, Assistant to the Twelve.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie

Of the First Council of the Seventy

May I raise in the minds of thoughtful and sincere Christian people such questions as these:

Crucial questions

Does the Holy Bible foretell the mission and ministry of Joseph Smith?

Is the advent of Mormonism spoken of in the ancient scriptures?

Was its establishment, growth, and eventual earth-filling destiny known to the prophets and seers of old?

Did Peter, Paul, John, and the other ancient apostles know that their apostolic mantles would rest in due course on the shoulders of Mormon elders, on prophets and apostles of modern times?

Did the ancient apostles and prophets know that after the predicted falling away from the faith once delivered to the saints, there would be a day of restoration and renewal, a day when

all the glories of old would be seen and known again?

Strange and improbable as such questions may seem at first blush, more extended investigation will reveal their aptness and deep significance.

Inspired men knew of events of today

If it is true that inspired men of old knew and spoke of the very events now transpiring where The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is concerned, then a knowledge of this Church and its doctrines becomes more important than any other knowledge in the whole realm of religion.

If it is true that these New Testament authors foretold both an apostasy and a restoration, then the traditional concept of many equally true Christian sects must give way to the stern reality that there is and can be but one true

Church on earth, one place where legal administrators chart the true course to salvation.

May I now open the door to investigation where these matters are concerned?

"Times of restitution"

Shortly after the ascension of the resurrected Christ into heaven, Peter made this inspired statement to those who were guilty of our Lord's death: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

"And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

"Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-21.)

Now let us analyze this prophetic utterance with care. Peter is not inviting our Lord's murderers to be baptized and to join the Church. They are not heirs of salvation. They have already rejected and slain their Messiah. But Peter is holding out some hope to them in a future day, a day named *the times of refreshing*. This designated period, this *times of refreshing*, is to take place at the second coming of the Son of Man, in the day when the Lord sends Christ again to earth.

If we are to catch the vision of Peter's prophecy, we must know pointedly and specifically what is meant by *the times of refreshing*. It is elsewhere spoken of by Jesus as "the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory." (Matt. 19:28.) It is the day "when the earth shall be transfigured, even according to the pattern which was shown unto mine apostles upon the mount, . . ." the Lord says. (D&C 63:21.) It is the day when "the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory." (Tenth Article of Faith.) It is the day of the "new earth" that Isaiah saw (Isa. 65:17), the earth which will prevail when wickedness ceases, when the millennial

era is ushered in, when "every corruptible thing, both of man, or of the beasts of the field, or of the fowls of the heavens, or of the fish of the sea, that dwells upon all the face of the earth, shall be consumed." (D&C 101:24.) It is the day when men "shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks" (Isa. 2:4), a day of universal peace and justice, a millennial era when Christ shall reign personally upon the earth.

Having thus announced that Christ will come again in this day of refreshing, of regeneration, of transfiguration, this day of paradisiacal glory, this millennial era, then Peter says that the heaven must receive him "until the times of restitution of all things." Here then we need another definition. What is meant by *the times of restitution*? These words mean *age of restoration*, an age in which God has promised to restore all things that he spoke by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

Thus, Christ came once and ministered among men, climaxing his ministry with his atoning sacrifice and ascension to his Father. He is to come again, a second time, in a day of refreshing and renewal, to reign personally upon the earth. But he cannot come this second time until an age in the earth's history commences which has the name *the times of restitution*, or in other words he cannot come until the age or period of restoration; and in that age or period all essential things that God ever gave in any age of the earth for salvation, betterment, blessing, and edification of his children will be restored again.

"Age of restoration"

What a glorious doctrine this is! How little it is known and understood in the world! Here we have a plain, pointed, prophetic proclamation that before the second coming of the Son of Man, an age named *the age of restoration* is to commence in the earth's history; and sometime in the course of this age or period, everything that God ever spoke or said or revealed to any an-

Friday, September 29

First Day

cient prophets is to come again to men on earth. What a door of investigation this opens.

Now, what is it that God revealed anciently? Has the great age of restoration commenced? Come, let us enter the door of investigation.

Other crucial questions

Was God known in ancient times? Did he walk and talk with the prophets of old? Were his laws revealed in plainness and in perfection? If so, all this is to occur again.

Did men of old hold the holy priesthood, the power and authority of God to act in all things for the salvation of men on earth? Were there legal administrators who had power from God to perform the ordinances of salvation so that they would be binding on earth and have full efficacy and force in eternity? If so, this power and this priesthood must come again.

Did men of old hold the keys of the kingdom of heaven? By these keys, could they bind on earth and have it sealed everlastingly in the heavens? If so, such divine power must be exercised again by mortal men.

Did legal administrators of old have power to baptize with fire and the Holy Ghost? Could they seal men up unto eternal life? Were the gifts of the Spirit poured out upon the saints? If so, all these powers and gifts must come again.

Beginning in the spring of 1820

Were there apostles and prophets in ancient times—men who actually represented the Lord; who stood between him and the people; who spoke his mind and his will to men; whose voice was as the voice of God to mortals? Is it true that the Church in ancient times was built on the very foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone? If so, such will again be found in the age of restoration.

In ancient times was the gift of the Holy Ghost poured out upon men? Were their minds quickened and enlightened from on high? Did they receive and utter words beyond man's

power to devise? Did they foretell the future? Were the visions of eternity opened to the seers of old so that they knew of things past, present, and future? Did angels descend from the courts of glory to give them counsel, direction, and understanding? If so, all of these things must be revealed anew in the age of restoration.

Were there miracles in days gone by? Did signs follow those that believed? Were the eyes of the blind opened, the ears of the deaf unstopped, the lame caused to leap, and the dead raised? Was there healing power in the priesthood? Were the elements controlled, wild beasts subdued, the violence of fire quenched, the armies of men put to flight, rivers moved from their course, and mountains moved? If so, like miracles must come again.

Now we testify—boldly and truly—that all these things were part of God's true religion anciently and that they have been, are being, or will be restored in the very age in which we live. We announce that *the times of restitution*, the age of restoration, began in the spring of 1820, with the appearance of the Father and the Son to Joseph Smith, that it is now continuing and will continue until after the second coming of the Son of Man.

Verily, it is true that the Holy Bible foretells the mission and ministry of Joseph Smith. It is true that the advent of Mormonism was spoken of in the ancient scriptures and that its establishment, growth, and eventual earth-filling destiny were known to the prophets and seers of old.

It is true that *the times of restitution* has commenced, and that Holy Being who is no respecter of persons, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever, that Being in whom is neither variableness nor shadow of turning, is again pouring out upon his saints every grace, right, gift, power, prerogative, and good thing ever enjoyed by the saints of any age.

These things are true. They deserve investigation. They demand investigation. A knowledge of them brings peace in this life and an assurance of immortal glory in the world to come. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.