

President Hugh B. Brown

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing "The King of Love My Shepherd Is." After the singing, Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve will address us.

Elder Marion G. Romney**Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles**

Brothers and sisters, as I have sat here on the stand through seven sessions under these intense lights for color television, I must confess that they have worked in me a change of allegiance. I have always felt that Daniel was the hero of the Book of Daniel, but I admit now that my sympathy is running strongly to the three Hebrew children who were thrown into the fiery furnace.

The Unknown God

I would like to begin my remarks this afternoon by using the scripture, referred to by President Brown this morning, which Paul spoke on Mars Hill in Athens. As he stood among the people, he said, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." (Acts 17:22-23.)

As I now address you on three types of evidence through which God has revealed himself, I invite you to join with me in a prayer that the Holy Spirit will bear witness to the truth and importance of what is said.

The orderliness of the universe

The three types of proof to which I refer are first, the orderliness of the universe; second, the testimony of eyewitnesses; third, the witness of the Holy Spirit.

As to the orderliness of the universe and its probative evidence, the Psalmist exclaimed: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament

Selection by the Choir, "The King of Love My Shepherd Is."

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sheweth his handywork." (Ps. 19:1.)

In 1887 the English physicist, Lord Kelvin, wrote: "If you think strongly enough you will be forced by science to the belief in God."

Countless scientists have confirmed this judgment.

Dr. Henry Eyring, our own world-renowned scientist, has said that the two most famous modern mathematicians, Sir Isaac Newton, the Englishman, and Carl Friederick Gauss, the German, were both believers "in an allwise Creator of the universe. . . ." (Henry Eyring, *The Faith of a Scientist*, p. 74.)

He has further said that "in the autumn of 1957, in Houston, Texas, the Welch Foundation invited the top nuclear physicists and chemists from all over the world to a symposium. At a dinner, twelve of the most distinguished were seated at a table. . . . Mr. Malone, a trustee of the foundation, said, 'Dr. Eyring, how many of these gentlemen believe in a Supreme Being?' I answered, 'I don't know but I'll ask.'

" . . . twelve people were asked and every one said, 'I believe.' All of these students of the exact sciences—two of them Nobel Prize winners—saw in the universal order about them evidence for a Supreme Being." (*Ibid.*, p. 147.)

Dr. Thomas J. Parmley, another of our own eminent scientists, has eloquently written:

"The moon and stars in the night sky, one hundred million suns with their attendant planets, space, oceans, earth and nature, the flight of a bird, the wonder of a flower, the intricate

design and unbelievable coordination of the human body, all of these and countless other creations proclaim the handiwork of God." ("Proclaim the Handiwork of God," *The Instructor*, July 1967, p. 272.)

The Lord gave his own personal witness that the orderliness of the universe is probative evidence of his existence, in these words:

"The earth rolls upon her wings, and the sun giveth his light by day, and the moon giveth her light by night, and the stars also give their light, as they roll upon their wings in their glory, in the midst of the power of God.

"Behold, all these are kingdoms, and any man who hath seen any or the least of these hath seen God moving in his majesty and power." (D&C 88:45, 47.)

Myriads of people are persuaded by the universal order about them that there is a divine power, a God, presiding over and controlling the universe. This conclusion is correct and comforting as far as it goes, but it is not enough. The honest, believing, inquiring soul wants to know about the nature and personality of God. This vital information God has provided in the testimony of the prophets, to whom he has revealed himself.

The testimony of witnesses

In Eden God revealed himself to Adam and Eve. They "carried with them from the Garden a personal knowledge of" him. (James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, p. 30.) There they had seen, heard, and talked with him. They knew from personal association that they were his offspring, created in his image. These truths they taught to their posterity.

Noah not only learned about the personality and nature of God from his father, Lamech, who had learned from the lips of Adam; he also "held direct communication with God, and lived to instruct ten generations of his descendants. Then followed Abraham, who also enjoyed personal communion with God. . . . Unto Moses the Lord made Himself known, not

alone from behind the curtain of fire and the screen of clouds, but by face to face communion. . . ." Moses beheld "the similitude" of God. (*Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.)

Jesus in his mortal ministry, being, as Paul said, "the express image of his [Father's] person" (Heb. 1:3), was a true and complete revelation of the person and nature of God. This he confirmed to Philip when he said: ". . . he that hath seen me hath seen the Father. . ." (John 14:9.)

Even though these testimonies of Jesus and the ancient prophets concerning the person and nature of God are clear and convincing, the Lord does not require us to rely upon them alone. He has never required the people of one age to rely upon the records of the past alone. At the beginning of every dispensation he has revealed himself anew. The revelation which he gave of himself in this day and which is binding upon us, you and me, came about in this manner:

In the spring of 1820, disturbed by the conflicting claims of the contending churchmen, Joseph Smith, Jun., desiring to know "which of all the sects was right," found privacy in a grove near his home. There he kneeled and called upon God in humble, fervent prayer. As he did so, a pillar of light descended upon him from above.

"When the light rested upon me [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.)

Later on, the Prophet said of these "two personages": "The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son also." To this he added, "but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit." (D&C 130:22.)

He said further: "When the Savior shall appear [and for this appearance we are now preparing] we shall see him as he is. We shall see that he is a man like ourselves." (D&C 130:1.)

Sunday, October 1

Third Day

Nor does Joseph Smith stand alone as the only modern witness to whom the Father and the Son have revealed themselves. Making record of an experience that they had together, February 16, 1832, Sidney Rigdon joined with the Prophet in his magnificent testimony:

The power of the Spirit

"By the power of the Spirit our eyes were opened and our understandings were enlightened, so as to see and understand the things of God— . . .

" . . . we beheld the glory of the Son, on the right hand of the Father, and received of his fulness; . . .

"And now, . . . this is the testimony . . . which we give of him: That he lives!

"For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father." (D&C 76:12, 20, 22-23.)

Some months later, Oliver Cowdery, a third witness, joined the Prophet in this testimony concerning an experience that they had as they bowed "in solemn and silent prayer" at the pulpit in the Kirtland Temple:

"The veil was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened.

"We saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, before us; . . .

"His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow; his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun; and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying:

"I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father." (D&C 110:1-4.)

Now the revelations that God has given of himself have in every age been intended and given for the benefit of all men, not just for those chosen servants who received the revelation. Even as he gave them, he declared: ". . . the voice of the Lord is unto the

ends of the earth, that all that will hear may hear." (D&C 1:11.)

God has, from the beginning, seen fit to place a knowledge of himself within the reach of all men. We who are his present witnesses are but discharging our responsibility when we bring these testimonies of the prophets and our own testimonies as to the form and nature of God to your attention.

To the extent we do bring them to your attention, the responsibility passes from us to you to determine the credibility of the witnesses and their testimonies. Let no man underestimate the importance of his decision concerning this matter. To know God and his Son Jesus Christ is life eternal. Without such knowledge no man can be saved. And the only way to get it is to obtain a personal witness to the truth of the revelations which God the Father and Jesus Christ, his Son, have given of themselves.

The witness of the Holy Ghost

This brings us to a consideration of our third and last source of evidence to which I will refer: the witness of the Holy Spirit of God—the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Trinity. He is, as has already been said, "a personage of Spirit." (D&C 130:22.) One of his functions is to bear witness of the Father and the Son to the honest, believing truth seeker.

The power by which truth is made known

In harmony with the Lord's promises, every soul who will acquaint himself with the testimonies of the prophets concerning God and then ask him "in the name of Christ, . . . with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ," if these testimonies are true, will receive a manifestation "by the power of the Holy Ghost" that they are true. (Moro. 10:4.)

It is not easy to explain to the uninitiated how this witness comes. Speaking about it to Nicodemus, Jesus said:

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8.)

In 1829, the Lord gave this explanation to Oliver Cowdery as to how the witness of the Spirit comes:

"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.

"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." (D&C 9:7-8.)

On another occasion, he said to Oliver Cowdery:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, if you desire a further witness, cast your mind upon the night that you cried unto me in your heart, that you might know concerning the truth of these things."

He was then trying to find out for himself whether or not the Prophet had the plates as he said he had. And then the Lord continued:

"Did I not speak to your mind concerning the matter? What greater witness can you have than from God?" (D&C 6:22-23.)

He whose desire to know the living God is strong enough to induce him to follow the prescribed course can and will get the witness for himself. And then he will understand what the Lord was saying in these scriptures. However, he who does not so seek will never understand these revelations, nor the revelations which God has given of himself.

Sure knowledge

One who receives the witness of the

Holy Ghost has a sure knowledge that God lives; that he is our Father in heaven; that Jesus Christ is our Elder Brother in the spirit and the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh, our Savior and Redeemer. Such a one knows that the universal order in the heavens above, in the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth, all give evidence that God lives; he knows that the testimonies of the prophets concerning the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are accurate and true. Secure in this knowledge, his life has purpose. The gospel of Jesus Christ becomes for him what Paul said it is: "The power of God unto salvation." (Rom. 1:16.)

Now as for myself, the Holy Ghost has borne and continues to bear witness to me that the words of the prophets are true. I know that God lives, that he is my Father, and that Jesus Christ is my Redeemer and that he spoke the truth when he said:

"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." (D&C 93:1.)

Now this testimony, my brethren and sisters, I bear unto you in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ, and in the authority of the holy apostleship which I hold, and I tell you it will be binding upon you. God grant that the Holy Spirit may bear witness of the truth of the testimonies of the prophets, my own included, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

President Hugh B. Brown

He to whom you have just listened is Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve.

Elder ElRay L. Christiansen, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us; and he will be followed by Elder Henry D. Taylor, also an Assistant to the Twelve.