

divinely endowed with the means to discover that evidence and know for himself that it is true.

The Spirit of Jesus Christ

"The Spirit of Jesus Christ," says the revelation, "giveth light to every man that cometh into the world; and the Spirit enlighteneth every man through the world, that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit.

"And every one that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit cometh unto God, even the Father." (D&C 84:45-47.)

The prophet Lehi bore like witness when he said to his son, Jacob, "men are instructed [hearing by the Spirit] sufficiently that they know good from evil." (2 Ne. 2:5.) And so did Mormon, by teaching his brethren that "the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he

may know good from evil." (Moro. 7:16.)

That we may all know by the witness of the Holy Spirit where we came from, why we are here, and where we go after we leave this life; and that by living righteously we "shall have glory added upon [our] heads for ever and ever," I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

We have just had the privilege of listening to that inspiring talk and testimony of President Romney of the First Presidency.

Elder LeGrand Richards of the Council of the Twelve will now address us. He will be followed by Elder James A. Cullimore, Assistant to the Twelve.

Elder LeGrand Richards

Of the Council of the Twelve

I am very happy, brothers and sisters, to have the privilege of attending this great conference with you and listening to the instructions that have been given to us by the servants of the Lord. I thank the Lord for your friendship and your kindness to me as I visit in your various stakes.

Value of scriptures

As I tried to think what I might say to you this morning that would be of interest and inspiring, I thought I would like to say a few words about the value of the holy scriptures.

If we didn't have the holy scriptures, what would we know about our Father in heaven and his great love that gave us his Only Begotten Son? What would we know about his Son and his

great atoning sacrifice, and the gospel that he has given us, the pattern of life to live by, and the principles that Brother Romney has just discussed with us of where we came from, why we are here, and where we are going? Without a knowledge of those things, we would be like a ship upon the ocean without a rudder or sail or anything to guide it. We might keep afloat, but we would never come into port.

I like the words of the Savior when he said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." (John 5:39.) Is there anything more desirable to search for than eternal life, a knowledge that we can live after death with our loved ones and be exalted in the presence of our dear ones with our Father in heaven and the sanctified and

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the redeemed of our Father's children?

I like the statement by Cicero. He said that he was more interested in the long hereafter than in the brief present. I like that thinking. I think if all of us were more interested in the long hereafter, it would be a changed world in which we live today.

I like the statement of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. She said,

*Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God,
But only he who sees takes off his shoes;
The rest sit round it and pluck
blackberries.*

"Aurora Leigh," 7:820.

A lot of people in this world are satisfied with plucking blackberries. As we look around us and see this marvelous creation and everything the Lord has created beyond the power of man to produce, we can't help but realize that earth is crammed with heaven.

But that doesn't tell us anything about what happens after death. That is what we get through our study of the holy scriptures.

Scriptures come through the Holy Ghost

I like the statement of Peter of old when he said, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

"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. 1:19-21.)

The scriptures come to us through the Holy Ghost and are not to be understood by man alone; they are not of any private interpretation. Then if we can believe the scriptures as they are

written, we have many truths to present to the world that no one else in the world can understand.

Isaiah's prophecies

I like the statements in the Book of Mormon. We are told in three places that we should study the prophecies of Isaiah, that they would all be fulfilled, that in the day of their fulfillment it would be given to the people to understand them.

Now I like to study the prophecies of Isaiah, and to my way of thinking he almost lived more in our day than when he was actually here upon the earth; he saw so much of what would transpire in this dispensation. Now for instance, this prophecy of Isaiah has always appealed to me. When Babylon was the greatest city in all the world, Isaiah prophesied that Babylon would be destroyed, that it would become the abode of reptiles and wild animals, that the Arabs would no more pitch their tents there. Then he said that Babylon would never be rebuilt. (See Isa. 13.) Now can you imagine anyone today declaring that one of our great cities would be destroyed and never be rebuilt? And yet, Babylon has never yet to this day been rebuilt.

Now I would like to discuss with you today a little about the twenty-ninth chapter of Isaiah. As I understand that chapter, there wasn't anybody in this world who could have understood the prophecies of Isaiah at the time that this Church was organized, until the Book of Mormon came forth. Through that we have an understanding of those scriptures that no one else in the world has.

I would like to read a little portion, commencing with the first part of the twenty-ninth chapter:

"Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt!" (Now that was Jerusalem, another name for it.) "... Add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices." (In other words, in coming generations.)

"Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow." (Isa. 29:1-2.) That is all he had to say about the destruction of Jerusalem, but you remember what Jesus said to his twelve. He told them the temple would be destroyed, there wouldn't be one stone left upon another, and it would be ploughed as an acre. (See Luke 21:5-6.)

Isaiah goes from that point on to see the destruction of another great center, and he says this: "And it shall be unto me as Ariel." (Isa. 29:2.) In other words, he saw the destruction of another great center like the destruction of Jerusalem. No one in this world could have told where that other center was until the Book of Mormon came forth. Then Isaiah goes forth with what he saw with respect to this other group of people. He said, "And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee.

"And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground [Now I want you to get that—when you speak out of the ground, it is not because you are alive that you are doing it; it is because of the record of your speech], and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust." (Isa. 29:3-4.)

Book of Mormon

Is there anything that has happened in this world to fulfill that like the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated that give the record of the early inhabitants of this land of America back over a period of thousands of years? Then he goes on in the sixth verse to say, "Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire."

All you have to do is to read Third

Nephi to see how literally that was fulfilled. I quote from Third Nephi, a portion, to indicate it:

"And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year . . . there arose a great storm, such an one as never had been known in all the land.

"And there was also a great and terrible tempest; and there was terrible thunder, insomuch that it did shake the whole earth as if it was about to divide asunder.

"And there were exceeding sharp lightnings, such as never had been known in all the land.

"And the city of Zarahemla did take fire.

"And the city of Moroni did sink into the depths of the sea, and the inhabitants thereof were drowned.

"And the earth was carried up upon the city of Moronihah, that in the place of the city there became a great mountain.

"And there was a great and terrible destruction in the land southward." (3 Ne. 8:5-11.)

Then it goes on describing the destruction in that land. No wonder they can find ruins of cities and cement highways as they delve into the depths of the earth down in that land of South and Central America where these people settled.

Then Isaiah goes on in the twenty-ninth chapter to say, "And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed." (Isa. 29:11.)

Fulfillment of prophecy

Can you find a fulfillment of that anywhere in this world like when Martin Harris took copies of the hieroglyphics from the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated to Professor Anthon in New York? When Professor Anthon had given a certificate to say that the translation was

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correct, he wanted Martin Harris to bring the plates and let him translate them. Martin Harris said, "They are sealed." The professor repeated the very words that Isaiah spoke thousands of years ago: "I cannot read a sealed book." That is what I mean when I say that if the prophecies, as Peter indicated, are not of private interpretation, then no one else in the world can interpret these prophecies of Isaiah in his twenty-ninth chapter.

"A familiar spirit"

Then he goes on in this same chapter, after saying that the vision of all—that is the vision of all that he saw about this people and its destruction and the coming forth of their record, speaking out of the dust—would have a familiar spirit. I gave a copy of the Book of Mormon to the treasurer in the Presbyterian Church back in New Bedford, Massachusetts, when I was doing missionary work there. When he had about finished reading it, I said, "As you read that book, did it occur to you that anyone could have written the contents of that book to deceive people?"

"Oh," he said, "Mr. Richards, when I read that book, I get the same spiritual uplift that I get when I read the New Testament."

Isn't that what Isaiah meant when he said that it should have a familiar spirit?

Then he goes on in that same chapter to say, "And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book [What book? The Book of Mormon], and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness." (Isa. 29:18.)

Isaiah didn't understand way back

in his day of his own wisdom the theory of braille that makes it possible for the blind to read the words of the book.

Then Isaiah says in that same chapter, "Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:

"Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." (Isa. 29:13-14.)

A marvelous work and a wonder

I bear you my solemn witness as an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ that we have that marvelous work and a wonder. These prophecies to which I have referred, no one else in all this world could interpret them if we will take them in the spirit in which they were written.

May God help us to share the marvelous truths that have come to us in this dispensation through the restoration of the gospel and our knowledge of the holy scriptures, I pray, and leave you my love and blessing, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

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