

The Logan Temple

March 13, 1979
First Session, 10:00 A.M.

I pray, sincerely and devoutly, that the same sweet spirit—the spirit of fight, edification, and comfort—that attended us while my esteemed colleague, Brother Hinckley, spoke, may continue with us now.

I know as well as I know anything in this world, that the Lord Jesus is our Redeemer; that he came into the world to work out the infinite and eternal atoning sacrifice; that he has taken upon himself the sins of all men on conditions of repentance; and that if you and I, who are members of the Church and kingdom of God on earth, will continue to walk in paths of virtue and integrity, we will enjoy peace in this life and be inheritors of eternal life in the world to come.

There lived in ancient Israel some 3000 years ago a mighty prophet whose ministry now spans that entire period, whose name in the Hebrew tongue was Elijah, and who was known in the Greek language as Elias. He held the keys of the sealing power, the power to bind on earth and have his acts everlastingly sealed in the heavens above. We have no scripture presently available to us that bears his name. And yet, his deeds were mighty and his words were many. He closed the heavens so that it did not rain for 3-1/2 years. He provided that the widow of Zarepath should have a cruse of oil and a barrel of meal that did not fail until the Lord sent rain again upon the land of Israel. He raised her son from the dead. He called down fire from heaven to consume his enemies. He did mighty works of great renown. And above all, he held the holy Melchizedek Priesthood and the keys of the sealing power. Five hundred years after he had dwelt in mortality, Malachi promised that the Lord would send Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the Lord, to turn the hearts of the children to the fathers and the fathers to the children. And then in the day of the Lord Jesus, after yet another five hundred years, there was a standing tradition among the people, there was a great expectancy that Elijah would return. And he did, in fact, in that day come, along with Moses, the two of them as translated beings, to give the keys of the kingdom to Peter, James and John on the Holy Mount. Then, somewhat as a crown and a capstone to his mission, he returned on the 3rd day of April in 1836 in the Kirtland Temple, to give to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery the keys of the sealing power, the same keys that have been held by the First Presidency of the Church in all dispensations and at all times, the keys and power by which men may be sealed up unto eternal life. When he came, according to the language Moroni gave the prophet, he planted in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers. May I inquire who were the fathers and what promises were planted in their heart.

The fathers were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—those three. We are their descendants and to each of them in turn the Lord gave promises concerning their salvation and exaltation and the glory and kingdom and dominion that would come to their seed in generations yet to be. We have accounts of these in the Book of Genesis which deal in large part with

their seed inheriting the land of Palestine. But in addition to this, their seed was to continue through the family unit and inherit, receive, and possess all things in time and in eternity. Our latter-day revelation says of these promises:

Abraham received promises concerning his seed and of the fruit of his loins,—which were to continue so long as they were in the world; and as touching Abraham and his seed, out of the world they should continue; both in the world and out of the world should they continue as innumerable as the stars; or, if ye were to count the sand upon the seashore ye could not number them. (D&C 132:30.)

That is the promise to Abraham, renewed to Isaac, renewed to Jacob, and then in process of time, renewed to every faithful elder in Israel. And the next verse of the revealed word says: “This promise is yours also, because ye are of Abraham, and the promise was made unto Abraham; and by this law is the continuation of the work of my Father, wherein he glorifieth himself.” (D&C 132:31.)

And then this counsel: “Go ye, therefore, and do the works of Abraham; enter ye into my law and ye shall be saved.” (D&C 132:32.)

God promised Abraham glory and honor and dominion and exaltation. He promised him a continuation of the family unit in eternity, out of which continuation eternal life grows. Eternal life is the name of the kind of life that God lives, and it consists, number one, of a continuation of the family unit everlasting; and it consists, number two, of inheriting the fullness of the glory of the Father. It is the name of the kind of life that God lives. And God promised Abraham that his seed—and the revelation specifically says the literal seed of the body—would be inheritors of those blessings as long as the earth should stand and time should continue. Now, we are the seed of Abraham. And because Elijah the prophet brought back the sealing power, we now know we have power to come to the temple of God and be sealed as husband and wife in a union, which if we keep the terms and conditions of the covenant then made, a union that will continue everlastingly in all the realms and in all the days that are ahead. And because Elijah came, there has been planted in my heart the desire to have the blessings of Abraham and to gain all that he receives. And those of you who need your memories refreshed, if you will go to the House of the Lord and listen to a celestial marriage ceremony, you will hear people receive anew in our day the blessings promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The Lord is no respecter of persons and he offers to all men on condition of obedience to the same law, the same glorious and wondrous rewards. Abraham and the prophets are but patterns and samples and what was in their lives can be in the lives of all of us.

It is marvelous and glorious beyond any power of expression that any of us have, this wondrous plan of salvation that God has given us in this day. We are the children of the prophets. We are the children of the covenant that God made with Abraham. It is in our power to inherit, possess, and receive without restriction and without limitation all that has ever been promised in any day.

God be praised for the wonders and glories that have been offered to us, and above all, God be praised that this work is true. And because it is true, his hand being in it, we have power to gain all that he has promised in any day to any people. The promises are in our hearts. They are based on and come to us because of the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus. And if we now do the things we know we ought to do, we will be inheritors of peace in this life and glory and reward everlasting in the life to come, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.