

The Gift of Prophecy

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I intend to be reminiscent in what I shall say on this occasion.

I have frequently called your attention to the fact that under President John Taylor I was permitted to fill a mission in the Southern States, in 1883 and '84, under the presidency of Elder B. H. Roberts. They were trying times, and the elders, as a whole, traveled without purse and without scrip.

In 1892 I was again appointed, under President Wilford Woodruff, to preside over the Southern States Mission. It was during that period of time that I found God; as my father said: God answered my prayers, and isn't that a pretty good evidence that God lives? My testimony was fixed and fast, and what I knew I learned by obedience and through suffering.

I take the position that knowledge cannot be knowledge without experience, so that what I know through the influence of the Holy Ghost--for I have heard that still, small voice--I know to my perfect satisfaction. There is no question of a doubt in my mind as to the truth of this work, and any time in my life that I can be convinced that Joseph Smith was not a prophet of God, then I will question the truth of this work. But Joseph Smith to me is a prophet, and there is hardly a Kimball living in the flesh today--of the first generation--notwithstanding we were very young when our father died, that did not have burned into his soul as a child that Joseph Smith was a prophet of the living God: that Brigham Young was his successor; that he too was a great prophet.

Now, it is along that line that I desire to occupy your time for a few moments, and to do so I expect to forecast from dead prophets. I shall not undertake to quote from memory as it is very difficult for me to quote correctly.

The prophet Joel said--we elders in that day on many occasions quoted this prophetic saying:

"And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams; your young men shall see visions.."

I think one of the greatest pieces of philosophy in the Bible is: "Where there is no vision the people perish." And the Prophet Joseph Smith left with us this statement: "Where there are no gifts there is no faith."

I further read in the Bible:

"When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken; but the prophet has spoken presumptuously, Thou shall not be afraid of him."

Jesus himself testified that "a prophet hath no honor in his own country."

I claim not to be a prophet, but I am a son of a prophet, and I expect to give you evidence--whether you question the truth of it or not--that shall be left with you--that Heber C. Kimball was a prophet of God. President Brigham Young on more than one occasion said: "Heber is my prophet, and I love to hear him prophesy."

In May, 1868---that is sixty-two years ago--he said:

"After a while the gentiles will gather in Salt Lake City by the thousands, and this will be among the wicked cities of the world,,"

He said:

"A spirit of speculation and extravagance will take possession of the Saints, and the results will be financial bondage."

He said:

"An army of elders will be sent to the four quarters of the earth, to search out the righteous and, warn the wicked of coming events.

"All kinds of religions will be started, and miracles performed that will deceive the very elect, if such a thing were possible.

"Persecution comes next, and all Latter-day Saints will be tested to the limit. "Many will apostatize, and others will stand still, not knowing what to do. "Before the temple reaches the square our brethren will be imprisoned, until the penitentiary shall be full, and some of them will be removed to other penitentiaries.

"Mothers would weep for their husbands, and, children would cry for their fathers. Some would die, and sorrow would fill the hearts of the Latter-day Saints.

"When the temple roof is on, the persecution will lessen, but when the temple is completed the power of the Evil One will be shut out."

"The prayers of the Saints will then be heard. The sick will be taken there and healed."

"The Spirit of God will rest upon the people, and work for the dead will be continued night and day."

"The judgments of God will be poured out upon the wicked, to the extent that our elders from far and near will be called home; or in other words, the Gospel will be taken from the gentiles, and later on will be carried to the Jews."

"The western boundaries of the State of Missouri will be swept so clean of its inhabitants that as President Young tells us, 'when we return to that place there will not be as much as a yellow dog to wag his tail.'

"Before that day comes, however, the Saints will be put to the test that will try the very best of them.

"The pressure will become so great that the righteous among us will cry unto the Lord day and night until deliverance comes."

In 1856---that is seventy-four years ago--a small group of friends convened in the house of the Lord, called the Endowment House. The conversation was about the isolated condition of the Latter-day Saints.

"Yes," said Brother Heber, "we think we are secure here in the chambers of these everlasting hills, where we can close the doors of the canyons against mobs and persecutors, the wicked and the vile, who have always beset us with violence and robbery, but I want to say to you, my brethren, the time is coming when we will be mixed up in these now peaceful valleys to that extent that it will be difficult to tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy against the people of God."

"Then is the time to look out for the great sieve, for there will be a great sifting time, and many will fall.

"For I say unto you there is a test, a Test, a TEST coming."

He further said:

"This Church has before it many close places through which it will have to pass before the work of God is crowned with glory.

"The difficulties will be of such a character that the man or woman who does not possess a personal knowledge or witness will fall. If you have not got this testimony, you must live right and call upon the Lord, and cease not until you obtain it.

"Remember these sayings: The time will come when no man or woman will be able to endure on borrowed light. Each will have to be guided by the light within themselves. If you do not have the knowledge that Jesus is the Christ, how can you stand?"

Do you believe it?

President George Q. Cannon said, after Heber C. Kimball's death: "Heber Chase Kimball was one of the greatest men of this age." He continued: "No man, perhaps, Joseph Smith excepted, who has belonged to the Church in this generation, ever possessed the gift of prophecy to a greater degree than he."

On the morning of the 22nd of June, 1868, he died.

At the funeral President Brigham Young said: "Heber was a man of as much integrity, I presume, as any man who ever lived on the earth--a man of faith--a man of benevolence--a man of truth."

On the evening of January 12th, 1862, the Lord made it known to Heber C. Kimball that he should not be removed from his place as First Counselor while he lived in the flesh.

Now my brethren and sisters, I am here to testify that the spirit of prophecy is in this Church. Any man who has a testimony that Jesus is the Christ has the spirit of prophecy, and I know that we have living prophets. Whenever the Lord desires, and it is his will to speak through his prophets, I have no fear and no doubt as far as I am individually concerned that they have the courage and the faith to speak the words of God. At a

time when the people were suffering, when the people were almost naked, when everything looked desolate, as if they were forsaken--

"Heber C. Kimball, filled with the spirit of prophecy in a public meeting declared to the astonished congregation that within a short time States goods would be sold in the city of Great Salt Lake cheaper than in New York and that the people would be abundantly supplied with food and clothing."

"I don't believe a word of it,' said Apostle Charles C. Rich; and he voiced the sentiment of nine-tenths of those who had heard the astounding declaration."

"On resuming his seat he remarked to the brethren that he was afraid he had missed it this time. But they were not his own words and He who had inspired them knew how to fulfil. The occasion for the fulfilment of this remarkable prediction was the unexpected advent of the gold-hunters on their way to California. The discovery of gold in that land had set on fire, as it were, the civilized world and hundreds of richly laden trains now began pouring across the continent on their way to the new Eldorado. Salt Lake valley became the resting place. Thus as the Prophet Heber had predicted, States Goods were actually sold in the streets of Great Salt Lake City cheaper than they could have been purchased in the city of New York."

Now, brethren, that is how I feel about it. I take pride in being a son of my father and as long as I live I shall never fail to honor my father and his successors, and try to be as loyal and true and steadfast in the faith as they have been. I am the only one that can destroy my faith in this work. God bless you. Amen.