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PROPHETS, SEERS AND REVELATORS.

Discourse Delivered at the Cache Lake Quarterly Conference, Logan, Sunday, October 29, 1893, by

PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

President George Q. Cannon this morning expressed his feeling at the thought of being called a prophet, a seer, and a revelator, and being sustained as such by the vote of the people at our various conferences, and how the natural man shrank from the responsibility involved in this great calling. He expressed very clearly my own thoughts and feeling in relation to this subject; but on reflection I take some consolation to myself in the fact that I am only one among many who are called to this high calling. We must remember that while there are but few upon whom is laid the responsibility of revealing to the people, by the inspiration of the Almighty, the word of the Lord for the building up of Zion, yet, I comprehend correctly the spirit of this work, it is that *all* who receive the spirit of the Gospel in their hearts are prophets, seers and revelators, in a certain sense; not to give the word of the Lord to the people for their government and direction, but to receive the same for their own guidance and knowledge of the doctrine, that it is of God.

It is fair to suppose that this large congregation, or those of them who profess to be members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, have received the testimony of Jesus Christ. If we have not we need to become converted, that we may receive the Holy Ghost, which testifies of the Father and of the Son, which is the testimony of Jesus Christ. It is said in the scriptures that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." If, therefore, men or women have received the testimony of Jesus, then they have received the spirit of prophecy; and if they have received the spirit of prophecy and exercise that spirit, if only in the discharge of their personal duty and for their own guidance, then they are prophets and prophetesses. The possession of the testimony of Jesus Christ and the spirit of prophecy constitutes man a prophet, a seer and a revelator. No man can be a prophet, a seer, or a revelator in the true sense, unless he has received the testimony of Jesus Christ, which is the spirit of prophecy. Hence I take some consolation to myself in knowing that I only bear my portion of this responsibility with many others. I see before me a host of men and women who

should be as much prophets, seers and revelators in their spheres and callings, and for the purpose of their own guidance in the path of truth, as President Woodruff is, or President Cannon, or as was the Prophet Joseph Smith, or any other man of God that has ever stood upon the earth. Of course, there is a distinction that should be understood on this point. President Woodruff is called to be a prophet, seer and revelator to the whole Church? You and I are not called to act in this capacity; but we are called to be the sons and daughters of God and should have the testimony of Jesus in our hearts; and this constitutes prophets and seers; for when we have the Spirit of God, we can see the truth and comprehend His purposes by the inspiration of the spirit that is within us. And every man and woman in the household of faith, if faithful, is as much entitled to the possession of that spirit as is President Woodruff. One of old said, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His spirit upon them." Paul, in exhorting the saints to seek after the gifts of the Gospel, said, "Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy." If a man has the spirit of prophecy from God, he is a prophet. Not that he is thereby called to prophesy to the whole Church; not that he is necessarily called as a lawgiver unto the Church; but he is called to be a child of God and to partake of the principles of light, intelligence, wisdom and knowledge, which come, through revelation, from God to man. It is right that every man and every woman should know of the doctrine for himself and herself; and inasmuch as we may all enjoy this spirit, and if we have this testimony in our hearts, then we are inspired of the Lord and are prophets.

Furthermore, when we enter into the sacred places that the Lord has instituted for us in this dispensation, and receive certain ordinances and blessings that God has ordained for such as are worthy, we not only receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, the testimony of Jesus Christ, which is the spirit of prophecy, in our hearts, but we become "the Lord's anointed," on whom rests great responsibility, and of whom the Lord will require faithfulness and virtue, honesty and uprightness, justice and charity, purity of heart and of life, and all the gifts and graces that pertain to the Gospel.

So that it is not such a terrible thought that one should be called a prophet, and that we should have this responsibility devolving upon us. Yet it is a most sacred thought; and while it may be regarded as a blessing common unto all who receive the Gospel, its prevalence

does not diminish the individual responsibility of those who receive it. It is just as sacred as though but one or two possessed it. You sustain the Presidency of the Church and the Twelve Apostles in the conferences as prophets, seers and revelators. That they may magnify this calling properly they should indeed be most faithful before our Father; for in thus being sustained they are called, not only to be revelators, to receive truth and inspiration from the Almighty for their own guidance, but also, as general officers of the Church, for the guidance and instruction of the people of God. Hence this is a requirement above that which is placed upon the people at large, and the responsibility is increased upon individuals as they are called and appointed to certain positions in the Priesthood. But the principle is no more sacred in their keeping than it should be in yours; it is no more direct from God to them than it should be to you. It is not necessary that they should hold it more sacred in their hearts than you should hold it sacred in your hearts.

It is written, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and His Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." Who is it in the kingdom of God that is not called to be a priest or a priestess, in holiness, in purity of life, in devotion to God, and in all the gifts and blessings of the Gospel? Ye are all called unto salvation, unto exaltation, and unto the gift of eternal life, and to obtain heavenly dominion, power and glory. This constitutes the priestly calling unto which the Saints of God are called. Should we not, therefore, look carefully to our conduct, to see whether we are worthy to receive the blessings that have been promised upon our heads, and that it is our privilege to receive through being adopted into the family of our Father? President Woodruff has been telling us that that spirit which prompts to do good is of God, while that spirit which prompts to do evil is not of God, but of that evil one. Where we discover within ourselves a disposition to take advantage of our neighbor, to be unforgiving toward our brother or toward any man, we may know that that is not of God. It is not the spirit that those who are entitled to become priests unto God should have. On the other hand, when we have a spirit of charity in our hearts, prompting us to be merciful, forgiving and charitable, we may know that we have the spirit of the Lord, and not the spirit of the evil one; for the spirit of the evil one does not prompt to charitable deeds, nor promote feelings of love and forgiveness. It is the duty of the Latter-day Saints who should be prophets,