

A Heavenly Manifestation

A Vision Given to Heber Q. Hale

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of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

As related by him at the Genealogical Conference
held in the Auditorium of the Bishops' Building,
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(Requested by the Presidency of the Church in 1920.)

It is with a very humble and grateful spirit that I attempt to relate on this occasion, by request, a personal experience which is very sacred to me. I must of necessity be brief. Furthermore, there were certain things made known to me which I don't feel at liberty to relate here. Let me say by way of preface that between the hours of 12 and 7:30 in the night of January 20, 1920, while alone in a room at the home of W.F. Raween in Carey, Idaho, the glorious manifestation was vouchsafed to me.

I was not conscious of anything that transpired during the hours mentioned, except what I experienced in this manifestation. I did not turn over in bed, nor was I disturbed by any sound, which indeed is unusual for me. Whether it be called a dream, an apparition, a vision or a pilgrimage of my spirit into the world of sprits, I know not. I care not. I know that I actually saw and experienced the things related in this heavenly manifestation, and they are as real to me as any experience of my life. For me, at least, this is sufficient.

Of all the doctrines and practices of the Church, the principle of vicarious work for the dead has been the most difficult for me to comprehend and wholeheartedly accept. I consider this vision is the Lord's answer to the prayer of my soul on this and certain other questions.

I passed but a short distance from my body through a film into the world of sprits. This was my first experience after going to sleep. I seemed to realize that I had passed through the change called death and I so referred to it in my conversation with the immortal beings with whom I immediately came into contact. I readily observed their displeasure at our use of the word death and the fear which we attach to it. They use there another word in referring to the transition from mortality to immortality, which word I don't recall and I can only approach its meaning and the impression which was left upon my mind, by calling it "the New Birth."

My first visual impression was the nearness of the world of sprits to the world of mortality. The vastness of this heavenly sphere was bewildering to the eyes of the spirit-novice. Many enjoyed unrestricted vision, and unimpeded action, while many others were visibly restricted as to both vision and action. The vegetation and landscape were beautiful beyond description; not all green as here, but gold with varying shades of pink, orange, and lavender as the rainbow. A sweet calmness pervaded everything. The people I met there I did not think of as sprits, but as men and women, self-thinking and self-acting individuals, going about important business in a most orderly manner. There was perfect order there and everybody had something to do and seemed to be about their business.

That the inhabitants of the spirit world are classified according to their lives of purity, and their subservience to the Father's will, was subsequently made apparent. Particularly was it observed that the wicked and unrepentant are confined to a certain district by themselves, the confines of which are as

definitely determined and impassable as the line marking the division of the physical from the spiritual world. A mere film, but impassable until the person himself was changed. The world of spirit is the temporary abode of all spirits pending the resurrection from the dead and the judgment. There was much activity within the different spheres, and appointed ministers of salvation were seen coming from the higher to the lower spheres in pursuit of their missionary appointments.

I had a very pronounced desire to meet certain of my kinsfolk and friends, but I was at once impressed with the fact that I had entered a tremendously great and extensive world, even greater than our earth and more abundantly inhabited. I could be in only one place at a time, could do only one thing at a time, could look only in one direction at a time, and accordingly it would require many, many years to search out and converse with all those I had known and those whom I desired to meet unless they were especially summoned to receive men.

All men and women were appointed to special and regular service under a well organized plan of action, directed principally toward preaching the gospel to the unconverted, teaching those who seek knowledge and establishing family relationships and gathering genealogies for the use and benefit of mortal survivors of their respective families, that the work of baptism and the sealing ordinances may be vicariously performed for the departed in the temples of God upon the earth. The authorized representatives of families in the world of spirits have access to our temple records and are kept fully advised of the work done therein, but the vicarious work done here does not become automatically effective.

The recipients must first believe, repent and accept baptism and confirmation; then certain consummating ordinances are performed effectualizing these saving principles in the lives of those regenerated beings. And so the great work is going on—they are doing a work there which we cannot do here, and we a work here which they cannot do there, for the salvation of all God's children who will be saved.

I was surprised to find there no babies in arms. I met the infant son of Orson W. Rawlings, my first counselor. I immediately recognized him as the baby who died a few years ago, and yet he seemed to have the intelligence and, in certain respect, the appearance of an adult, and was engaged in matters pertaining to his family and its genealogy. My mind was quite contented upon the point that mothers will again receive into their arms their children who died in infancy and will be fully satisfied, but the fact remains that entrance into the world of spirits is not an inhibition of growth but the greatest opportunity of development. Babies are adult spirits in infant bodies.

I presently beheld a mighty multitude of men, the largest I had ever seen gathered in one place, who I immediately recognized as soldiers, the millions who had been slaughtered and rushed so savagely into the world of spirits during the great world war [WWI]. Among them moved, calmly and majestically, a great general in supreme command. As I drew nearer, I received the kingly smile and generous welcome of a great loving man, General Richard W. Young. Then came the positive conviction to my soul, that of all the men living or dead, there is not one who is so perfectly fitted for the great mission unto which he had been called. He commands immediately the attention and respect of all the soldiers. He is at once a great general and a great High Priest of God. No earthly field of labor to which he could have been assigned, could compare with it in importance and extent. I passed from this scene to return later when I found General Young had this vast army of men completely organized with officers over successive divisions, and all were seated, and he was preaching the gospel in great earnestness to them.

As I passed forward, I soon met my beloved mother. She greeted me most affectionately and expressed surprise at seeing me there, and reminded me that I had not completed my allotted mission on earth. She seemed to be going somewhere and was in a hurry and, accordingly, took her leave with saying that she would see me soon again.

I moved forward covering an appreciable distance and consuming considerable time, viewing the wonderful sights of landscape, parks, trees and flowers and meeting people, some of whom I knew, but

many thousands of whom I did not recognize as acquaintances. I presently approached a small group of men, standing in a path lined with spacious stretches of flowers, grasses, and shrubbery, all of a golden hue, marking the approach of a beautiful building. The group was engaged in earnest conversation. One of their number parted from the rest and came walking down the path. I at once recognized my esteemed President Joseph F. Smith. He embraced me as a father would his son and after a few words of greeting, quickly remarked: "You have not come to stay," which remark I understood more as a declaration than an interrogation. For the first time I became fully conscious of my uncompleted mission on earth and, as much as I would have liked to remain, I at once asked President Smith if I might return. "You have expressed a righteous desire" he replied, "and I shall take the matter up with the authorities and let you know later."

We then returned and he led me toward the little group of men from whom he had just separated. I immediately recognized President Brigham Young and the Prophet Joseph Smith. I was surprised to find the former a shorter and heavier built man than I had pictured him in my mind to be. On the other hand I found the latter to be taller than I had expected to find him. Both they and President Smith were possessed of a calm and holy majesty which was at once kind and kingly. We then retraced our steps and President Smith took his leave, saying he would see me again.

From a certain point of vantage I was permitted to view this earth and what was going on here. There was no limitation of my vision and I was astounded at this. I saw my wife and children at home. I saw President Heber J. Grant at the head of the Great Church and Kingdom of God and felt the divine power that radiates from God giving it light and truth and guiding its destiny. I beheld this nation founded as it is on correct principles and designed to endure, but beset by evil and sinister forces that seek to lead men to thwart the purposes of God. I saw towns and cities; the sins and wickedness of men and women. I saw vessels sailing the oceans and scanned the battle-scarred fields of France and Belgium. In a word, I beheld the whole world as if it were but a panorama passing before my eyes.

Then there came to me the unmistakable impression that this earth and scenes and persons upon it are open to the vision of the spirits only when special permission is given or when they are assigned to special service here. This is particularly true of the righteous who are busily engaged in two fields of activity at the same time.

The wicked and unrepentant have still, like the rest, their free agency, and applying themselves to no useful or wholesome undertaking, seek pleasure about their old haunts and exalt in the sin and wickedness of degenerated humanity. To this extent they are still the tools of Satan. It is these idle, mischievous and deceptive spirits who appear as miserable counterfeits at spiritualist seances, table dancing and ouija board operation. The noble and great ones do not respond to the call of the mediums and to every curious group of meddling inquirers. They would not do it in the world of mortality, certainly they would not do it in their increased state of knowledge in the world of immortality. These wicked and unrepentant spirits are [tools] of Satan and his host, operating through willing mediums in the flesh. These three forces constitute an unholy trinity upon the earth and are responsible for all the sin, wickedness, distress and misery among men and nations.

I moved forward feasting my eyes upon the beauty of everything about me and glorying in the indescribable peace and happiness that abounded in everybody and through everything. The further I went, the more glorious things appeared. While standing at a certain vantage point, I beheld a short distance away a wonderful beautiful temple, capped with golden domes, from which emerged a small group of men dressed in white robes who paused for a brief conversation. They were the first I had seen thus clad. The million that I had previously seen were in uniforms. In this little group of holy men, my eyes centered upon one more splendid and holy than the rest. While I thus gazed, President Joseph F. Smith parted from the others and came to my side. "Do you know him?" he inquired. I quietly answered, "Yes, I know him. My eyes behold my Lord and Savior." "It is true," said President Smith. And, oh, how my soul thrilled with rapture, and unspeakable joy filled my heart!

President Smith informed me that I had been given permission to return and complete the mission upon the earth which the Lord had appointed to me to fulfill, and then with his hand upon my shoulder, uttered these memorable and significant words, "Brother Heber, you have a great work to do. Go forward with a prayerful heart and thou shall be blessed in your ministry. From this time on, never doubt that God lives, that Jesus Christ is the Son, the Savior of the World, that The Holy Ghost is a god of spirit and the messenger of the Father and Son; never doubt the resurrection of the dead, the immortality of the soul; that the destiny of man is eternal progress. Never again doubt that the mission of the Latter-day Saints is to all mankind, both the living and the dead; and that the great work in the holy temples for the living and the dead had only begun. Know this, that Joseph Smith was sent of God to usher in the gospel dispensation of the fullness of times, which is the last unto mortals upon the earth. His successors have all been called of and approved of God. President Heber J. Grant is at this time the recognized and ordained head of the Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth. Give him your confidence and support. Much you have seen and heard here you will not be permitted to repeat when you return." Thus saying he bade me "Good bye, and God bless you."

Quite a distance, through various scenes and passing innumerable people, I traveled before I reached the sphere which I had first entered. On my way I was greeted by many friends and relatives, certain of whom sent words of greeting and counsel to their dear ones here—my mother being one of them.

One other I will mention. I met brother John Adamson, his wife, his son James and their daughter Isabelle, all of whom were killed by the hand of a foul assassin in their home, at Carey, Idaho, in the evening of October 29, 1915. They seemed to define that I was on my way back to mortality and immediately said, (Brother Adamson was speaking) "Tell the children that we are very happy and very busy and they should not mourn our departure, nor worry their minds over the manner by which we were taken. There is purpose in it, and we have a work to do here which required our collective efforts, and which we could not do individually." I was at once made to know that the work referred to was that of genealogy on which they are working in England and Scotland.

One of the grandest and most sacred things of heaven is the family relationship. The establishment of the complete chain without any broken links brings a fullness of joy. Links wholly bad will be dropped out and either new links put in or the two adjoining links welded together. Men and women everywhere throughout the world are being moved upon by their departed ancestors to gather genealogies. These are the links for the chain. The ordinances of baptism, endowments, and sealings performed in the temples of God by the living for the dead are the welding of the links. Ordinances are performed in the spirit world effectualizing the individual recipient for their receiving the saving principles of the gospel vicariously performed here.

As I was approaching the place where I entered, my attention was attracted towards a number of small groups of women, preparing what appeared to me wearing apparel. Observing my inquiring countenance one of the women remarked, "We are preparing to receive Brother Phillip Worthington very soon." As I grasped his name in repetition I was admonished, "If you knew the joy and the glorious mission that awaits him here you would not ask to have him longer detained upon the earth." Then came flooding my consciousness this awful truth, that the will of the Lord can be done on earth as it is in heaven, only when we resign completely to His will and let His will be done in and through us. On account of the selfishness of many, persons who might have otherwise been taken in innocence and peace, have been permitted to live, and have lived to their own peril, men and the assertion of the personal will as against the will of God. Phillip Worthington died January 22, 1920, for which I was advised by telegram, and returning to Boise, preached his funeral sermon on January 25, 1920.

Men, women and children are often called to missions of great importance on the other side, and some respond gladly while others refuse to go and their loved ones will not give them up. Also, many die because they have not the faith to be healed. Others live and pass out of the world of mortals without any special manifestation of action of the divine will. When a man is stricken ill, the question of prime importance is not "Is he going to live, or Is he going to die?" What matter is it whether he lives or dies,

so long as the will of the Father is done? Surely we can trust him with God. Herein lies the special duty and privilege of administration by the right and authority of the Holy Priesthood, namely: it is given the elders of the Church of Jesus Christ to divine the will of the Father concerning the one upon whose head their hands are laid. If for any reason they are unable to presage the Father's will, then they should continue to pray in faith for the afflicted one, humbly conceding supremacy to do the will of God, that His will may be done in earth as it is done in heaven.

To the righteous person, birth into the world of spirits is a glorious privilege and blessing. The greatest spirits in the family of the Father have not usually been permitted to tarry longer in the flesh than to perform a certain mission; then they are called to the world of spirits where the field is greater and the workers fewer. This earthly mission, may therefore, be long or short, as the Father wills.

I passed quietly out where I had entered the world of spirits and immediately my body was quickened, and I was to ponder over and record the many wonderful things I had seen and heard.

Let me here and now declare to the world that irrespective of the opinion of others, I do know of my own positive knowledge and from my own personal experiences that God in the Father of the spirits of all men and that He lives; that Jesus Christ is his son and the Savior of the world, that the spirit of man does not die, but survives the change called death and goes to the world of spirits; that the world of spirit is upon or near this earth; that the principles of salvation are now being taught to the spirits and the great work of saving the Father's family among the living and dead is now in progress, and that but comparatively few will ultimately be lost; that spirits will literally take up their bodies again in the resurrection and that the gospel of Jesus Christ has again been established upon the earth with all of the keys, powers, authority, and blessings, through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith; that His is the power that will not only save and exalt every one who yields obedience to its principles, but will ultimately save the world; that the burden of our mission is to save souls unto God, and that the work for the salvation of the dead is no less of importance than the work for the living.