

January 14, 1931

President Rudger Clawson
and Members of the Council of Apostles

Dear Brethren:

December 15, 1930, Elder B. H. Roberts wrote to the First Presidency asking them if certain remarks made by me before a gathering of Genealogical workers in Barratt Hall, April 5, 1930, were given as an "official declaration of the Church," or was but an expression of my personal opinion. In case it was my personal opinion, then Elder Roberts entered objection "to the dogmatic and finality spirit of the pronouncement" on the grounds that "Elder Smith is incompetent to utter such dogmatism either as a scholar or as an Apostle."

Elder Roberts' communication, which did not set forth the nature of the objections he raised, was placed by the Presidency in the hands of President Rudger Clawson with the request that the Council of the Apostles investigate the matter. Acting upon this request President Clawson invited Elder Roberts to appear before the members of the Council with a detailed statement of his objections and there make such presentation of his views as he might desire. On January 7, 1931, Elder Roberts appeared before the Council and in some detail registered his objections, which have to do with certain statements that were made pertaining to the questions that there was no death upon this earth before the fall of Adam. and that the theory of pre-Adamites is not a doctrine of the Church. At the conclusion of Elder Roberts' statement I was invited to prepare a statement which would also be given a hearing before the members of the Council.

That I am surprised that Elder Roberts, with his experience should

question what I said, is stating it mildly, for, let it be understood, I can lay no claim to originality for anything proclaimed in that discourse. What was said on that occasion has been said, just as dogmatically, in my judgment, as I declared it, and that too by Apostles and leading brethren of the Church from the beginning. All my life I have been taught these doctrines and believe most firmly that they are imbedded in the revelations given to the Church, and hence in perfect harmony with the plan of salvation. For these reasons, I made the remarks I did in a positive and dogmatic manner, in answer to questions asked me at the time, and in full confidence that they are true. I am perfectly willing to leave the matter in the hands of my brethren, when I am through with this paper, whether or not I have sufficient grounds for speaking as one who has authority rather than as one of the scribes.

We are living in a most wonderful age of discovery and invention. Ancient prophets saw our day and wrote of it. Daniel proclaimed that "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." But no knowledge or discovery, by which the world is benefited, has come to light, except the Lord has willed it. We all know that great benefits have come to mankind through these discoveries, and I fully affirm what Elder Roberts has said, that there are many truths made known that have not been proclaimed by direct revelation. With my brethren I stand ready to accept any truth, from any source it may come; but that which comes through the researches of men, must conform to, and harmonize with, the revealed word of the Lord to his servants the prophets. The Latter-day Saints are not bound to receive the theories of men when they do not accord with the word of the Lord to them, no matter how great the weight of evidence may appear

to be in favor of the theory, or how many men of world renown may accept it as established truth. I firmly believe that the "key of truth" which I proclaimed in that discourse is perfectly sound. The revealed truth from God, is the measuring rod, the test tube, the crucible, by which we may prove all things advocated by man.

While considering the great volume of light which has come through man's research, let us not be unmindful of the fact that the adversary of righteousness is also giving revelation and poisoning the minds of men. Never in the history of the world has he raged in the hearts of men and stirred them up against that which is good more than he is now doing. Never has his dominion appeared to be so firmly established. He has poisoned the minds of the mighty with false theory, philosophy and doctrine, so that we may verily declare that the time spoken of by Paul is here: "And for this cause (i.e. because they hearken to Satan). God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." 2 Thes. 2:11.

It does not always follow that it takes the "competent" and the "wise" in the learning of the world, to confound the mighty. The Lord said he would call upon the weak things of the world to "break down the mighty and strong ones, that man should not ** trust in the arm of flesh." (D. and C. 1:19). Moreover, said the Lord, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." (1.Cor. 1:19).

I believe in the doctrine that there are "worlds without number," which the Father has created and that they have been, are now, and will be for ever, peopled with sons and daughters "begotten unto God." This is the great work of God. The doctrine of organic evolution which pervades the modern-day sciences, proclaiming the edict that man has evolved from lower forms of life through the Java skull, the Heidelberg jaw, the Pilt-down skull, the Neanderthal skull and last, if not least, the "Peiping man,"

who lived millions of years ago, is as false as their author who reigns in hell! Well, that's dogmatic, and it's true!

I believe that there are many worlds that have passed away, that is to say, they have filled their mortal existence and have been crowned with eternal glory; that there are worlds now passing through the mortal probation, and when they pass away and are raised in their resurrection, others will come, for there is no end to the work of the Lord. I do not deny, but firmly believe, that men have lived and died and passed through the resurrection on other worlds, in similar scenes we are now enacting. My remarks in the discourse are, I believe, in strict accord with the word of the Lord and pertain solely to this earth and its inhabitants.

THE WEAKNESS OF GEOLOGICAL TESTIMONY

The greater part of Elder Roberts' paper has to do with the testimonies of the world's eminent scientists in relation to the story told in geology. I shall not, at this time, endeavor to enter into a lengthy discussion of this phase of the question. However, it may be well for us to consider some of the salient features taught by geologists. Geology is a modern science. It is that branch of science which endeavors to solve the problems relating to the structure of the earth; its behavior in its various parts and its physical and biological history. In it, like in other branches of science, theories have been advanced, discarded, changed and modified. "No one can judge fully of the weakness of the present geological theories, or forecast the future development of the science, who does not have clear and somewhat full ideas regarding the history of the science with which we are dealing," says one eminent geologist, who adds: "* in geology, facts and theories are still in-extricably commingled; and in the ordinary college text book of the science, the most absurd and fantastic speculations are still taught to the students with all the solemnity and pompous importance which

