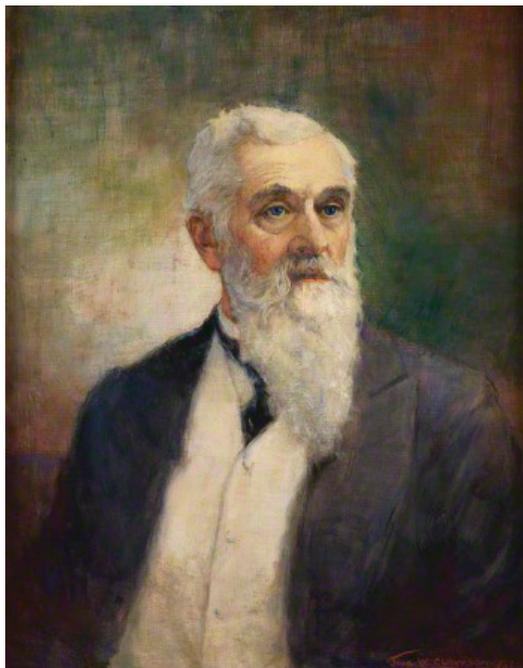


"AN EXPERIENCE OF MY FATHER'S": LORENZO SNOW'S VISION OF CHRIST

An Experience of My Father's

By LeRoy C. Snow

FOR some time President Woodruff's health had been failing. Nearly every evening President Lorenzo Snow visited him at his home. This particular evening the doctors said that President Woodruff could not live much longer, that he was becoming weaker every day. President Snow was greatly worried. We cannot realize today what a terrible financial condition the Church was in at that time—owing millions of dollars and not being able to pay even the interest on its indebtedness.



President Lorenzo Snow
Image courtesy lds.org.

My father went to his room in the Salt Lake Temple, dressed in his robes of the Priesthood, knelt at the sacred altar in the Holy of Holies in the House of the Lord and there plead to the Lord to spare President Woodruff's life, that President Woodruff might outlive him and that the great responsibility of Church leadership would not fall upon his shoulders. Yet he promised the Lord that he would devotedly perform any duty required at his hands. At this time he was in his eighty-sixth year.

Soon after this President Woodruff was taken to California where he died Friday morning at 6:40 o'clock September 2nd, 1898. President George Q. Cannon at once wired the information to the President's office in Salt Lake City. Word was forwarded to President Snow who was in Brigham City. The telegram was delivered to him on the street in Brigham, He read it to President Ruder Clawson, then President of Boxelder Stake, who was with him, went to the telegraph office and replied that he would leave on the train about 5:30 that evening. He reached Salt Lake City about 7:15, proceeded to the President's office, gave some instructions and then went to his private room in the Salt Lake Temple.



The Holy of Holies in the Salt Lake City Temple

President Snow put on his holy temple robes, repaired again to the same sacred altar, offered up the signs of the Priesthood and poured out his heart to the Lord. He reminded the Lord how he plead for President Woodruff's life to be spared, that President Woodruff's days would be lengthened beyond his own; that he might never be called upon to bear the heavy burdens and responsibilities of the Church. "Nevertheless," he said, "Thy will be done. I have not sought this responsibility but if it be Thy will, I now present myself before Thee for Thy guidance and instruction. I ask that Thou show me what Thou wouldst have me do."

After finishing his prayer he expected a reply, some special manifestation from the Lord. So he waited,—and waited—and waited. There was no reply, no voice, no visitation, no manifestation. He left the altar and the room in great disappointment. Passing through the Celestial room and out into the large corridor a glorious manifestation was given President Snow which I relate in the words of his grand-daughter, Allie Young Pond, now the wife of Elder Noah S. Pond, recently president of the Northern States Mission:

"One evening while I was visiting grandpa Snow in his room in the Salt Lake Temple, I remained until the door keepers had gone and the night-watchmen had not yet come in, so grand-pa said he would take me to the main front entrance and let me out that way. He got his bunch of keys from his dresser. After we left his room and while we were still in the large corridor leading into the celestial room, I was walking several steps ahead of grand-pa when he stopped me and said: 'Wait a moment, Allie, I want to tell you something. It was right here that the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to me at the time of the death of President Woodruff. He instructed me to go right ahead and reorganize the First Presidency of the Church at once and not wait as had been done after the death of the previous presidents, and that I was to succeed President Woodruff.'

"Then grand-pa came a step nearer and held out his left hand and said; 'He stood right here, about three feet above the floor. It looked as though He stood on a plate of solid gold.'

"Grand-pa told me what a glorious personage the Savior is and described His hands, feet, countenance and beautiful white robes, all of which were of such a glory of whiteness and brightness that he could hardly gaze upon Him.

"Then he came another step nearer and put his right hand on my head and said: 'Now, grand-daughter, I want you to remember that this is the testimony of your grand-father, that he told you with his own lips that he actually saw the Savior, here in the Temple, and talked with Him face to face.'



Lorenzo Snow had a vision of Christ in the Salt Lake Temple, similar in some ways to the one Joseph Smith described in the Kirtland Temple.

During the June conference in 1919 at an M. I. A. officers' meeting in the Assembly Hall I related the above testimony. President Heber J. Grant immediately arose and said:

In confirmation of the testimony given by Brother LeRoi C. Snow quoting the grand-daughter of Lorenzo Snow, I want to call attention to the fact that several years elapsed after the death of the Prophet Joseph before President Young was sustained as the president of the Church; after the death of President Young, several years elapsed again before President Taylor was sustained, and again when he died several years elapsed before President Woodruff was sustained.

After the funeral of President Wilford Woodruff, the apostles met in the office of the First Presidency and brother Francis M. Lyman said: "I feel impressed, although one of the younger members of the quorum, to say that I believe it would be pleasing in the sight of the Lord if the First Presidency of the Church was reorganized right here and right now. If I am in error regarding this impression. President Snow and the senior members of the council can correct me."

President Snow said that he would be pleased to hear from all the brethren upon this question, and each and all of us expressed ourselves as believing it would be pleasing to the Lord and that it would be the proper thing to have the Presidency organized at once.

When we had finished, then and not till then, did Brother Snow tell us that he was instructed of the Lord in the temple the night after President Woodruff died, to organize the Presidency of the Church at once. President Anthon H. Lund and myself are the only men now living who were present at that meeting.

May the Lord bless and guide us by his spirit continually and may the testimony that we possess of the divinity of the work ever abide with us and our faithfulness be an inspiration to lead others to a knowledge of the gospel, [p.679] is my prayer and I ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

A few days after the M. I. A. conference, in an interview with President Lund in his office, he retold the incident to me as given by President Grant regarding the meeting in the office of the First Presidency on Tuesday morning, September 13th, 1898, at which Lorenzo Snow was chosen President of the Church. He also said that he heard father tell a number of times of the Savior's appearance to him after he had dressed in his temple robes, presented himself before the Lord and offered up the signs of the Priesthood.

I related this experience in the Eighteenth ward sacramental service. After the meeting Elder Arthur Winter told me he also had heard my father tell of the Savior's appearance to him in the Temple instructing him not only to reorganize the First Presidency at once but also to select the same counselors that President Woodruff had. Presidents George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith.



*President Lorenzo Snow with his counselors and the Quorum of the Twelve.
Image courtesy LDS.org.*

LeRoi C. Snow, "An Experience of My Father's," *The Improvement Era*, 36, no. 11 (Sept. 1933): 677, 679.