

Singing in the Pure Language

Elizabeth Ann Smith Whitney, wife of Bishop Newel K. Whitney, received the gift of tongues about 1837. She would often sing a song in the pure Adamic tongue. In the Kirtland Temple she sang in tongues and it was interpreted by Parley P. Pratt. The last recorded time was in 1881 at the home of Emmeline B. Wells.

The following extract is from [Elizabeth Ann Smith Whitney] “A Leaf from an Autobiography,” *Woman’s Exponent* 7 (November 1, 1878):83.

Great manifestations of power were witnessed in the Kirtland Temple . . . The first patriarchal blessing meeting over which Joseph Smith, Sen., presided was one of the most striking and noticeable features of that particular period of time. In this meeting I received the gift of singing inspirationally, and the first Song of Zion ever given in the pure language was sung by me then, and interpreted by Parley P. Pratt, and written down; of which I have preserved the original copy. It describes the manner in which the ancient patriarchs blessed their families, and gives some account of “Adam ondi Ahman.”

In ancient days there lived a man,
Amidst a pleasant garden.
Where lovely flowers immortal bloom’d,
And shed around a rich perfume;
Behold, his name was Adam.

One of the nobles of the Earth,
Had mighty power in blessing;
Received the Priesthood, and went forth
And blessed his seed, and gave the earth
Blessings for their possession.

He sealed them for eternal life,
And all their generations,
Who should obey the Gospel plan,
Down to the latest years of man—
A multitude of nations.

Isaac and Jacob, they in turn
Had power to bless their children:
Hence, Jacob by his faith did learn,
And gave directions for his bones
To be conveyed to Canaan.

By the same spirit, Joseph gave
A great and mighty blessing
To Ephraim, and Manasseh too,
Whereby their seed were carried through

Long travels, though distressing.

By that same faith they built a ship,
And crossed the mighty ocean,
Obtain'd the choicest land of Earth,
Foretold the great Messiah's birth,
And all the great commotion.

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The Holy Priesthood long remain'd
In all its power and glory,
Until the Priests of God were slain,
Their records hid from wicked men
Within the hill Cumorah.

Their remnants sank in sorrow down,
Became a loathsome people,
To misery and sorrow doom'd,
Their pleasant fields o'erspread with gloom,
Ruled by a Gentile nation.

But now the Priesthood is restored,
And we partake its blessings;
Our parents and our children dear
With Joseph's remnants have a share
To latest generations.

As Adam blest his family
In Adam ondi Ahman,
So shall our aged father bless
His seed who dwell in righteousness
Upon the land of Zion

* * * * *

The Prophet Joseph promised me that I should never lose this gift if I would be wise in using it; and his words have been verified.

For a Relief Society Meeting held on July 17, 1880 there is a mention of Sister Sarah Whitney, "R[elief], S[ociety]. Reports," *Woman's Exponent* 9 (September 1, 1880):54.

"Sister Whitney then sang one of her sweet songs of Zion in the language which was spoken and sung (the Prophet Joseph said) by our first parents in the Garden of Eden. Sister Snow explained that Joseph Smith told Mother Whitney 'If she would use the gift with wisdom it should remain with her as long as she lived.' Sister Zina then gave the interpretation. The theme of which was rejoicing and praise to the Great Author and Giver of good."



Original headstone of Elizabeth Ann Smith Whitney.



Current headstone of Elizabeth Ann Smith Whitney, Salt Lake City Cemetery.