

the Son of God, who was crucified for the sins of the world, and that Joseph Smith was a prophet called and appointed to usher in the dispensation of the fulness of times. That is my message to the world, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### ELDER ANTHONY W. IVINS

*My brethren and sisters*, I earnestly desire an interest in your faith and prayers during the few moments that I stand before you this morning, for I feel that I need it.

#### ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF THE LAST GOSPEL DISPENSATION.

All during the proceedings of this conference, as I have listened to the remarks of my brethren who have preceded me, I have been thinking of the one outstanding incident of interest to the Church, which has been so often referred to: that one hundred years, approximately, have elapsed since the ushering in of this the greatest, the most important gospel dispensation that the world has ever known. Prophets of old looked forward to it, prayed that they might see it, and participate in its activities. The Apostle Paul said: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, \* \* \* having made known to us the mystery of his will \* \* \* that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him."

There have been other dispensations in which the gospel has been brought to earth, all of which have been of great importance to the people: that of the meridian of time, when the Redeemer ministered in person, being, without doubt, of greater fundamental worth than any which came before or will follow after, for the redemption of the human family depended upon the atonement which he made, by which we are redeemed from the fall and made heirs with him to the kingdom of his Father. But the great work which he commenced, the glorious triumph of right over wrong, of light over darkness, the fulfilment of the words of all of the ancient prophets, the consummation of the purposes of the Lord, and the redemption of his covenant people, is left for the dispensation in which we live. Proper conclusions can only be drawn by comparison. If there were no tall people, there would be none short. If there were no short people, there would be none tall. If there were no clouds, as there are today, we would not appreciate the sunshine; and if there were no sunshine we would be happy, I suppose, with the clouds.

#### THE DISPENSATION OF THE MERIDIAN OF TIME, AND THE FULNESS OF TIME COMPARED.

So, as we contemplate the events of the past century, we naturally compare our experiences, our accomplishments, our joys and sorrows, our successes and failures, with those that others had before us. While

Christ's ministry did not begin until a considerable time had elapsed after his birth, the ushering in of the dispensation of the meridian of time may be said to date from that eventful night when shepherds who watched their flocks upon the hills of Judea were overshadowed by the glory of the Lord, and a multitude of heavenly hosts sang, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will to men," as the Christ was born into the world.

So, in the day in which we live, while the Church had not yet been organized, the ushering in of this gospel dispensation dates from the occasion to which Brother Talmage and others have made reference, when the Father and Son appeared to Joseph Smith in the early spring of 1820. While there was some development in the primitive church subsequent to the crucifixion of the Redeemer, before a century had passed, Jerusalem was besieged and taken by the Roman armies, under Vespasian and his son Titus; the great temple, in the construction of which Herod had employed eighteen thousand men, for a period of nine years, was destroyed, the Jews were made captive and scattered to the four winds of heaven. To what extent the members of the Church who were at Jerusalem at this time suffered, we do not know, but we are told that, remembering the admonition of the Redeemer, and taking advantage of the temporary withdrawal of the Roman armies, they had been led by Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem, to the little mountain town of Pella, where for a time they were safe.

In the meantime the gospel had been taken by the apostles to other nations than the Jews, and at Corinth, Ephesus, Rome, and other places, more fruitful fields were found than at Jerusalem. At Rome many converts were made to the Christian faith, and as usual, with the spread of truth, the powers of darkness arrayed their hosts against the Church, and its members suffered persecution, the like of which the present dispensation has never known.

Under Nero, who appears to have been a very fiend incarnate, who had murdered his own mother; who burned Rome that he might witness a great conflagration, and then charged the Christians with the offense, the emissaries of Lucifer, the enemy of all that is good, and particularly the enemy of the Redeemer, were given full license to wreak vengeance upon these hapless and innocent people, whose doctrines of peace, good will and righteousness, endangered the dominion of their master upon the earth. The Christians were accused of being rebellious, of holding disorderly meetings, of murdering their own children, of being cannibals. If earthquake, famine or pestilence came, the Christians were held responsible. It was popular to denounce and bear false witness against any suspected of affiliation with the Church, and when brought before tribunals for trial, if they denied that they were Christians, they were condemned because of their obstinacy. If they admitted that they were members of the Church, they were sent away for execution. Their condition, I am reminded, was not unlike that of one suspected of witchcraft among the early Puritans of New England. We are told that the suspected persons were thrown into the water. If they did not sink and drown it

was evidence of guilt, and they were burned. If they did sink and were drowned, it was proof that they were guilty.

To satisfy his own morbid and savage nature, and please the rabble, Nero ordered Christians thrown into the great amphitheatre at the Coliseum of Rome to be torn by savage dogs, killed and devoured by hungry lions, or tossed upon the horns of vicious bulls. He caused Christians to be smeared with pitch and tar and burned as torches with which to illuminate the city at night. Notwithstanding these atrocities, my brethren and sisters, the truth rapidly spread. The maid whispered it to her mistress. The toiler, as he labored in the field, told the wonderful story of the Christ to his fellow workmen, and bore witness of its truth. The soldier whispered it to his companion in arms. The shepherds, as they tended their flocks, told of those other shepherds upon the hills of Judea, and thus, each convert doing the work of a missionary, very many people were added to the Church.

There was at Rome, at the time to which I refer, a great series of underground passages or chambers, abandoned quarries from which stone, for the construction of the city, had been taken. Had you been there at the time to which I refer, and desired Christian worship, you would have gone at a late hour of the night, after the city had ceased from its revelry and debauchery, possibly with some friend, more likely alone, cautiously toward these abandoned quarries. Silently you would have slipped into one of the dark passages, and felt your way forward until a glimmer of light appeared in the distance. A man would salute you as "Brother," and demand the sign of identification by which he might determine your right to be there. You would hear the sound of distant voices engaged in singing or prayer, and would soon emerge into one of those large underground chambers dimly lighted, and find yourself in the presence of a large congregation. All classes of people would be represented there. Beneath the outer garment you would recognize the uniform of an officer of the royal legions of Rome, the rich attire of the patrician, the poorly clad plebeian. Here they met as brothers and sisters, uniting their voices in hymns of praise and prayer, to God for strength to endure the persecution of their ignorant and blinded enemies.

Peter or Paul, if they had chanced to be present, would doubtless have exhorted the assembly devotedly to continue in the faith, bearing witness to them that death in the service of the Master assured more glorious entrance into his Kingdom. Bread would have been broken, blessed, and partaken of; wine blessed and drank, and then you would have stolen quietly back to your home, not knowing whether, before the setting of tomorrow's sun, you, too, would be thrown to the lions. Such was Christian worship during the latter part of the first century after Christ.

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH AND THE CHURCH OF OUR DAY HAVE HAD  
ANALOGOUS EXPERIENCES.

So, by comparison, my brethren and sisters, the experiences of the primitive Church and the Church in the dispensation in which we

live are analogous. Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist when thirty years of age, and was condemned and crucified three years later. Joseph Smith was baptized under direction of this same John, when twenty-four years old, and was martyred fifteen years later, in the thirty-ninth year of his age. Each lived but a short time after his ministry began. Both died for the establishment of the same truths. Each met death violently at the hands of his enemies, but under entirely different conditions. Jesus was formally arraigned, tried and condemned by a legal tribunal, although not entirely in legal form. Joseph Smith was killed by a mob, without pretense of legal formality.

Before a century had elapsed after the birth of Christ, all of the apostles whom he chose, with the single exception of John, were violently put to death by their enemies. During the century which has just passed, the Church has experienced no such conditions as these. In both dispensations the Church was unpopular, and its members bitterly persecuted; in our day, thank the Lord, not with the same wicked, relentless spirit which was manifest toward the primitive Church.

#### THE CONDITION OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH ON THIS CONTINENT.

The condition of the Church and its members during the first one hundred years after its establishment upon this continent, by the Redeemer, was in direct contrast to that of the Church in the old world.

Permit me briefly to read:

And it came to pass that the thirty and fourth year passed away, and also the thirty and fifth, and behold the disciples of Jesus had formed a church of Christ in all the lands round about. And as many as did come unto them, and did truly repent of their sins, were baptized in the name of Jesus; and they did also receive the Holy Ghost.

And it came to pass in the thirty and sixth year, the people were all converted unto the Lord, upon all the face of the land, both Nephites and Lamanites, and there were no contentions and disputations among them, and every man did deal justly one with another;

And they had all things common among them, therefore they were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift.

\* \* \* \* \*

And it came to pass that there was no contention among all the people, in all the land, but there were mighty miracles wrought among the disciples of Jesus.

And it came to pass that the seventy and first year passed away, and also the seventy and second year; yea, and in fine, till the seventy and ninth year had passed away; yea, even an hundred years had passed away, and the disciples of Jesus, whom he had chosen, had all gone to the paradise of God, save it were the three who should tarry; and there were other disciples ordained in their stead; and also many of that generation which had passed away.

And it came to pass that there was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people.

And there were no envyings, nor strifes, nor tumults, nor whoredoms, nor lyings, nor murders, nor any manner of lasciviousness; and surely

there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God.

#### OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS COMPARED WITH THOSE OF THE NEPHITES.

We have not succeeded, during the past century, in accomplishing that which was accomplished by the Nephites, notwithstanding the great results which have come from our efforts. The people have not yet all been converted to the Lord. We have not reached that condition, which I sincerely believe that we must some time reach, when we are united in temporal things, as were the Nephites. We have not reached a condition where there is no envy, nor strife, nor malice, nor whoredoms, nor any manner of lasciviousness among the people. We have not reached a condition that we are in one the children of Christ, as the Lord would have us to be.

It is true, my brethren and sisters, that the conditions under which we have labored are entirely different to those which existed among the Nephites. The Church was established among them by the Redeemer in person, and the power of the Father was manifest in his life and works, as he ministered among them, as it never has been, and never will be manifested through any other person. In the dispensation in which we live the Church was established by Christ through his chosen agent, and it is true that the signs have followed the believer in a remarkable degree, but never with the overwhelming, convincing proof which characterized the ministry of the Son of God. They were a people of one race, speaking one language, with the same ideals, the same traditions, occupying a single country.

Our efforts have been among the people of many different nations and countries, people with different languages, with different traditions, with different ideals, many of whom, after their conversion, have left their native lands, all that the ordinary man holds dear, and have come to a strange country, to identify themselves with a strange people, to be surrounded by a new environment, which was entirely contrary to that which they had been accustomed to.

So I feel, my brethren and sisters, that as we review the events of the past century, we have very much to be grateful for, that we may justly take pride in what we have, with the help of the Lord, accomplished, because all that has been done has been through the Lord and by the help which he has given us.

#### WE MAY LOOK, WITH CONFIDENCE AND FAITH, TO THE FUTURE.

It appears to me that we may look forward with absolute confidence and faith in the future, knowing, because of the experiences of the past, that the Lord is on our side, and that with his help the development of the Church will continue; that in this dispensation in which we live he will consummate his purposes; his covenant people will be gathered; Christ will come to reign personally upon the earth; all of the purposes of the Lord will be consummated, and his kingdom be established upon the earth as it is in heaven. May the

Lord give us faith and strength to continue the efforts of the past century, until these glorious purposes shall be accomplished, is my earnest prayer, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

After a number of announcements had been given out, the choir and congregation sang, "High on the mountain top."

Conference adjourned until 2 o'clock p. m.

Elder Soren Rasmussen, President of the Jordan Stake of Zion, pronounced the benediction.

## AFTERNOON SESSION

The conference was called to order at 2 o'clock by President Heber J. Grant, who presided.

The choir and congregation sang, "Guide us, O thou great Jehovah."

Prayer was offered by Elder H. H. Blood, President of the North Davis stake of Zion.

Choir and congregation sang, "Redeemer of Israel, our only delight."

### ELDER DAVID O. McKAY

"Even so, I have sent mine everlasting covenant into the world to be a light unto the world and to be a standard for my people, and for the Gentiles to seek to it, and to be a messenger before my face to prepare the way before me."

#### AN ENSIGN TO THE NATIONS.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was scarcely one year old when that declaration was made through inspiration by the Prophet Joseph. He himself was but twenty-six years of age. It is a marvelous declaration, great in its pretension, comprehensive in its scope: "Mine everlasting covenant" (the gospel), is sent into the world "*to be a light unto the world, to be a standard for my people and for the Gentiles to seek to it.*"

On Bedloe Island, at the entrance of New York harbor, there stands the Statue of Liberty, a light to the nations. What it has meant to thousands and hundreds of thousands of the down-trodden of Europe has been most graphically expressed by Israel Zangwill in that impressive production, *The Melting Pot*. I shall read a few words. David the emigrant, the little Russian Jew, is speaking:

All my life America was waiting, beckoning, shining, the place where God would wipe away tears from off all faces. To think that the same great torch of Liberty which threw its light across all the seas and lands into my little garret in Russia is shining also for all those other weeping millions of Europe, shining wherever men hunger and are oppressed, shining over the starving villages of Italy and Ireland, over the swarming, starving cities of Poland and Galicia, over the ruined farms of Romania,