

## ALL THINGS POSSIBLE TO THEM THAT BELIEVE

Miracles belong to no particular time or place. Wherever and whenever there is a legitimate demand for the exercise of divine power, that power will act, and marvels will result. We worship a God of miracles, and he changeth not, but is the same yesterday, to-day and forever (Mormon 9:7-11, 17-20). There is but one valid reason for the absence of miracles among any people, and that is the absence of faith. "All things are possible to them that believe."

The choir and congregation sang, "How firm a foundation, ye Saints of the Lord."

Benediction was pronounced by Elder Nelson J. Hogan, president of the Idaho stake of Zion.

Meeting adjourned until 2 o'clock p. m.

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**AFTERNOON SESSION**

President Heber J. Grant opened the meeting by announcing that the choir and congregation would sing, "O say what is truth?"

After singing, Elder Colen H. Sweeten, president of the Curlew stake of Zion, opened the meeting with prayer.

A duet, "For so hath the Lord commanded," was sung by Cannon Lund and August Glissmeyer.

**BISHOP CHARLES W. NIBLEY**

It is a great honor, I am sure, to be asked to speak to this congregation, but I approach this duty with fear and trembling. The meeting this morning, the first session of our conference, gave assurance that the Lord is still with his Saints, and still recognizes this work, and that he is sustaining his servants who labor for his honor and glory.

There is a deep significance in Elder McKay's testimony given this morning, when he spoke concerning the changed conditions in some nations of the earth where hitherto our sons suffered imprisonment for trying to preach the gospel; while now places of prominence are open to them, even the halls of the governments, in which Latter-day Saint missionaries have been invited to hold meetings. What has brought about this change?

During recent years, especially since the World War, great changes have taken place in this direction. I call your attention to a revelation of the Almighty, given to the Church through the Prophet Joseph Smith found in Section 98, beginning at the 4th verse:

"And now, verily I say unto you concerning the laws of the land, it is

my will that my people should observe to do all things whatsoever I command them.

"And that law of the land which is constitutional, supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges, belongs to all mankind, and is justifiable before me.

"Therefore, I, the Lord, justify you, and your brethren of my church, in befriending that law which is the constitutional law of the land;

"And as pertaining to law of man, whatsoever is more or less than these cometh of evil.

"I, the Lord God, make you free, therefore ye are free indeed; and the law also maketh you free.

"Nevertheless, when the wicked rule the people mourn.

"Wherefore, honest men and wise men should be sought for diligently, and good men and wise men ye should observe to uphold; otherwise, whatsoever is less than these cometh of evil."

Again, in the 101st section of the same book, commencing at the 77th verse, we find:

"According to the laws and the Constitution of the people, which I have suffered to be established, and should be maintained for the rights and protection of all flesh, according to just and holy principles;

"That every man may act in doctrine and principle pertaining to futurity, according to the moral agency which I have given unto him, that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment.

"Therefore, it is not right that any man should be in bondage one to another.

"And for this purpose have I established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose, and redeemed the land by the shedding of blood."

This last revelation was given just after the Saints had been driven from their homes in Missouri. Yet the Lord's words to his people were that the Constitution of the United States is that which "I established." This divinely conceived Constitution is, we are told, for the benefit of all mankind. The Lord said that its underlying principles are for the benefit of all flesh, not made for this country alone, but intended to govern the whole world.

Why is it that the elders are not permitted to preach the gospel in Russia today, where there are a hundred and eighty million people who have scarcely heard of the gospel? It is because of the moral agency that the Lord speaks of in the revelation known as section 101. These people are denied their free agency. The rulers of this people have a wrong conception of the rights and privileges which the Lord says pertain to all mankind.

In the 109th section of the Doctrine and Covenants is a prayer, given by revelation to Joseph the Seer, which was repeated in the Kirtland temple at the time of its dedication on March 27, 1836. I shall not undertake to read it, but shall quote only the 54th paragraph:

"Have mercy, O Lord, upon all the nations of the earth; have mercy upon the rulers of our land; may those principles which were so honorably and nobly defended, namely, the Constitution of our land, by our fathers, be established forever."

These words were uttered as a part of the dedicatory prayer, notwithstanding the persecution the Saints had suffered prior to 1836, persecution suffered at the hands of people who were prejudiced, people who were ignorant as to what the Latter-day Saints stood for, ignorant as to their beliefs and their aims. Notwithstanding all this, and clearly showing the broad and liberal spirit of this great latter-day work where such matters are concerned, the words last quoted were uttered as a part of the dedicatory prayer.

The revelations found in the Doctrine and Covenants, sections 98 and 101, which I have quoted, and in which the Lord has said that no man should be in bondage to another, were given at a time when millions of negroes were in bondage in the southern part of the United States. At that time there existed a great question as to whether or not slavery should be perpetuated, and it seemed that the decision might be in favor of continuing to hold this black-skinned race under bondage to the white men who owned them. This question was settled a few years later, when the Supreme Court rendered its decision in the Dred Scott case. Dred Scott was a negro who escaped from serfdom and went into one of the eastern states. His owner followed him and replevined him, claiming he was after his own property, just as he would go for a mule or an ox or a cow. Under the law the slave was his property. Chief Justice Taney, then at the head of the Supreme Court, delivered the decision that this was the law, the constitutional law. This decision was the law of the land; but in the justice and mercy of Almighty God, even a law which became a constitutional law, had to be overthrown, and the Lord raised up Abraham Lincoln and others to see that the law laid down by Him—that one man should not be in bondage to another—was set right and true freedom established in this land.

From that day on, millions more of slaves have been freed in Russia and other lands. In these latter-days, thrones have tottered and fallen, and in place of these has come a representative form of government, a government of the people, a government which gives the people their moral agency, spoken of in the revelations I have read, and which the Lord says is pertinent to all mankind.

It is true that there might be a constitution similar to ours in such countries as Mexico or Russia, and the results would not be at all the same, for the people of these countries are not as intelligent as are the people of this nation. But even in such countries, our Constitution could not help but produce a better government, for in that Constitution are the underlying principles which will, in time, teach these people to govern themselves intelligently. In order that the various peoples of the earth may at sometime reach the point at which they can intelligently govern themselves, the Lord in his mercy has in the past overthrown nations comprised of millions of people who have been subjected to unrighteous domination.

Now, coming to our own land, our own Constitution, I think we hardly appreciate sufficiently what this Constitution means to us and to the work of the Lord. It is my belief that this Constitution, which the Lord declared he established, is for the benefit of all mankind. Verse 77, Section 101, reads as follows: "According to the laws and constitution of the people, which I have suffered to be established, and should be maintained for the rights and protection of all flesh, according to just and holy principles." Certainly, the fundamental, governing principles which the Lord has established on the earth under the name of the Constitution of the United States, were meant for all men, everywhere. These principles, with their accompanying freedom and liberty, are inseparably connected with our great latter-day work, it seems to me; for the Lord tells us that this freedom, this liberty, was brought about through the hands of wise men whom he raised up. Without this great Government of ours, this God-given Constitution, the gospel of Jesus Christ could never have found an abiding place in the earth. They are connected, correlated, interlocked one with the other; for the Constitution, like the gospel itself, is for the benefit of all flesh, for all mankind.

The Book of Mormon tells us that so long as the people of this nation are willing to acknowledge Jesus Christ as the God of this land, or as the ruler of this nation, so long shall his mercies be extended unto them. Notwithstanding the weaknesses of our people, and of other people, I believe that today there is a greater desire in the minds of millions of people of this nation to acknowledge God and to acknowledge Jesus Christ and to live righteous lives than there has ever been before. While in some ways wickedness may be increasing, yet there is an earnest desire in the hearts of millions of people in this nation to acknowledge God and serve him.

Only a month ago President Coolidge delivered his inaugural address, and he closed it with the name of God upon his lips. These are the closing words of that address:

"America seeks no earthly empire built on blood and force. No ambition, no temptation, lures her to the thought of foreign dominion. The legions which she sends forth are armed, not with the sword, but with the cross. The higher state to which she seeks allegiance of all mankind is not of human, but of divine, origin. She cherishes no purpose save to merit the favor of Almighty God."

Here is a direct acknowledgement, most direct, coming from the very head of the nation, showing that the nation believes in God, believes in his divine providence, and asks for nothing save the favor of God.

When Abraham pleaded with the Lord that the cities of the plain might not be destroyed, he was told that if he could find ten righteous people, the Lord would spare them. I believe that, instead of ten righteous people in this nation of one hundred and ten millions, there

are millions of people who are righteous, who daily seek the Lord, and who try to live according to their beliefs.

On the coin of the realm there is another direct acknowledgment that as a nation we believe in God, for, stamped on every silver dollar and on every goldpiece, are the words: "In God We Trust."

Also, in our national anthem we have these words:

"Then conquer we must, for our cause it is just,  
And this be our motto: 'In God is our trust!'  
And the Star-spangled Banner in triumph shall wave,  
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave."

I believe that it is my duty and your duty to teach our children concerning this great God-inspired Constitution, this great law of liberty which he has given to this world, and which was never given before to any nation in any land. Never before has there been a representative government of this kind. Republics have been tried, hundreds of times, thousands of years ago, but never was there anything like this Government. If I had the time I could point out the differences between our God-given Government and those governments of men.

In our nation's hymn "America," we have the words which were given, I believe, by the inspiration of the Almighty. The last verse of this hymn is the one that declares our beliefs as to who is the God of this land, and while we sing it, I believe that we feel in our hearts that Jesus Christ is indeed our God, the true Ruler over this great land of ours. The words of the last verse are these:

"Our father's God! to thee,  
Author of Liberty,  
To thee we sing;  
Long may our land be bright  
With freedom's holy light;  
Protect us by thy might,  
Great God, our King!"

The Lord bless us. Amen.

### ELDER JOHN A. WIDTSOE

About ten days ago it seemed as if I might be prevented from attending this great gathering. I took counsel with myself, and came to the conclusion that the general conferences of the Church, which I have been permitted to attend, with considerable regularity, ever since the days of my early manhood, have been a tremendous source of strength to me. I doubt whether any other Church activity has been more powerful in establishing and building my faith than these great general conferences.

#### GOD GUIDES AND DIRECTS THIS PEOPLE

I have been stirred by this conference; and uplifted in my feelings. I desire to bear witness to the truth of that which has been spoken.