

PRESIDENT ANTHONY W. IVINS

My brethren and sisters: I rejoice greatly, and praise the Lord, who is our strength, and upon whom we depend for guidance and support, for the manifestation of his goodness to us as it is exemplified in this large assembly of Latter-day Saints who are gathered here for the semi-annual conference of the Church.

As I look upon this congregation and review the circumstances which have brought it together, going back into the remote past, and see, or appear to see, how literally the Lord fulfills his promises to people with whom he enters into covenant, my heart is made to rejoice.

PURPOSE OF THESE GENERAL ASSEMBLIES

The purpose of these general assemblies of the Church is that those who have been chosen to preside over it, and its members may be brought together from time to time where report of the progress and development of the work of the Lord may be made, when instruction may be given, when we may be admonished, where admonition is necessary, and encouraged where we need encouragement.

FEATURES WHICH DIFFERENTIATE OUR CHURCH FROM OTHER CHURCHES

There are so many distinctive features which differentiate the Church from other religious denominations that it is impossible, in a short period of time, to refer to even a comparatively small number of them. This is one of those distinctive features, this great gathering of the Church, which occurs twice during the year. Another distinctive feature is that these people who are assembled here, who make up the membership of the Church, are its controlling influence and power under God. Those who preside are placed here by the voice of the Spirit of the Lord, and sustained by the voice of the people. The people uphold them with their faith and prayers and they depend upon the Lord for inspiration and wisdom to properly direct the affairs of the Church for the benefit of all its members. It is not a Church in which the individual members depend entirely upon the instruction and testimony which come to them from their presiding officers. The testimony of the truth which brings them together is their individual gift and right, and they are here and adhere to the faith because the Lord has manifested his truth to them by the power and gift of the Holy Ghost, and they are not dependent upon others for this knowledge.

AN ALLEGED RETROGRADE MOVEMENT IN THE CHURCH

Only a short time ago, just a few months, during the present year, a gathering of representatives of other religious denominations, from all parts of this intermountain country, assembled at Salt Lake City. They discussed the interests of their various organizations, and among other things, as usual, discussed the Church of Jesus Christ of

Latter-day Saints, which they continue to refer to as a non-Christian organization, and they took great comfort, apparently, in the reports which were made from various representatives of those denominations to the effect that they had at last succeeded in battering down the walls of this American Islam, that Christianity was making way among the Latter-day Saints; that the activities of our elders were decreasing; and the tithes of the Church gradually being depleted. In other words, that there was a retrograde movement in the Church which appeared to encourage them in the hope that its members might eventually be converted to the Christian faith. I shall not enter into a discussion of this matter. The proceedings of this great convention were published and may be read. I thought, as I looked upon this congregation of men and women, that it is sufficient answer to these people. We encourage and bless them in their righteous efforts, and the Lord will bless them for all the good that they accomplish. But they are ignorant of the fact that these Latter-day Saints, these people whom they are endeavoring to convert to Christianity, have been converted, not by argument, not by reason alone, but by the gift of the holy Spirit through which they bear testimony to the divinity of the mission and character of the Redeemer of the world as no other people.

THE CIVIL GOVERNMENT AND THE DOMINANT CHURCH IN MEXICO

Reviewing the occurrences of the past six months, and to a careful observer they have been pregnant with events indicating the rapid approach of the consummation of the work of the Lord, I have been impressed with two occurrences more particularly than others during that period of time. The present attitude of the civil government in the Republic of Mexico toward the dominant church in that Republic is of greater importance to the world than we generally understand. It is not a question which involves Mexico alone, but is one which involves all of the churches of the world, and the results which shall be achieved there, whether the civil government of Mexico shall prevail in its present attitude, or whether the church which is opposed to it shall prevail, will have a great influence upon the relationship of the church and state everywhere.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE MUST BE DETERMINED

It appears to me to indicate that a time has come when the proper relationship which should exist between Church and State, between civil and ecclesiastical law, between those who administer civil government and those who stand as representatives of the church or the various religious denominations of the world, must be determined.

That there is a proper relationship is clearly defined in the word of the Lord, and in the teachings of the Redeemer himself. Give to Caesar that which belongs to him; render obedience to the civil law. Give to God that which belongs to him, and render allegiance and

service to him. This can be done very readily if people can only be brought to understand the proper relationship of these two great administrative powers. One of the accusations made against Christ our Lord was that he had declared himself to be a king. Yes, he said before Pilate, I am a king, but my kingdom is not of this world. I am not here in antagonism to the kingdom of Herod, or to the empire of Rome. My kingdom pertains to the life to come. I am here to teach people the way which will lead them back to God, where they will attain to everlasting life, and where they may be crowned as kings and priests of the Most High.

L. D. S. MORE THAN OTHERS DIRECTLY INTERESTED IN THE QUESTION

I shall not enter into any lengthy discussion of this question. I only desire to call your attention to it. Latter-day Saints are perhaps more directly interested in it than any other people in the world, from the fact that the Republic of Mexico is made up in the great majority of its citizens of people whom the world calls Indians, but to whom the Latter-day Saints refer as Lamanites, people whom we believe to be of the chosen and promised seed of Abraham, brought to this continent and established here under the direction of God our Father, under the leadership of their inspired prophets.

THE LAMANITES OR INDIANS OF MEXICO

They developed a great civilization, but finally through unbelief, infidelity, and indifference to the word of the Lord, and the teachings of the Christ who ministered among them, fell into darkness, became divided into tribes, were decimated by civil war until they finally so far lost the spirit of the gospel of Christ that they became idolaters and offered human sacrifices, practices that were entirely foreign to the teachings of their fathers. It was in this condition that the conquerors of Mexico found them. Their prophets had warned them that this would come to pass. They had exhorted them to turn from idolatry, had declared to them that they should be trodden down of the Gentiles, who would come to this promised land, but just as definitely and surely as their subjugation by foreigners had been declared, so did the Lord promise to their fathers that they should be redeemed; that a remnant of them should survive and be brought back to a knowledge of the truths of the gospel of Christ and of their real origin. And so we look forward to the evolution of conditions in that country that will bring about the fulfilment of this latter promise. No people of modern times have been so down-trodden, so persecuted, so afflicted, so burdened with unreasonable burdens as have the people of Mexico during the past four hundred years. Nothing in the way of suffering could be inflicted upon humanity that has not been inflicted upon them. Mercilessly treated by their conquerors, reduced to slavery, they have suffered throughout all these

generations. The Lord in his mercy, and undoubtedly by means so natural and common that many will not see his hand in it, will redeem them from that condition.

RETRIBUTION HAS COME TO THEIR PERSECUTORS

And retribution has come to their persecutors. It is a remarkable fact that of these men who brought that nation into subjugation, there was not one, so far as I am aware, who did not pay the penalty for the suffering he inflicted upon them during his mortal life. Columbus, the discoverer of this country, the man who was entitled to honor and glory far greater than he ever received, consented to the traffic in these peoples as slaves and sent them by shiploads to the old world. You all know how he died at *Valladolid*, in Spain, how he was cast into prison, how he was stripped of the honors which belonged to him, and died in that condition.

Hernan Cortez, the conqueror of Mexico, suffered the same fate. Francisco Pizarro and his friend Almagro, the conquerors of the Peruvian empire, likewise suffered. Pizarro killed Atahaulpa, and later killed Almagro, his bosom friend. The younger Almagro killed Pizarro, and he in turn was killed by the governor of the country. Thus one by one retribution came to them. I believe this law to be as inevitable as fate itself; that we reap that which we sow.

SHALL CHURCH OR GOVERNMENT RULE, OR EACH IN ITS SPHERE?

So, my brethren and sisters, we feel interested in this movement, this conflict which is now on in that country and which shall determine whether or not the civil government or the church shall rule, or whether the church and the civil government will join hands and in harmonious obedience to both civil and ecclesiastical law go on to the development of this continent as God our Father would have it develop.

THE BRITISH-ISRAEL MOVEMENT

Another thing in which I thought you would be interested is a great movement which is just on in Great Britain, which has been of exceeding interest to me. An association is in existence there which is sponsored by many of the great scholars and statesmen of Great Britain, called the British-Israel movement. The British people are undertaking to determine who their ancestors were. They have become obsessed with the thought that they are of Israel, and are investigating and studying, going back into the old traditions and folk-lore of Wales, of Ireland, of England and Scotland, in an endeavor to determine the origin and destiny of the British race. And this in brief is what they are finding out: In the first place that the word "British" itself is very significant. I asked a Jewish Rabbi the other day the derivation of the word "British." He said in Hebrew it was composed of two words, "Brit"—a covenant, and "ish"—a man. A covenant man, or a

man of the covenant, the covenant which God our Father made with Abraham, the covenant in which he promised him that his seed should become as numerous as the stars of heaven—a covenant in which he promised him that kings should come out of him, and that through him all of the nations of the earth should be blessed.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE INVESTIGATION

I cannot take the time to go into detail, but it is sufficient for me to say that these investigations show very conclusive, if not definite, evidence that at an early date in the history of the world, not long after the ten tribes were led away captive into Assyria by Shalmaneser, the tribe of Dan appeared in Ireland and went over into the Scandinavian countries, and there again you will find this singular coincidence, (Dan is one of the tribes of Israel) that Denmark means Dan's Land, or the Land of Dan.

I noted down here, that I might not be too long, just a few of the developments in this investigation. It was after the scattering of the ten tribes that Troy was established, and it is made almost definitely certain that the Trojans, and the nations who lived in the time which we call the age of fable, where the remnants of those scattered tribes of Israel which left the head of the Euphrates river and traveled north over the mountains into Northern Europe. They say that the early appearance of the tribe of Dan is very clearly proven. Later came another division of this same people to Scotland, where they were established. There appeared in Ireland, six hundred years before Christ a great Israelitish lawgiver, who enforced the observance of the Ten Commandments and established a school of the prophets, who was called Ollam Fodhla, two Hebrew words said to mean "wonderful prophet." A medallion now in existence in Great Britain is said to identify this man with the Prophet Jeremiah.

An old manuscript which has been dug up in the British Museum identifies a great character who came there about the same time as Joseph of Arimathea, who came with his daughter Anna to that country. This man, the evidence indicates, was a younger brother of the father of the Virgin Mary, thus Anna became the cousin of the Virgin. The royal family of Great Britain trace their genealogy back direct to this woman Anna. There can be no doubt in regard to this. The only question in doubt is the identity of Anna and some of the scholars in Great Britain agree that she appears to have been a cousin of the Virgin Mary.

SYMBOLISM OF THE BRITISH COAT OF ARMS

The British coat of arms I desire to refer to just for a moment. I think that none of us has very seriously undertaken to define its symbolism and meaning: The lion of the house of David is shown on it; the unicorn, to which the Lord likened Joseph when he said that

his horn should be like the horn of the unicorn, which should push the people together from all parts of the earth; the harp, which was the banner of David. There are ten symbols on the British coat of arms, which appear to represent the ten tribes of Israel. And these were not put there because of the knowledge which modern Britain had of their significance at the time of their adoption. It was the heraldry which had been handed down to them from generations long past.

WHAT THE SAINTS HAVE TRIED FOR YEARS TO TEACH THE BRITISH

The thing which interested me most was that these British people are just beginning to find out what the Latter-day Saints have been trying to teach to them for nearly a hundred years. This great congregation of people which is assembled here this morning—if you should go to the Presiding Patriarch of the Church, whose right it is because of his calling to designate your genealogy—he would almost without exception declare you to be the seed of Joseph, and in the great majority of cases through the lineage of Ephraim, for this is the land which was given to Ephraim—these everlasting hills. His blessing was greater than that bestowed upon his ancestors. Jacob said that it extended to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills. And so this pushing together is occurring, and here Ephraim is gathering in fulfillment of the unchangeable words of the prophets of the Lord.

Now, my brethren and sisters, there is much more—oh, a world of interesting evidence that is being unearthed, not by enthusiasts, not by foolish people, but by scholars, by Egyptologists, by men who understand—until the thought is becoming almost universal in the British Isles, that Israel is there, where we have always known them to be.

A STUDY OF THE PYRAMID OF GIZEH

Another interesting development is a more careful study of the great pyramid of Gizeh in Egypt. What is it? Why was it put there? It is one of the most wonderful things that exist in the world, a miracle in stone. We cannot call it anything else. It stands in the spot where the Prophet Isaiah said the Lord should establish an altar which would stand as a sign and a witness to the Lord in the land of Egypt in the latter days. It is said to be the only perfectly oriented structure in the world, and yet it was put there at a time when the civilization of the world was not supposed to have developed as it is developed at the present time. It is the largest structure in the world. It is said to record the history of the Adamic race during the six thousand years of its existence. It was called by the ancient Egyptians, Khuti, which in Hebrew means the Urim, or Urim and Thummim. Its exterior was polished so that it reflected light as nothing of similar kind had ever done before. It is not the tomb of a king. Its measurements are said to be the most accurate that the world knows at the present time. Its proportions are in exact measurement and harmonize with the

surface of the earth. It represents the relationship of the earth to the heavenly bodies.

I opened the Pearl of Great Price a few months ago and read the story of Abraham in Egypt, where the book tells us that he was sitting upon Pharaoh's throne, discussing with those people astronomy and the mysteries of godliness with which they were not familiar. According to eminent scholars of Great Britain the pyramid is so accurately arranged in its measurements and symbols that it has outlined many great and important events which have occurred since its erection, which apply to the Israelitish people. It indicates a date on the 6th or 7th of April—there is a little difference of opinion but some great event was to occur on the 6th or 7th day of April, which is interpreted to be the date of the crucifixion of the Redeemer of the world. Its measurements indicate the beginning of the great war in 1914, and its termination in 1918. More than ninety per cent of the events chronicled, according to measurements, have already been fulfilled. The scholars of Great Britain tell us that between the present date and 1936 or 1938, the record so far as it applies to this monument in stone will have been completed. There is nothing which appears after that date. And so they look for the accomplishment of great events during this period.

I do not give this to you, my brethren and sisters, as correct in every detail, but it is the conclusion of some of the best informed men of the British Empire, and is not out of harmony with the word of the Lord as he has revealed it to us. It is not out of harmony, if you have been a close observer during the past six months, with the things which have occurred in the world at large. It is not out of harmony with the words of the Redeemer himself who warned the world that in this dispensation, and not far from this time, for it is nearly a hundred years since the organization of the Church, that he will consummate his work so far as it applies to the Gentile nations of the world.

PREDICTIONS FROM THE DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS

I am going to take the liberty to read a few words from the Doctrine and Covenants, that my study of these things has brought to my mind. There are here the Presidents of the missions of the Church. There are in this congregation thousands of men and women who have gone out as missionaries from the Church declaring these truths to the people, as President Grant has stated:

“And after your testimony cometh wrath and indignation upon the people.

“For after your testimony cometh the testimony of earthquakes, that shall cause groanings in the midst of her, and men shall fall upon the ground and shall not be able to stand.

“And also cometh the testimony of the voice of thunderings, and the voice of lightnings, and the voice of tempests, and the voice of the waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds.

"And all things shall be in commotion; and surely men's hearts shall fail them; for fear shall come upon all people."

BE PREPARED FOR COMING GREAT EVENTS

Do you see anything, my brethren and sisters, in current events which indicate the approach of a period of this kind? Be prepared then for it. In what way? Just by serving the Lord. Just by continuing in devoted work in the gospel of his kingdom. Just by observing the laws of the land and the laws of the Lord as they are exemplified in the discipline of the Church. There ought not to be a violator of the civil law in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. There should not be a boot-legger, should not be a blasphemer; there should not be a man or woman bearing false witness against his or her neighbor. There should not be a man or woman whose heart and spirit is not in harmony with the doctrines taught by the Redeemer of the world. And if this condition can be attained and shall continue in the Church; if we shall be as we declare we are, subject to kings and to potentates, to presidents and to governors, wherever our lot is cast, and at the same time go on in our devoted service to the Lord our God, keeping his commandments, having faith in the words of his servants, the prophets, looking steadfastly forward to the accomplishment of his purposes, I promise you that when this time of awful trouble comes which the British seers say is at our very doors, and it will come, his protecting hand will be over us, and he who is powerful, he who can deliver, he who can protect, will give us protection and deliverance.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PRIESTCRAFT AND PRIESTHOOD

God bless you, my brethren and sisters, keep us all from the sins of the world, keep us clean and unspotted, make us more devoted if possible to his word and more loyal and patriotic to the government of which we form a part. For without this government the Church of Christ could not exist, unless God should manifest his power in an unusual manner in our behalf. He has raised up this government and the men who direct its affairs for our protection and benefit, for the protection and benefit of the people of the world in righteousness. But whenever people depart from the way of righteousness, whenever priestcraft shall take the place of Priesthood, God's mercy will be withdrawn. (Distinguish between the words—priestcraft is that system by which men pretend to speak and act in the name of the Lord without authority and without power; Priesthood is the keys and authority to properly act and speak in the name of the Lord, and the power of the Priesthood will be manifest in the works of those who exercise it. And that characterizes the lives of these men, these apostles who are before you, these presiding seventies, and presidents of missions. They exercise the Priesthood of the Lord our God through proper authority, and they exercise it in a proper way.)

When priestcraft shall assume that which does not belong to it, then God's mercy and protection will be withdrawn. Go on and read the remainder of this eighty-eighth section of the Doctrine and Covenants, (I do not like to read it here) because it tells us what is going to happen to priestcraft, and it is coming with those other manifestations of the power of the Lord which are so prevalent.

May the blessing of the Lord be with you, my brethren and sisters. We pray for you, we work for you, we love you. Our only desire is to be of service to you, forgetting ourselves. And I want to bear witness that never in the history of the Church have men more unselfishly directed its affairs than at the present time. I know this from my association with these men, with the Presidency, with the members of the Council of the Twelve. They are here to sacrifice everything for the welfare of the members of the Church of Christ. God help us all to follow that example, I pray through Jesus Christ. Amen.

The choir sang, "Inflammatu8," Laurinda Brewerton, soloist.

The benediction was offered by Elder Geo. W. Middleton of the Ensign stake.

The conference adjourned until 2 o'clock p. m.

AFTERNOON SESSION

The meeting opened at 2 p. m., Sunday, October 3, 1926; President Heber J. Grant presiding.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn, "Praise to the man who communed with Jehovah."

Prayer was offered by Elder John M. Baxter, president of the Woodruff stake.

The choir sang the hymn, "Go, ye messengers of glory."

PRESIDENT CHARLES W. NIBLEY

My brethren and sisters: It has always been a considerable task for me, at the general conferences, to address these large gatherings of Latter-day Saints, although I have had many years' experience. Approaching a task of this kind gives one a feeling of awe.

A GREAT WORK ACCOMPLISHED BY THE SAINTS

I rejoice in the work that the Lord has accomplished with the help of his Saints, imperfect as most of us are. Under his guidance and direction we have been able to accomplish a great work. I believe that he would say now, as he said to the Church in former days, that he is well pleased with his Church collectively—not individually, but collectively.