

## SECOND DAY

### MORNING MEETING

Conference reconvened Sunday morning, April 5th, at 10 o'clock, President Heber J. Grant presiding.

The Tabernacle was crowded to capacity, every seat in the great auditorium and galleries being taken and every available space in the doorways and aisles being occupied. Thousands who could not find accommodations in the Tabernacle assembled in the large Assembly Hall and on the Tabernacle grounds, where they listened by means of the radio to the Conference services.

The Tabernacle Choir and the congregation sang the hymn, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet."

Elder J. Emmett Bird, President of the Kolob Stake, offered the invocation.

The Choir sang the anthem, "Let the Mountains Shout for Joy."

#### PRESIDENT ANTHONY W. IVINS

##### *First Counselor in the First Presidency*

I do not remember an occasion, my brethren and sisters, when it appeared to me that a greater number of members of the Church were present than are here this morning. I feel humble and grateful that I am permitted to be here with you, recognized with you, a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

It is a beautiful morning. The sun shines brightly without. As I walked through the grounds I noticed that the buds on the trees are beginning to burst, to put on their new summer clothing, and awake to newness of life.

Then, when I look at these Easter lilies, with their purity of color, I remember that this is the day when Christian people throughout the world commemorate the resurrection of Christ, our Lord. It seems appropriate that it should come on such a day, that the occasion should come when the earth is awakening from its long winter sleep, its frozen condition, to new life and new energy.

#### EASTER

The word "Easter" is derived, according to a note which I have here, from the Anglo-Saxon word "Eostra," who is the mythical goddess of spring. Prior to the seventh century A. D., no uniform date had been fixed upon which this event, the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, was commemorated. I find that Rome observed the 26th of March; that Gaul observed the 21st of March; Italy the 18th of April; while Christians of Egypt observed April 27th, as the day on which the tomb of the Redeemer of the world was opened, and he came forth with his resurrected body.

Regardless of the date, whether it be upon April 5th, as we commemorate it today, or upon any other day which might be designated, it does bring to our memory, and we commemorate it as one of the greatest—perhaps I might be justified in saying the greatest event that has occurred in the history of the world.

It is true that the creation of man, and the placing of him here upon earth by God, our Father, was the beginning of all things as they now pertain to us; but if the decree of death which was pronounced upon our first parents, and which has been the heritage of man from that time until the present, had been definite and perpetual, if no means of redemption from it had been provided, the purpose of God our Father in placing us here would have been, to a great degree at least, futile.

#### A REDEEMER PROMISED

He promised, in the beginning, that he would provide a Redeemer; that the penalty of death, which was pronounced upon humankind, because of transgression, should not be eternal, but that at a time, designated as the meridian of time, he would send to earth his Only Begotten Son, through whom the bonds of death were to be broken and the restoration of the spirit and body of man became an accomplished fact, when mortality would be no longer a burden to us, but when with glorified bodies we should stand in the presence of God, our Father.

I am just quoting in a general way, because of the limited time, the facts as they are to be found in holy writ. The Bible tells the story very definitely and understandingly to those who read. That the Israelitish people, from whom we are descendants, looked forward to a time when a Redeemer would be provided, is a well-established fact. Israel had been reduced to a condition of servitude. The independence of Judea had passed into other hands. Rome dominated, and the Jews were tributary to her. Their prophets looked forward to the day when deliverance would come. They expected one to come to sit upon David's throne. They looked for a deliverer, a redeemer, who would come surrounded by the panoply of war, and restore to Israel the kingdom which had been wrested from them. The advent of Christ, the humility of his birth, the simplicity of his life, did not appeal to them.

#### "HE WHO WAS TO COME"

When he was baptized in the River Jordan, John, who administered the ordinance, bore witness that he was the Son of God. John had preached repentance and baptism; bore witness to the world that one would come after him, the latchet of whose shoes he was not worthy to unloose. And yet it is evident that John himself was not certain, because while in jail at the decree of Herod, the king, he sent messengers to our Lord, with this question: Go and ask him if he is really he who was to come, or, are we to look for another. Christ answered them and said: Go back and tell to John that which you have seen. The blind see. The deaf hear. The sick are healed. The poor have the

gospel preached to them. Let the mind of John revert to the words of the prophets, who had long before declared that he should come in humility, and not in the glory of the world.

Christ, our Lord, came to earth first, to break the bands of death, and make the resurrection from the dead an established fact. He came to teach us the story of human life, for he lived it, as we should live it. He came to teach us the source from which we came, and to which we shall return.

#### THE WITNESS HE BORE

He bore definite witness that he came from the presence of the Father, as we come from the presence of the Father. He bore definite witness that he returned to the Father; that he went to sit upon his right hand, as it would be the privilege of all of those who accepted and followed him to sit upon his right hand. He bore witness to us that whoever had seen him had seen the Father; that the glory of the Father was not only manifest in his ministry and the doctrines which he taught, but that he was in the exact image of his person. When men said to him: "Show us the Father," did he not answer: Is it possible that you have been with me so long, and ask this question? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father—thus establishing the divinity of the declaration made in the book of Genesis:

"God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him; male and female, created he them."

#### KING THOUGH HE WAS

He taught us the doctrine of humility. King though he was, he rode into Jerusalem upon the colt of an ass—not in a chariot, not with military attendants, not with the blare of trumpets and the beating of drums, but under the most humble circumstances that the human mind can well conceive.

He was born into the world as we are born into it, the son of a righteous, God-chosen mother. He lived very much as we live. He grew up as we grow up, except for the manifestation of his wisdom and godly calling which characterized even his childhood, his youth. He died very much as we would have died, subjected to the same conditions.

It appeared, after all, that the end had come. He had taught the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead, but his disciples did not fully understand, and when they saw him give up the ghost, and laid his body away in the sepulcher prepared by his devoted friend, Joseph of Arimathea, who is said to have been the uncle of Mary, his mother, it appeared to them that the end had come. And they said: After all, there is nothing to it. I am going back to my fishery. I shall go back to my life as a publican. I shall pursue the avocation that I pursued before I knew him.

#### HE WAS NOT THERE

But when the good women came up that Sunday morning which we commemorate today, not expecting to find his sepulcher empty, but

expecting to administer to him the last rites which it was customary among the Hebrew people to administer to the dead, he was not there. An angel of the Lord was there. The great stone which Pilate had ordered to be placed before the opening of the sepulcher, and sealed with a Roman signet, had been rolled aside. The body of their Lord was gone. The linen cloths were there, in which his head had been bound. The angel asked them why they sought the living among the dead.

You are all familiar, you who read the scripture, with the story of his glorious resurrection. You all know that his disciples could not believe it when word was taken to them that he had been raised from the dead. To them it appeared to be an impossibility. While they were met together, with the doors closed, and he appeared before them, they looked upon him in wonder and some doubted. Thomas said: I will not believe until I see the marks of the nails in his hands and feet, and the wound of the Roman spear-thrust in his side. And he did see them. Then he bowed down and worshipped him as his Lord and God, just as we worship him today.

He taught us the doctrine of forgiveness. He said to the sinful woman when her own people would have stoned her to death: "Go thy way and sin no more." Among his last words he said, of those who were responsible for his death: "Father, forgive them. They know not what they do."

#### HE LIVED AGAIN

He lived again. It was after his resurrection that he authorized his disciples to go into the world and preach his gospel, and promised them that the signs should follow—not during his mortal life had he given them such general authority.

The Bible bears witness that not only the body of Christ arose from the grave, but that many of the graves were opened, and people, with their resurrected bodies, went forth into the great city, and appeared unto many.

He appeared after, with his glorified body, to the inhabitants of our own continent. They saw him. They heard his voice. He taught them the same doctrines that he taught to his people in the promised land, or in Jerusalem. So we know that he lived again.

My brethren and sisters, this is the great lesson that he teaches us: This is what I have endeavored, in few words, to present to you: Just as Christ lived and died and was resurrected from the dead, so do we live and die, and so are we resurrected from the dead, or else there is no truth in the revealed will of the Lord as it is written in the holy scripture.

#### IT WAS A REVELATION

I admonish you all to read the last book of the Bible, the revelation given to St. John. We call it the Apocalypse. Reflect for a moment on the manner in which it came. John tells us that it was a revelation of Jesus Christ, our Lord; that he sent and communicated it to him through the agency of an angel—he did not go himself; and then the

wonderful revelations which are made regarding the earth and its inhabitants, the future which is before us, were delivered by this personage to John, the divine disciple of Christ our Lord, who had been banished to the isle of Patmos by decree of the Roman governor.

And what did he tell John? John says: He showed me these things. I saw that the graves were opened; and the dead came forth, that small and great arose from them; that they appeared before God to be judged according to the things which are written in the books, according to their works. All men, he declared, are to be the beneficiaries of the redemption wrought out by Christ, our Lord. The sea gave up the dead which were in it. The graves were opened, and the dead came forth, and death and hell gave up the dead that were in them. They came to judgment, every man and woman according to the works done while they were in mortality, as we are in mortality now. Revealing to us definitely the obligation that we are under to God, our Father, to live righteous lives, to accomplish good purposes, to fulfil the mission for which we have been sent to earth, in a manner that will be pleasing to God our Father, and justified when the balance sheet is struck.

"NO MORE DEATH"

And then what else did John tell us?—I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had passed away. And there was no more death, neither weeping nor sorrow, for all of those things had been done away.

Does this bring a degree of resignation to us? Does it bring happiness to us in time of trouble and sorrow? What does it all mean? It means that every wife who has stood at the bier of her husband, whom death has called, has hope that the separation is only temporary. It means that every husband who has laid away his wife has that same hope, if he understands. It means that mothers who have mourned the loss of children, relatives who have mourned the loss of friends that have been separated from them by death, have joy and consolation in the knowledge, the definite knowledge which has come to us, that there will be restoration from death in the life to come.

It is a wonderful thing to me. I glory in it. So I bear witness to this large congregation of people that we are redeemed from this change from mortality to immortality, which we call death, through the redemption wrought out by Christ our Lord. He is our Redeemer. He is our Savior and if we are true to him, we will be entitled to sit upon his right hand in the mansions of God our Father, when our mortal lives are ended. Every covenant, every promise made to men and women upon earth, which is sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, will go with us into the life to come.

A MAN OF SORROW

Who was this man that made all of this possible? He was not a man of wealth. He was not a man of great national notoriety. He had no home to call his own. He had no place to lay his head. He was not a man who sought the praise of the world, not one to magnify

himself to the exclusion of others; but one who, while in reality a king, was not a king as we interpret that word to mean in human life. He washed the feet of his humble followers. He was not well known in Jerusalem, where he ministered; it was necessary that someone point him out that the officers of the law might know who this man was that was making such great disturbance. A man of humility! A man of sorrow! It is said of him that no one ever heard him laugh, but many people saw him weep, weep because of the sins of the world, weep because of his love for an unbelieving people, his own people, to whom he came but who rejected him as a malefactor and an imposter.

#### THE EARTH IS HAPPY

My brethren and sisters, these are things which these Easter lilies have brought to my mind. These are things which this springtime day recalls. How like our own lives! How like mortality is the earth itself! Winter time comes. The earth appears to die. Ice and snow enfold it. Should it continue so, the earth would not be habitable. It would become like the frozen country to the south of us which Byrd has so recently explored, devoid of vegetation, devoid of life, bleak, hopeless, uninhabitable. But the Lord has so provided that the sun comes back to us, or the earth moves back to the sun, the winter snows and ice are melted, and springtime comes. These trees, barren now of leaves, shoot out their buds, and put on their summer garments. The birds sing again. The earth is happy. So do I see our own lives illustrated in these things of mortality with which we are surrounded. God help us all to appreciate them. God help us all to understand that the resurrection from the dead is a reality, not a mythical thing, but a reality; and that it may apply to us all, I pray, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### PRESIDENT CHARLES W. NIBLEY

##### *Second Counselor in the First Presidency*

It is a great responsibility, my brethren and sisters, to stand before a congregation like this, and I feel the need of your faith, your sympathy and your prayers, for of myself I am not able to enlighten your minds; but if the Lord will favor us, and will favor me with the power of his Spirit, then by that power the mind is enlightened.

I bear witness to the truth of that which has been delivered by President Ivins. We believe literally and truly in the resurrection from the dead. It is taught in our books of scripture—the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants, as well as the Bible. So we have good ground for our belief with respect to that.

#### ON STRANGE TIMES

The world has fallen on strange times. The times are out of joint. Troubles have been ere now, and many of them, in the history of the world. But history gives us no example of anything like the world-wide troublesome conditions that prevail at this very day. There