

THIRD DAY

AFTERNOON MEETING

The closing session of the Conference convened promptly at 2 o'clock Sunday afternoon, April 9. Again the great Tabernacle was crowded to capacity, and thousands of people who could not get into the building gathered in the Assembly Hall and upon the Temple Square where they listened to the services by means of large amplifiers as the proceedings were broadcast from the Tabernacle.

The Choir and congregation joined in singing the hymn, "The Spirit of God like a fire is burning."

Elder Wilford A. Beesley, President of the Salt Lake Stake, offered the invocation.

Mrs. Ray M. Russell sang a sacred solo, "Who are these arrayed in white?"

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

Since our last Conference one of the most beloved, most energetic and most estimable members of the General Authorities of the Church has passed away, a man whose voice has been heard here many many times and one who has filled several missions in Great Britain. Until shortly before his decease he had been presiding over the California Mission of the Church. During his administration several hundred thousands of dollars were expended in the erection of chapels in that mission, and three stakes were organized in what was the California Mission at the time that Brother Joseph W. McMurrin was made its president. He was one of the great preachers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in these last days, a man with a perfect and abiding testimony of the divinity of the work in which we as Latter-day Saints are engaged; a man who won the love and respect not only of members of the Church but of all with whom he came in contact, for his sincerity, his honesty and his fearless defense of the work of the Lord.

ELDER JAMES E. TALMAGE

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

We are reassembled at the time and place appointed, and if we have come, as I feel that we have, with the spirit of righteous desire and faith in our hearts, we should receive a continuation of the blessings that have been so marked in the earlier sessions of this conference.

TIMELINESS

Time and timeliness are very important in the affairs of men, and no less in the ever unfolding purposes of the Lord our God. He does things in his own due time, and that is always the right time. In the

establishment of this nation, of which we have heard much, he chose the time, after due preparation had been made. I believe that had an attempt been made by men to establish a democracy, such as this, a hundred or fifty or twenty years earlier, it would have been a failure.

There is a time for seeding and there is a time for harvest. Many of us become impatient and desire to reap the harvests of the fields and the orchards even before the harvests of the snows have been garnered in the storage recesses of these everlasting hills.

There was a time for the establishment of this Church. It was the Lord's time. Great and numerous events had been leading up to it, and at the appointed time it was established, never again to be thrown down.

EXAMPLES OF TIMELINESS

There is a marked timeliness in the advice and counsel and instructions given to the Latter-day Saints from period to period. Many could not understand, or would not understand why, but a few years ago, during the epoch of recognized prosperity, the usual advice and counsel to the people in regard to things temporal was emphasized, perhaps more than ever before. People were told to get out of debt, and to keep out of debt, and not to go into expanding schemes whereby their means would be tied up. They were told of the very conditions that are now upon us. It is true that through all the decades past since the people came to these mountains, advice of this kind had been given; but it was intensified in recent years, and those who had ears to hear listened and acted upon the counsel given. To others it was mere repetition, and they permitted it to pass.

There was a time when our Elders were preaching among the nations of the earth the doctrine of the gathering, and urging upon the people, the members of the Church in those other countries, to make arrangements to come to Zion as soon as they could. That was when immigration into this country was unrestricted, and the Perpetual Emigration Fund was maintained for the assistance of worthy saints who were otherwise prepared to come to this land. They were told at that time—I heard the Elders of the Church declare it when I was a boy in my native land—that the day would come when it would not be possible for people to come to Zion, and they should take advantage of the opportunities that they then possessed. And so it is with many other developments.

COUNSEL IN SEASON

Now, at this conference there has been much emphasis laid upon the necessity of attention to personal health and the conditions that tend to conserve and insure health of body and mind. I can imagine that some who are deaf to the finer sounds of the Gospel, as declared by the Lord's representatives, may well say: "We have heard that before. We have heard too many sermons about the Word of Wisdom." There is significant meaning in the emphasis that has been given to this subject

at the current conference, and those of you who are receptive—and I trust most of you are—must know that there is a deep significance in the emphasis being laid upon that topic just now.

Have you not read of the pestilences, including perhaps strange diseases, that are to sweep the earth? They are among the judgments that were foretold for these days. We had a taste of such back in 1918-19, when the great influenza carried, according to the established records, over sixteen millions of people to their graves. Now, all other things being equal, it is the healthy and the strong who are more likely to survive under the assault of disease.

Latter-day Saints, look to your bodies, look to your health, as you have been again and again advised to do; and if disease and pestilence come let it not take you because of your blamable condition of ill health.

We have heard of these ills—calamities we call them though they may be blessings to the race in disguise—that are characteristic of these days. They have been predicted, and some people are apt to place responsibility if not blame for all these upon the Lord, and to envision him as a God of vengeance. He is a God of love, and it is necessary that some of these experiences shall come upon mankind, that they may be better prepared for what the Lord has in store for them by way of blessing.

FOREKNOWLEDGE NOT A DETERMINING CAUSE

It is not fair to blame the Lord, even in thought, because he gives us warning of what is to come. It is most irrational and illogical so to do. He, with his omniscience, knows what is to come to individuals and nations, and he gives warnings. Many of us take that warning to be an expression of divine determination to punish and to afflict. Well, others besides the Lord are subjects of ill-directed blame sometimes. I have suffered from it. On one occasion I undertook to warn a merry party of intending picnickers not to set out on their jaunt, because a storm was coming, a violent storm. I had consulted the instruments that told of its coming. But they knew better and they went, and they came back in some fashion. I wish you could have seen them. But the tragical part of it was they blamed it all on me.

Shall it be that because the storm is predicted we should believe that the foreknowledge so used is a determining cause? You know better. Let us be thankful for the warnings that the Lord has given and is giving, and prepare ourselves against the tempest.

Oh, Latter-day Saints, we have to bear the conditions that have been foretold, and that are now being realized. Let us do it with faith and resignation, never faltering, knowing that the Lord will bring out all things well, for his word shall not fail, nor shall his purposes be turned aside.

I am happy to be in harmony with the spirit of this conference, to find myself receptive to the advice that has been given.

May the Lord's peace and support be with us now, henceforth and forever, I humbly pray, in his name. Amen.