

ELDER RUDGER CLAWSON

President of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brethren and sisters, it is a wonderful sight to see so many Latter-day Saints assembled in one body. It is impressive. I have rejoiced in the spirit of this meeting thus far. I think we have made an excellent start for a splendid conference.

THE SAVIOR'S BIRTH AND MISSION FORETOLD

The Savior has been referred to this morning. He was the great central figure in all the world of mankind, and prophets of ancient Israel predicted his birth in no unmistakable language. They looked forward to his day with keenest interest, knowing that he would be entrusted with the greatest mission that ever had been or ever would be given to mortal man. By the eye of faith, under the inspiration of the Almighty Father, they saw that he was destined to become the Savior of the world through the shedding of his precious blood.

As ancient prophets anxiously looked forward to his day, so modern prophets look backward with equal interest to his day, and all, both prophets and saints, rejoice in contemplation of it.

Some people in Christian communities, even ministers of the gospel, have denied the divinity of his birth, while on the other hand in several instances, writers have asserted that no such character as Jesus Christ, the Lord of the Holy Bible, ever existed. They could just as well have repudiated the entire Bible itself as to make such a ridiculous claim.

WORDS OF SCRIPTURE SET TO MUSIC

Brethren and sisters, permit me to read, by way of reminder, some of the scriptural passages mostly found in the book of Isaiah the prophet, relating to the Christ, which were set to music by George Frederick Handel and designated *The Messiah*, an oratorio. The words were undoubtedly inspired of the Lord, and we may well believe that the music was also given by inspiration.

The oratorio is divided into five parts as follows: *The Prophecy*, *the Fulfilment*, *the Passion*, *the Glorification*, and *the Resurrection*.

WORDS OF PROPHECY

I will first read the words of prophecy concerning the Christ:

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned.

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low, the crooked straight, and the rough places plain.

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: Yet once a little while and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come.

The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; Behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.

But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth?

For he is like a refiner's fire.

And he shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name Emmanuel, God with us.

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For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee, and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

THE FULFILMENT

These were prophecies made in ancient times concerning the Savior, and now follows the fulfilment of these *prophecies* in brief:

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night.

And lo! the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying:

Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will towards men.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee.

He is the righteous Savior, and he shall speak peace unto the heathen.

Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; and he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Come unto him, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and he shall give you rest.

Take his yoke upon you, and learn of him; for he is meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

THE PASSION

And now comes the *Passion*. Think of the solemnity of it.

He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him.

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Thy rebuke hath broken his heart; he is full of heaviness. He looked for some to have pity on him, but there was no man; neither found he any to comfort him.

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto his sorrow.

THE GLORIFICATION

And now the *Glorification*:

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

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Why do the nations so furiously rage together? and why do the people imagine a vain thing?

The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed.

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Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever.

KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS, HALLELUJAH!

THE RESURRECTION

And now finally the *Resurrection*:

I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

And though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.

For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first-fruits of them that sleep.

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Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.

Blessing and honor, glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

While these references from Holy Writ cover, broadly speaking, the life of Jesus Christ, there are many other scriptures that throw much light upon the great and enduring work he accomplished.

OUR OBLIGATION TO THE REDEEMER

In conclusion let me say that we should never forget the words of John, the beloved disciple, as recorded in chapter 3, verse 16, in St. John's gospel:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

This passage of scripture emphasizes the tremendous obligation the children of men are under to the Redeemer who suffered for them a cruel and ignominious death.

I testify to you for myself, in all solemnity, that I do know that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the world, and was crucified upon Mt. Calvary for the sins of the world, and that Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God.

I rejoice with all my heart and soul in this testimony, which I hope to have and to retain all the days of my life.

I pray God's blessings upon you brethren and sisters, and upon the Presidency of the Church and all the General Authorities, and all the local authorities of the Church in the stakes of Zion, and the people of God generally. May his blessings and power and goodness be upon you I pray, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER SYLVESTER Q. CANNON

Presiding Bishop of the Church

I rejoice, my brothers and sisters, in the splendid spirit that has been evidenced in this first meeting of this conference; and am happy with the splendid report that has been presented of Church progress in 1935. It is stimulating to know of the very favorable conditions that prevail throughout the Church, and toward the Church by our fellowmen in this nation and in other places throughout the world. I realize that, after all, the progress that we make as a people depends in large measure upon our actions. I was interested in the expression of the President that "Zion is growing" and is spreading abroad.

WHAT AND WHERE IS ZION

What is Zion and where is Zion? I would like to read to you a few things that President Brigham Young stated about that very thing. He said, "Where is Zion? Where the organization of the church of God is. And may it dwell spiritually in every heart. And may we so live as to enjoy the spirit of Zion always." Further he said, "When we conclude to make a Zion we will make it; and this work commences in the heart of each person." Again, "This is the land of Zion. West of us is a body of water that we call the Pacific, and to the east there is another large body of water which we call the Atlantic, and to the north is where they have tried to discover a northwest passage. These waters surround the land of Zion." Again, "What is Zion? In one sense Zion is the pure in heart. But there is a land that will ever be called Zion. It is North and South America." Finally, he states "Zion will extend eventually all over the earth. There will be no nook or corner upon the earth but what will be Zion. It will all be Zion."

ZION—WHERE VIRTUE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS PREVAIL

Now, as I read these statements I conclude that Zion is a place where virtue and righteousness are practised, and where the love of the Lord