

men and women quite comparable to the missionary work of the Church. I doubt if the Church engages in any other activity that brings to it such a constant vitalization as the missionary work does.

The Northern States Mission is made up of a section of the United States that is both rich and populous. The Church in its infancy was cradled in these states. The cradle was rocked so violently that only the hand of providence saved it. It is gratifying to know that the weary feet of our people never rested upon a spot that was not made greener thereby.

One of the fundamental obligations resting upon this Church is to preach the Gospel to the world. This is indeed a high commission, a great and exalted calling, but the second obligation, that of living our religion, is still higher and greater. I recently heard a young missionary in one of the large cities of the East sketch in outline the organization of the Church, its plan for solving the social and economic problems that vex and distress the world. At the conclusion of the meeting a man said to me, "How does it work out? You must live in a marvelous community." That is the test to which the Church must be subjected. How does it work out? My brethren and sisters, if we have faith enough to live the plain principles of our religion, to practice what we have been taught all our days, we are destined to become the pride and glory of the earth. If we care for our poor a little better than other churches do; if the youth of this Church enjoy greater opportunities, if they grow up untouched by sin, uncontaminated with the wickedness of the world; if we are distinguished for our honesty, our sobriety, our industry; if we do actually live a little longer; if our lives are a little happier—then we have no need to fear! No bigotry can defeat us, no malice can stay our progress, no hatred can destroy us. Philosophers, educators, statesmen, and thinkers will come from afar to see how we do it. This is the day of demonstration. 1700 missionaries may preach this Gospel loud and long, far and near, but they can never preach it with the convincing power that we can do by living it. We belong to a great Church. God help us to honor it, to declare its message to the world and to vindicate in our daily lives its advantages, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

ELDER RULON S. WELLS

Of the First Council of the Seventy

What a blessed thing it is to live in this beautiful world! I wonder how well we appreciate the great privilege that is given to us in the span of human life. What an opportunity it affords to every one to accomplish something that will be for our eternal welfare! God has ordained that we should have this earth-life experience. What a beautiful world he has made for us in which to dwell! How grateful we ought to be! When we contemplate the beauties of it and look out into the world, and especially at this time of the year, when the springtime is approaching and the buds begin to swell, and leaves

to unfold, how my heart thrills with the beauty of this natural world in which we live, and my heart goes out in gratitude to my Heavenly Father for the span of human life. He has been good to me and extended the years of my life very greatly.

My father used to say, when he had attained the ripe old age of seventy years, "Now I have attained the allotted age of man, three score years and ten, what years I may yet live are borrowed time." From that we might suppose, from a life insurance point of view, that it would be lopped off from somebody else's life. He lived some six or seven years after that allotted time. It has been my privilege to go nearly twelve years already beyond the allotted age of man, and I feel grateful, and I have the hope in my heart that I may devote the years that I may yet live in the service of God, in the building up of his kingdom here upon the earth, this beautiful earth, this beautiful world in which we live, and that I may be full of admiration and gratitude for the beautiful home which God has made for us.

I am not blind to the fact that there are some things which greatly mar the beauty of the world in which we live, and that mar our happiness, not coming from God, however, but from those who inhabit this beautiful world. We read in the newspapers of the terrible crimes that are being committed, executions of judgment for heinous crimes. We read of the terrible things that are happening all around us—murders, robberies and other offenses; of wars, and rumors of wars. We read of the great nations on the verge of war. What is the reason, and why should these things be in this beautiful world? Why cannot the children of God dwell on it in peace and in harmony, and enjoy the great privileges and the great blessings which God gave to us when he made this world to become our habitation for the span of human life, during which period we are to be tried?

The Lord purposes that we should be tried, and therefore it has become necessary in order to bring about the purposes of the Almighty that there shall be opposition to the will of God. God wills that we shall do right, that we shall live in peace and harmony together. God wills that we shall live righteous lives, that we shall love him and keep his commandments. But the devil came also, and he was permitted to come, and he exercises an influence upon the children of God, and leads them away from God; hence the confusion, hence the wickedness, hence the strife, the wars, and rumors of wars, and all the wickedness that we see round about us. Does the Lord will that, or does he not? What is the occasion of this life, and why are we subjected and placed in a position where we have to witness these things, and hear of them, and where we have to come under the temptations? Because the Lord deemed it necessary that there should be opposition in all things in order that we might be tried.

When he placed our first parents in the Garden of Eden he planted in the east of Eden a wonderful garden, with wonderful trees

growing there, and he took the man that he had made out of the dust of the ground and placed him in this garden. He saw that it was not good for the man to be alone, and so he made a helpmate for him and placed them in this garden in which these wonderful trees had been planted, that would supply all their bodily requirements; all that they had to do was to stretch forth their hands and obtain the things that were needful for their welfare. In the midst of that garden God planted also two very marvelous trees, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life. They were somewhat different in their nature from other trees. I do not know just what fruit was being yielded upon those other trees. There may have been pear trees, apple trees, etc., but one thing we are quite sure about, there must have been a fig tree, as we read further in regard to the products of that tree. But the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was something different, not like the apple or the pear, it doesn't partake of that nature at all.

Just as a pear is the fruit of a pear tree, or the peach or the apple is the fruit of the peach or the apple tree, so too is Knowledge of Good and Evil the fruit of the tree that bears that name. And Life, by which I mean eternal life, is the fruit of the Tree of Life. A tree is known by the fruit it bears, and "by their fruits ye shall know them." That is the nature of every plant that grows.

And now then, this wonderful tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Why should there be opposition to the will of God? Because light has come into the world and with that light comes responsibility, the free agency of man, because we had to choose between good and evil, having partaken of the fruit of the tree that bears that name. How could we choose between good and evil if it were all good? Hence the necessity for opposition to the will of God, and the devil came also and lured them away from God, and they broke the law of heaven.

What is the law of heaven? Obedience to the will of God, for "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God." Obedience, then, is the first law of heaven. Partaking of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil of course was forbidden, not because it was undesirable, not because there was anything in it of itself that was wicked, not by any manner of means. For how could we be saved unless we had that knowledge of good and evil? How could we choose between the two? Impossible. Therefore the opposition came and we must be proven as to whether we would do all things whatsoever the Lord God should command us to do. Obedience to the law of heaven is an essential condition of salvation, and an essential condition in heaven.

I sometimes think of this world and compare it with what it was before the curse of the Almighty came upon it in the Garden of Eden, where everything was beautiful and everything was peace and tranquility, the lion and the lamb lying down together, and all was

harmony. It must have been beautiful indeed. It is referred to in the scripture as "the garden of the Lord." Isaiah tells us: "For the Lord shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." (Isa. 51:3.) Surely then the Garden of Eden must have been beautiful, a little heaven on earth. It was Paradise.

Adam and Eve violated the law of heaven by breaking God's commandment and hearkening to the devil, and therefore they were driven out of Eden. Shall the devil rule in heaven? Why did the Savior teach us to pray: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven"? Whom shall we obey? God or the devil. Whomsoever ye list to obey his servant ye are. Such then was the Garden of Eden. But on account of disobedience the Lord cursed the earth—not Adam and Eve—he cursed the earth for their sakes. No longer could they stretch forth their hands and get without effort the things that they needed. No, they must earn their living by the sweat of their brow. There were no thorns or thistles there at the beginning. Now Adam must earn a livelihood on this earth under the curse that was placed upon it, with thorns and thistles to contend with, and many other things that they had to contend with under the curse which God had put upon the earth for their sakes.

Are we to regard this early episode in the history of our race as a calamity? No! indeed! Was the fall of Adam in reality a misfortune? Again no, indeed! For, as we read in the Book of Mormon, if Adam and Eve had not transgressed there would have been no progress but they would have remained forever in the same state in which they were then first created—in a perfect state of innocence, "having no joy, for they knew no misery, doing no good, for they knew no sin." Therefore to bring about the eternal purposes of God in the end of man it was found necessary that there should be opposition. And furthermore there would have been no children and hence we would have been deprived of our golden opportunity of living upon this beautiful earth, this probationary period, the span of human life. But the Lord desires that our eyes shall be open, that we shall have knowledge of good and evil, and therefore we are exposed to them, and blessed are we if we will choose the good and reject the evil. We do not have to do the wrong; we should do the right, and if we do the Lord is bound, under the covenant that he has made with us. If we shall do all things whatsoever the Lord our God shall command us, there shall be glory added upon our heads forever and ever. That is the promise; it is God's covenant. We are a covenant people, and that covenant has been restored to the earth with the restoration of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord, and all things whatsoever the Lord our God shall command us are embodied in that glorious Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Obedience, then, to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ will

entitle us to eternal glory, worlds without end. That is the promise. The Lord keeps his covenants. Men do not always keep their covenants. What a wonderful thing this covenant is that the Lord has made with us!

What is a covenant? If you will look at your dictionary you will find that it is defined as an agreement between two persons or parties. Sometimes those agreements are made between nations, and then they are called treaties, and they are usually entered into by being signed by the executive heads of those nations or governments and then ratified by their legislative bodies. Such are the treaties that are made with the nations. They are intended to be solemn pledges whereby they bind themselves with one another to make good the agreements they enter into with each other. What a terrible shock it was during the World War to hear the ruler of one great nation refer to his solemn treaty as "a mere scrap of paper," but in these later days we are getting used to that, and these dictatorial rulers of many great and wonderful nations are treating their solemn treaties like mere scraps of paper; but they should not be so treated, they should be solemnly and truthfully and faithfully kept. Between individuals we draw up an instrument and we sign it, and have it signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of witnesses, and then go before a notary public or a justice of the peace and make oath in order to make it binding, and in order that it may be still more so, laws are passed imposing penalties for breach of contract. These are in the nature of covenants which men make with their fellow men.

What must we then think of a covenant where God himself is the party of the first part? Such a covenant God has made with every one of us. He has entered into an agreement with us. If you will do all things which the Lord your God shall command you; if you will do his will, you shall have glory added upon your heads forever and ever. That is the pledge, and God keeps his covenant and we should do the same.

How do we enter into that covenant? Not by signing a written instrument. True. But in a most impressive manner and a most authoritative manner. The Lord commissions his servants, bestows upon them his priesthood and authorizes them to perform sacred ordinances, the same as if he had signed it in person. They call attention to the necessity of following the Lord Jesus Christ and obeying his Gospel, doing all things whatsoever the Lord shall command us. That is the contract, and we enter into it in a most solemn way. What is the formality of it, if not by writing with pen and ink? It is by baptism by immersion for the remission of sins. What a wonderful and impressive formality! Could anything be more so? In baptism by immersion we symbolize both death and life, for as the Apostle Paul explains: "We are buried with Christ by baptism into death and brought forth out of the watery grave in likeness of his glorious resurrection. This is also symbolized in the story of the Garden of Eden and the two marvelous trees that were planted in the midst of

the garden—the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil concerning which God commanded “Thou shalt not eat of it, in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” Therefore, for sin, death. The other tree—the Tree of Life—eternal life, God’s greatest gift to man, which will come to those who do his will. Again as the Apostle Paul tells us: “For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom. 6:23.) All this is symbolized in the holy ordinance of “baptism by immersion for the remission of sins,” and this is valid only when performed by one who has been duly commissioned of Jesus Christ the Lord. After this it is ratified by “the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost” by one having authority, just as Peter declared on the day of Pentecost: “For the promise is unto you and to your children and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” This is the seal of the covenant by which it is ratified and those receiving it are confirmed members of his church.

May the Lord help us to be true to the covenants we have made with him in the waters of baptism, and so to live that we may have those glorious blessings in this beautiful world, when it shall be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

I wish again to thank this wonderful choir for being here and for so thoroughly inspiring us with their music.

An anthem, “The Heavens are Telling,” (Haydn), was sung by the Choir.

Elder Danford M. Bickmore, President of the Hyrum Stake, offered the benediction.

Conference adjourned until Sunday, April 5, 9:30 a. m.

SECOND DAY

MORNING MEETING

Sunday morning, April 5.

As a prelude to the third session of the Conference a program of choral and organ music was rendered by the Tabernacle Choir and Organ from 9:30 to 10:30 a. m., which program was broadcast by radio throughout the United States and Canada over the Columbia Broadcasting System’s network, originating over Station KSL, Salt Lake City.

As the time approached for commencing the broadcast every available seat and space in the great Tabernacle auditorium and galleries was occupied, and in addition thousands of people assembled on the