

May the Lord continue His Spirit to be with us at all times. May He be with us during the remainder of this Conference; particularly may He bless and restore President Grant to complete health and strength, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

An Anthem, "My Soul is Athirst for God," (Dr. Florence Jepsen Madsen), was sung by the Brigham Young University Chorus. Soloist: Edward Sandgren.

## ELDER SYLVESTER Q. CANNON

### *Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

I am very grateful, my brethren and sisters, for the opportunity I have to be present with you this morning. The statesmanlike expression of the growth of the Church, of the progress of every activity of the Church, and the faith of the people, as expressed by President Clark and those who have spoken, has impressed me and affected me very greatly. I appreciate the fact that this work is progressing effectively and under the influence of the Holy Spirit the Lord is blessing His people and enabling them to accomplish the work which is before them.

I regret with you very greatly the fact that President Grant is unable to be present with us this morning; yet I rejoice in great measure that his health is improving; that he is on the road to recovery; and that the blessings of God are with him.

I rejoice in the mission of peace which is manifest among the Latter-day Saints and among many other people, and in all that has been said regarding this important quality and characteristic. I was impressed with the testimony and prayer of Brother George T. Hyde, imploring the Lord for peace and the way to overcome conditions which prevail throughout the world today, particularly in the Eastern Hemisphere.

### WARS AND RUMORS OF WAR

The ways of God are the ways of peace. Yet, in spite of His efforts to promote peace on earth, it is still a fact that among many millions of people, particularly in the Eastern Hemisphere, wars and rumors of war are largely prevalent. Threats of war are heard almost constantly in the other half of the world. In this western continent the larger part of the peoples are in the enjoyment of peace. We are grateful for the fact that, for a period at least, the Western Hemisphere has not, to a large extent, in any way been embroiled in all the turmoil, which will lead we know not where.

There are those, who, both here at home, and particularly abroad, would like to see this great nation become involved in these struggles abroad. So far, fortunately, the majority of the people of the United States, and, to a very considerable extent, the people of other western nations, have been able to keep their heads and their common sense, and to follow the wise and ancient counsels of the Father of our country, to

beware of entangling alliances with the foreign nations of the old world, and not to ally ourselves for war with any of these countries.

The Latter-day Saints believe firmly in peace. We consider that wars are largely foolish and unnecessary, and that the present warring conditions are entirely without justification or necessity. With the present measure of intelligence among men, if those engaged in strife, were free from selfishness, greed and ambition, peace would prevail. The Prince of Peace came on earth in His mortal life nearly two thousand years ago, but due to the hatred and prejudices among men He was unable to carry out His peaceful desires fully and, as He himself stated, He "came not to send peace on earth, but a sword." (Matt. 10:34) During the twenty centuries that have elapsed since His coming, there have been wars and rumors of wars prevailing largely. As His mortal ministry was about to be finished, He said to his disciples:

These things I have spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace.  
In the world ye shall have tribulation.

#### QUOTATION FROM BRITISH THINKER

Recently, I noticed an article in the *Contemporary Review* written by a prominent British ecclesiast regarding the present war conditions, and discussing the question of universal peace. The statement is entitled, "Ruling and Overruling." I quote a few brief extracts therefrom as follows:

The war raises again the grave problem of the relationship of God to the world, and of His activities in the affairs of men. Many are asking—Why did not God intervene to prevent this dread calamity, to spare mankind this tremendous ordeal? Is God inactive in His universe, and His very existence problematic? If not, what is the method in which His sovereignty is expressed, and what is the end it seeks to achieve? Surely, peace in its essential meaning demands catholicity, the commonwealth of mankind, and the community of a truly human fellowship. Is the structure of human society at present sufficiently strong and righteous to rear and sustain this weighty and glorious edifice? Obviously, it is not. Should not the war, therefore, be regarded as, in part, the Divine judgment upon us? If so, mercy is at its heart."

#### FREE AGENCY GIVEN TO MEN

As indicated by the writer of this article, many people raise the question as to why God did not intervene to prevent the great calamity that has come upon the earth and to spare mankind this tremendous ordeal. In my judgment the questions asked and the issues raised do not agree with the fundamental principles under which the Almighty operates, and by which He accomplishes His purposes. Men and women, who inhabit this earth, inherently enjoy the right of free agency, or the right of choice, in their actions. Though God does earnestly desire and strive for the acceptance of His purposes by mankind, He will not exert compulsory means to bring to pass His designs. As the Lord declared to Cain when the latter was angered with his brother Abel:

If thou doest well, thou shalt be accepted. And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door, and Satan desireth to have thee. (Writings of Moses.)

Though many men under the influence of justice and righteousness are led toward peace and good will, those who are influenced by selfishness and personal ambition will act contrary thereto. The Prophet Nephi declares:

Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great mediation of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself. (II Nephi 2:27.)

Every individual has the right of choice. And just as everyone has the right of free agency, so everyone will be held accountable for his or her choices. For all have the intelligence, and must render an accounting of their actions. This is clearly portrayed in the *Pearl of Great Price*, writings of Moses, Chapter 4, Verses 1 to 4, as follows:

That Satan, whom thou hast commanded in the name of mine Only Begotten, is the same which was from the beginning, and he came before me, saying—Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor.

But, behold, my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved, and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever.

Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I caused that he should be cast down;

And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice.

These statements make clear the fact that, because of the domination of men, in bringing about war, the Lord did not intervene, even though He has steadfastly sought to win mankind to peace and union and righteousness. As already stated, due to the agency of mankind to make their choices as to their ways of life, they will necessarily have to render an accounting of their acts in this life. As was revealed to the Apostle John, (Rev. 20:12) regarding the accountability of all mankind for their acts:

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

#### JOY COMES THROUGH SERVING GOD

The relationship of God to the world, and His interest in the affairs of men, is greatly misunderstood by many of the people of the various nations. They conclude, apparently, that He is actuated by arbitrary

or dictatorial attitudes, instead of being the embodiment of justice and righteousness, love and mercy, particularly toward those who seek to know and strive to do His will. He is love. He desires greatly the progress and happiness of mankind. He realizes that the greatest peace and joy come to men who seek to harmonize their wishes with His will: "Men are that they might have joy," and joy comes to those who undertake to keep His commandments. But, if mankind choose to follow the influence of the adversary, to be guided by domineering or dictatorial leaders, with the accompanying destructive results, they must take the unfortunate consequences.

#### THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

The question—"Is God inactive in His universe, and His very existence problematic? If not, what is the method in which His sovereignty is expressed, and what is the end it seeks to achieve?"—indicates a lack of faith in and understanding of the great personages who constitute the matchless governing and supreme power over all things, by whom all things were created, whether visible or invisible, whether in heaven, on earth, in the earth, under the earth or throughout the immensity of space. The work and the glory of God is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. Respecting the method in which His sovereignty is expressed and the end it seeks to achieve, the Lord has revealed the following:

Hearken, O ye people, and open your hearts and give ear from afar; and listen, you that call yourselves the people of the Lord, and hear the word of the Lord and His will concerning you.

Yea, verily, I say, hear the word of Him, whose anger is kindled against the wicked and rebellious,

Who willeth to take even them whom He will take, and preserveth in life them whom He will preserve;

Who buildeth up at His own will and pleasure; and destroyeth when He pleases; and is able to cast the soul down to hell.

Behold, I, the Lord, utter my voice, and it shall be obeyed.

Wherefore, verily I say, let the wicked take heed, and let the rebellious fear and tremble; let the unbelieving hold their lips, for the day of wrath shall come upon them as a whirlwind, and all flesh shall know that I am God.

The sovereignty of God, as expressed herein, is in perfect accord with all that God has revealed in the Scriptures on this subject.

In the revelations of the Apostle John (Rev. 4:11) the Elders, representing the Church declare:

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

God's sovereignty is absolute, but the exaltation and happiness of His children are His glory. His absolutism is that of a loving Father who knows of no greater happiness than the promotion of the welfare of His family. How sovereignty in God can be exercised upon free agents may be difficult to explain, but the yielding of obedience fully does not

interfere with free agency. There is no inconsistency in the doctrine of God's sovereignty and men's freedom.

#### THE GOSPEL BRINGS PEACE

Peace on earth depends upon the harmonizing of men's hearts and the cultivation of good will, justice and righteousness. It involves the overcoming of selfishness, unfairness and mistrust among mankind. There have been many failures throughout the world in the endeavors to maintain peace. Yet the effort toward the increase of good will and kindness is so much worthwhile and is of such great moment to the welfare of the human race that it justifies continuous effort in every direction. It is especially incumbent on the Latter-day Saints, who are disciples of the Prince of Peace, and are seeking to live in harmony with His established Gospel, which is the way to peace. The Lord has revealed again in these latter days the charge to His followers to—"Renounce war, and proclaim peace". To endeavor in every proper way, through example and influence, to promote peace everywhere, that the way may be prepared so that "nations shall not lift up the sword against nations" but be prepared for the coming of the reign of the Lord, that peace and good will toward men shall prevail everywhere. This, we are confident, will eventually occur.

I pray our Heavenly Father that His blessings may attend all of us in all of our actions, that we may endeavor constantly to live the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, for that is the way to peace and prosperity, and I ask it in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### ELDER HUGH B. BROWN

*Former President of the British Mission*

Sometimes it is better to go "over the top" without notice, than to sit in awful expectation of the zero hour. Humbly I pray for guidance and help.

I bring to you, my brothers and sisters, greetings from the Saints of the British Mission. They are attempting to carry on under very trying circumstances. Men and women have assumed responsibilities of leadership, and in all the branches and districts an effort is being made to maintain the organizations of the Church and to carry on under the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The spirit of the British Saints is admirable indeed. The attitude of the British people commands respect and admiration. They are taking a stand in defense of democracy, are fighting a war which was not of their choosing but which I am sure they will prosecute until the aggressor nations change their policy and decide to live at peace with their neighbors and respect the rights of individuals, of groups, of races and nationalities.

We who remained a few months after the war was declared have some little appreciation of the seriousness of the situation as it affects our people there. While we are assembled here in a great Conference of the Church, in a peaceful land, surrounded with comparative plenty,