

Saturday, April 4

First Day

Brethren, God bless you. Let us dedicate ourselves with all we have and all we are to the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ and to living in accordance with the high ideals of the Church and to the winning of the gigantic conflict on the battlefield into which our nation has been compelled to enter. May I say again, let us dedicate ourselves to the winning of this great fight for liberty and freedom.

#### DEDICATING EVEN LIFE TO A GREAT CAUSE

**I**N a high priests' meeting in the Ensign Stake during World War I, Richard W. Young, brigadier general,

said, "I told my son good-bye last night and sent him into this war. I may never see his face again. Going into this mighty conflict may cost him his life. But if it does, he could not possibly give his life to a more glorious cause than to give it for the freedom and liberty not only of the people of our own nation but of all mankind."

And so let us in real humility appeal to God the Eternal Father to enable us to discharge well our duty, to preach the gospel effectively, and to do our utmost to make the people of our nation worthy of victory. God grant that we may be worthy and that we may win the war.

#### ELDER JOHN A. WIDTSOE

*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

**T**HE present unhappy infernal conditions of the world are daily before us and our people. We cannot forget them. The incomprehensible folly of humanity bewilders us. All Israel are anxious and troubled. Some face the day in fear. Many are filled with premonitions and forebodings. To cure this condition; to steady the pulse of our people; to teach the ultimate conquest of right over wrong, may be our immediate problem. Of all people in the world we should and can see most clearly in this dark, man-made chaos. We have the light. We must see the happy destined end from a dark and corrupt beginning. The Lord has spoken, and foretold the calamities of the last days; but He has also declared that He is the Master and that He and His righteous people will triumph over all evil. The Lord is never defeated.

Questions, conjectures, and speculations are rife among the people. Some ask, "Is this Armageddon?" Others, "Will the Savior come when this war is over?" Yet others are busily engaged in proving that present events, countries, men, and even

dates, may be read into the prophecies of thousands of years ago. To all such questions there is but one answer: We only know that this is the dispensation of the fulness of times, the Saturday evening of the earth's temporal existence. These are the "last days," days of much commotion, to be followed by the millennium and the presence on earth of the Lord Jesus Christ who will "put all enemies under his feet." We know that the coming of the Lord is nigh, but He has warned us that "the hour and the day no man knoweth, neither the angels in heaven, nor shall they know until he comes." (D. & C. 49:7) All that has been set forth in great clearness in the revelations to the Prophet Joseph Smith and his successors. There is no benefit in prying beyond the revealed word of the Lord.

A passage in the Doctrine and Covenants foretells and explains the sorrows of the "last days," and it summarizes the message of the Lord to His latter-day people concerning these times of sadness. (D. & C. 63:32-34)

I, the Lord, am angry with the wicked;

I am holding my Spirit from the inhabitants of the earth. I have sworn in my wrath, and decreed wars upon the face of the earth, and the wicked shall slay the wicked, and fear shall come upon every man; and the saints also shall hardly escape; nevertheless, I, the Lord, am with them, and will come down in heaven from the presence of my Father and consume the wicked with unquenchable fire.

Fear, which "shall come upon every man," is the natural consequence of a sense of weakness, also of sin. Fear is a chief weapon of Satan in making mankind unhappy. He who fears loses strength for the combat of life, for the fight against evil. Therefore, the power of evil ever seeks to engender fear in human hearts. In this day of sorrow, fear walks with humanity. It directs, measurably, the course of every battle. It remains as a gnawing poison in the hearts of victors as of the vanquished.

As leaders in Israel, we must seek to dispel fear from among our people. A timid, fearing people cannot do their work well. The Latter-day Saints have a divinely assigned world-mission so great that they cannot afford to dissipate their strength in fear. The Lord has repeatedly warned His people against fear. Many a blessing is withheld because of our fears. He has expressly declared that men cannot stop his work on earth, therefore, they who are engaged in the Lord's latter-day cause and who fear, really trust man more than God, and thereby are robbed of their power to serve.

**T**HE key to the conquest of fear has been given through the Prophet Joseph Smith. "If ye are prepared ye shall not fear." (D. & C. 38:30) That divine message needs repeating today in every stake and ward. Are we prepared in surrender to God's commandments? In victory over our appetites? In obedience to

righteous law? If we can honestly answer yes, we can bid fear depart. And the degree of fear in our hearts may well be measured by our preparation by righteous living, such as should characterize Latter-day Saints. To the handful of believers at the opening of this dispensation, the Lord gave this glorious promise:

Fear not, little flock; do good; let earth and hell combine against you, for if ye are built upon my rock, they cannot prevail. (D. & C. 6:34)

Speaking to the Church about the events of the last days, the Lord said, "The wicked shall flee unto Zion for safety." Since Zion is wherever the pure in heart are, I like to read into that inspired saying, that there is safety wherever the people of the Lord live so worthily as to claim the sacred title of citizens of the Zion of our Lord. Otherwise the name Zion is but an empty sound. The only safety that we can expect in this or any other calamitous time lies in our conformity to gospel requirements.

Every individual may carry the blessings of Zion with him wherever he goes. Our boys who have been called into our country's service, if they keep themselves clean and undefiled, carry Zion with them. It is my faith that they will be protected by divine power. Should they fall in action or from disease it will be with the consent of our Father in heaven. Besides, to all Latter-day Saints, time and eternity are closely associated. Our sons who live righteously, yet who may lose their lives in this devil-engendered war (and may they be few in number, I pray) will enter into the glory prepared for the righteous. The Lord has so declared. "Therefore, whosoever belongeth to my church need not fear, for such shall inherit the kingdom of heaven." (D. & C. 10:55) And also, "fear not even unto

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death; for in this world your joy is not full, but in me your joy is full." (D. & C. 101:36)

In this world upheaval, in this day of wanton destruction, we, as a people must look upward. There must be trust and faith in our hearts. Hope must walk by our side. We must remember charity also. We must treasure the warm words of the Father to His Church, "Be of good cheer, and do not fear, for I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you." (D. & C. 68:6) We who have been called to leadership in the Church of Christ must lead our people from anxiety and fear and doubt, to trust and faith in the Lord, and certainty in the outcome of the Lord's plan of salvation. We must repeat with gladness the words of the Lord, "Fear not, let your hearts be comforted; yea, rejoice evermore, and in everything give thanks." (D. & C. 98:1)

Above the roar of cannon and airplane, the maneuvers and plans of men, the Lord always determines the tide of battle. So far and no farther does He permit the evil one to go in his career to create human misery.

*First Day*

The Lord is ever victorious; He is the Master to whose will Satan is subject. Though all hell may rage, and men may follow evil, the purposes of the Lord will not fail. The God of Israel, "He slumbers not nor sleeps." It is well to remember the admonition of old: "Be still and know that I am God."

It is our destiny as a people to purify the world; to lead men from evil to good; to win the nations to the realm of everlasting truth; to prepare the earth for the coming of the Lord. We are called to establish the kingdom of God on earth. If we accept our mission with faith and the courage born of faith, the Lord will make us victorious in our labors in his cause. Happiness will wait upon us. The protection of heaven will be about us. At this time in our history, let us teach as never before. "If ye are prepared, ye shall not fear."

May the Lord qualify us for the heavy duties of this day I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

## BISHOP LEGRAND RICHARDS

*Presiding Bishop of the Church*

**B**RETHREN: It is a great privilege to associate with you in the leadership of the Church, and I feel very grateful for the kindness that has been extended to me, as I have had the privilege of visiting in your various stakes. It seems that the Church is dearer as we become better acquainted with the men upon whom such responsibility rests.

The Church has always placed a high value upon leadership, righteous leadership. When the Lord was talking to Abraham, He told him of the spirits He had created, and He stood in the midst of them, and He said: "These I will make my rulers upon the earth." Then He said to Abraham,

"Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born."

It seems to me that probably there has never been a time in the history of the world when there were as many of those spirits among whom the Father stood as there are upon the earth at the present time. Now, perchance, if we are among those spirits of whom the Father spoke, then great responsibility rests upon our shoulders. It is not enough to be called, to be given talents, to be given an opportunity, but the Master indicated that those who are faithful and true to the talents that were placed in their hands, they it was who should receive His blessing. He said unto them: "Well done, thou good and