

Sunday, April 5

Second Day

session of the conference, and was also released over nationwide and international network facilities. Music was by the Tabernacle Choir and Organ, with J. Spencer Cornwall directing and Dr. Frank W. Asper at the Organ, and Elder Stephen L. Richards of the Council of the Twelve delivered the address. The program was conducted by Richard L. Evans, who introduced it as follows:

*Theme:* "Sweet Is the Work"—McClellan—organ and humming voices.

*Announcer:* A decade ago the Church of the Air was brought into being by the Columbia Broadcasting System to give opportunity to representatives of the major faiths to bring

their messages to a nationwide congregation of worshippers. Since that time these religious services have been heard twice each Sunday. Today, in the eleventh year of the Church of the Air, the network Mormon service comes to you as part of the proceedings of the one hundred twelfth Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, through Station KSL in Salt Lake City. The service originates in the Mormon Tabernacle while leaders of the Church listen in session, in the upper rooms of the Salt Lake Temple. We will give the service into the hands of Stephen L. Richards of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, whose subject will be, "Had We Listened to the Prophets."

### ELDER STEPHEN L RICHARDS

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

The morning breaks, the shadows flee;  
Lo! Zion's standard is unfurled.  
The dawning of a brighter day  
Majestic rises on the world.

THESE lines from a poet were not penned to herald Easter morn, although they might well have been. They were written to announce the advent of a new gospel dispensation. They also appropriately symbolize the resurrection of the Christ. When His bruised and wounded body arose from the sepulcher and put on the radiant garb of immortality, it was in truth the dawning of a new and brighter day for all the world.

That event was the central fact in the life of the Savior. For it He was born; to prepare for it He lived His matchless life; to substantiate its efficacy for all men, He endured more sorrow than any other, a crueler death, carried a heavier burden—all to demonstrate the supreme happi-

ness and the most transcendently beautiful and desirable thing within the attainment of humankind—eternal life.

The Easter we celebrate this day in the Christian world, together with substantially all other aspects of the life and ministry of the Redeemer was foretold by the prophets. I have counted two hundred twenty-two verses of scripture from the Bible alone which deal in a prophetic way with our Lord Jesus Christ. Surely there is significance in this voluminous foretelling of the greatest thing in history. I look upon it as the supreme vindication of prophecy and the prophets. The Savior might have lived, died, and done His work without prediction of His coming, but it is evident that that was not the plan. Being the author of faith, He caused that sacred principle to be introduced as the premise for His appearance in the flesh, and He left

it with men as the cornerstone in the foundation of His gospel. From it I draw the meaning of this hour.

To the followers of Christ everywhere I pose this question: Has anyone truly Christian faith who does not believe the prophets? I suspect that some may not care to answer the question, even to themselves, but I know of no better way of testing our real allegiance to Christian principles.

The prophets have had vital messages for us in days that are gone, as they have in the critical days that are here. Had we understood and believed their words, many of our difficulties might have been averted. They have given us counsel on every phase of our living. They have told us the things that would make for happiness and success, and they have pointed out the courses which lead to misery and failure. We should be deeply interested in their words now, as we are searching for causes and remedies, and when we are so urgently in need of formulas to unite and solidify our people and our efforts in the Herculean task before us. Painful as it may be, we must admit our mistakes before we can rectify them.

Most of our people recognize the necessity for spiritual support in this war. I believe there is no higher spirituality than that which is manifested in prophecy and also in its acceptance. God speaks through His chosen servants. If we do not listen to them, it is likely we do not really hear God at all, although I do not mean in any degree to deprecate individual communion with our Father through prayer. I have in mind divine pronouncement of principles and laws for the guidance of men and nations.

This war began among Christian nations. It is true that China and Japan were involved before its out-

break, but its foundations were laid among peoples who had the Bible and, professedly at least, the churches of Christ. Had they listened to inspired prophets, it and many preceding wars would never have been begun. In the first place, they would have been convinced of the necessity of adopting principles governing international relations which would have averted conflict, and in the second place they would have known from the beginning the futility of war. Wars have been fought before to end war, and mankind should have learned long ago that the war serum injected anywhere in the body of the universe is wholly ineffective as an antitoxin for the malady of human conflict. Surely it is time for investigation to be directed along other lines to isolate the bacteria of this disease and provide a cure.

Now as I see it, those engaged in such investigations have become so engrossed in the use of microscopic technological methods that there has developed an adversity to the simple, obvious formulas which, whenever actually tried, have proved effective. Not long ago I heard a prominent scientist declare that science would end war. He said that scientific genius would devise such terrible killing devices that men would be afraid to go to war. This I doubt, first, because the defense can call to its aid the same science as the offense, and secondly, because I believe that fear will never be an adequate deterrent. We have record of wars resulting in the complete extermination of the opposing hosts, but I don't know that anybody looks forward to such a process of ending war.

SOMEHOW there has developed a certain modern education which seems to have disdain for the ob-

*Sunday, April 5*

vious, proceeding on the assumption that if it's simple and old, it can't be true. Such an attitude, which fortunately is by no means universal, has served greatly to retard the solution of many of our most important problems, chief among which is the question how men may live together comfortably and in peace. All of us rejoice in the contribution science has made to the convenience and pleasure of our living. We are deeply grateful for the discoveries of patient, hard-working research men who have contributed so much to freedom from disease, organic efficiency and longevity of life. I noted a number of years ago that a poll of students placed Louis Pasteur at the head of a list of great men, excluding religious leaders, who had made contributions to mankind.

What a pity it is that in the face of all these remarkable advances in health, sanitation, comfort, and beauty that we have made so little progress in human relations. Someone has pointed out that the greatest tragedy of the modern age was the tercentenary of Harvard University in 1936, where scholars from all over the world met to appraise the progress of the world for the past three hundred years and reached the solemn conclusion that, while man had made most unusual and commendable progress in solving the mysteries of the universe, bringing under control the forces of nature, that in all this long period of time he had made no appreciable advance in the control of himself, his greed and his passions, and that he was even more prone to fight with other men than he had been centuries before. So it is evident that the social studies carried forward by many conspicuously brilliant people have not helped us very much in our greatest difficulty.

Now that we are in a crisis we find

*Second Day*

ourselves groping for every straw that might indicate the proper direction of our national effort. We have tried and we are still trying experiments by the score. We know that we need unity, loyalty, self-sacrifice, efficiency, and faith. We plead and cry for these high qualities so essential to success, but they don't come in sufficient measure. Dissension, costly disputes, selfish interest, inefficiency, skepticism, and doubt continue to retard our preparation to meet a peril that is so imminent as to make the best things of life tremble in the balance. This is the situation. Is there a day or an hour nearer and better than now—right now—to meet the challenge? I believe there is not.

Where can we look for the essential virtues our people need with greater hope and assurance than to religion and the prophets? It is there that we find not only the outstanding examples but the most potent factors for cohesion, solidarity, and unity. It is there that loyal devotion and self-sacrifice for a cause have been developed and shown their richest fruit. It is there that we have been given the gospel of work, industry, frugality, and thrift. It is there that we have been taught the virtue of honesty and integrity; and it is there, and there alone, where we have learned the meaning and vitality of faith. Did you ever stop to think where we would be if all the learning, all the concepts, all the morality, all the idealism, and virtue that have come to us from the prophets should be swept away and annihilated? It seems to me a moment's contemplation on such an awful state should immediately renew and enhance our appreciation of the inestimable contributions which have come to us through divinely inspired men.

Now I hope you will bear with me

as I project a few specific applications of the great principles and doctrines which have been our heritage to our present situation. We named as our first need: Unity. How is it to come? We thought that the terrific shock of Pearl Harbor had brought it. As the weeks passed and the force of the sudden impact subsided, we found that we were mistaken. A hundred incidents which you know, and I have not time to mention, bear that out. Selfish interests still dominate much of our internal negotiations and activities. It is vainly pointed out with irrefutable logic that these militate against our efficiency and success. What is the answer? Brotherhood—the fraternity of men taught to us by the prophets. I know that some may say it is Utopian and unattainable, yet it is the very thing we are announcing in carefully worded charters as the panacea for the ills of the world. Why not try it at home and demonstrate its efficacy before we attempt to spread it abroad? All that it entails is mutual consideration and the recognition of humankind as the family of God. The latter is especially important. There are few, if any, stronger cohesive factors than kinship. We do not establish kinship without parentage. We cannot estimate the value of the acceptance of God as a universal Father.

WE are continually told that self-sacrifice is necessary to our success. Self-sacrifice is of the very essence of the Christian religion. Its history is filled with instances of it. The early Christians, the monasterial life of the Middle Ages carried to excess in asceticism, the exploring missionaries, and our own Puritan fathers are but a few. This very day is in commemoration of One who gave His life to teach self-sacrifice and altruistic service. Sacrifice in its finer aspect is

a spiritual concept. It elevates spiritual growth above material gain. It looks for its reward in things only of enduring worth. This concept, firmly implanted in the hearts of the people, is all we need to help us endure cheerfully whatever deprivation may be necessary to aid our country.

We need efficiency in all our endeavor. No one doubts it. Everyone is clamoring for it. Now efficiency, in the last analysis, has reference to man power. We speak of efficient machines and efficient organizations and efficient methods, but it is men who make all these. Someone has well said, "It is not the guns that win decisive battles; it is the men behind the guns." Another has said about this crisis, "It is self discipline or slavery." I don't intend to take the time to present facts revealed by the physical examinations of our selectees. All of you have read some of these reports, and you have general knowledge of the vast number rejected for unfitness.

One caustic critic has said, "America is drunk. How could she be otherwise after having smoked or chewed three hundred forty-three million pounds of tobacco and swallowed more than one billion, six hundred fifty-four million gallons of malted liquor and one hundred twenty-four million gallons of spirituous liquor, nearly two billion gallons of beer and whiskey annually?" The same article concludes by the assertion, "America is burning up its energy in pipes, cigars, and cigarettes, drowning it in beer, wine, whiskey, and rum, and smothering it with luxurious living. . . . The Fifth Columnists who are doing America the most harm are the promoters of these . . . great evils to the damaging effects of which our military leaders are not yet awake."

If these statements in any substantial degree represent the truth, what a deplorable calamity has befallen us! Our war enemy himself could scarcely strike more terribly and effectively against our man power than these arch enemies of the race have already struck. With all the expedients we can devise, it will take years to undo the damage. Never

Sunday, April 5

has a more deadly fallacy crept into any society than that more narcotics, more tobacco, more whiskey, and more licentiousness will make better armies. This sophistry and diabolical propaganda is not the work of religion and the prophets. It emanates from the enemies of religion and the enemies of men and the nation. Thank the Lord for the courage of Gene Tunney and a few others like him who see the far-reaching and disastrous effects of these narcotics, and are brave enough to speak out against them and those who perpetrate them on our youth! I believe that the great majority of all the homes in America from which the army boys have come would thank our Commander-in-Chief from the bottom of their hearts if he would make an order forbidding the use of such poisons in our military establishments.

What a difference it would have made, and would still make to our efficiency, if men would but accept the concepts of the human body given to us by the prophets:—if they would look upon the body as the tabernacle of the spirit which dwells within it, and protect and preserve it from abuses and deleterious substances which militate against its organic efficiency. If they would remember that it is an affront to God to violate the purity of these earthly temples of the spirit, I am sure they would be more thoughtful in their care. How precious to the nation, not to mention homes and loved ones, are the bodies of our youth! The revelations through the prophets have told us long ago what is good for them and what is hurtful. Science has confirmed divinely inspired formulas. The laws of health are inexorable. They cannot be violated with impunity.

So, in the interest of our boys, in the interest of our country's cause, I humbly appeal to all who love them and to all who are the beneficiaries of their noble service, not to send them cigarettes and intoxicating liquors. In the end they will know that you were kind if you help them to conserve their strength and vitality in wholesome, righteous living. Try to help them realize that

Second Day

in the face of danger there is one thing they cannot hazard and that is their souls.

**P**ROPHETCY and religion supply the one most indispensable element in all our colossal endeavor, and that is faith—faith in the destiny of our democracy, faith in the triumph of righteousness over evil, and faith in the worth, the integrity, and the majesty of man.

We live in a world of irreverence. Oh, I know that it is true that we have preserved forms of worship. Millions are invested in churches and cathedrals, and we in America, as in other Christian countries, maintain at great expense much of the formalism and pageantry of religion. I know, too, that there are thousands of good men and women who love God and seek to order their lives in conformity with His teachings, but accounting for all these, there are relatively few—so very few—who have the simple, honest, humble faith to accept the Word of God as revealed to and spoken through His chosen prophets.

It is a great pity that it is so, because out of the words of the prophets we have received not only our most profound understanding of man and the universe, but also the assurances and predictions that bring comfort, hope, confidence, joy, and a peace "which passeth all understanding." It is from the prophets that we learn of the glorious place and distinction given to man among all God's creations, that he was created in the image of God and that he is not menial, nor low, nor of servile nature, but that he is of high estate, of the noblest lineage, endowed with the God-given gift of intelligence, the sublime and supreme investiture of both God and man. It is from the prophets that we learn that he is to be free, with the voluntary power of choice, and that this free agency is essential to his development and progression. And it is from the greatest of all the prophets, Jesus Himself, that we learn how man is to retain his freedom, for He said, ". . . Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

What a difference it would make in

the world today if only the people believed the prophets and knew these truths! Had we accepted their spiritual reality and the verity of their messages, the tragedy that envelops the world today would never have been. But we thought it was childish to believe in them. We looked upon them as visionary men whose words had no import for our day. We didn't believe in a higher power that could look through the vista of time and foresee the tragic things that would come to men out of their perversity, their egotism, and their sin. We ignored all the warnings, and we laughed in the faces of these solemn messengers from On High, because we wanted fun and light-heartedness and vanity and hundreds of other things to distract us from the serious things of life.

How unfortunate it is that we did not recognize that there is no lasting happiness and peace except in goodness, and that the ways of God, the ways in which the prophets tried to lead us, are the only ways to joy and safety.

If we had but followed the prophecies, we would have known from the very beginning of our nation that one of old had said that ". . . this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ." Had we had that knowledge and believed it, we should have known all along where to have put our trust and what the course of our lives should be. There would have been no anxiety or misgivings concerning the future of our beloved America, and there would be none now, could we but quickly come to the truth and accept the divine word.

I need not argue that it is the province of religion to bring to pass an acceptance of the prophecies. They are the constitution of the kingdom of God. No man truly enters into the kingdom who does not believe and follow the prophets.

It is fortunate indeed that so many admire the teachings of Christ—kindness, mercy, tolerance, forgiveness, and

the doctrine of the good neighbor, and altruistic service—but I fear that there are many who worship at the shrine of His teachings and attributes but deny the sovereignty of the King. True religion teaches us that the most acceptable homage we can render to the Savior is to acknowledge Him as God and pay Him the tribute of a good life. No praise, no adoration can be substituted for this. One gift only is adequate, and that is the giving of one's self.

Now it would seem that we have a long way to go to reach the goals the prophets have set for us. We truly have. But there will never be a more propitious time to start the journey than now. We need not be discouraged because the road seems long and hard. It will never be easier. We ought to feel happy that the promises which were given so long ago are still held out to us, and happy too that in spite of our mistakes of the past, through mercy, there is yet time to turn from mistaken and unprofitable ways and direct the course of our lives, both individual and national, into the straight ways that lead to truth and peace and security.

My friends, I would not willingly give offense to a single soul this Easter day. I recognize the right of every man to his own views and opinions. What I have said has been prompted by love of country and my fellow men. More than anything else I desire the blessings of God to attend our beloved America and the lofty causes for which she stands. I am sure that it is the burden of every prayer which is offered that our nation shall come to victory and glorious triumph. My convictions, however, constrain me to say to you that it is the prayers of the righteous which will be heard. Our Father exacts a contrite heart and a pure life for the bestowal of His blessings. It is for these I plead. If these are given, He will cause all the rest to follow. Oh, God, grant that it may be so!

After address, choir sang "The Morning Breaks"—Careless.

*Announcer:* Ladies and Gentlemen,