

(Theme: "Sweet Is the Work"—organ and humming voices of the Choir.)

*Announcer, Richard L. Evans:* Twelve years ago the Church of the Air was established by the Columbia network so that representatives of the major faiths might bring their messages to a nationwide congregation of worshippers. Since that time, these devotional programs have been heard twice each Sunday. Today, the network service of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints comes to you from the Mormon Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, where the 114th Annual Conference of the Church is now in session. The speaker will be Albert E. Bowen, member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the Church, and the subject: "He Is Risen From the Dead." The Salt Lake Tabernacle Choir, under the direction of J. Spencer Cornwall, provides the music for the service. Alexander Schreiner is at the organ. The choir opens with the Easter anthem—"Our Risen Lord," by Harvey Gaul.

((The Choir sang "Our Risen Lord," by Gaul.)

*Announcer, Richard L. Evans:* We now give the service into the hands of Albert E. Bowen, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

### ELDER ALBERT E. BOWEN

*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

#### THE SORROW OF MOTHERS

Perhaps no day now goes by that some home is not made desolate by receipt of a message from the war or navy department beginning: "We regret to inform you. . . ." Then a few phrases about courage, devotion to duty, dying gloriously, and some mother knows the dull heavy thud of a heartbreak signalling blasted hopes for her boy that will not come home again. No one may know what reveries troop through her mind as she sits alone, disconsolate. . . . The boy that lay nestled under her heart, the boy she nourished from her own body during his helpless infancy, the boy for whose future she had dreamed dreams into which were woven the praises of men's tongues as they extolled his achievements and whose children should one day sit upon her knee as she told them the story of his rise to fame. . . . Now all seems ended, the promise of life cut off, made fruitless, all sacrifices and strivings vain. Her boy is dead, victim of blundering human stupidity in a recreant, wilfully-disobedient world.

Then, perhaps, as she sits with her musings, companioned by despair, she sees a vision of hope born of the story of that other mother, who with a few women and one lone disciple, watched so long ago at the foot of the cross as her first born, nailed high upon it, died in agony between malefactors, 'mid the jeers and taunts of a ribald soldiery and the gloatings of apparently victorious, bigoted and vengeful adversaries. His birth had been heaven-proclaimed, for the angel of God came to that mother at Nazareth and said:

Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.  
 . . . thou shalt conceive . . . and bring forth a son, and shalt call his  
 name Jesus.

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the  
 Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom  
 there shall be no end. (Luke 1:30-33.)

Then the bereft mother of today may catch an understanding glimpse  
 of the conflicting emotions which must have tugged and pulled at the  
 heart of Mary as, after seeing him laid in the tomb, she reviewed the  
 checkered and mysterious life of this heaven-heralded Son.

#### REVIEWING EVENTS IN THE SAVIOR'S LIFE

Etched ineffaceably upon her memory must have been that angelic  
 salutation: "Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee,  
 blessed art thou among women." And again her heart must have throbbed  
 as she recalled the prediction of eternal kingship for her promised Child.  
 As memory's scroll unrolled, she would live again those thirty years of  
 filial obedience until he went to be baptized of that strange man, John.  
 She would relive that long vigil in the wilderness, where he scorned the  
 temptation to prostitute his power or to barter his soul for all the king-  
 doms of the world and their glory. Tracing his steps back to his native  
 province she would recall how he "went about all Galilee, teaching in  
 their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing  
 all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him  
 all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments . . . and  
 he healed them.

And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and  
 from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond  
 Jordan. (Matthew 4:24-25.)

She would probably see herself seated as a member of that congrega-  
 tion at Nazareth when he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day  
 whence, because he said that the scriptures were fulfilled in him, his own  
 townspeople drove him out and through the city to the edge of the escape-  
 ment with evident intent to cast him headlong into the abyss below. But  
 apparently for once exercising his power in his own behalf he passed  
 through them and went his way. There would pass in review before her  
 mind his triumphal entry into Jerusalem when the people thronged to  
 meet Him and strewed the way with their garments and with palm  
 branches and shouted: "Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that  
 cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matthew 21:9.)

Again she would hear His penetrating words from the side of the  
 mountain by the seashore as in that most wonderful of all sermons ever  
 uttered by the lips of man He called blessed the poor in spirit, the  
 meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, they who hunger  
 and thirst after righteousness and those who are reviled and persecuted  
 and evil spoken of for His name's sake, and would witness again in retro-

spect His compassionate feeding of the multitude and see them attempt forcibly to crown Him king only to turn back and "walk no more with him," when he explained that his doctrines laid heavy exactions upon those who followed him in the matter of the purity and fidelity of their personal lives.

Looking back she would recall how He had astonished the learned by the depth of His understanding, and confounded hypocritical questioners by the power of His unfailing wisdom; how He showed mercy to the sinner, brought comfort to the disconsolate, hope to the oppressed, cheer to the heavy laden, and healing to the broken hearted.

All these triumphs Mary must have witnessed or heard report of. And then last of all would come the sickening vision of His being tried before Herod and Pilate, meekly submitting to be dressed in a purple robe, with a crown of thorns crushed upon His brow, and mocked and scourged. And finally there would haunt her the sight of His staggering under the weight of His own cross and dying in agony upon it.

What was to be made of it all? This ignominious death seemed to spell the failure of His life, the frustration of His mission and the thwarting of the promise of perpetual reign over the kingdom which should be without end.

#### THE WONDER OF THE RESURRECTION

But Mary had not long to wrestle with these perplexities for: "In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week . . ." came the women to the sepulchre to perform certain unfinished offices for the dead. Their wonder grew as an angel who was seated upon the stone which had been rolled back from the door of the tomb said:

Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said . . . And go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead. . . . (Matthew 28:1-7.)

Such is the glorious message of that great triumphal morning. It bore to Mary the answer to her bewilderment. Now she could know the promises for her Son made at the annunciation had not failed, that his life of anxiety and care and suffering and sorrow had not been in vain. So in like manner may every brooding mother who has received a "We regret to inform you" letter draw strength from the assurance that the life of her loved one has not failed. Perhaps, within his finite limitations, in a weak similitude of the great vicarious offering of the Lord for the redemption of the race, her boy, too, has given his life, a vicarious offering. For in this world he himself will never reap the fruits of his own sacrifice.

As such mother sits alone with her anguish and reviews the events of the life of her martyred son there may unfold before her vision the scroll upon which are written the experiences of Mary, the mother of the Son of God, and from the final triumph of His life she may draw the

sustaining power of hope and faith; for the resurrection is as universal as the race.

Its bringing about was the great crowning achievement of Christ's life. To that consummation its whole course had been directed. As He approached the time of His agony, He said, "but for this cause came I unto this hour." (John 12:27.)

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth," said He again, "will draw all men unto me." (John 12:32.)

Further He told His disciples: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12:24.)

So His death and burial and resurrection from the dead bears fruit in the raising of all who die. That was the whole burden of the message of the disciples.

#### PAUL'S TESTIMONY BEFORE AGRIPPA

Paul, standing in bonds before Agrippa, said:

At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.

And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. (Acts 26:13-15.)

These are not the words of an unlettered man, nor of one infatuated by living under the spell of the powerful personality of Jesus, or deluded by the stories told of Him by His admirers. For by his own confession Paul had lived a Pharisee, the strictest sect of his religion, they who had been the subjects of the Lord's severest chastisements.

He hated the Christians with a bitter hate. He had testified against them when they were condemned to death; had hounded them from city to city, thrown them into prison, compelled them to blaspheme, and had vilely persecuted them. He was on such mission to Damascus when the light appeared before him in the way and he heard the risen Lord's voice. The reality of his experience—the sincerity of his conversion—is attested by the devotion of his subsequent life, enduring shipwreck, privation, persecution, chains, and finally death for his testimony of the reality of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus. With faultless logic he wrote to the Corinthians:

Now if Christ be preached that he arose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:

And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

.....  
But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. (I Cor. 15:12-20.)

That doctrine is the center and pivot of Christian theology, the foundation of the Christian religion, the very basis of Christian hope. Strip that dogma from your creed, and you destroy Christianity. Take it away, and you devalue your New Testament, for it is the fundamental fact of that whole record.

#### MR. MOODY'S ADVICE TO A YOUNG PREACHER

It is related that in Europe, the great evangelist, Mr. Moody, was asked by a young minister, "What makes the difference between the success of your preaching and mine; one of us is wrong?"

Moody said: "You have heard me preach and I haven't heard you, you tell me the difference." The minister answered: "You make a good deal out of the death of Christ. . . . I don't think that has anything to do with it. I preach life."

Then Mr. Moody quoted him several scriptures declaring the atonement and asked the young preacher with respect to each, "What do you do with that?" He said in each instance, "I never preached that," and finally asserted: "I think the whole thing is a sham." Then said Mr. Moody:

"I advise you to get out of the ministry very quickly. I would not preach a sham. If the Bible is untrue, let us stop preaching, and come out like men and fight against it if it is a sham and untrue; but if these things are true, and Jesus Christ left heaven and came into this world to shed His blood and save sinners, then let us lay hold of it and preach it in season and out of season."

That is one of the things that admit of no compromise. It is of the "all or none" variety. The same record which recounts the miracle of the resurrection contains all we know about the moral teachings of Jesus. You can't very well repudiate it as to the one and enlist enthusiastic allegiance for it in respect of the other. Today is kept a memorial by all Christendom. The very commemoration of the day assumes the reality of the occurrence it signalizes, for you cannot commemorate an event that never happened.

#### THE RESURRECTION THE FOUNDATION OF FAITH AND HOPE

The great stumbling block to acceptance of the crucifixion and the resurrection, seems to be that they are thought opposed to natural law. But what is natural law? Who established it? It is conceded on almost all sides that there is a supernatural law operative in this universe. Who is to say that in effecting the purposes of God it may not transcend natural law? If you grant God at all, does it seem consistent to suppose that He set laws in motion which froze Him outside of them and rendered Him impotent before the works of His own hands?

We know so little about this wondrous world in which increasing knowledge only reveals vistas stretching further and further into the realm of the unknown that he must be a reckless man indeed who would

dare affirm of his own finite wisdom what is and what is not possible with God.

In far too great degree the professedly Christian world has to its own obvious harm become apostate to the reality of the announcement, "He is risen from the dead." Take away belief in that reality and you make rubble of the foundations of faith and rob the disconsolate of their fairest hope.

The record tells of an occurrence when Jesus with His disciples and "much people" was entering the city called Nain. They were met by a funeral procession taking to his burial the only son of a widow. Having compassion upon that mother, Jesus bade her cease weeping and bidding the young man to arise from the bier He delivered him alive to her. As He stopped that funeral procession and restored the dead to life so by His death and resurrection He has stopped forever the triumph of death for all men.

To every weeping mother the empty tomb proclaims aloud the glad tidings that whether the bones of her child lie bleaching on Africa's hot sands, or find their rest in the bottom of the sea, or his body is lowered into the grave he shall be raised up again and live.

(Theme: Sweet is the Work—organ with humming choir.)

### PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.

*First Counselor in the First Presidency*

We now resume the regular session of this Conference. We had as the last speaker, as has been announced, Elder Albert E. Bowen, who gave us a beautiful and truthful and uplifting Easter sermon, carrying, I am sure, hope and cheer to every saddened heart. May we hope that somehow that great message may have reached our sons in the field.

### ELDER CHARLES A. CALLIS

*Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

I humbly pray God for the guidance of His teaching spirit.

There is a continuous freshness in the fundamental principles of the Gospel. They never grow out of date. Fortunate is the man who translates them into his life.

### FAITH A MOTIVATING POWER

In his masterly presentation of faith and his great appeal for faith, the apostle Paul citing the examples of the heroes of faith of the Old Testament said:

Now, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.