

The Tabernacle Choir sang "Behold, God the Lord Passed By," from "The Elijah."

Elder George Christensen, President of the Rigby Stake, offered the invocation.

Singing by the Choir, "Now Let Us Rejoice."

ELDER JOSEPH L. WIRTHLIN

Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

Whenever called upon, my brethren and sisters, to perform this great task, I always ask the Lord to quicken my mind and loosen my tongue, and I hope that that prayer has a response in your hearts in my behalf today.

MANY EVIDENCES OF CHRIST'S DIVINITY

We frequently hear the question asked: "What is there in a name?" And thinking of names, we always think first of family names. We think of the great names in the fields of education, industry, statesmanship, but what about the names in the great realm of religion? In retrospect there are many that come before us—the names of Confucius, of Buddha, of Mohammed, and of Jesus Christ. As we think of the first three, their names identify them as men who endeavored to teach their followers certain philosophies, philosophies of men, with some elements of truth in them. But what about Jesus Christ and his teachings, and furthermore, what do we find in his name? In the use of his name, there is also an immediate mental connection with the Godhead. His followers proclaimed that he was the Son of God, for we read:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-5; 14.)

To the early followers of Jesus Christ, he was with God in the beginning. He was God, and to him was given the great commission of creating the earth and all the things that are now upon it. And furthermore, because his plan of salvation was accepted in the pre-existent councils in heaven, he revealed himself to mankind in the flesh, the only Begotten of the Father. In analyzing this declaration and comparing it with the theories and teachings of Confucius, Buddha, and Mohammed, we find a great difference in the claims of these great religious teachers.

The above declaration of John must of necessity be supported with tangible evidence that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, a mem-

ber of the Godhead who revealed himself to mankind in the flesh for the purpose of redeeming mankind from the sin of Adam. The great evidence to sustain the above claims is found in a promise made by the Savior wherein he declared:

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. (John 15:26.)

The great difference between Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the other great religious teachers of the world was that after he left the earth, the third member of the Godhead, even the Holy Ghost, would testify to the races of men on earth of the divine mission of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

Nearly two thousand years have elapsed since Christ was upon the earth, but untold thousands have enjoyed the revelation of the Holy Ghost that his mission was divine. A modern-day prophet, Brigham Young, states most emphatically that any honest searcher of truth can know that Jesus was the Christ in the same way that Peter knew it. As you recall, the Savior was traveling in the country with his disciples and turning upon them asked this question: ". . . Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" As I visualize that scene, his followers were dumfounded and rather hesitantly answered: "Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets." The second time the Savior asked the question: "But whom say ye that I am?" Peter, the humble fisherman, without any reservation declared: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," and the reply immediately came from the Savior: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 16:13-17.) How was it possible for Peter to answer this question without any hesitation or reservation? It was possible because the Holy Ghost revealed this great truth to him, and in this event we see that the Holy Ghost does reveal the fact that Jesus Christ is the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh, the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world.

Again we ask the question: "What is there in a name?" In the name of Jesus Christ there is salvation and exaltation to the children of our Heavenly Father, for we read in the Acts of the Apostles:

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:12.)

In his ministry Christ taught the people to accept his name, to take his name upon them. In the matter of prayer he said:

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. (John 14:13.)

PRINCIPLES TAUGHT BY THE SAVIOR

With reference to belief and faith he said:

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name. (John 1:12.)

He taught the principle of repentance; forcibly declaring in Luke:

And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (Luke 24:47.)

John the Baptist, forerunner of Christ, taught the gospel of repentance and baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, and in the course of events, the Savior appeared applying for baptism. Ecclesiastical history declares that when he came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and the Holy Ghost appeared in the form of a dove, and the assembled multitude heard the voice of the Father saying: ". . . This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:17) again proclaiming the great truth that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world.

. . . Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. (Matt. 28:19.)

Admission into the kingdom by baptism, as the Savior so declared to Nicodemus, was in the name of the Godhead including the name of the Savior. Other promises he made in his name:

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. (Mark 16:16-18.)

THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST CARRIES HIS NAME

In contemplation of the great ministry of our Lord, his name stands out preeminently as the only name under heaven whereby the children of men can enjoy the blessings of salvation and exaltation. In fact, his name is the pass-word into the kingdom of our Heavenly Father.

Paul in preaching to the Ephesians declared that Jesus gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and some teachers, and may I also point out to you that in the New Testament, there is an abundance of scriptures to prove without question wherein high priests, seventies, elders, priests, teachers, deacons and bishops were selected, these offices being made an integral part of the great Church organization. After the selection of Church officers and its organization did the Church carry a name, and if it did, what was its name two thousand years ago? Did it carry the name of Peter; was it the church of John or Matthew? It was not; it carried the name of its great organizer, the Lord, Jesus Christ. Read, if you will:

And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. (Colossians 1:18.)

It logically follows that if the Savior was to have pre-eminence in all things, the most pre-eminent of all these would be this great organization called the Church which should carry his name. We read:

For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. (Ephesians 5:23-24.)

We see in this comparison that the Church was to take the name of Jesus Christ, its head, and become subject, just as the wife takes the name of her husband and becomes subject to him. So the Church in the days of Jesus Christ carried his name.

At the trial of the Savior, when he stood before Pontius Pilate, the Roman ruler declared that he could find no guile in the man, but to appease the Jews, his subjects, he ordered the crucifixion. He did something more to please his subjects, for John declared:

And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. (John 19:19.)

Little did Pontius Pilate realize when that name was nailed to the cross at his command, whereon the Son of God hung, that name would become the best known among the children of men, the only name under the heavens whereby we might enjoy a place in his kingdom.

While the Savior's body lay in the tomb, we are told by Peter that his Spirit visited the spirits who, in the time of Noah, were a disobedient people upon the earth and were swept away by the flood, teaching them the importance of his name and that by obedience to the gospel that he had proclaimed upon the earth, they too should enjoy salvation.

APOSTASY FROM THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

According to the records found in III Nephi in the Book of Mormon, Jesus Christ as a resurrected being appeared to the inhabitants on the American continent, teaching them to take upon them his name, and furthermore that the application of the ordinances of the gospel was to be done in his name. Shortly after the departure of the resurrected Savior from the earth. Paul declared to the Galatian Saints:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. (Gal. 1:6-8)

This statement is an evidence that other principles and doctrines were being taught and that the great apostasy from the Church of Christ was already in process, and furthermore that as a result of the apostasy, the name of Jesus Christ had lost its significance among

men. Men were taught to pray in the names of men and women who out of the changed doctrines of the Savior became so-called saints, standing between the people on this earth and God rather than Jesus Christ. During this period we hear no more about apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, high priests, seventies, elders, bishops, priests, teachers, and deacons, but new officers with new titles took their places. The efficacy of faith was lost in that men were taught to believe that they might be saved by faith and grace rather than by faith and works. The principle of repentance became one wherein the forgiveness of sins could be purchased. The ordinance of baptism was changed and the organization lost its identity as its first title "Jesus Christ" had another substitute. As the dark clouds of apostasy settled over the earth, there were some great men who declared that there would be a change, a reformation. Among these were Martin Luther, John Calvin, Roger Williams, who declared that the Church of God was no longer upon the earth. Sincere in their declarations and in their efforts, they were unable to restore the Church organization with its name, ordinances, and principles as the Lord, Jesus Christ first gave them to the world.

THE TRUE CHURCH RESTORED

Out of the turmoil and the adverse opinion in the world, a young man, sincerely wishing to know which of all the churches was the Church of Christ fell upon his knees among the giants of the forest, calling upon God for divine direction to the end that the true Church might be revealed to him. In answer to the prayer of the fourteen-year-old boy, God, the Eternal Father, and Jesus Christ, his Son, appeared, the Father saying to Joseph Smith: "This is my Beloved Son, hear him!" reaffirming to the world that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, a resurrected being, that the Father and the Son were two distinct personages with bodies, parts, and passions. Joseph Smith received instructions from the Father and the Son and thereafter was visited by heavenly beings who indicated that their visits were in the name of the Savior, again establishing upon the earth that all things were to be done in his name as the apostles of old taught the people.

The eighteenth section of the Doctrine and Covenants parallels the verses found in the book of Acts, wherein the significance and the power of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ was restored to the earth. It reads:

Behold, Jesus Christ is the name which is given of the Father, and there is none other name given whereby man can be saved; Wherefore, all men must take upon them the name which is given of the Father, for in that name shall they be called at the last day. (D. & C. 18:23, 24.)

It is a grand and glorious truth to contemplate that in this day, your day and my day, Jesus Christ has again spoken to the world, restoring the gospel and all its saving ordinances to the end that the

children of our Heavenly Father might enjoy salvation and exaltation in his kingdom.

Here are familiar words spoken two thousand years ago and again reiterated in the words of the Savior to the Prophet with reference to prayer, indicating again that his name was to become the watchword of salvation:

And thou shalt continue in calling upon God in my name, and writing the things which shall be given thee by the Comforter, and expounding all scriptures unto the church. (*Ibid.*, 24:5.)

And if ye are purified and cleansed from all sin, ye shall ask whatsoever you will in the name of Jesus and it shall be done. (*Ibid.*, 50:29.)

PRIESTHOOD GIVEN TO MAN

John the Baptist appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, bestowing upon them the Aaronic Priesthood, with these words:

Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer the priesthood of Aaron. (D. & C. 13:1.)

May I ask the question, was there ever a time in the history of the great reformers or any other religious leaders when they claimed that divine messengers came from the heavens above in the name of Jesus Christ or in the name of the Messiah, bestowing upon them any or part of the priesthood? The answer is no. The restoration of the ordinance of baptism brought with it the mandate that men and women were to be baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The confirmation of members of the Church and the promise of the gift of the Holy Ghost were to be done in the name of Jesus Christ. Administrations to the sick were to be performed in his name. The revealed blessings on the sacrament were to begin with these words: "O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy son, Jesus Christ," (D. & C. 20:77,79) and so on.

Follow through the restoration of the gospel, if you will. The significance of the name of Jesus Christ is most impressive, restoring to it the same place that it held when he taught men upon the earth two thousand years ago. With the restoration of the ordinances and principles of the gospel, the Lord again, as Paul once declared, gave some apostles, prophets, evangelists teachers, pastors high priests, seventies, elders bishops, priests, teachers, and deacons, and with the restoration of these offices in the priesthood of the Church the Church was again organized just as perfectly as it was in the days of Peter and John. Something more than the restoration of the gospel, ordinances, principles, and organization was necessary, and what was that? The name by which it might be identified in the world, which name had been taken from the earth when the great apostasy took place, and is it not singular then that all the great religionists failed to call the churches organized by them the Church of Jesus Christ but through the providence of God, it was not to be.

Sunday, April 7

Third Day

Hence, the name was reserved for the day when through the Lord's instrument, Joseph Smith, the Church was again restored to the earth. We read in a revelation known as the one hundred fifteenth section of the Doctrine and Covenants the words of the Savior to the Prophet relative to this matter:

Verily thus saith the Lord unto you, my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and also my servant Sidney Rigdon, and also my servant Hyrum Smith, and your counselors who are and shall be appointed hereafter; And also unto you, my servant Edward Partridge, and his counselors; And also unto my faithful servants who are of the high council of my church in Zion, for thus it shall be called, and unto all the elders and people of my Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, scattered abroad in all the world; For thus shall my church be called in the last days, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Verily I say unto you all: Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations. (*Ibid.*, 115:1-5.)

MEANING OF NAME LATTER-DAY SAINT

With the restoration of the name, the organization was now complete with the priesthood, all its officers, ordinances, and principles that existed in the ancient Church as Christ taught them. The restoration of the name is one of the greatest evidences of the divine calling of the Prophet Joseph, the Church in the latter-days being known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The members of this Church carry a great and grave responsibility in using the title Latter-day Saints. As I think of my own life, I wonder if I merit the name Latter-day Saint. Do you ponder over this divine title, determining whether or not your lives are compatible with the title of Latter-day Saint? We only become Latter-day Saints insofar as we live the gospel of the Lord, Jesus Christ, and a real Latter-day Saint is willing to take upon him the full name of the Lord, Jesus Christ, keep his commandments, his covenants. It demands wholehearted, devoted loyalty to the anointed of the Lord who preside over his Church, and beyond that cleanliness of life is a prime requisite, for I am convinced that anyone who claims to be a Latter-day Saint and drinks a glass of beer or smokes a cigaret is not entitled to the divine title of Latter-day Saint.

The Lord's people are a covenant people under solemn obligation to him so to live as he has declared to the Prophet Joseph to become a standard to all the nations, and if there was ever a time in the history of the world when it needed a people that would manifest in its lives all the principles of the gospel, that time is today.

Joseph Smith declared prophetically on the banks of the Mississippi River on the sixth day of August 1842, almost two years before he was murdered, that this people would move to the Rocky Mountains, becoming a great and a mighty people. I wonder what he meant by the word "mighty." Were we to become mighty in politics, in the industrial world, or were we to become mighty in righteousness? My interpretation of this prophecy is that we were to become mighty

in righteousness, and out of our might in righteousness we would set the world an example. We would become a light, a standard to a misdirected, misled, and faithless world. So in the final analysis of the Lord's plans, he bestowed his name upon the restored Church to identify us from the rest of the world by being called Latter-day Saints.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A NAME

It is a far cry from the days of Pontius Pilate when he ordered the name of the Savior nailed to the cross: "Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews," to the day when John the Revelator saw in a vision and declared:

And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh, a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. (Rev. 19:16.)

In his name the Lord promised that he would appear as the Lord of lords and King of kings to all those who live the gospel of Jesus Christ, meriting the title of Latter-day Saints, and they should have this blessing:

They are they who are the church of the Firstborn. They are they into whose hands the Father has given all things—They are they who are priests and kings, who have received of his fulness, and of his glory; . . . These are they whose names are written in heaven, where God and Christ are the judge of all; These are they who are just men made perfect through Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, who wrought out this perfect atonement through the shedding of his own blood. These are they whose bodies are celestial, whose glory is that of the sun, even the glory of God, the highest of all, whose glory the sun of the firmament is written of as being typical. (D. & C. 76:54-56; 68-70.)

Again the question is submitted: "What is there in a name?" What is there in the name of Jesus Christ?

Behold, Jesus Christ is the name which is given of the Father, and there is none other name given whereby man can be saved; Wherefore, all men must take upon them the name which is given of the Father, for in that name shall they be called at the last day. (*Ibid.*, 18:23, 24.)

May God bless you and may he bless me, that we will so reverence the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that we will keep his commandments and enjoy all the blessings involved therein, I ask in his name. Amen.

ELDER MARK E. PETERSEN

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I rejoice with you in the return of our Latter-day Saint Servicemen from their many assignments overseas. I am grateful for the strength they will bring to us in our various organizations, in the wards and stakes. I sincerely hope that every returning Latter-day Saint serviceman will resume his activity in the Church without delay.