

also the two services on Sunday at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. These same sessions will be broadcast over station KSUB, Cedar City, and KDYY, at Pocatello.

The choir singing at this session of the Conference will be by the Relief Society Singing Mothers of the Salt Lake and Central Utah regions. Sister Florence Jepperson Madsen is the conductor, Elder Frank W. Asper, the organist.

The first song will be, "Dear Land at Home," by Sibelius.

The opening prayer will be offered by President Ivan Call of the Nevada Stake.

Singing by the Singing Mothers of the Salt Lake and Central Utah Regions, "Dear Land of Home," by Sibelius.

Elder Ivan Call, President of the Nevada Stake, offered the invocation.

Singing, by the Singing Mothers, "Hear My Prayer," by Will James.

### PRESIDENT GEORGE ALBERT SMITH

It is my pleasure this morning to bid you welcome to the house of the Lord. It is a beautiful picture to see this great tabernacle filled, the seats occupied and people standing, at the beginning of the one hundred seventeenth annual conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Church was organized under great difficulties and unpleasantness to those who became its members. People who accepted the gospel did so because they knew it was the Lord's will, and the result was that they were able to endure the persecutions and difficulties and sorrows that followed them until they finally were driven from the East and came here to these desert lands to make their homes with the wild animals, and at that time, the still more savage red men.

#### PERSECUTIONS OF CHURCH

Remarkable as it may seem, but running true to form, the Church from its inception endured persecution. It was so in the days of the Old Testament, also during the mortal life of the Savior as well as

in our day. The people were moved about, buffeted from place to place, but I think it could be safely said that every day when the sun went down the Church was stronger than it had been the day before.

Representatives from many parts of the world are in attendance today. Many of you have traveled a long distance, and I am sure you will receive a blessing because of your investment.

#### SEVENTY-SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY

This happens to be an unusual occasion for me. Seventy-seven years ago today I came to Salt Lake City. My mother's home was

just across the road west of us, and that is where I was born. From the best of my recollection the ground was covered with snow that morning, just as it is now. In addition to my memory I have the testimony of my mother who later told me there was deep snow on the ground.

Many things have transpired since then. I have seen this city grow and develop. When I was a child, there were no paved streets. The dust on West Temple Street was the most delightful playground the children could have. We ran barefoot in it, and we had a happy time.

#### SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Little by little conditions improved, and now in this year of the one hundredth anniversary of the coming of the Pioneers, on the 24th of July next, we see one of the beautiful cities of the world, one of the most delightful places in which to live that can be found anywhere. Fortunately for me, I have been able to observe and enjoy that development. The Lord made a promise a long time ago. It was this:

“Seek ye first”—not last—“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added.” (Matthew 6:3.)

And when our people abandoned their comfortable homes in the East because of force, also in different parts of the world, and began to trek their way across the plains to this then-wilderness, they had to have faith to believe that they could enjoy in this desert land the blessings that people enjoy elsewhere. The Lord never fails to fulfil his promise, and I stand here today a witness to the fact that in this promised land, are some of the happiest people that can be found on the earth, and the advantages and opportunities here are unsurpassed. Not only do we have the blessings that our Heavenly Father has bestowed upon us as individuals, but people also come from all parts of the world to see what has been accomplished.

In an earlier day, if anybody wanted to hear the best music and be trained in great universities, he had to go away from here. Today those who have been trained here in our universities are serving in many parts of the United States as instructors in other educational institutions. Those who used to go away to receive their musical training and learn how to operate a pipe organ may now get that instruction here, and from this Tabernacle the Choir sings to the world, and the music of the Organ is sent everywhere that radio reaches.

#### UTAH KNOWN FOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

After one hundred years the Lord has made his people known for good. It is remarkable what has been accomplished. This state is classified as number one among the states of the Union for the

largest number of high school students and the largest number of university students in proportion to population. We are recognized because there have been more scientists and more men and women of affairs born in this state than in any other state in the Union in proportion to population. You cannot go anywhere in the world where Utah is not known. As you sit here this morning, you are doubtless in the most comfortable, the most desirable meeting place for its size—and it is one of the largest—to be found in all the world. You are in an edifice where a pin drop can be heard two hundred feet away. And all these things, with thousands of others that might be mentioned, have been coming one by one that we might enjoy them in tained us delightfully, and the great Organ that is famous the world that this was a land choice above all other lands, and at this time those who are fortunate enough to dwell in this part of it feel that there is no better place in which we may live.

### “COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE”

I see these mission presidents from the various missions of the earth, stake presidencies, bishops, counselors, high councilors, and as already has been said, on this stand are all the General Authorities of this Church with one exception. I welcome you all. We have this marvelous chorus of singing mothers who have already entered in this land in peace and safety; and how do we feel today over. Think, if you can, of any place in all the world that you could go to attend a service that would compare with this. Surely the Lord has fulfilled his promise. In our homes we have not suffered for the necessities of life during this terrible war period. A commandment was given long ago through a prophet of old to “. . . Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” (Rev. 18:4.) Many of you who are in this audience today are descendants of those who followed this advice, and some of you have come yourselves from distant lands for the gospel's sake, and by so doing you escaped the ravages of world wars. Our Heavenly Father is mindful of his own.

### FORMER MISSIONARIES PRESENT

We are here this morning not to see and be seen, but we are here to worship, and there will address us from this stand a group of men whose lives are devoted to disseminating the gospel of Jesus Christ. In this audience there are hundreds who have filled missions, have been away from home for a term of years, at their own expense or the expense of their loved ones, to divide the gospel of Jesus Christ with our Father's other children. I would like to have all those who have filled missions for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints outside the states in which they live, raise their hands. Thank you.

I wish all who are outside the building could see that sight. Hundreds, both men and women, have indicated that because of their assurance that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ and that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of the Lord, they have been willing to leave home and loved ones and go from door to door among the homes of our own and other lands, asking for the privilege of sharing the truth that the others did not possess in order that they too might enjoy greater happiness.

#### GRATITUDE FOR BLESSINGS

These are some of the things that come to my mind this morning. I am grateful to my Heavenly Father that I was born in this land of the free, in this great nation, in this valley, among the people who have dwelt here. I am thankful for the companionship during my life of the best men and women that can be found anywhere in the world both at home and abroad. This morning we are here to wait upon the Lord. We are here to listen to the inspiration that will flow from him to us. We are here to say by our prayers and by our singing voices, "Heavenly Father, we thank thee for all that we enjoy." This is a blessed privilege.

We have here this morning mayors of cities, the governor, and other officials of the state, some members of the Church and some not, and how happy we are to have our visiting friends with us. While you are here in the city, I would like to plead with the Latter-day Saints to see to it that everyone has a place to stay in comfort. Let this conference be notable for the generosity of the people who reside here, and let us see to it that everybody is properly taken care of.

I take this occasion to thank dozens of my friends, that I cannot thank in any other way, for their greetings and good wishes on my birthday. It has been a very delightful experience, and I thank you all, wherever you may be who are listening in, who have written to me or telegraphed or telephoned your good wishes. Surely it is a blessed thing to be associated with such people, and from the depths of my soul I pray that our Heavenly Father will now give us the satisfaction of listening to his voice and his instructions during this conference, and when the meetings are finished and we return to our homes, that we may take with us the influence and the truths that we have enjoyed here to share with those who are not fortunate enough to come here. I pray for these blessings, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Elder Joseph Anderson, Clerk of the Conference then read the following report: