

Saturday, October 4

Second Day

opportunity to be a missionary in Finland after I was released from my work as acting president in Sweden. When President Benson of the Quorum of the Twelve came to the Swedish and Finnish Missions it was a great event. All of this time Finland was being prepared for the preaching of the gospel, and I saw at that time how much better the work was going forward. The newspapers were very friendly, and they had fine articles on the front pages of their papers. Finland was the first land in the northern countries to which our message could be sent over the radio.

I am very thankful for the opportunity which I have to bear my testimony, which I do now, that I know that God lives; I know that Jesus Christ is His Son. I know that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. I know that President George Albert Smith is also a prophet of God. It is not very long ago that I was standing in Hamburg and a missionary was giving that message, and from that time I have read the scriptures. I recognized that the message that missionary gave was true, and the time came when I had to repent. I know that we cannot baptize a man or a woman who has not faith and who has not repented. We must always have repentance. I thank my Heavenly Father for the wonderful feeling that I have and for the beautiful messages we have heard at this conference and that we shall hear. I pray that we may accept of these things and so live that our Heavenly Father can accept of us. I do this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

(At President McKay's request, Brother Johanneson then bore a brief testimony in the Swedish language.)

President David O. McKay:

We have just heard from Elder Fritz Johanneson, Acting President of the Swedish Mission during the war, who bore a word of greeting in his native tongue, Swedish.

As a matter of interest, how many present in this audience understood Elder Johanneson when he spoke in Swedish?

(Many hands were raised)

Thank you! A goodly number.

BISHOP LEGRAND RICHARDS

Presiding Bishop of the Church

I feel grateful, brothers and sisters, for this occasion, and for the privilege of worshipping with you, as I do when I travel, week after week, through the stakes of Zion. You are the most wonderful people in the world, and I thank the Lord to be considered worthy to be numbered among you.

AARONIC PRIESTHOOD PAGEANT

During the past week or ten days, we presented in this taber-

nacle the Aaronic Priesthood pageant, *Prepare Ye the Way*. I would like to express, for the Presiding Bishopric of the Church, our appreciation to all those who made the pageant possible: to Sister Evelyn Wood for writing it, Brother Mitchell for preparing the music, Brother Palmer and Brother Lees for directing it, and all who took part therein.

Since witnessing the presentation of it three times, I have thought a great deal of the message that it conveyed. Several of the speakers in this conference have referred to our pre-existent state. I am sure that if the veil were rolled back and we understood today as we did then, the purpose of earth life, and the privileges that were to be ours, we would be a little more attentive to responsibilities which are ours.

In the pageant, when the spirits were about to come to this earth, Father Adam was asked if there would be anyone here at the crossroads to show them the way, and they were told there would be their parents and the priesthood of God. If these two should not fail there would not be much danger or much to worry about our young people, but if the parents fail and the priesthood fails in its duty, then we can hardly expect that these choice spirits of promise will return to the Father and receive the plaudit: "Well done thou good and faithful servant."

Those of you who saw the pageant will remember that when some of the boys dropped out of the priesthood activity and gave their reasons for so doing, one little fellow said: "My father doesn't go to priesthood meeting, and I want to be like my father." Following our presentation of the pageant six years ago, a Relief Society in one of the wards in a testimony meeting was discussing the pageant, and one good sister said: "I took my husband to see the pageant and when that little fellow said: 'My father doesn't go to priesthood meeting, and I want to be like my father,' I felt my husband cringe just like he had been hit with an electric shock. The next Sunday morning when my boy was getting ready for priesthood meeting his father said, 'Wait a minute my boy, I am going with you.' The boy said: 'You don't mean it do you, Dad?' And I got his eye and told him not to say anything about the pageant, and his father went along with him to priesthood meeting."

We have been told as we travel throughout the Church that the greatest deterrent to the success of the Aaronic Priesthood and Latter-day Saint girls program of the Church is the indifference of the parents. It seems almost incredible to believe that such a thing is true.

PARENTS INFLUENCE CHILDREN

Brother Benson, in his beautiful address on the home, told us of the charge the Lord has laid upon the parents in Israel to teach their children faith in the Living God, repentance and baptism, and the laying on of hands, and teach them to pray and to walk up-

Saturday, October 4

Second Day

rightly before the Lord in all things, with the statement that if they failed in so doing the sin would be upon the heads of the parents. I wish every father and mother in Israel realized what that meant and what it will mean when they give a reckoning for the stewardship that has been theirs to be privileged to be the parents of these chosen spirits who are permitted to come upon the earth in this day and time.

A short time ago one of the leaders in the Aaronic Priesthood in one of our stakes handed me a copy of an article that appeared in a magazine that was published by the Kiwanis Club. I want to read a few excerpts from it:

There is a general opinion that children are bright. In my opinion there is no greater fallacy. They are so dumb that it is a wonder we ever make really useful citizens out of them.

To illustrate, the article says,

I know a fellow, a Kiwanian by the way, who has two small boys. He is a well-educated, cultured gentleman, with a lovely wife and a nice home. Those two boys have been reared with every advantage. This man takes his golf clubs and hikes out to the golf course every Sunday morning of his life, and can you imagine it, those two boys are so dumb that they can't understand why they should be made to go to Sunday School? They think they should be permitted to go fishing or swimming Sunday morning instead of going to church! Nothing their father says to them seems to convince the dumb little creatures that they should spend two hours in church on Sunday morning.

To save time, I will relate one or two more of these comments. The next one is about the father and mother who always preface their meal with a cocktail. They have a son and a daughter in high school who went to a dinner-dance, and the father found out that the children each had a cocktail before dinner. Those two kids were so dumb that when they were called on the carpet by their dad, they couldn't understand why they shouldn't drink cocktails! "I tell you, kids are dumb."

A man who occupied a prominent position in his community, when he was out in the yard and would hit his finger with a hammer or run against a wire clothesline, would make the sky blue with his profanity, and yet when his six-year-old boy called the cat a "damned cat" because it ran across the table, the father promptly spanked him and washed his mouth out with soap, but he was never able to make that dumb kid understand that it was wrong to swear. And there was a mother who did not like to entertain company when she wasn't in the mood, and if someone would call and want to come over to visit her, she would immediately say she had house guests and couldn't receive them, or if they wanted to speak to her on the phone and she wasn't in the mood, she would turn to her little girl and say, "Tell them I am not home." Do you know that dumb little girl lies like Ananias. The mother has done all she can to break her of it, but the child is just a natural born liar!

Let me read another comment on parents:

'Twas a sheep not a lamb
 That strayed away in the parable Jesus told,
 A grown-up sheep that strayed away
 From the ninety and nine in the fold.
 And why for the sheep should we seek
 And earnestly hope and pray?
 Because there is danger when sheep go wrong:
 They lead the lambs astray.
 Lambs will follow the sheep, you know,
 Wherever the sheep may stray.
 When sheep go wrong,
 It won't take long till the lambs are as wrong as they.
 And so with the sheep we earnestly plead
 For the sake of the lambs today,
 For when the sheep are lost
 What a terrible cost
 The lambs will have to pay.

—*The Echo*, C. C. Miller

TEACH CHILDREN TO HONOR THE SABBATH

If the fathers and mothers in Israel understood the importance of this they would take their boys and girls with them to Church. No father would ever let a boy of his grow up dishonoring the Sabbath day, working on the Sabbath day when it is work that does not absolutely have to be done. Brigham Young's statement to the Saints when they first entered this valley was that if they worked on the Sabbath day they would lose more during the week than they gained by so doing. And we can't get away from the command of the Lord when he said that we should honor the Sabbath day and keep it holy, and if you fathers think you can work on the Sabbath when you don't have to, you must not be surprised if your boys are just dumb enough to do the same thing when they grow to manhood.

On the other hand what a marvelous thing if we set out with the thought in our minds that no matter what the cost, we will say with the prophet of old:

. . . as for me and my house, we serve the Lord. (Joshua 24:15.)

WORK FOR YOUR CHILDREN'S WELFARE.

Contrasted to what I have just read, I want to tell you about a convert to the Church who came into my office just a few weeks ago. She and her husband came here for the gospel's sake. They had misfortune after they arrived; through sickness and hospital bills they were brought down to where they had to move into a section which was not desirable, and I know, as you do, like the story we used to hear as boys, of the one bad apple that spoils the whole bushel, sometimes something breaks loose that is very undesirable. So this sister came in and said, "Bishop, there are some wicked young people in the locality where I am, and unless some-

thing is done about it, they are going to destroy the virtue of my daughters. And I have come here to see if something can't be done." We have heard the Saints bear testimony that they would give their lives for the testimony that is theirs, and that is marvelous, but I wonder if they would be just as willing to live for the testimony that is theirs as to die for it, so when we find conditions that threaten the virtue and the honor and the integrity of our children we do something about it. This little mother did something about it. We got the bishop and the stake president on the job and she said: "Bishop Richards, if I have to do it, I will protect the virtue of my daughters if I have to purchase a tent and go up here on the foothills and live away from the rest of you." That is the kind of faith that will win and bring the parents out triumphant in watching over their children that have been entrusted to them.

I remember reading in *The Improvement Era* a statement about one of our good Latter-day Saint mothers over in Germany who, when the invading army came in, knowing how they ravished the women, took her two daughters up in the attic of a house almost destroyed by the bombs, and there exposed to the weather, she and the daughters remained for several days, and then when she thought it was safe she came down but left the daughters there for days to protect their virtue. God bless that mother and every mother like her in all the world, who is willing to do all in her power to protect her children against the wickedness of this world.

We have all heard the story about Sister Mary Fielding Smith, the mother of President Joseph F. Smith, who came in from Mill Creek with a load of produce and delivered it to the old tithing office on the block east of here. The good brother in charge, knowing she was a widow and how hard it was for her to get along, hardly had the courage to let her unload that wagon at the tithing office. He said, "Take it home. You need it as much as anyone in the Church." Sister Smith said, "I can't do it. My children must know that we pay our tithing." She knew that lesson must be taught to her children. Has she been rewarded? Her son grew up to become the prophet of the Lord to preside over this great Church.

FAITH OF WIDOW

When I was the bishop of a ward and we were building a meetinghouse, a little German widow came to me one day and said: "Bishop, I haven't received my allotment for the meetinghouse." I said, "No, Sister, and you aren't going to get one. If you will just care for those little children your husband left you with, we will build the meetinghouse." "Ah," she said, "Bishop, but I must be able to point to that meetinghouse and tell my children we have done our part." So I said, "God bless you, Sister, but you will have to say what your part is then," and she gave us a substantial contribution toward that meetinghouse. I have met her

children as I have traveled about from place to place in this Church and have found them active, and I want to tell you she didn't cast her bread upon the water in vain, for as the prophet of old said, "For thou shalt find it after many days."

You remember what Alma did when his son, Alma, didn't walk in the ways of the Lord and went about trying to destroy the Church. He just did not give the Lord any rest about it; he took it to the Lord in mighty prayer until an angel of heaven appeared to his son, Alma, and the sons of Mosiah, and when the angel spake unto Alma and his brethren, he caused the earth to shake. They all engaged in the ministry and labored as missionaries unto the Lamanites, and one by one the sons of Mosiah refused to serve as king over the people, desiring rather that they might continue their ministry among the Lamanites.

And this is Alma's statement after his conversion:

O that I were an angel, and could have the wish of mine heart, that I might go forth and speak with the trump of God, with a voice to shake the earth, and cry repentance unto every people! Yea, I would declare unto every soul, as with the voice of thunder, repentance and the plan of redemption, that they should repent and come unto our God, that there might not be more sorrow upon all the face of the earth. (Alma 29:1, 2.)

The greatest sorrow upon the face of this earth is when men and women depart from the ways of the Lord, for truly the prophet hath said:

. . . the way of transgressors is hard. (Proverbs 13:15.)

PRAY FOR YOUR CHILDREN

Now I want to admonish you to pray for your children, to work for your children, to do all within your power to help save them. God may not always send an angel from heaven, as he did in answer to Alma's prayer, but I want to tell you there are men and women in this Church by the thousands and tens of thousands who are as angels of heaven in the hands of God in helping to show the youth of Zion the way to eternal life.

I want to tell you just how the Lord uses some of these. One of our good brethren, who was president of a high priests quorum, and has since passed away, told me this story himself. He was working for the city. He was driving up Main Street one night and saw a boy in uniform being accosted by a wicked woman. He said: "Something said to me, 'Stop and rescue that boy.' I pulled my car off to the side of the street and went over and took that boy by the arm and said: 'You come and go with me.' The woman said, 'Oh, no you don't, he belongs to me.'" This brother said: "I will turn you over to the police," and she looked down and saw a policeman on the corner and walked away. He took that boy, sobered him up and put him in a hotel. The boy said he had never lost his virtue and said, "I don't know why I found myself in this condition." He gave the boy his name, and the boy wrote to his

mother back in Virginia, and after a few days this good brother received a letter from that boy's mother, reading something like this: "I don't know why you stopped your auto and rescued my boy, save that I prayed to God that night, for him, as I had never done before, and the Lord used you as an instrument to rescue my boy."

Now if there were time I could tell you how the Lord uses these bishops and these advisers in the Aaronic Priesthood and in the Latter-day Saint girls program and the teachers in the auxiliaries of this Church in order to help the parents. So, in the words of the pageant, there are the parents at the crossroads, and the great organization of the priesthood of this Church to show youth the way.

God help both to use all their power for the salvation of our boys and our girls, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

President Edgar B. Brossard of the Washington Stake has recently been over in Europe on official business and had an opportunity to visit some of our missions there. We should like to hear a few words from President Brossard.

ELDER EDGAR B. BROSSARD

President of the Washington Stake

Brothers and sisters, I am very pleased with this opportunity of attending conference. It is an inspiration to me as it is to all of us to be present in these sessions and to acknowledge the Spirit of our Father in Heaven which attends those who address us, and to listen to the sweet and inspiring music that comes from our choir.

In Europe this summer I was privileged to visit the place where I performed a mission and lived thirty-three years ago. I went to France and Paris and then to Geneva, from there to Berlin, across to London, to Belfast, Ireland and back to the United States. The work in Europe is going forward. The missionaries are there again. They are being well received in most places where they can get government consent to stay. The people are receiving them very well. They are listening to the gospel, and the gospel is performing wonders in the lives of the people.

Generally, the conditions in Europe are very unfavorable. People are confused. They are confounded. In some of the countries they walk and work and look as if they did not know where they were going nor how to get there. It is a very discouraging spectacle after one has been acquainted with European conditions in times past and seen the intelligent, active, interesting faces of people—the light that has been in them, and then see it almost