

as the climax of a siege in which the historian Josephus tells us there were a million one hundred thousand people killed and

. . . tens of thousands were taken captive, to be afterwards sold into slavery, or to be slain by wild beasts, or in gladiatorial combat for the amusement of Roman spectators.

All of this destruction and the dispersion of the Jews would have been avoided had the people accepted the gospel of Jesus Christ and had their hearts changed by it.

CHOICE BEFORE WORLD TODAY

Today the peoples of the earth stand at the crossing of the same roads as did the Jews in the days of Jesus. The same choice is before them. They may accept the gospel of Jesus Christ and move on to righteousness, peace, love, and happiness, or they may reject it and suffer wickedness, hate, war, and destruction.

The Lord in his great mercy has seen the events of our time coming, and he has sounded the warning and offered the way of escape. Remember that in the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants he said:

. . . I, the Lord, knowing the calamity which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him commandments;

Continuing with this modern revelation, the Lord makes references to that experience of Jerusalem, of which I have told you:

Behold, I tell you these things even as I also told the people of the destruction of Jerusalem; and my word shall be verified at this time as it hath hitherto been verified. (*Ibid.*, 5:19-20.)

Now my beloved brethren and sisters, in conclusion I bear witness to the fact that the gospel of Jesus Christ as restored to the earth in these latter-days through the Prophet Joseph Smith is intended to be and it is the key to the solution of the problems which face our world today, both people individually and collectively. May we who have accepted and declared our allegiance to it keep it brightly shining in our own lives and before the nations of the world, and may others of our Father's children in sufficient numbers receive it before it is too late, that the world may be saved from destruction, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRESIDENT J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.

First Counselor in the First Presidency

My brethren and sisters, I humbly pray that the spirit which thus far has guided this conference, of which we have all partaken, may continue while I shall speak to you.

One gets so much in one of these general conferences not only

from the direct instructions and observations which come, but also from the thought which these instructions and directions invoke, that it is a little difficult sometimes to collect one's thoughts along a particular line.

THE TREASURES OF LIFE

As we grow and enter the upper brackets of years, we reflect a great deal upon the things which are of lasting importance and we come clearly to see that many of the things which we thought were of value in our earlier lives are merely the dross and that the gold, the treasures of life, we may have overlooked.

I am grateful that while I still live and have opportunity to serve that I have come more or less to appreciate, I try fully so to do, the things that are worth while. I try to shear away the unimportant, and, when I do so, I find that worldly things have pretty largely disappeared, that the objects which ordinarily are the matters of ambition among men have gone, and life settles down to the problem of the future. I cease to look at time and get over as near as may be into eternity. I am grateful for the knowledge which the Lord has enabled me to get, which means he has given to me of the things of the spirit. I am grateful for the knowledge of the gospel, imperfect as is the knowledge which I have. I am grateful for my testimony which strengthens with the days and the years, and I am grateful that the blessings which I thus recount to myself are the blessings which belong and are enjoyed by all of you. I come to see that the things which men give in the way of honor and respect and office and position are really of little worth. They are not worth what sometimes we feel we have to give in order to obtain them. I come to know that worldly goods are of no consequence whatever, save I have enough to eat, and to drink and reasonably to wear, and that to attempt to leave wealth to my children will not only be a futile effort but that it may prove a curse.

I do not mean by this that we should cease to exert our efforts to become influential for good in our communities. I do not mean that we should forget that we are living here and have our lives to live. I do not forget that a reasonable provision for those who come after us is a wise thing. I am only saying that none of these things is worth the sacrifice of a principle. They are not worth the sacrifice of our integrity, of our honor, of our righteous living.

WORLD IN A MESS

It is a trite thing to say the world is in a mess. That we know, and out of a life of seventy-seven years I can say that so far as I can see, it has never been in the mess that it is in today. There have never before, in my life, been the powers of evil in such strength. Satan seems to have taken us over very largely, and we

are more or less his tools. This is not the first time in our national history that we have been in trouble, and when I say "we," I mean the people. I am not talking of administrations. I am talking of us, we the people of the United States.

PROCLAMATION OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

I have always been impressed with a great proclamation that was issued by Abraham Lincoln. He issued it in one of the darkest hours of the Civil War, just before Vicksburg, the surrender of which opened up the Mississippi River, and just before Gettysburg, which stopped the threatened invasion of the North. The Senate had passed a resolution calling attention to the needs of the country and asked him to set apart a day for national prayer and humiliation. The nation was considered almost bankrupt from debt. The people were tax-ridden, almost beyond endurance; the army was unpaid, some of it for a period of six months, and it was daily dwindling by desertion. The president issued a proclamation, and I want to read two or three paragraphs therefrom.

"We," by which he meant the people,

... have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in number, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God who made us.

It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness. Now, therefore in compliance with the request and fully concurring in the views of the Senate, I do by this my proclamation designate and set apart Thursday the 30th day of April, 1863, as a day of national humiliation, to abstain on that day from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite in their several places of public worship and be devoted to the humble discharge of the religious duties proper to that solemn occasion.

All this being done in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope authorized by the divine teachings that the united cry of the nation will be heard on high and answered with blessings no less than the pardon of our national sins and the restoration of our now divided and suffering country to its former happy condition of unity and peace.

WE HAVE HAD PROPHETS

In some respects, too many, we stand in that same place today.

Some time ago a pamphlet came across my desk which unfortunately I threw away. On the outside page it was stated, "We need a prophet," and as I read it then, and as I think of it now, I think how blind the world is. We have had a prophet, an American prophet, one who spoke our language, one who was imbued with

Christian ideals, and that prophet gave us the great righteous principles of which we know and of which the world partly knows; he gave them in our own language over a hundred years ago. These may all be read; we have been teaching them for a century. The trouble with the world is they do not want a prophet teaching righteousness. They want a prophet that will tell them that what they are doing is right, no matter how wrong it may be.

There is nothing new in this. Going back to the beginning, Noah taught the people. He was a prophet, and he told them what to do. He finally convinced his own family, and they were saved. So of Moses—while the children of Israel were in Egypt and he was promising them deliverance, they followed him, they did what he told them, but once out of Egypt and away from the bondman's lash they forgot, and he had rebellion after rebellion upon his hands from then until he died. The later prophets in Israel—Elijah vindicated by a miracle, that he was a prophet of God; yet Jezebel hunted him like a wild beast and would have killed him had not the Lord taken him by a miracle; and Isaiah and Jeremiah, these prophets spoke not only about righteous living and what Israel should do in their family life and in their religious worship, but those prophets spoke also of the relationship of nations and how Israel should bear herself toward those nations, but their warnings and prophecies went unheeded, and the calamities which they predicted came.

Now our Prophet, Joseph Smith, and the prophets since his time—and there has always been a prophet in this Church, and prophets, and you sustain the brethren here, conference after conference, as prophets, seers, and revelators—the Prophet himself, through the Lord by revelation, gave certain great principles that would save the world if the world would but listen. We do not lack a prophet; what we lack is a listening ear by the people and a determination to live as God has commanded. That is all we need. The way has been made perfectly clear.

REVELATIONS GIVEN TO JOSEPH SMITH

In the earliest days of the Church the Prophet, through revelation, gave a plan—we call it the United Order—which, if lived, would have preserved individual initiative, what we have come to call the American way of life, and at the same time have cared for all who needed to be cared for. When we could not live that, the Lord then gave us, through a series of revelations, step by step—for he always leads us gradually, we cannot always be led clear through to the end all at once—he gave us revelations out of which we have developed the plan for caring for the poor, through the giving by those who have to those who have not. We now know it as the great welfare plan. There is nothing new in the welfare plan except a little machinery that we have added to carry it out.

The Lord gave us a great dietary law more than one hundred years ago. He called it a Word of Wisdom. If this law were lived, it would regenerate the human race, so far as their physical bodies are concerned; and because of the intimate relationship between our physical bodies and our spiritual welfare, we would, if we had lived it, by this time be well on our way spiritually toward that peace for which men today so earnestly and devoutly work and pray.

He taught us also the relationship between father and son, child and parent, a great principle, one of the saving principles of society, given first on Mount Sinai and repeated by the Savior to the questioning Pharisees. We have forgotten that. The prophecy is here. There is no difficulty about that. It is our ears that are at fault.

He gave us the true principle for righteous ruling in that great revelation which tells us how the priesthood should rule, as already referred to by Brother Romney, I believe, who quoted some teachings from the Book of Mormon.

He gave us a great law of war telling us that we his people, should not go to war unless commanded by him and then telling what those who were attacked should do, how many times they should forgive, following along the lines of those quotations made by Brother Romney.

He declared also, this prophet of ours, that this was a promised land and should so remain so long as we worshiped the God of this land, Jesus Christ; but he warned us that when and if we became ripe in iniquity, he would destroy us, just as he had destroyed others before us.

The Prophet gave a great revelation involving fundamental principles of government, the relationship between the civil officers and the people, the relationship between the people and the laws commanded obedience to righteous laws—all sufficient in general principles to take us out of our present morass of pride, lawlessness, and crime.

He told us that the Constitution, under which we live, was an inspired document, that its principles were elemental to free human government and declared we should adhere to the Constitution and to the principles thereof. In that Constitution is the great Bill of Rights, guaranteeing to us freedom of the press, freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, freedom to assemble, and so on.

AMERICA NEEDS A LISTENING EAR

All this is in our gospel. It is all part of the work of our great prophet Joseph Smith, and those who have followed him. It is in the books and has been in print for a century. The American Prophet has spoken; American prophets are speaking. The great principles I have named, and almost countless others, have been

proclaimed for a hundred years. No, America does not need a prophet; America needs a listening ear. And more than all, we who are here, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we need a listening ear.

May God give us that ear. May he give us a disposition to read what he has told us. May he give us a spirit, his spirit, to take into our souls the principles of the gospel which he has given to us. May he give us the will and power to live them, having taken them into our souls; and the blessings and the joy and the happiness of life that will come to us if we so live are beyond any powers of expression or suggestion that I possess.

May God give us, again I say, a listening ear to all that he has told us, in order that we may live as he would have us live and give us the spirit to which I have referred, and the power to live as he would have us live, and to us men the will and power to honor our priesthood, and give to all of us every blessing that would be for our good, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

ELDER OCTAVE W. URSENBACH

Former President of the Canadian Mission

With you, my brethren and sisters, I rejoice in the great blessing that is ours, collectively, for being in attendance at this conference. We have been fed the bread of life. We have drunk of that cup of living water which will give us an everlasting blessing. I hope our souls have been fired with a determination to serve the Lord and to keep his commandments.

I should like at this time to express my gratitude to my Father in heaven and to his servants who preside over this Church for the opportunity of serving in the Canadian Mission for almost four years. You may well imagine how closely I followed the report of Elder Romney as he recounted his experiences in that mission recently. It was the first foreign mission of the Church. Work commenced there in the year 1832. Canada is a great country, great in possibilities but not great in population. Its population of about twelve million people is represented in all the churches that are dominant. The largest church in Canada is the Catholic Church which comprises about forty-three percent of the population of the country. The United Church of Canada is the second largest. Of the people more than ninety-eight percent of the total population claim allegiance to some Christian denomination, according to the records of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Canada was settled by English, Irish, Scotch and French peoples and there are among them many honest souls, and from that country have come faithful members of the Church of Jesus Christ. My labor among those people was most satisfying. I congratulate the membership of this Church in giving of its strength in young men and young women who have faith and