

Friday, April 4

First Day

kindness they have manifested towards me.

So, my brethren and sisters, I am happy to find myself in full accord with all that this Church is and all that it does. Its divine leader, Jesus Christ, is my leader and my Lord. Its leaders on this earth are my leaders. The principles of this Church are my principles. The objectives of this Church are my objectives. The welfare of this Church is my welfare.

I give myself to it with all my heart and pray that God may enable me to do some good in the sacred ministry unto which he has called me.

This is the Church of Jesus Christ, the Creator and the Redeemer of the

world. The keys of the kingdom of God are here in our presence. These operate and will operate throughout all the world among all mankind, through the Holy Melchizedek Priesthood, which is always present when the Church of Jesus Christ is upon the earth. And when this power is not upon the earth and where this power does not exist among men, the Church of Jesus Christ does not exist.

Thank God for the great revelations—key revelations—that point the way for us and enlighten us and preserve us.

May God help us to be true and faithful, and devote ourselves with all our hearts to this work, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER JOHN A. WIDTSOE

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

MY DEAR brethren and sisters: It is good to be here. The ancient words of those who dwelt in the presence of the Savior are our words today.

Six months ago circumstances combined so that I was not here, and I have felt since a sense of loss, loss of the spiritual power, the spiritual support and elevation that come to all Latter-day Saints who attend Church gatherings in the name of the Lord, whether in general or stake or ward capacity.

With you, I have been thrilled to note that the Church of Jesus Christ is not standing still but, guided by heavenly forces, is growing and increasing and becoming mightier in the service of God's children here upon earth. With you, too, I enjoyed the spirit of the sermon of the man who has been called by God to preside over the Church. It is well for me, it is well for you, and it is well for all in the world to listen to the chosen head of the Church as he speaks from time to time. Therein lies the path to safety.

Six months ago I was not here because, with the approval of the First Presidency, I had accepted an invita-

tion from the Canadian government to assist in solving some of their problems relating to the reclamation of the dry lands of the Dominion. Canada is much like the United States, with two seaboards, one on the Atlantic and the other on the Pacific, with ample rainfall, and a dry section between, in the interior, such as we have here. The prairie provinces of Canada offer only scant and difficult living to those who attempt to cultivate them because of the lack of the plentiful rainfall on either coast. So the practice of irrigation has gradually grown in the province of Alberta, where many of our people live. It has been found that the enlivening power of water used in irrigation increases the crops many-fold, and what is better, permits a close settlement, and in time the building of a state. There is water aplenty in the land of our neighbors to the north. Great streams, filled with water to overflowing, usually, roll into the oceans on both sides of the Dominion, and the problem is how to use that water on the dry lands of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and other neighboring provinces, to build the Dominion of Canada, now great, into a greater country.

The commission to which I was appointed was given the responsibility of passing on one of the huge projects proposed by the country, one that will redeem and bring into cultivation nearly half a million acres of land and involve an expenditure running from \$100,000,000 to \$200,000,000. Sometime it has to be done, for these dry lands when irrigated offer future possibilities of happy homes for thousands of families, not to be overlooked in the process of statesmanship.

It has always been a curious thing to me, curious is not really the right word, when I reflect upon the history of our own people, how we were led by the hand of God, as a people, and were brought over the deserts and over the mountains to be settled in this country. We did not know at that time, and the world did not know, that one-half or more of all the land surface of the earth lies under low rainfall. These vast stretches of land can be reclaimed only by the twin arts of dry farming and irrigation, best of all by irrigation, for dry farming at its very best is only a minor practice to be followed by people who live near the cultivated areas. But our people came here and for the first time in the history of civilization demonstrated that a successful manner of community living might be built with the irrigation ditch. The Lord guiding us took us to a protected home, but not only that, he made us teachers of the world in these twin arts of successful soil conservation. In this state, from which we have spread over the west and are spreading over the world, has come the birth of modern irrigation. Most countries which lie in part under low rainfall have sent agents or representatives here to find out what we did and how we did it, and whether they can do it also. We have a worldwide reputation in reclaiming desert lands by the use of water. Our work has served humanity greatly. We have preached the everlasting truths of the gospel by thousands of missionaries, but we have also preached by our example here,

before the great nations of the world, how their resources may be utilized more fully and more completely and how the needs of humanity may be more fully met.

It has never seemed to me a mere chance that the Lord brought us here. There seems to lie in that part of our history a distinct evidence of the divine guidance of this people. It may be of interest to us here today, as many of you know, that not only did we as a people begin to show how a modern, civilized group of people could live under irrigation, but that here, also, beginning in our own Utah State Agricultural College at Logan, experiments and tests were and are made to place this art of irrigation on a scientific, orderly basis. This is not the place to discuss that, perhaps, but we do have the honor of being not only the generators of modern-day irrigation, but also of placing that ancient art on a modern, scientific basis.

Some very remarkable things have been discovered from time to time in this field that are tremendously interesting. Our farmers are gradually learning more and more about these precious truths. The farming people, you know, move slowly. They want to know before they do anything, but little by little that which we have garnered and gained throughout the years will be used.

And so a Latter-day Saint, working as I had to work last fall in behalf of a great agricultural, irrigation project, is stirred in his feelings when he looks back upon what the Lord has asked his people to do—to toil, to struggle, to compel the desert to yield; and also to teach all the world that which the world is hungry to know.

Well, perhaps that is all I should say about my irrigation work and why I was not here in attendance six months ago. But you know there is a great symbolism in irrigation. As a lifelong student of the subject I have always been impressed by the fact that the dry desert soil contains nearly all the elements of fertility. All that it needs is

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the enlivening power of a stream of water to flow over that soil. Suddenly the land begins to yield, and it becomes powerful. Is it not so in our spiritual lives, I wonder? Men according to our theology are children of God, not created under the old idea, but being literally children of Almighty God, contain all the elements under the law of eternal progression that will lead them into the likeness of their Father in heaven. When this being, this divine being, because in one sense we are all divine, is touched by the power of the Holy Ghost, the Holy Spirit, the power that flows from God, suddenly a man blossoms into a new life, new possibilities arise, new powers develop. As I have lived in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as a member since my very early boyhood, I have come to understand that perhaps the greatest miracle in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is the transformation that comes to a man or a woman who in faith accepts the truth of the gospel, and who then lives it in his or her life. That transformation is marvelous. I have seen it in the mission field, where I first heard the gospel. I have seen it here at home. I see it every day. Every person has a measure of God's Spirit given to him. We are all in God's presence through his Holy Spirit. As new and greater truths come, as the understanding of them develops within us if we accept and live them, we are transformed from ordinary men into new powers and possibilities.

The weavers of the midlands in England, the coal miners of Wales, the fishermen in Norway, the trudging farmers of Denmark, very common, ordinary people, who accept the gospel from the lips of some humble Mormon missionary become so changed by those enlightening truths of the gospel that they are not the same people any longer. They have been fertilized, so to speak, by the Spirit of God that flows from eternal truth, just as in irrigation the barren, dry soil is fertilized by diverting the stream of water

from the irrigation ditch onto the thirsty land.

It is a comparison worthy of our thought, because we are the bearers of the irrigation message to all the world.

I remember the man who baptized me into the Church, a very common, ordinary man to begin with, a ropewalker with a jug of beer two or three times a day, a glass of whiskey a little later, and a cud of tobacco mostly all day long, living a useless, purposeless life, except for three meals a day, and the satisfaction of some of the carnal appetites. He heard the gospel and accepted it. It was good. It was something he had been longing for. The man grew in power and stature in the Church. As I recall it, he filled five or six missions and presided over one of the missions of the Church. He was the same man, with the same arms, same feet, same body, same mind, but changed because of the Spirit that comes with the acceptance of eternal truth. Have not we seen this in our own families and friends, in the little towns in which we live? Have not we felt our own strength grow mightier in love for our fellow men, in love for our daily tasks, in love for all the good things of life? If you question yourself or question us here who have the responsibility of conducting this conference, we will all bear witness to it. But remember, when irrigation began in Utah, it was a struggle with the earth. It required toil. The water did not flow down these canyon streams to the farms just by asking it to do so, but men dug and drilled and shoveled and made canals. We have a remarkable illustration of that in one of our enterprises in Utah. It was called the Hurricane enterprise. The story of that has never been told quite fully, but it is stirring and thrilling. And to some degree in every enterprise in the building of this state toil had to be faced and used. And so to get that spiritual stream that I have been talking about, it must be sought for; it must be fought for; it must be labored for. It will come, but we must ask

for it and seek it and labor for it. Then comes that great change—an overwhelming change. It changes men to a Godlike phase of life and living.

Well, you know the comparison as well as I do. I must not take any more of your time. It is good to be a Latter-day Saint. It is good to be here. It is good to hear the words of inspiration that come from the mouths and lives of these inspired men. I am glad to feel the responsive spirit from the thousands of people who are here and who listen over the radio.

May we all so live as to have a great measure of the enlivening, spiritual, fertilizing stream that comes from God because of our virtuous lives, our earnest actions in seeking after truth. May

we all be blessed according to our needs.

Let us determine to cling to our heritage here in this land where we were led by the guiding power of God, and may the descendants of our pioneer fathers refuse to sell their birthright for gold lest it turn to a "mess of pottage." May we remember our heritage in this Church of land, of water, and of spiritual power, I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Combined Choruses and the congregation joined in singing the hymn, "The Spirit of God Like A Fire Is Burning." The singing was led by Richard P. Condie, Assistant Conductor of the Tabernacle Choir.

ELDER HENRY D. MOYLE

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I AM very grateful unto my Heavenly Father for the opportunity which is mine to meet with you, my brethren and sisters, in this great conference and to partake of the Spirit of the Lord that is here with us in such rich abundance.

I feel indebted to the Lord for the health and strength which is mine, and I am certain that he has blessed me with this health and strength in answer not only to my own prayers but also to the prayers of my brethren and sisters in the Church.

I have had a great affection for the leaders of the Church as far back as I can remember. I have always desired of the Lord that he would give me the strength to honor and to sustain those who presided over me in the priesthood with all my heart and soul, and I do that today. I am grateful for the leadership of President David O. McKay, and of President Stephen L. Richards and President J. Reuben Clark, Jr. I know these men receive from our Father in heaven his inspiration and direction in the work which they are called upon to perform for you and for me. I have this great affection and love not alone for the Presidency of the Church but

for President Joseph Fielding Smith as President of the Council of the Twelve and all my associates in that Council, and all of the General Authorities. In fact my affection extends to all of my brethren and sisters. No man could have a richer heritage on the face of this earth than to be really worthy to be numbered among the Latter-day Saints.

The statistics that we heard read this morning demonstrate the results of great inspiration and leadership. I say that my affection for my brethren in the Church creates within me a further and similar desire that we might have governmental leaders in our nation and in our state and in our counties and in our cities of the same calibre.

I am always impressed when I read the 134th section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

We believe that governments were instituted of God for the benefit of man; and that he holds men accountable for their acts in relation to them, both in making laws and administering them, for the good and safety of society.

We believe that no government can exist in peace, except such laws are framed