

## FIRST DAY AFTERNOON MEETING

Conference reconvened at 2:00 p.m., Saturday, April 4.

### President David O. McKay:

We repeat that the notices that come to the rostrum will be announced over the loud speaker on the grounds. We shall have to be fair to all, if we announced any one of these that are coming to us, we should be showing partiality. All announcements for meeting your friends or your relatives and of meetings will be announced over the loud speaker, please.

This is the second session of the One Hundred Twenty-Third Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We are convened in the Tabernacle on Temple Square, Salt Lake City. These services and all general sessions of the conference, will be broadcast in the Assembly Hall, in Barratt Hall, 60 North Main, over a loud speaking system and by television.

Last Thursday morning, this tabernacle was filled with the Primary workers of the Church. Friday night, last evening, it was filled to overflowing with the bishoprics of the Church. This morning and this afternoon it is filled to overflowing by members in attendance at the conference. It is evident that one pressing need of our Church is a larger building. We need a Coliseum that will seat fifteen or twenty thousand people, even to accommodate those officers and teachers who come to these conferences.

The proceedings of this session will be broadcast over station KSL of Salt

Lake City, and by arrangement through KSL over the stations named in the first session of this conference. This session will be televised also over KSL television station, channel 5.

The singing will be furnished by the combined Scandinavian choirs, with Elder R. Hulbert Keddington conducting, and Alexander Schreiner at the organ. We shall begin this service by the Combined Choirs singing, "Send Out the Light," conducted by Elder Keddington. The opening prayer will be offered by Elder Edward H. Sorensen, formerly President of the Danish Mission.

---

The Scandinavian Choirs sang: "Send Out Thy Light."

Elder Edward H. Sorensen, former President of the Danish Mission, offered the opening prayer.

### President David O. McKay:

Elder Edward H. Sorensen, formerly President of the Danish Mission, has just offered the invocation.

The combined Scandinavian choirs will now favor us with, "Let Not Thy Heart Be Troubled," after which Elder Harold B. Lee of the Council of the Twelve, will speak to us.

---

Singing by the Choir, "Let Not Thy Heart Be Troubled."

### President David O. McKay:

Elder Harold B. Lee of the Council of the Twelve will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church.

### ELDER HAROLD B. LEE

#### *Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

I AM overwhelmed, and my soul is subdued by the marvelous spirit of this great conference. I think no one needed more the message of that

beautiful number just sung by the choir than I—"Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." I seek therefore earnestly for an interest in your

faith and prayers for these next few minutes.

Several years ago in company with President S. Dilworth Young and his wife, we toured the New England Mission. At Glace Bay on Cape Breton Island we were introduced to a lovely sister who had been studying the gospel with our missionaries and had been very much attracted to them, but as we talked with her about her understanding of what they had taught, she said:

"I cannot accept this part of your teachings about the gospel of the second chance."

As we talked on, I discovered that what she was alluding to were the teachings of the missionaries with reference to the statement of the Savior when he said:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

For as the Father hath life in himself: so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself. (John 5:25-26.)

She was referring to the missionaries' interpretation of the words of Peter as he wrote them to the Saints in his day,

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. (1 Peter 3:18-20.)

They had taught her what Peter explained from what the Master must have told of his visit to that spirit realm, when he said:

For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. (*Ibid.*, 4:6.)

I answered her, "You misunderstand our teachings. We don't believe in the

gospel of the second chance. We do not believe in the gospel of the first chance, but we believe in a chance or full opportunity for everyone to hear and to accept the gospel."

Then I recalled to her what the Master had said,

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. (Matt. 24:14.)

I quoted to her from revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith in which the Lord said:

Behold, I sent you out to testify and to warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor. Therefore, they are left without excuse, in the day of judgment, and the sins be upon their own heads. (D. & C. 88:81-82.)

I read to her from the words of the Prophet of the Book of Mormon where he declared:

For after this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed. (Alma 34:33.)

I told her of the vision of the Prophet Joseph that he had in the Kirtland Temple in January 1836, when he saw in vision Adam and Abraham, and saw his own father and mother. He saw his brother Alvin, who had departed this life before he was baptized, saw them in the celestial kingdom, and he marvelled, and then the Lord spoke to him and said:

All who have died without a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom of God; and those who die henceforth without a knowledge of it who would have received it with all their hearts shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom, for I, the Lord, will judge men according to their works, according to the desires of their hearts. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 107.)

Saturday, April 4

First Day

Many times I have thought back over that conversation, and I believe now I am beginning to understand what the Master meant when he said to Peter, after Peter had declared his testimony of the divinity of the Savior. The Master had told him that this was a revelation from God, and then added,

And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matt. 16:18.)

There are those with limited or little understanding who believe that statement to refute our teaching that there has been an apostasy. They say, "If there was an apostasy, then the gates of hell did prevail against the Church, contrary to the words of the Savior to Peter."

As I have thought of the true meaning of that statement, I have said to myself, "Oh, how great is the wisdom of God as contrasted with the foolishness of men."

What was the purpose of our Father concerning us and his work? He declared it to Moses:

This is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and the eternal life of man. (Moses 1:39.)

It was John who said that Jesus was as a lamb "slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8) or, in other words, Jesus was prepared for an atonement; his sacrifice was to be made as a ransom for all of those who would obey him and keep his commandments.

The Prophet Joseph Smith in speaking about this matter said this:

The great Jehovah contemplated the whole of the events connected with the earth, pertaining to the plan of salvation, before it rolled into existence, or ever "the stars of morning sang together" for joy; and the past, the present, and the future, were and are with Him, one eternal "now". . . . He knows the situation of both the living and the dead, and has made ample provision for their redemption, according to their several circumstances, and the laws of the kingdom of God, whether in this world or in the world to come. (Smith,

Joseph Fielding, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 220.)

That plan, which had been laid in the heavens before the foundations of the world were laid, contemplated a testing in the spirit world. It contemplated the plan of salvation given in various dispensations of the gospel here upon the earth.

As President Joseph Fielding Smith told us this morning, it was not God who sealed the heavens following a dispensation of the gospel. It was man. Hence, we are to believe that there would have been but one dispensation beginning with Adam and reaching down to now, except had it been for the wickedness of men.

That plan contemplated the preaching of the gospel to those who were in the spirit world, who had departed this life without having had ample opportunity of hearing the gospel. It contemplated the vicarious work to be carried on in behalf of those who had died without that knowledge in holy temples here in order that they might be judged as though they had heard the gospel here in the flesh.

The gates of hell would have prevailed if Satan had been victorious in the war in heaven, and if his plan, which would have nullified free agency, had been the order. The gates of hell would have prevailed had there ever been a time when the power to administer the saving ordinances of the gospel would not have been in each dispensation of the gospel upon the earth.

The gates of hell would have prevailed if the gospel had not been taught to the spirits in prison and to those who had not had ample opportunity to receive the gospel here in its fullness. It would have prevailed if there was not a vicarious work for the dead, and had it not been instituted to provide for those in the spirit world who desired to accept the gospel.

The gates of hell would have prevailed were it not for other vicarious work pertaining to the exaltation which

those who accept the gospel might receive, both ordinances for the living and for the dead.

Now, as I think of that plan, so perfect in its conception, it is clear that this plan could not have existed except it had been by the revelations of the Living God.

So we begin to understand what the Lord meant when he said to Peter,

... upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matt. 16:18.)

He was speaking of the revelation of the Lord to his authorized servants and all the forces of hell combined could not prevent it.

Several years ago while I served as a missionary, I came to the door of one who belong to an apostate faction which fell away after the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith. For a considerable time we had a rather spirited discussion, although not unfriendly, in which she argued her case, and that we, the Latter-day Saints, and not their faction, were the apostates from the truth.

As we talked on into the afternoon, there came an interesting turn to our conversation. It developed that this couple had had but one child, a little boy, who, when about seven years of age, was stricken with an incurable disease. When he came to the age of accountability, of eight, he was still sick, and at nine or shortly thereafter he passed away, still unable to be taken into the waters of baptism.

Now, they accepted the revelation of the Lord through the Prophet Joseph that at eight years of age, the age of accountability, children are to be baptized, except for which they should not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

"Now," she asked, "what do you think we ought to do for our child?"

I replied: "Oh, that is easy. Have him baptized for in the temple. That is what temples are for."

But she said, "We have no temple." Then there came into my mind a scripture in which the Lord said,

Now the great and grand secret . . . and

the *summum bonum* of the whole subject that is lying before us, consists in obtaining the powers of the Holy Priesthood. For him to whom these keys are given there is no difficulty in obtaining a knowledge of facts in relation to the salvation of the children of men, both as well for the dead as for the living. (D. & C. 128:11.)

Truly as I thought about her plight, the gates of hell had prevailed against her church because the keys and the power to reveal knowledge from heaven was not to be found in that church.

In other words, the Lord has said to Joseph Smith what he said to Peter and what he has said to every prophet in every dispensation. He gives to each the keys to the kingdom of heaven, and the power to receive revelation in order that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his plan.

What he said to Peter was tantamount to saying to Joseph, if I can make this meaning clear—he might well have said,

And I say unto thee, thou art Joseph, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

What he said to Joseph, might well have been said to Peter:

I give unto thee the keys to the kingdom of heaven, for he to whom these keys are given shall have no difficulty in obtaining a knowledge of both the salvation of the living and the dead.

The importance of revelation on which to found this Church was again impressed on the day this Church was organized, when the Lord said, to the Church, not only to those few who were then members, but also to all of us who have since been members,

Wherefore, meaning the church, thou shalt give head unto all his words [meaning the words of the President of the Church, the Prophet of the Lord] and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me;

For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith.

For by doing these things the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and

Saturday, April 4

First Day

the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name's glory. (D. & C. 21:4-6.)

In other words, the Lord has said it was not only important that there be revelation to his Church through his mouthpiece, the one who held the keys, but his Church must also be founded on personal revelation, that every member of the Church who has been baptized and has received the Holy Ghost must be admonished so to live that each might receive a personal testimony and a witness of the divine calling of him who was called to lead as the President of the Church so that he will accept those words and that counsel as if from the mouth of the Lord himself. Otherwise, the gates of hell would prevail against that individual.

It was exactly that meaning that the Apostle Paul intended to convey when he wrote to the Ephesians,

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers. (Eph. 4:11.)

In other words, he organized the Church and set up the proper officers, "that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Upon this rock, the rock of revelation, to individuals who have the power of the Holy Ghost, and revelation from God to his Church, the Lord in wisdom has designed that therefore the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

In the midst of travail and suffering the Lord sent this word of comfort to the Prophet Joseph:

God shall give unto you knowledge by his Holy Spirit, yea, by the unspeakable gift of the Holy Ghost, that has not been revealed since the world was until now; . . . According to that which was ordained in the midst of the Council of the Eternal God of all other gods before this world was, that should be reserved unto the finishing and the end thereof, when every man shall enter into his eternal presence

and into his immortal rest. (D. & C. 121:26, 32.)

Thus the rock of revealed knowledge has built his Church, and the gates of hell have never prevailed against it.

With that overpowering thought that the plan of the Almighty has been so laid that never has Satan been able to shake it, how we should rejoice at the word of the Lord to Joseph when he said:

. . . What power can stay the heavens? As well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri river in its decreed course, or to turn it up stream, as to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge from heaven upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints. (*Ibid.*, 121:33.)

I am grateful as I stand here this afternoon to realize that this is his Church. We have at the head of this Church an earthly head who presides as the President thereof, the mouthpiece of God. In this day to those who will believe and will listen to counsel, the gates of hell shall never prevail. Those who die without a knowledge will have the right to hear that truth in the spirit world, and if they accept it, work may be done vicariously that they might be judged and blessed even as though they had accepted it in the flesh.

Thanks be to God that the devil's power has never prevailed against his plan of continued revelation to his servants, and never will prevail so long as the earth shall stand, for the gospel plan was laid in heaven and will continue throughout the eternities for the purpose of bringing about immortality and eternal life.

I bear you that humble testimony in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President David O. McKay:

He to whom we have just listened is Elder Harold B. Lee, of the Council of the Twelve. Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church, will now speak to us. He will be followed by President Levi Edgar Young, of the First Council of Seventy.