

Monday, April 6

Third Day

Elder John C. Dalton, President of the East Long Beach Stake offered the invocation.

Singing by the Combined Choruses, "Christ, the Lord, Is Risen Today."

President David O. McKay:

Our first speaker this afternoon is Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve. He will be followed by Elder Henry D. Moyle.

ELDER MARION G. ROMNEY

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

SOMEHOW I don't feel like giving the talk which I had prepared for the conference. I would, however, like to discuss with you a few things that are in my mind, without attempting to make a speech or deliver a discourse.

In the first place, I extend my welcome to Brother Bennion, who has today been called into the Council of the Twelve. He has great talents and the ability to do great service in the Church. He touched my life for good more than thirty years ago when he gave me encouragement in a trying time.

I express my regrets, too, at the passing of Brother Widtsoe, a great man who for many, many years was one of the outstanding leaders of the Church. I am sure our hearts go out to Sister Widtsoe and to her family. Just a year ago Brother Widtsoe gave his last conference talk. He had recently returned, you will remember, from a very important assignment in Canada. He talked about preserving water and making it available to the land. He told how putting water on land turns barren soil into fertile, productive soil. From this he drew the following gospel lesson:

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. (*Conference Report*, April, 1952, p. 34.)

I am sure we shall long remember the labors of Brother Widtsoe.

I would like to say a word to you, Brother Bowen, if you are listening. Our hearts go out to you; we love you; we recognize the strength of your great character and your unusual intellect. I would like to put in the record a statement from the address you delivered here a year ago. You were explaining how the adoption of the precepts of men had changed the doctrines of the Christian Church. You were, of course, speaking of churches generally, not of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Then you concluded—and I remember these words as you spoke them:

In my view there is only one safety; there is only one cure; and that is to take the pure and unadulterated word of God and set that up as our standard of measurement, and measure every creed and doctrine and dogma by that yardstick. That which will not square with the declarations of Almighty God we can lay aside as unsuited for the need of man. (*Ibid.*, p. 66.)

I know, Brother Bowen, you would love to be here today. We would love to have you, and we give you our faith and our prayers.

Now may I call your attention to President Richards' conference address given six months ago. You will recall

that he extended an invitation to the peoples of the world. It began with these words:

I desire to use this opportunity to extend an invitation. . . . To the people of the Church, there is nothing novel in this invitation. Although it has gone out to the people of the world for more than a century, there are still few of the world who fully understand its import. This is the invitation, addressed: To All Men, Women, and Children. Dear Friends: You are cordially and earnestly invited to participate in building the kingdom of God in the earth. Place—Everywhere. Time—Now. (*Ibid.*, October, 1952, pp. 97-98.)

President Richards, we remember that great talk. We have re-read it. We pray God, our Eternal Father, to bring you back that you may give many more such talks.

President McKay, in the opening address of this conference, said there were two things that we should do. One of them was to put our homes in order; the other was to bear witness of the Redeemer. He was thus quoted in the press:

President McKay, in his opening message to the Church membership, emphasized what he termed two great duties of Latter-day Saints: (1) to put their homes in order, and (2) to proclaim the divinity of the mission of Jesus Christ.

I would like to say just a word about my testimony of the mission of Jesus Christ. I want to go a little farther back for a moment, if I can be given guidance by the Spirit of the Lord to speak the truth accurately, and mention the great condition precedent to the efficacy of the mission of Jesus Christ. That condition precedent is the mission of Father Adam, because without the mission of Adam there would have been no need for the mission—the atonement—of Jesus Christ.

I have an assignment from the First Presidency to serve on the Church publications committee. This committee is expected to read and pass upon the literature proposed for use in the study courses of our auxiliary organizations.

It would please me immensely if, in the preparation of this literature, we could get away from using the language of those who do not believe in the mission of Adam. I have reference to words and phrases such as "primitive man," "prehistoric man," "before men learned to write," and the like. We sometimes use these terms in a way that offends my feelings; in a way which indicates to me that we get mixed up in our understanding of the mission of Adam. The connotation of these terms, as used by unbelievers, is out of harmony with our understanding of the mission of Adam.

"Adam fell that man might be." (2 Nephi 2:25.) There were no pre-Adamic men in the line of Adam. The Lord said that Adam was the first man. (Moses 1:34, 3:7; D. & C. 84:16.) It is hard for me to get the idea of a man ahead of Adam, before the first man. The Lord also said that Adam was the first flesh (Moses 3:7) which, as I understand it, means the first mortal on the earth. I understand from a statement in the book of Moses, which was made by Enoch, that there was no death in the world before Adam. (Moses 6:48; see also 2 Nephi 2:22.) Enoch said:

. . . death hath come upon our fathers; nevertheless we know them, and cannot deny, and even the first of all we know, even Adam.

For a book of remembrance we have written among us, according to the pattern given by the finger of God; and it is given in our own language. (Moses 6:45-46.)

I understand from this that Enoch could read about Adam in a book which had been written under the tutelage of Almighty God. Thus there were no prehistoric men who could not write because men living in the days of Adam, who was the first man, wrote.

I am not a scientist. I do not profess to know anything but Jesus Christ, and him crucified, and the principles of his gospel. If, however, there are some things in the strata of the earth indicating there were men before Adam, they were not the ancestors of Adam.

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Adam was the son of God. He was our elder brother, not older than Jesus, but he was our brother in the same sense that Jesus was our brother, and he "fell" to earth life. He did not come up through an unbroken line of organic evolution. There had to be a fall. "Adam fell that men might be." (2 Nephi 2:25.)

I will go on now and read this scripture before I forget it:

For a book of remembrance we have written among us, according to the pattern given by the finger of God; and it is given in our own language.

And as Enoch spake forth the words of God, the people trembled, and could not stand in his presence. (Moses 6:46-47.)

Some men speak of the ancients as being savages, as if they had no intelligence. I tell you this man Enoch had intelligence, and Adam had intelligence, as much as any man that ever lived since or that lives now. They were mighty sons of God.

And he said unto them: Because that Adam fell, we are; and by his fall came death; and we are made partakers of misery and woe. (Moses 6:48.)

If Adam and Eve had not partaken of the forbidden fruit, they would have had no children, and we would not have been. (2 Nephi 2:23-25; Moses 5:11.)

I do not look upon Adam's action as a sin. I think it was a deliberate act of free agency. He chose to do that which had to be done to further the purposes of God. The consequences of his act made necessary the atonement of the Redeemer.

I must not go into a longer discussion, but I say again that I would be very pleased if, in our teaching of the gospel, we could keep revealed truth straight in our minds and not get it confused with the ideas and theories of men, who do not believe what the Lord has revealed with respect to the fall of Adam.

Now, I believe with Enoch, "... Because that Adam fell, we are; and by

his fall came death;" (Moses 6:48) that every man must die, as Brother Petersen said yesterday. I believe that to meet the demands of justice, it took the atonement of Jesus Christ to redeem men from that death, that they may be raised again and have their spirits and their bodies, which are separated through death, reunited. I believe that through the atonement of Jesus Christ whatever "transgression" Adam committed was paid for, and that as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, every living creature. (I Cor. 15:22; D. & C. 29:24, 77:2.) I believe, too, that through the atonement of Jesus Christ my individual sins, your individual sins, and the individual sins of every human being that ever lived or ever will live upon the earth were atoned for, upon condition that we accept the gospel and live it to the end of our lives.

I know that my Redeemer lives. I shall not know it better when I stand before the bar of God to be judged. I know that Jesus is the Redeemer. I bear that witness to you, not from what people have told me; I bear it out of a knowledge revealed to me by the Holy Spirit. As to this knowledge, the Lord, after commanding the early Apostles of this dispensation to testify that the words he had spoken to them were of him, said:

For it is my voice which speaketh them unto you; for they are given by my Spirit unto you, and by my power you can read them one to another; and save it were by my power you could not have them;

Wherefore, you can testify that you have heard my voice, and know my words. (D. & C. 18:35-36.)

I am willing to bear this witness to all the Saints and to all men and women everywhere, saints and sinners, in all the world, for it is the eternal truth.

I know that the Prophet Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. I know he saw God, the Eternal Father, and his Son, Jesus Christ, as he says he did. I was not there, but I have read his account many,

many, many times. From his account I get in my mind a mental picture, but I did not get my knowledge that he had the vision from that source. I received it from the whisperings of the Holy Spirit, and I have had those whisperings in my mind the same as Enos had when he said, ". . . the voice of the Lord came into my mind." (Enos 10.)

I know that God revealed every principle of salvation necessary to the salvation of men to the Prophet Joseph Smith. I know that his successor who sits here today, David O. McKay, holds every power and every authority and all the priesthood that the Prophet Joseph had—unless it be the keys of this last dispensation—but every power that is necessary to the salvation of men, he holds. Nobody has a testimony of the gospel that will save him unless he knows it, too.

It is an easy thing to believe in the dead prophets, but it is a greater thing to believe in the living prophets. I will give you an illustration.

One day when President Grant was living, I sat in my office across the street following a general conference. A man came over to see me, an elderly man. He was very upset about what had been said in this conference by some of the Brethren, including myself. I could tell from his speech that he came from a foreign land. After I had quieted him enough so he would listen, I said, "Why did you come to America?"

"I came here because a prophet of God told me to come."

"Who was the prophet?" I continued.

"Wilford Woodruff."

"Do you believe Wilford Woodruff was a prophet of God?"

"Yes," said he.

"Do you believe that his successor, President Lorenzo Snow, was a prophet of God?"

"Yes, I do."

"Do you believe that President Joseph F. Smith was a prophet of God?"

"Yes, sir."

Then came the "sixty-four dollar

question." "Do you believe that Heber J. Grant is a prophet of God?"

His answer: "I think he ought to keep his mouth shut about old age assistance."

Now I tell you that a man in his position is on the way to apostasy. He is forfeiting his chances for eternal life. So is everyone who cannot follow the living prophet of God.

I want to say one more thing before I sit down. Today being the twentieth anniversary of Brother Clark's call to the First Presidency, I want to pay him a tribute. I love him. Although the Lord had to go all the way to Mexico City to find him, I am grateful that he brought him back to give us this twenty years of service. I want to read a statement from the message he gave twenty years ago. In it he spoke of his great humility and of the apprehension he felt as to whether he could meet the requirements of his new position. In telling of the joys he anticipated, he said:

We shall have the joy of work, too, for man also is that he might work, he went forth from the innocence of Eden to the God-like knowledge of good and evil, with the Divine blessing—not curse—as it seems to me: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." And save in extremity, no man may rightfully violate that law by living by the sweat from the brow of his brother. It is the eternal, inescapable law that growth comes only from work and preparation, whether the growth be material, mental, or spiritual. Work has no substitute. Idleness brings neither profit, nor advantage, nor good—only a withering decay and death. The world is near to forgetting all this; I hope that we as a people shall keep it ever in remembrance, for in proportion as it is forgotten, evil will rule. (*Conference Report*, April, 1933, p. 103.)

I have watched him work through these years, as have the other brethren. We greatly appreciate the example he has set for us.

In conclusion, let me say this by way of general statement. Work, brothers and sisters, work in the kingdom. Get the testimony of the gospel. I think it

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is a disgrace for men and women to stand on the same ground day after day in their testimony, their knowledge of the gospel, and their work in the Church. We should go forward. We ought to be on our mettle all the time, reaching, perfecting our lives, doing more work, going forward preparing to meet the Redeemer. We live in the day just before his coming. We must speed the day, speed the work in preparation for that great day, that we may rest our souls in the kingdom of

God, which I hope we may all do, and so pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve has just concluded speaking.

We shall now hear from Elder Henry D. Moyle, of the Council of the Twelve. He will be followed by Elder Stayner Richards.

ELDER HENRY D. MOYLE

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

WE HAVE all been thrilled with the marvelous, inspired, testimony of Elder Marion G. Romney. Every word that he uttered found a responsive chord in my being. And I should like to say amen to all that he said.

I have a feeling akin to the last statement which he made, concerning the necessity for us to show in our lives by our works, the faith that we have in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

If we believe, as we profess, we should constitute the greatest body of friends the earth has ever known. I have been reading recently the statement of a great writer who must have had a deep insight into the subject of friendship, though his attitude toward the same may have been somewhat cynical. He said, and I am quoting from Emerson:

The higher the style we demand of friendship, of course, the less easy to establish it with flesh and blood. We walk alone in the world. Friends such as we desire are dreams and fables. But a sublime hope cheers even the faithful heart, that elsewhere, in other regions of the universal power, souls are now acting, enduring, and daring, which can love us and which we can love. We may congratulate ourselves that the period of nonage, of follies, of blunder, and of shame, is passed in solitude, and when we are finished men, we shall grasp heroic hands in heroic hands. Only be admonished by what you already see, not to strike leagues of friendship with cheap persons where no friendship can be.

Our impatience betrays us into rash and foolish alliances which no god attends. By persisting in your path, though you forfeit the little, you gain the greater.

I am conscious today that had there come into Emerson's life that which has come into yours and mine, the power of the priesthood of God, he would have had a different idea, a different conception of friendship. We have spoken frequently during this conference of our testimony of the divinity of the work in which we are engaged. We know that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ. We know that the Savior of mankind is the only Begotten Son of the Father. I bear witness to these facts in all solemnity, and I likewise want to bear witness to the fact that there is a brotherhood of man, that just as Jesus is our elder brother, so are we brethren ourselves. We belong to a society in which there can be a perfect friendship. It requires of us but one thing, and that is that we keep the commandments of God. It is this fellowship, this brotherhood that makes it possible for us to magnify the priesthood of God which has been conferred upon us as men of Israel in these latter days.

I want to bear witness to you today, my brethren, that none of us can magnify our callings in the priesthood, none of us can exercise the power of the