

Music: Organ and humming choir: "Sweet Is the Work."

Announcer: The *Church of the Air* is presented by CBS Radio so that men of many faiths may speak to a nationwide congregation. Today's service comes to you from the "Mormon" Tabernacle on Temple Square, through the facilities of Station KSL in Salt Lake City, Utah, where the annual General Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is this week in session. The speaker will be Elder Harold B. Lee, member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles of the Church. Music will be by the Tabernacle Choir, with J. Spencer Cornwall conducting, and Frank Asper at the organ.

The Service opens on a theme from Psalm 137: "Here by Babylon's wave, though heathen hands have bound us,

though afar from our land, the pains of death surround us; Sion! Thy men still in our heart we are keeping, and still we turn to Thee, our eyes all sad with weeping."

(The Choir sang: "By Babylon's Wave."—Gounod.)

Announcer: We shall now hear on this *Church of the Air Service*, Elder Harold B. Lee, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, frequently referred to as the "Mormon" Church. Educator, former Commissioner of Salt Lake City, Chairman of the Servicemen's Committee, and Managing Director of the Church Welfare Program, Brother Lee has titled today's talk: "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."

ELDER HAROLD B. LEE

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

THE SUNDAY before Easter is generally celebrated by many Christian sects as Palm Sunday in commemoration of our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

My text today is taken from the "Hosanna shout" which sounded from the multitude who jubilantly acclaimed Jesus, the lowly Nazarene as he rode triumphantly into Jerusalem from Bethany on a colt which had been borrowed for that occasion. As the animal upon which he rode had been designated in their literature as the "ancient symbol of Jewish royalty"* and their acquaintanceship with the might of His Messianic power impressed the appropriateness of his kingly right to such an entry, they cast their garments before him and cast palm branches and other foliage in His path as though carpeting the way of a king. What might at first have been but the humble testimony of a faithful few, increased into a mighty chorus of voices as the multitude shouted in harmony:

Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna, to the Son of David.

And then perhaps as they remembered the angels' announcement to the shepherds on the night of His birth, they reverently repeated the theme of the angels' song: "Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." And again, probably remembering the charge he had given His disciples to carry on after he would be taken from them, and as a supplication for their Master and those who would carry on after His ascension, as well as in the remembrance of the ancient prophets whom they revered, came the expressions of adulation from the multitude: "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

At the commencement of His ministry, He seemingly had seldom, and then only guardedly, declared that He was the Christ who should take away the sins of the world, but now His earthly ministry was reaching a consummation and His fearful agony on the cross was near. It seemed altogether appropriate that He should now demonstrate His kingly place as the King of Kings and the Prince of Peace. Thus demonstrated, His devoted disciples could thereafter likewise bear witness to the divinity of His mission as the Savior of mankind and the "rock" upon which His church

* Zech. 9:9.

was to be founded in the Meridian of Times.

There was an occasion during His ministry when His chiefest Apostle, Peter, had fervently declared his faith and testimony of the divinity of the mission of the Master: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." The Lord had replied to Peter by declaring, "flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" and that upon "this rock" or in other words, the revealed testimony of the Holy Ghost, the revelation that Jesus is the Christ—His Church is founded and "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." It was of this same foundation upon which the Church was laid to which the Apostle Paul made reference when he wrote to the Ephesian Saints: "Now therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone." (Eph. 2:19-20.)

In the few minutes allotted to me in this brief Church of the Air address, I would like to make some explanation as to just 'how blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord', from that day even to the present time.

At the commencement of His ministry, the Master chose twelve men whom he separated from the rest by the name, Apostles. These were to be special witnesses of the sanctity of His life, and of His divine mission, and to be responsible for transmitting to the latest posterity, a genuine account of His doctrines, and principles, and ordinances essential to the salvation of the human soul. History records that these men, as judged by worldly standards, were "illiterate, poor, and of mean extraction." It would seem that He avoided using in this ministry, persons endowed with the advantages of fortune or birth or enriched with the treasures of eloquence or learning, lest "the fruits of their embassy, and the progress of the gospel should be attributed to human and natural causes." Mosheim.

True servants in the Kingdom of God, when properly authorized, received an endowment of holy power except for which their ministry would be as the

"tinkling of brass and the sounding of cymbals." This heavenly endowment to His chosen Twelve, came as a result of three sacred experiences. First, they were baptized of water, maybe by John the Baptist, or possibly as the only ones He did baptize, by the Master, himself, for John records that He and His disciples were in Judea "and there He tarried with them, and baptized." (John 3:22) Then He "breathed on them and said unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost," (John 20:22) which in all likelihood was the confirmation and the commission to receive the Holy Ghost, or the baptism of the Spirit, by the laying on of hands for that was the procedure followed thereafter by His disciples.

The meaning of this baptism of water and of the Holy Ghost by one who comes in the name of the Lord, is best understood by the words of a prophet on the Western Continent. Addressing a group of baptized converts he said this: "There is no other name given whereby salvation cometh; therefore I would that you should take upon you the name of Christ, all of you that have entered into the covenant with God that ye should be obedient unto the end of your lives." (Mosiah 5:8)

The third of the remarkable spiritual experiences to which the disciples were privileged is thus described by the Master, himself: "Ye have not chosen me but I have chosen you and ordained you,—that whatsoever ye should ask the Father in my name He may give it you." (John 15:16) Try to imagine if you can, being "called" by the Master and "ordained" under His hands. That these ordinations resulted in an endowment of power from on high as well as giving authority to act officially as the Lord's representatives, is well attested by the miraculous events that followed, which made of them, "men different" because of that divine commission.

Not alone were these special apostolic witnesses to receive and enjoy these heavenly gifts. They were commissioned to transmit them by ordinations to others who had received the witness of the divine mission of the risen Lord. Acting by authority of their priestly office, it was as though the Lord were saying as He did through a prophet in recent times: "And I will lay my hand upon

you by the hand of my servant . . . and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost." (Doc. & Cov. 36:2)

The historians have given us a summary and a thrilling description of how men so chosen and so ordained were blessed with heavenly gifts because they "came in the name of the Lord."

After the departure of Jesus from them, he gave them the first proof of that majesty and power by which he was exalted, by the radiant gift of the Holy Ghost upon them on the day of Pentecost according to His promise . . . Dr. Mosheim in his Ecclesiastical history writes that "no sooner had the apostles received this special gift, this celestial guide, than their ignorance was turned into light, their doubts into certainty, their fears into firm and invincible fortitude, and their former backwardness into an ardent and inextinguishable zeal . . ." The growth of the Church among the Gentile nations during this period was most phenomenal. How was it possible that a handful of apostles, who as fishermen and publicans could engage the learned and the mighty as well as the simple and those of low degree to forsake their religion and embrace a new religion? There can be but one answer to that question. There were undoubted marks of a celestial power, perpetually attending their ministry. There was in their very language an "incredible energy or amazing power of sending light into the understanding and conviction of the heart."* Then the historians enumerate the miracles, the gift of prophecy, the power of discernment, a contempt for riches, and a serene tranquility in the face of death, all the while maintaining their lives above reproach, and then conclude with this declaration: "Thus were the messengers of the divine Savior, the heralds of his spiritual and immortal kingdom, furnished for their glorious work as the voice of ancient history so loudly testifies."*

As we review again the matchless and unselfish devotion of these early prophets and martyrs to the gospel of Christ, may we bow in reverence and repeat with a greater appreciation and comprehension

* Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, Vol. 1, pp. 56-58.

as with the multitude in Jerusalem on the occasion of the triumphal entry the words: "How blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

The place of these heaven-endowed messengers who represent the Lord in every dispensation of the gospel upon the earth may be illustrated by an incident related by a traveler in northern Europe. Our traveler was leaving by boat from Stockholm, Sweden out into the Baltic Sea. To do so, the boat had to pass through a thousand or more islands. Standing on the forward deck, the traveler found himself becoming impatient because of what seemed to him to be a careless course. Why not a course near to this island or another and more interesting than the one the pilot had chosen? Almost in exasperation he was saying to himself, "What's wrong with the old pilot? Has he lost his sense of direction? Suddenly he was aware of markers along the charted course which appeared as mere broom handles sticking up in the water. Someone had carefully explored these channels and had charted the safest course for ships to take. So it is in life's course on the way to immortality and eternal life: "God's engineers" by following a blueprint made in heaven, have charted the course for safest and happiest passage and have forewarned us of the danger areas.

How dreary and frustrated is the human soul who not only does not come "in the name of the Lord," but who disregards the guide-posts marked out by "God's engineers" of the above illustration! Of this the Apostle to the Gentiles wrote: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." (I Cor. 15:19) That misery certainly can only be matched in him who in this life, has no faith or hope in Christ. Without such faith, man is, as someone has said, "but a creature of circumstance." Truly, as the Master instructed his faithful Peter, His Church, the true religion in which He was the "chief cornerstone" was to be built upon a "rock," the rock of revelation. All others are tossed about by storm on the waves of time.

But what strength and fortitude comes to him who puts his trust in the Lord! I recently heard a missionary for the Church tell of an incident which oc-

curred in an atheist-dominated country. A young student with a fervent belief in God and in the mission of the Savior of the world was ridiculed and abused by her teacher who scorned the idea of a God. As a punishment, the teacher required that she write twenty times, "There is no God." The young student refused. In a rage the teacher demanded that she write her denial of God, fifty times and added, as a veiled threat, "If you don't, something terrible will happen." That night mother and daughter fasted and prayed far into the night to that God whom they could not and dared not deny. When school time came the next morning, mother and daughter went to see the teacher. The school convened and the teacher had not arrived. As they waited, the principal of the school came to inform them that the teacher had died suddenly in the night of a heart attack. Something terrible had happened but not to this young girl who came without fear "in the name of the Lord."

The triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, which is commemorated on this Sunday was in truth but a prelude to the greater day of triumph only a few days distant. Before His crucifixion, He had spoken of His personal triumph over worldly things, when He said: "In me ye have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16: 33) But there was yet that *greater day of victory* when he triumphed over death and opened the way to a universal resurrection. The Apostle Paul in exultation wrote to the Corinthians: "Death is swallowed up in victory—O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? . . . Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 15:54-7)

Today as did they in past dispensations, we declare boldly, that "The fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it."*

O that the inhabitants of an unre-

pentant world would humble themselves and with faith in the Redeemer of mankind join in the chorus of the multitude who welcomed the Master into the Holy City, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna to the Son of David. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." For that I pray humbly in the name of the King of Kings, Jesus Christ, Amen.

(The Choir sang: "All Creatures of Our God and King."—Anon.)

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CHOIR AND ORGAN BROADCAST

The following broadcast, written and announced by Richard L. Evans, and originating with Station KSL, Salt Lake City, was presented from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. Sunday, April 3, 1955, through the courtesy and facilities of the Columbia Broadcasting System's network, throughout the United States. The broadcast was as follows:

(The organ played "As the Dew," and on signal the Choir and organ broke into the hymn, "Gently Raise," singing the words to the end of the second line, and humming to end the verse for announcer's background.)

Announcer: Once more we welcome you within these walls with music and the spoken word from the Crossroads of the West.

The CBS Radio Network and its affiliated stations bring you at this hour another presentation from Temple Square in Salt Lake City, with J. Spencer Cornwall conducting the Tabernacle

* Teachings, p. 121.