

intelligent, and faithful representative of the Church.

I think of a few weeks ago in Logan when a fine young man bore testimony in our conference before returning to Columbia College, where he is serving as student body president of that great school. He said he had been offered a graduate scholarship when he was finished, and hoped it would still be available after he had served a mission. There are many, many similar cases throughout the Church. No Latter-day Saint young person needs to sacrifice anything important to be a real member of the Church. Remember that there are many wonderful people, old and young—like the boy on Iwo—who

desperately seek what you have, or may have if you desire it and seek it and live for it.

I bear testimony that God lives, and that this is his work, and if I know anything in the world it is that obedience to his law brings happiness, and the opposite—disobedience—brings unhappiness, of which I testify in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Marion D. Hanks of the First Council of Seventy has just spoken to us. Elder Alma Sonne, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us.

ELDER ALMA SONNE

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

MY BRETHREN AND SISTERS, I am very happy for the privilege of standing before you for a moment, to express my gratitude for the fine things we have heard and seen at this general conference of the Church. This morning at 7:30 in the Assembly Hall we held a welfare meeting. We heard something about cattle, beef cattle, and dairy cattle, and how to manage farms, especially the welfare farms. This instruction was given by experts from the Utah State Agricultural College. When they had given their talks, President Clark made some observations. President Clark, you may know, is a farmer and a cattleman in his own right—if he can qualify for that distinction, by working two or three hours on Saturday afternoon on his farm. We were greatly edified.

It reminded me of the funeral service which was held up in the Bear Lake country for Brother Hyrum Nebeker, also a cattleman. Prior to his death he had selected the hymns he wanted sung at the service. Among them was the well-known hymn we sing so frequently, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet." He also requested that everyone in the gathering join in singing this hymn, not only the choir, but those also

who sat on the front seats, and the entire congregation. Seldom does one hear a song sung with more feeling than was done on this occasion. Everyone sang, and all seemed to feel the spirit and the significance of this great hymn.

I thought of the statement made by someone who said, "Tell me the ballads a people sing, and I will tell you their character." I hope the Latter-day Saints will be judged by the songs they sing on occasions like this. This hymn, in particular, suggested guidance, prophetic guidance. Guidance is a beautiful word, it is a meaningful word. We all need to be guided and directed and inspired in our work and in our responsibilities.

I recall a poem I learned as a boy;

Hand in hand with angels through the world we go;
Brighter eyes are on us than we blind ones know;
Tender voices greet us than we deaf will own;
But never walking heav'nward can we walk alone.

Those who dislike guidance, it seems to me, lack in humility. Jesus believed in guidance. I read a verse from the Gospels:

... when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he

Saturday, October 1

shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. (John 16:13.)

Mark the words "he will guide you into all truth . . . and he will shew you things to come." Of all the leaders who have lived upon the earth, only Jesus, the Lord, could make a promise like that. These words are tremendously important and reassuring, especially to those who are striving for a better life.

Christ's plan of salvation came to light gradually through holy prophets. Back of them is Jesus Christ, the light of the world, and the greatest of all the prophets. His gospel is the beacon light. The voice of the prophets is the voice of God to generations past, present, and future. These prophets came as they were needed. They were chosen before they were born. Their messages were always vital, important, and timely. Their testimonies were strong and fervent. They called people to repentance. They rebuked sin in high places. Their mission was to purify and regenerate the human family and to turn the hearts of men to God, who is the Creator, the Ruler, and the Giver of life. These living oracles seldom argued. They announced and interpreted God's will and made no compromise whatever with worldly standards and patterns, however glowing and colorful they might appear.

You will realize the significance of Paul's question put to Agrippa and the others: "Believest thou the prophets?" Paul believed the prophets. He quoted their words to justify and substantiate his claims. I am convinced that the warnings and admonitions of the prophets, had they been duly regarded and respected, would have transformed the world, and evil forces operative in public and private life, now and in the past, would have been far less powerful.

We believe in prophets. We believe the only safe course for us is to follow the admonition of the prophets. Said Jesus:

Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city. (Matt. 23:34.)

And then his concluding words: "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, . . ." (*Ibid.*, v. 35.) The deniers of God's servants were to answer for their repudiation of the prophets. Had the Jews believed John the Baptist and heeded his admonitions, many people (more than did), would have believed on Jesus the Christ. But they rejected him and maligned him. He was put in prison, like his predecessors, and finally put to death, but they could not entirely destroy his influence nor his memory. The common people, the meek and the lowly, listened. They heard his words and accepted his divine calling and followed him. But the magistrates and the rulers, the high and the mighty, the professional religionists, were not among the multitude which followed him to the River Jordan, but Jesus came, and Jesus was baptized by this great prophet, the greatest of all the prophets, said Jesus, born of women. (See Luke 7:28.)

These prophets were not dreamers, they were not visionary men—they were practical men. They saw the present and the future needs of the people to whom they were sent.

President Brigham Young, for instance, was a great prophet and more than a prophet. He was called to a great responsibility. It was not unlike that which fell upon Moses, the law-giver of Israel, during the years of exodus from Egypt. Both of them were deeply concerned with the spiritual and temporal welfare of their people.

Looking back over the magnificent achievements of Brigham Young and those who followed, we can picture the tragic exodus of covered wagons and handcart companies. Every day was a challenge, and every night a hazard, full of danger and uncertainty. But the sturdy and unconquerable pioneers, under their prophet, never faltered; they pressed forward to their destination. On their arrival, they beheld a barren wasteland, covered with sagebrush and possessed by the savage Indians. What did this modern prophet do? He made friends with the Indians. He cultivated the soil, and he irrigated the fields.

Prophets came as they were needed. May we, you and I, heed the prophets who live today. May we be guided by

their inspiring instruction, and may we undertake with them to build up God's kingdom upon the earth, and eventually be worthy of an exaltation in that kingdom, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Alma Sonne, Assistant to the Twelve, has just concluded speaking. The congregation will now sing, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet," conducted by Elvis B. Terry.

After the singing Bishop Thorpe B. Isaacson will speak to us.

The congregation and Choir will now sing.

The Choir and congregation joined in singing the hymn, "We Thank Thee, O God, For A Prophet."

President David O. McKay:

Bishop Thorpe B. Isaacson of the Presiding Bishopric will now speak to us, and our concluding speaker will be Elder Harold B. Lee.

BISHOP THORPE B. ISAACSON

First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric



RESIDENT MCKAY, President Richards, President Clark, my beloved brethren and sisters, and friends: I feel very humble in standing before you this morning, and after a great deal of worrying and fasting and praying, I hope the Lord will bless me. I shall be grateful for an interest in your faith and prayers.

I would like to thank my wife now because I did not do it this morning, when she was kind enough to offer a very beautiful prayer in my behalf. I was too touched then to do it, but I would not feel right if I did not do it now.

I had prepared one or two thoughts, but they have been so beautifully treated already that I do not feel I could possibly add anything to them. I was going back again to an experience I had on the Hill of Calvary, mentioned by President Clark so beautifully yesterday, Brother Sill today, and Brother Sonne just now. I shall not say more on that. So I shall entirely rely on the Spirit of the Lord to guide me today, in what I might say.

It is good to see many in the audience whom we meet in stakes as we come to you each Sunday in stake conferences. Many times we come to you as total strangers, but after we have been with you for a couple of days, we feel as if we have known you forever. After we leave, even though we have held many meetings and are tired

physically, we are uplifted in our spirits and our faith because of your great devotion to the gospel of Jesus Christ and to the responsibilities to which you have been called.

We are grateful for your thoughtfulness and for your kindness and courtesy to us. We are grateful to you for your encouragement. I cannot help expressing deep affection and appreciation for the stake presidents of this Church and for the ward bishoprics, for we see your great devotion. You so frequently put aside your own personal interests because of your responsibilities in the Church, and particularly among the young people of the Church.

I wish you could have all been at the meeting in the temple Thursday morning where the General Authorities were invited and privileged to meet with the First Presidency. When President McKay was speaking to us and sharing with us his experiences recently in Europe, I could not help thinking of a passage or statement that Brigham Young once made when he was referring to the humble man who converted him to the Church. He said something like this, "His spirit bore witness to my spirit, and I believed." That morning in the temple it was as if the Spirit of the Lord was speaking to the President of the Church and prophet of the Lord, and his Spirit bore witness to our spirits, and we believed.

I cannot help thinking you are partaking of that same Spirit in this con-