

Friday, April 6

First Day

of the Pilgrim Fathers and their coming in the *Mayflower* to America in 1620. We have the story of Pastor Robinson uttering a farewell prayer to the Pilgrim Fathers as they left for America. In reading it, we see the prophetic spirit of it when he said:

I charge you before God and His blessed angels, that you follow me no farther than you have seen me follow the Lord, Jesus Christ. If God reveal anything to you, by any other instrument of His, be as ready to receive it, as ever you were to receive truth, by my ministry; for I am fully persuaded, I am very confident that the Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of His holy word.

It was Sir Isaac Newton who lived some three hundred years ago who wrote a book on mathematics which is said to be the greatest scientific work of its kind ever written. I speak of Newton for his life has always thrilled me. Born in 1642 in Lincolnshire, England, he was a frail little farm boy who used to wander into the gardens and fields where he lived. He would look up at the sun and stars, for to him they possessed such heavenly qualities unlike anything on earth. The sight of a falling apple one day caused him to wonder about the force that drew the apple to earth. Newton began to work with the laws of motion and universal gravitation. As a result he produced one of the greatest books of all times entitled, *Principia*. It was a scientific work of the highest merit. Just before he died he wrote that the wonders of the universe had been given their shape and motion by the hand of God.

A copy of the *Principia* was given to the Seventies' Library by Orson Pratt who had been called by President Brigham Young to go to Austria on a mis-

sion in 1864. Elder Pratt had already written and published his book called, *Biquadratic Equations*, which was used at the University of Vienna. It was in Vienna that he obtained Newton's *Principia* which he brought home to the Seventies' Library.

After the Quorum of the Seventy had been organized in Kirtland in 1835, the brethren were stirred by certain words of the Prophet Joseph Smith as found in the Doctrine and Covenants:

And as all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom, seek learning even by study and also by faith; . . . (D & C 109:7.)

The admonition of the Prophet grew in the hearts of the seventies who knew that they must become the missionaries of the Church. It was not long before a library was established which developed into one of the largest collections of history and literature in the early history of America. Books were brought from all over the world, and the collection of the great works of mankind stirred the seventies to a desire to develop the art of reading.

I pray that we may come to a greater appreciation of the truth and beauty of the divine books that teach the gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Levi Edgar Young of the First Council of Seventy has just concluded speaking. Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church, will now speak to us. He will be followed by Elder Adam S. Bennion, who will be our concluding speaker.

ELDER ELDRED G. SMITH

Patriarch to the Church

I APPRECIATE the prayers that have been offered in behalf of those who shall take part in this conference, and I pray that I shall receive my share of those blessings which have been asked.

I appreciated the privilege of attending the Los Angeles Temple dedication with

the other General Authorities of the Church, and I also want to express appreciation for the sustaining vote in my behalf of this assembly today, for I feel that is a very personal help and support to me in my work. I also wish to sustain with you the General Authori-

ties and others whom we have sustained in this conference, especially President McKay as the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who holds the keys of the gospel at this time through which we may receive the blessings of the Lord of salvation and eternal life which are promised through the gospel.

On that memorable occasion which we read of in the Book of Mormon, in Third Nephi, when Christ spoke from the heavens so that all could hear, he said,

Yea, verily I say unto you, if ye will come unto me ye shall have eternal life. Behold, mine arm of mercy is extended towards you, and whosoever will come, him will I receive; and blessed are those who come unto me.

And continuing further, he said:

. . . And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost, . . . (3 Nephi 9:14, 20.)

All are invited to come unto him that they may have eternal life. The glory of God is ". . . to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (P. of G. P., Moses 1:39.) The Lord wants only to bring us back into the presence of God. For that purpose he has established the priesthood on the earth. He has established his kingdom with just laws and ordinances, through obedience to which we may obtain eternal life in the presence of our Father in heaven.

All God asks of us is that we keep his commandments, that we obey the laws and ordinances of the gospel. These laws are not unjust, as are some which are given by corrupt rulers. They are simple laws which bring nothing but happiness to those who obey them.

The Prophet Joseph Smith makes the following comparison:

Were a king to extend his domination over the habitable earth, and send forth his laws which were the most perfect kind, and command his subjects one and all to yield obedience to the same, and add as a reward to those who obeyed them, that at a certain period they should be called to attend the marriage of his son, who in due time was to receive the kingdom, and they should be made equal with him in the

same; and fix as a penalty for disobedience that every individual guilty of it should be cast out of the marriage feast, and have no part nor portion with his government, what rational mind could for a moment accuse the king with injustice for punishing such rebellious subjects? In the first place his laws were just, easy to be complied with, and perfect: nothing of a tyrannical nature was required of them; but the very construction of the laws was equity and beauty; and when obeyed would produce the happiest condition possible to all who adhered to them, beside the last great benefit of sitting down with the royal robe in the presence of the king at the great, grand marriage supper of his son, and be made equal with him in all the affairs of the kingdom. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 52.)

Then the Lord has said, "Behold, mine arm of mercy is extended towards you." (See Jacob 6:5.) This means to all the inhabitants of the earth, not just to the few who then heard his voice, but to all the children of God, to the ends of the earth, to those of all nations, regardless of time or place of their life on the earth. Yes, his invitation reaches to those who lived before his ministry on the earth, who then or even now dwell in the world of spirits, to those who are yet to be born on the earth. Most important of all this invitation is to us, to all of this generation, to you and to me. Are you willing to accept his invitation, can you offer a broken heart and a contrite spirit, are you willing to seek him? He has said,

. . . seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. (Luke 11:9.) . . . Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matt. 6:33.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith said, "Search the scriptures," as Brother Kirkham has told us this morning.

Search the revelations, which we publish, and ask your Heavenly Father in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, to manifest the truth unto you, and if you do it with an eye single to His glory nothing doubting He will answer you by the power of His Holy Spirit. You will then know for yourselves and not for another. You will not then be dependent on man for the knowledge of God. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 11.)

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The Lord is constantly making it easier to find him. He has established his Church with the divine authority to teach and administer in the ordinances thereof. He has established the missionary system to teach and to seek out those who wish to accept his invitation to eternal life.

It was a glorious privilege to listen to the testimonies of the mission presidents who have gathered here at this conference. Surely they are men of God, and they, too, will testify that as they work they receive more for their labors. I testify to you that our missionaries are in good hands.

Those who accept His invitation are surely blessed. It is a real thrill to see the joy expressed by these converts; many through tears of joy tell how wonderful it is that they have been privileged to receive the gospel. Some tell of the joy they received in going into the waters of baptism, that joy is increased again to a climax when they have the privilege of coming to the temple and enjoying the blessings of the sealing ordinances.

The Lord has recently provided more temples to make it easier for men to accept his invitation, including the new Los Angeles Temple. Not only does it make it easier for us, but it also leaves more of the people of the earth without excuse. And woe unto him who has the gospel taught to him and has all these opportunities given to him and does not avail himself of the blessings of the Lord. This may also be a fair warning to those who have the opportunity given to them to go forth to teach the gospel, and do not avail themselves of that opportunity. They too shall surely forfeit great blessings.

Foreign missionaries are not the only ones who have the privilege of teaching the gospel, for it is our privilege to teach the gospel in our own lives, as well as those who are called to local missions. I heard of a man who lived in Salt Lake City in the same house for seventeen years before joining the Church. When he was asked why he had not joined sooner, he replied, "No one asked me."

I talked with a man in Ogden who had lived in the same place for about fifty-five years and had recently accepted

the Lord's invitation. He told me no one had asked him before, either.

The invitation to receive eternal life requires more than mere acceptance of baptism. When we receive the Holy Ghost which reveals unto us the truth, it is then our responsibility to extend his invitation to others. This is one case where the more you give to others, the more you receive unto yourself. Then give generously in teaching the gospel. Accept of his invitation to receive him, that you with your family and friends may return unto our Father in heaven, exalted in his kingdom.

May the blessings of the Lord be with us, for I bear unto you my testimony that this is the gospel of Jesus Christ through which we may receive eternal life and become exalted in the kingdom of our Father in heaven. May these blessings be upon us, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

A meeting devoted to the work of foreign and stake missions will be held in the Tabernacle this evening at 7:00 o'clock. Mission presidents, all stake mission presidencies and district presidents are requested to attend this meeting. A special invitation is extended also to stake presidencies, high councilmen, bishops, presidents of Seventies quorums, and officers and members of auxiliary General Boards.

The Temple Presidents in attendance will please meet at 4:30 this afternoon. That is why we are dismissing a little early.

The singing for this session has been furnished by the Brigham Young University Combined Choruses, with Crawford Gates conducting and Alexander Schreiner at the organ. I do not know what to say to express your appreciation to these young people for their presence today. There comes to my mind a saying that:

There are gains for all our losses.
There are balms for all our pain.
But when youth the dream departs,
It takes something from our hearts
And it never comes again.

And just your presence today, young men and young women of the Brigham Young University, has rejuvenated our