

Friday, October 5

First Day

for the sake of the truth, but might not blush for the private character of the man who bore that testimony. I have been sensitive on this subject, I admit, but I ought to be so, you would be under the circumstances, had you stood in the presence of John with our departed Brother Joseph, to receive the Lesser Priesthood, and in the presence of Peter, to receive the Greater, and look down through time, and witness the effects these two must produce—you would feel what you have never felt, were wicked men conspiring to lessen the effects of your testimony on man, after you have gone to your long-sought rest."

You know, when Oliver Cowdery wrote that he was not a member of the Church, he had left the Church through some transgression. Not long, however, after he wrote this letter to his brother-in-law he found his way back to the body of the Church.

When the Prophet Joseph Smith was in Carthage Jail with his brother Hyrum, John Taylor, and Willard Richards, the Prophet asked that a letter be written to Oliver Cowdery asking him if he had not fed upon the husks long enough. I do not know what became of that letter, but evidently it must have been written and shortly after the martyrdom, Oliver Cowdery found his

way back to Nauvoo and then continued his journey across the Territory of Iowa to the camp of the Latter-day Saints at Kanesville, where he made his plea to be brought back again into the Church, testifying there again, which testimony I think is quite generally known, that he was not asking to come back for any place or position, but merely to be a humble member of the Church, and he bore witness to the same things on his return.

Just another word—if Oliver Cowdery had been lying and the story was not true, at the time when unstable members of the Church were forsaking it, he never would have gone to Nauvoo, among the enemies of the people, and then continued his journey westward to find the body of the Latter-day Saints when everyone else thought they had gone to their destruction.

The Lord bless you, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### President David O. McKay:

We have just listened to President Joseph Fielding Smith of the Council of the Twelve Apostles. Our next speaker will be Elder LeGrand Richards of the Council of the Twelve, and he will be followed by Elder Oscar A. Kirkham.

### ELDER LEGRAND RICHARDS

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

I AM SURE I express the feeling of every heart here today when I say that I have thrilled with the sessions of this conference up to this present moment. The music has been out of this world, and the prayers have been beautiful, and the instructions and counsel and advice and the testimonies of the brethren have been wonderful.

I pray that I may make a contribution that may be helpful to the final success of this conference.

I would like to say a few words about prophecy. I have always been a great believer in the words of the prophets. Through Isaiah the Lord said:

I am God, and there is none like me,

Declaring the end from the beginning. . .  
(Isa. 46:9-10.)

To me it seems that the prophets have laid out just about as completely and perfectly the great plan of the Lord with respect to this earth and the inhabitants thereof until the final winding up scenes when his kingdom shall have been established, and he shall come and reign as King of kings, as an architect does when he plans a building.

So I believe in prophecy. You remember when the Savior appeared to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus; as he listened to them he said: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken."

(Luke 24:25.) And Peter tells us that "We have also a more sure word of prophecy;" more sure than anything else, ". . . a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." (II Peter 1:19.)

I want to refer to two prophecies from the Book of Mormon. I quote the words of Moroni:

For the eternal purposes of the Lord shall roll on, until all his promises shall be fulfilled.

Search the prophecies of Isaiah. . . . (Mormon 8:22-23.)

Then I read a statement from Nephi:

. . . in the days that the prophecies of Isaiah shall be fulfilled men shall know of a surety, at the times when they shall come to pass.

. . . for I know that they shall be of great worth unto them in the last days; for in that day shall they understand them; wherefore, for their good have I written them. (2 Nephi 25:7-8.)

We are all here today in fulfilment of the words of the prophets, and I love the prophecies of Isaiah because it seems to me that he lived almost more in our day than when he was actually upon the earth, because the Lord gave him to see so many of the things that would transpire in the latter days in the redemption of these valleys and the building of this house of the God of Jacob in the tops of the mountains and the gathering of Israel from all the nations of the earth.

You will recall that when the angel Moroni appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith three times during the night and the next morning, and this was when he was only a young man of eighteen, Moroni quoted from the eleventh chapter of Isaiah and told the Prophet that these things were about to come to pass, and I read from that chapter the following:

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people. . . .

And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

The envy also of Ephraim shall depart,

and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim. (Isa. 11:11-13.)

Now we have lived to see the first part of that prediction literally fulfilled. He has gathered Israel into these valleys of the mountains according to his promise. He has set up an ensign unto the nations. It seems to me that no thoughtful, honest person could examine what the Lord has done in the establishment of this Church, his kingdom on the earth, and then give any mortal man or group of men the credit for what has been accomplished. It has been the God of heaven that has done this, according to the words of the prophets.

Now, for a few moments I would like to refer to the second part of this promise, "and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." There is not time today to consider fully what the Lord is doing, according to his promise, in gathering the Jews back to the Holy Land. After two thousand years they now have a nation of their own and it is to be hoped that with the help of the Lord they can establish it in permanency and fulfil all the words of the prophets.

Then Isaiah says, "The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim." We are from Ephraim. The Lord expects us, since we are the custodians of his gospel as restored in these latter days, according to my understanding, to extend the hand of friendship to Judah, because after all we are all descendants of the prophets Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and we come under the promises that through their descendants should all the nations of the earth be blessed.

I do not know how the enmity and the envy between Ephraim and Judah can disappear except that we of the house of Ephraim, who have the custody of the gospel, should lead out in trying to bring to this branch of the house of Israel the blessings of the restored gospel.

In a revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith on November 3, 1831, the Lord said:

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Send forth the elders of my church unto the nations which are afar off; unto the islands of the sea; send forth unto foreign lands; call upon all nations, first upon the Gentiles, and then upon the Jews. (D & C 133:8.)

You know how literally the Church has fulfilled that command; the gospel is going to nearly every nation under heaven, and now into the Far Eastern countries, to the Japanese and the Chinese and the Koreans and the Filipinos and so forth, and the Lord said that it should go first to the gentiles and then unto the Jews. That is the command which the Lord gave unto the elders of the Church in this day.

Then the Lord says:

And they also of the tribe of Judah, after their pain shall be sanctified in holiness before the Lord, to dwell in his presence day and night, forever and ever. (*Ibid.*, 133:35.)

And it seems to me that the only way that the tribe of Judah can be sanctified to dwell in his presence forever and ever will be when we bring to them the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior promised them it would be brought in the latter days.

I quote again the words of the Lord to the Prophet Joseph in 1833:

Therefore, renounce war and proclaim peace, and seek diligently to turn the hearts of the children to their fathers, and the hearts of the fathers to the children;

And again, the hearts of the Jews unto the prophets, and the prophets unto the Jews; lest I come and smite the whole earth with a curse, and all flesh be consumed before me. (*Ibid.*, 98:16-17.)

As I understand this command, we the prophets must turn our hearts unto the Jews, and then we may hope that they will turn their hearts unto us because of the message that we shall bring unto them through the restoration of the gospel in this dispensation. The importance of this the Lord declared in these words: ". . . lest I come and smite the whole earth with a curse, and all flesh be consumed before me."

The Lord said again in a revelation given the day the Church was organized, in commanding and giving to

Oliver through the Prophet Joseph the responsibility to carry the gospel to the nations of the earth:

And the first preacher of this church unto the church, and before the world, yea, before the gentiles; yea, and thus saith the Lord God, lo, lo! to the Jews also. Amen. (*Ibid.*, 21:12.)

It would therefore appear that we have a great responsibility to preach the gospel unto the Jews.

We read in the Book of Mormon—about which President Joseph Fielding Smith has just been speaking, and you know how marvelously it has been preserved through the centuries and has been given to us in this dispensation, also in fulfilment of the words of the prophets that there was to be a record of Joseph joined to the record of Judah—and in the preface to the Book of Mormon, we read the purpose for which the Lord preserved it:

Which is to show unto the remnant of the House of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever—And also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations— . . .

If this book is to be a witness unto the Jew that Jesus is the Christ, manifesting himself unto all nations, it will be because we, the members of his Church, take this book unto them, and I am very happy to say to you today, those who may not know it, that the missionary committee has approval of the First Presidency to start preaching the gospel unto the Jewish people in some of the stakes of Zion where there are many of them residing, on somewhat of a trial basis to see if their hearts are inclined enough to be willing to accept the message that the Lord has for them.

I read a few words from Second Nephi:

And it shall come to pass that the Jews shall have the words of the Nephites, and the Nephites shall have the words of the Jews; and the Nephites and the Jews shall have the words of the lost tribes of Israel; and the lost tribes of Israel shall have the words of the Nephites and the Jews.

And it shall come to pass that my people, which are of the house of Israel, shall be gathered home unto the lands of their possessions; and my word also shall be gathered in one. And I will show unto them that fight against my word and against my people, who are of the house of Israel, that I am God, and that I covenanted with Abraham that I would remember his seed forever. (2 Nephi 29:13-14.)

If the Jews are to have the records of the Nephites, it will be because we take these records to them.

When the Savior visited the Nephites, he promised them that the time would come when the Jews would have the fulness of the gospel preached unto them. I read:

And it shall come to pass that the time cometh when the fulness of my gospel shall be preached unto them. (3 Nephi 20:30.)

And then the Prophet Jacob in the Book of Mormon made this statement:

That he has spoken unto the Jews, by the mouth of his holy prophets, even from the beginning down, from generation to generation, until the time comes that they shall be restored to the true church and fold of God; when they shall be gathered home to the lands of their inheritance, and shall be established in all their lands of promise. (2 Nephi 9:2.)

It seems to me that now that the Jews are being "gathered home to the lands of their inheritance" and are being "established in all their lands of promise," that this is the time when "they shall be restored to the true Church and fold of God"; and this can only be done through our preaching the gospel unto them.

I do not know how familiar you are with the history of the Jewish people, but they have suffered, it seems to me, as few if any people who have ever lived upon the face of this earth; they have been driven from country to country; their people have been ravaged and put to death; parents have been separated from each other; their children have been put to death because they have been accused of things that they were never responsible for. That is all in fulfillment also of the words of the prophets.

I read you the words of First Nephi:

And because they turn their hearts aside, saith the prophet, and have despised the Holy One of Israel, they shall wander in the flesh, and perish, and become a hiss and a byword, and be hated among all nations. (1 Nephi 19:14.)

Now you know how literally that has been fulfilled. Not only have they been driven from nation to nation and been persecuted in a most terrible manner, but during World War II, in one nation alone, over six million of these Jewish people were put to death for no other reason than that they were Jews.

The Savior has spoken in a most positive manner against such persecutions and actions. I read his words to the Nephites:

Yea, and ye need not any longer hiss, nor spurn, nor make game of the Jews, nor any of the remnant of the house of Israel; for behold, the Lord remembereth his covenant unto them, and he will do unto them according to that which he hath sworn. (3 Nephi 29:8.)

The Prophet Nephi saw our day and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, and through him the Lord made this statement:

And because my words shall hiss forth—many of the Gentiles shall say: A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible.

But thus saith the Lord God: O fools, they shall have a Bible; and it shall proceed forth from the Jews, mine ancient covenant people. And what thank they the Jews for the Bible which they receive from them? Yea, what do the Gentiles mean? Do they remember the travels, and the labors, and the pains of the Jews, and their diligence unto me, in bringing forth salvation unto the Gentiles?

O ye Gentiles, have ye remembered the Jews, mine ancient covenant people? Nay; but ye have cursed them, and have hated them, and have not sought to recover them. But behold, I will return all these things upon your own heads; for I the Lord have not forgotten my people.

Thou fool, that shall say: A Bible, we have got a Bible, and we need no more Bible. Have ye obtained a Bible save it were by the Jews? (2 Nephi 29:3-6.)

It would therefore appear that the Lord has indicated that the curses and hatred that we pronounce upon the Jews he will return upon our own heads, and

he indicates his displeasure that we "have not sought to recover them."

In closing, I would like to leave this thought with you (there is not sufficient time further to develop this subject), that we need the co-operation of the Latter-day Saints; we need to be careful what we say. The Lord has said that we should no "longer hiss, nor spurn, nor make game of the Jews." Some of them who have been investigating our message have come into our meetings and have heard such statements as "a Jewish trick" and "we Jewed them down." If we are to win these people unto the restored Church of Christ according to the promise of the Lord, it will be because we show forth kindness unto them and reach out our hands to try to share with them the glorious truths of the gospel.

It is my privilege to be personally acquainted with quite a few converted Jews of prominence, and I find in their hearts the same love of God, the same love of the truth, the same testimony of the divinity of the work, that you and I have, and I would like to have read to you some of their testimonies, but time will not permit. I have burning in my soul a testimony that if we will be kind to them, the Lord will richly reward us for every kindness we show unto these, our brethren of the house of Israel.

There is a question with some as to when the times of the gentiles shall be

fulfilled. The gospel came first to the Jews in the Meridian of Time, and then to the gentiles, and the promise was that in the latter days it would come first to the gentiles and then unto the Jews. But you will recall that the Lord did not wait until all the Jews were converted before he sent the gospel to the gentiles, through that marvelous vision and experience Peter had. It seems to me that if we wait until all the gentiles are converted before we take the gospel to the Jews, we shall never convert the Jews; and yet the Lord promised them that the fulness of his gospel would be preached unto them.

We have a few faithful missionaries working with the Jewish people and we are getting some encouragement and I extend to all of you Latter-day Saints an invitation to help these missionaries and to help in this great movement, according to the promises of the Lord, through showing kindness to them; and I bear you my witness that if you will do this the Lord will bless you for it, as he will for all that you do for the building of his kingdom in the earth, and I leave you my love and blessing in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

Elder LeGrand Richards of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us. Elder Oscar A. Kirkham of the First Council of Seventy will now address us.

### ELDER OSCAR A. KIRKHAM

#### *Of the First Council of the Seventy*

**I** PRAY FOR the blessings of the spirit of the Lord. It has been my high privilege through the years to address myself largely to the young people of this Church. Today, with fathers and mothers and grandfathers and grandmothers—I want to take the liberty of speaking to them all. Through the years one commandment has been intensified because of my travel in many lands, and my association with many people, to make it really part of my life. I recite briefly the fourth commandment: Keep the Sabbath day holy.

In the Old Testament we read that keeping the Sabbath was made a sign between Jehovah and the Israelites:

Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: . . .

(May I inject, for I sense deeply to whom I am talking. Yes, I appeal to you to keep the Sabbath day holy. Meetings, meetings, meetings, but never lose sight of the great commandment of God to keep the Sabbath day holy.)