

Friday, April 5

First Day

I wish to announce also that we have greetings from others, but time will not permit us to read them. Please take note, temple presidents, that there will be a meeting of all temple presidents in the annex of the Salt Lake Temple Sunday, April 7, at 4:30 p.m.

We acknowledge the presence of the following distinguished visitors,—there may be others whom we cannot see: Brother Ezra Taft Benson, a member of the Council of the Twelve, and also a member of the Cabinet of the United States Government; Lamont Toronto, Secretary of State; Adiel F. Stewart, Mayor of Salt Lake City; Ernest L. Wilkinson, president of Brigham Young University; President A. Ray Olpin of the University of Utah; President John L. Clarke of Ricks College; President Arthur F. Bruhn of Dixie College; Dr. Elliott Cameron, director of Snow College; Dr. M. Lynn Bennion, superintendent of Salt Lake City Schools. All are welcome, and we trust that you will share in the spiritual experience which we all hope to enjoy during the coming Conference.

The opening song by the Brigham Young University Combined Choruses will be, "He Watching Over Israel."

I wish to acknowledge the presence

also of the mission presidents in the United States, Mexico, and Canada, all of whom are present; also the presidencies of stakes, bishoprics of wards, from all nearby states and countries.

After the Chorus sings, "He Watching Over Israel," the invocation will be offered by Elder Albert Leland Bott, president of the Mount Ogden Stake.

The Chorus will now sing.

Singing by the Brigham Young University Combined Choruses, Norman Gulbrandsen conducting, "He Watching Over Israel."

Albert Leland Bott, president of the Mount Ogden Stake, offered the invocation.

President David O. McKay:

The invocation just offered was by President Albert Leland Bott of the Mount Ogden Stake. The Brigham Young University Combined Chorus will now sing, "O How Lovely Was the Morning," arranged by Elder Crawford Gates, conducted by Elder Norman Gulbrandsen.

The Brigham Young University Combined Choruses sang, "O, How Lovely Was The Morning."

PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY

4/57

MY BELOVED brethren and sisters, this is one of the most humbling experiences of my life. In anticipation of this moment I have spent many hours of thought and many hours of prayer. I think there is no experience in the world that makes one of the General Authorities, or any man who holds the priesthood, feel so dependent upon inspiration, as standing before a vast audience of members of the Church. I do pray for your sympathetic attention, and for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is a joy to meet with you, notwithstanding the sense of responsibility.

I have chosen as a text, to indicate a line of thought: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he

that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21.)

The thought is, as expressed by James: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only." (James 1:22, italics added.) That applies particularly to each individual. Salvation is an individual affair. We are not saved as congregations, nor as groups, but we are saved as we come into the world as individuals, and the Lord's purpose is to save the individual, each being precious in his sight.

Before commenting further upon the theme, I desire to express commendation for the progress made by the Church and individual groups during the last six months and during the past year.

This has been another prosperous year for the Church. Increased faith and

more active participation in Church activity are evidenced almost weekly by the reports of the General Authorities of their assigned visits throughout the stakes and missions. Some illustrative facts follow:

1. *Regarding Sacrament Meetings:* Attendance at Sacrament meetings during 1956 is the highest yet attained in the Church—15,000 more people attended last year than in 1955, and that was the highest percentage of attendance to date. From 1945 to 1955 there has been a gradual increase of attendance at Sacrament meetings of eleven percent.

2. *Regarding Tithes and Offerings:* Greater devotion is evident, also, in the increase of tithes and offerings. It appears that a larger proportion of the members are contributing a larger proportion of their incomes, the result being that tithes and offerings have increased during recent years substantially more than the growth in membership and the indicated increase in average incomes of the Saints. Those two items point to increased spirituality, the very object of our organization.

3. *Regarding the Welfare Plan:* We are grateful for the progress that has been made in the welfare plan. Hundreds of projects have been established, and bishops' storehouses equipped to supply in a helpful and dignified manner the needs of the poor. The priesthood generally and the Relief Society sisters have responded to this important work. We are especially grateful to the members of the general Church welfare committee, who have given direct supervision to this program for a period of over twenty years. The basic concepts of the welfare program have been tested and proved to be sound.

Nevertheless, we must constantly remind ourselves of the primary purpose of the plan, which is—*First*, to supply in a helpful and dignified manner food, clothing, and shelter to every person so in need.

Second, to assist men and women who, through misfortune, ill-luck, or disaster, find themselves without gainful employment, to become once again self-supporting.

Third, to increase among the members of the Church the true spirit of the

brotherhood of Christ, having in mind in all their service the divine saying, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matt. 25:40.)

4. *Missionary Work:* In 1956 there were 23,923 baptisms performed in foreign and stake missions, which is an increase of nine percent over the previous year.

5. *Schools in Polynesia:* I am sure you will be interested in the progress of the schools in Polynesia. The New Zealand College will be finished and ready for opening in February 1958. It is composed of an administration building, a student center building, which is made up of two full-scale gymnasiums, cafeteria, kitchen, student center, lounge, swimming pool, locker rooms, and an auditorium combined with the gymnasium which will seat 4500 people. There are five classroom wings which will accommodate 1000 day students, three girls' dormitories and three boys' dormitories, accommodating 600 students. I will not go into further detail, but I do wish to express a word of commendation to those who are working down there. I should name them, but there is one man and his wife, particularly, who deserve commendation, and that is Brother George R. Biesinger and his sweet wife. He has left his business here and devoted years to this project, and will continue to do so until the completion of the temple and the completion of these schools.

In Samoa, there are new additions to the Pesega School in Western Samoa. The school is completed also at Vaiola, Savaii, Samoa, and one at Sauniatu, Samoa. Another is now under construction at Mapusago, Samoa.

In Tonga at the Liahona College, two large wings to the boys' and girls' dormitories, a new classroom wing, a new dining hall with kitchen facilities combined, and dormitories for the men and women teachers are under construction.

In Hawaii, the new Junior College now being built at Laie, Oahu, will accommodate not fewer than 750 students. The large shop building and the main building are already nearing completion.

All of these school buildings of the South Pacific are being built by labor

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missionaries called from America, and local labor missionaries called from their respective homelands. The work is going forward in a completely satisfactory manner, and in all areas is on schedule. Commendation and appreciation are extended to the local labor missionaries and to the Saints who contribute to the sustenance of these labor missionaries in this vast building program, as well as to our labor missionary supervisors called from America.

6. *Regarding Our Temples:* Near Auckland, New Zealand, on December 22, 1956, another milestone in Church history was passed. Elder Hugh B. Brown, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve, under appointment from the First Presidency, conducted the services and officiated at the cornerstone laying ceremonies for the New Zealand Temple.

Cornerstone laying ceremonies for the London Temple will be held at New-chapel, Surrey County, England, May 11, 1957. Elder Richard L. Evans of the Council of the Twelve will officiate at the ceremonies. The ground for this temple was broken August 27, 1955.

Brethren and sisters, to partake of the spirit of faith and activity in the Church is inspiring. Membership therein is at once a privilege and a blessing.

Looking around us, we are convinced that we are living in an era of great progress, embracing wonderful inventions and scientific discoveries. Man's search for the unknown has led him out of the world of matter literally into the realm of space. He splits the atom, sets off horrifying hydrogen explosions, flies through space at a speed faster than sound, is taking steps to build satellites to accompany the earth in its revolutions. Many of the imaginations of Jules Verne are now commonplace realities. Flying to the moon is an achievement now considered possible.

The earth itself, figuratively speaking, is shrinking. The railroad, automobiles, airplanes, have made New York and San Francisco next-door neighbors, and Greenland and the South Pole only a few days apart!

But with all these things comes increased responsibility to every individual, man, woman, and child. New

inventions bring greater opportunities, but demand more activity, more strength of character. Many years ago you and I read the following comment by Roger W. Babson, the great statistician:

"Although the airplane opens up boundless opportunities, it also threatens limitless perils. All depends upon whether we can match this flood of new material powers with an equal gain in spiritual forces. The coming generation can see in a minute more than the former generation could see in a week. The coming generation can outhear and outtravel the former generation. Horsepower has expanded beyond all dreams. But what about manpower? What about spiritual power, and the power of judgment, discretion, and self-control? Unless there is a development of character equal to this enlargement of physical forces there is sure trouble ahead. Twenty-five years ago an intoxicated man might tip the buggy over, but commonly the old horse would bring him home. Today a driver under the influence of liquor maims and kills. Tomorrow, therefore, is something to ponder over. Without moral progress in pace with physical progress the airplane will merely make dissipation more disastrous, immorality more widespread, and crime more efficient. One result of the automobile has been to put hell on wheels; the airplane will put hell on wings unless righteousness, too, is speeded up. On the development of character depends whether the airplane shall bring prosperity or calamity."

Along this same line also are the comments of Mr. A. Cressy Morrison, eminent scientist who, fearing "a period of regression for true civilization," says: "If we have read the signs of the times correctly, or even if we have exaggerated some of the symptoms, the only salvation for mankind will be found in religion. However, it must be a sound Christian religion, vitalized by its own primitive ideals; aware of the progress of science, rid of prejudice against fair speculative intelligence, and soaring high above frontiers. Never in her two thousand years has the Church had a more urgent call and a nobler opportunity to fulfill her obligations as the comforter and guide of humanity." That is from *Man Does Not Stand Alone* (p.

264), a book I commend to all earnest seekers after truth.

Well, as our text says, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21.)

Too many people in the world are sitting and giving only lip service to God; too many have forgotten him; too many are denying him; too many are crying, "Lord, Lord," but fail to follow his principles. Many of us through selfishness are lingering near the edge of the animal jungle where Nature's law demands us to do everything with self in view. Self-preservation is the first law of mortal life, but Jesus says, "He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." (*Ibid.*, 10:39.)

The first experience of our Savior after his baptism, and after having been acknowledged by his Father as his Only Begotten Son, was to triumph over selfishness on the Mount of Temptation.

Applicable today is Paul's admonition to the Philippian, given over nineteen hundred years ago:

"Wherefore, my beloved . . . [and that branch in Philippi was the first branch in Europe] work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

"Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." (Phil. 2:12-15.)

An outstanding doctrine of the Church is that each individual carries the responsibility to work out his own salvation, and salvation is a process of gradual development. The Church does not accept the doctrine that a mere murmured belief in Jesus Christ is all that is necessary. A man may say he believes, but if he does nothing to make that belief or faith a moving power to do, to accomplish, to produce soul growth, his professing will avail him nothing. "Work out your own salvation" is an exhortation to demonstrate by activity, by thoughtful, obedient effort the reality of faith. But this must be done

with a consciousness that absolute dependence upon self may produce pride and weakness that will bring failure. With "fear and trembling" we should seek the strength and grace of God for inspiration to obtain the final victory.

To work out one's salvation is not to sit idly by dreaming and yearning for God miraculously to thrust bounteous blessings into our laps. It is to perform daily, hourly, momentarily, if necessary, the immediate task or duty at hand, and to continue happily in such performance as the years come and go, leaving the fruits of such labors either for self or for others to be bestowed as a just and beneficent Father may determine.

I am not unmindful of the scripture that declares: "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8.) That is absolutely true, for man in his taking upon himself mortality was impotent to save himself. When left to grope in a natural state, he would have become, and did become, so we are told in modern scripture, "carnal, sensual, and devilish, by nature." (Alma 42:10.) But the Lord, through his grace, appeared to man, gave him the gospel or eternal plan whereby he might rise above the carnal and selfish things of life and obtain spiritual perfection. But he must rise by his own efforts and he must walk by faith.

"He who would ascend the stairway leading upward to eternal life must tread it step by step from the base stone to the summit of its flight. Not a single stair can be missed, not one duty neglected, if the climber would avoid danger and delay and arrive with all safety and expedition at the topmost landing of the celestial exaltation." The responsibility is upon each individual to choose the path of righteousness, of faithfulness and duty to fellow men. If he choose otherwise and as a result meets failure, misery, and death, he alone is to blame. President Brigham Young, speaking on this thought, once said:

"If Brother Brigham should take a wrong track and be shut out of the kingdom of heaven, no person will be to blame but Brother Brigham. I am the

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only being in heaven, earth, or hell, that can be blamed. This will equally apply to every Latter-day Saint. Salvation is an individual operation. I am the only person that can possibly save myself. When salvation is sent to me, I can reject or receive it. In receiving it, I yield implicit obedience and submission to its great Author throughout my life, and to those whom he shall appoint to instruct me; in rejecting it, I follow the dictates of my own will in preference to the will of my Creator."

In thus emphasizing individual effort, I am not unmindful of the necessity of co-operation.

"There is a destiny which makes us brothers,

None lives to self alone;

All that we send into the lives of others
Comes back into our own."

—Edwin Markham*

A single, struggling individual may be stalled with his heavy load even as he begins to climb the hill before him. To reach the top unaided is an impossibility. With a little help from fellow travelers, quorums, or wards, he makes the grade and goes on his way in gratitude and rejoicing.

This is in harmony with the teachings of Jesus, "who sought to perfect society, not by popular agitation or by reorganization, but by perfecting the individual. He recognized the fatal fallacy in the dream of those who hoped to make a perfect state out of imperfect individuals. The ideal social state, which he described as the kingdom of God, is a commonwealth in which all men are united and governed by a commanding love both for God and for their neighbors."

The present-day turmoil and bitter strivings threaten to undermine basic foundations of Christian relationship. Liberty, freedom of speech, self-government, faith in God, and particularly faith in the efficacy of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, are facing a bombardment from the ranks of error such as the world has seldom if ever witnessed.

Too many men quail under the impending onslaught, and cry vainly, "What can we do?" To members of the Church, to men everywhere, the

Church answers, "Keep the commandments of God," as named specifically, for example, by the Prophet Nephi:

"... God hath given a commandment that all men should have charity, which charity is love. And except they should have charity they were nothing. . . .

"And again, the Lord God hath commanded that men should not murder; that they should not lie; that they should not steal; that they should not take the name of the Lord their God in vain; that they should not envy; that they should not have malice; that they should not contend one with another; that they should not commit whoredoms; and that they should do none of these things; for whoso doeth them shall perish." (2 Nephi 26:30, 32.) I commend this chapter to you.

Avoidance of Intoxicating Liquor: In this dispensation the Lord has warned mankind against the use of intoxicating liquors. In violation of that warning alcoholism is now a national problem. Americans spend the staggering sum of more than nine billion dollars every year for alcoholic beverages. In addition, lost wages, crime, and accidents traced to alcoholism cost Americans another \$667,000,000 a year. (Facts given by Dr. Chester A. Winyard in "Alcohol and Human Tissues." See *Deseret News*, February 10, 1954.)

"Alcoholism has become a major public health problem, for it is 155 times more prevalent than polio, 11 times more prevalent than tuberculosis, and 6 times more prevalent than cancer. If the number of alcoholics continues to increase during the next ten years as it has during the past ten years, alcoholism will soon affect every family in the United States." So says a pamphlet published by the National Committee for the Prevention of Alcoholism, Washington, D. C., July 22-August 2, 1956.

Over a hundred years ago the Lord said through the Prophet Joseph Smith that "tobacco . . . is not good for man." (D & C 89:8.) Luther Burbank in the "Dearborn Independent" says:

"How much would you know about tobacco if, upon the tombstone of every one killed by it were inscribed, 'Killed by tobacco'?"

"You would know a lot more about it than you do now, but you would not

*Used by permission.

know all, because tobacco does more than kill. It half-kills. It has its victims in the cemeteries and in the streets. It is bad enough to be dead, but it is a question if it is not sometimes worse to be half-dead,—to be nervous, irritable, unable to sleep well, with efficiency cut in two and vitality ready to snap at the first great strain. This seems like exaggeration. It isn't! It is well within the truth.

"Let me tell you how tobacco kills. Smokers do not all drop dead around the cigar lighters in tobacco stores. They go away and, years later, die of something else. From the tobacco trust's point of view, that is one of the finest things about tobacco. The victims do not die on the premises, even when sold the worst cigars. They go away, and when they die, the doctors certify that they died of something else,—pneumonia, heart disease, typhoid fever, or what not.

"In other words, tobacco kills indirectly and escapes the blame," confirming what the Prophet Joseph said before, "tobacco . . . is not good for man."

"Approximately 38,000,000 Americans are regular cigaret smokers, although a million and a half have quit smoking entirely in the last eighteen months, according to estimates based on a survey made by the US Bureau of the Census for the National Cancer Institute of the Public Health Service, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The 38,000,000 cigaret smokers include 25,000,000 men and 13,000,000 women." (See "America's Smoking Habits," THE IMPROVEMENT ERA, April 1957.)

In the Church no teacher who indulges in smoking should be permitted to teach our children in Primary and Sunday School. Through the Prophet

Joseph the Lord gave the Word of Wisdom to all. It is time, in the light of revelation and the discoveries of science, that this Church uphold its principles regarding these things.

The best way to prevent indulgence in these harmful habits is to refuse to tamper with them. Let each youth decline the first invitation to indulge, remembering that "The soul that is worth the honor of earth, is the soul that resists desire."

"Wherefore, now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence.

"He that is slothful shall not be counted worthy to stand, and he that learns not his duty and shows himself not approved shall not be counted worthy to stand." (D & C 107:99-100.)

The Church is thriving, as indicated in my opening remarks. Let us rejoice in her progress. To see the discoveries of science and to be the recipients of inventions and new appliances as they relieve daily life of former drudgery give hope and encouragement; but to overcome difficulties, to control temper, to subdue and conquer passion, in whatever form, to feel in one's heart a growing love for truth and for one's fellow men, to sense a nearness to God our Father, and to recognize the whisperings of his voice through the Holy Spirit, fill the soul with joy and make life worth living.

That obedience to the principles of the restored gospel gives to man these blessings, I testify in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Our next speaker will be Elder Clifford E. Young, Assistant to the Twelve. He will be followed by Elder Richard L. Evans.

ELDER CLIFFORD E. YOUNG

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

I REALIZE, my brethren and sisters, that every week we meet with people whom you represent. You are a cross section of the stakes and the missions where we from time to time visit. You

are always so kind and considerate of our every need. Yet I do not know why I should feel timid as I stand here this morning to attempt to say just a few words, and especially after this im-