

mony. In the group that met with them in the sealing room were represented three generations on each side. That, it seems to me, is as it should be. Families should participate as families in holy places. If we expect to be together as families in the next life, and it seems to me that is the center and the objective of the whole, then it is best and well that we get together as families in these holy temples under such circumstances as that.

The overwhelming desire that should be in the mind of every young boy and every young girl as he or she moves into young manhood and womanhood is to prepare himself or herself each day that he or she lives to be worthy of entering into the house of the Lord, and there receive the fabulous blessings that the Lord extends to those who desire them. How glorious is the doctrine that man was in the beginning with God! How glorious is the doctrine that families may be perpetuated forever! Of all the people upon the earth today the Latter-day Saints should manifest the greatest faith in God—not because we are a more gifted people or a better race, but because through the goodness of God we have received evidence upon evidence of our divine origin, and the knowledge that we are indeed his children.

## ELDER GEORGE Q. MORRIS

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

My dear brethren and sisters, I sincerely pray that the Lord will direct me by his spirit to say what I should say today. I had been thinking along lines similar to what the last two brethren have been speaking of. We have avoided a head-on collision, but we have been pretty close to it.

I have had in mind a statement of Job: "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble." (Job 14:1.) I suppose at times we all may have that feeling ourselves. That leads to the matter of troubles and evils and sins and adversity which have been referred to today. I rejoice greatly in the revelations that God has given us so that we will understand life, and if we

Not only the Bible but also modern scriptures have revealed to us great and fundamental truths which are not generally understood as to the origin and destiny of man. In addition, appearances of the Lord himself and appearances of his heavenly messengers have added to the faith and knowledge of this people. I pray, brothers and sisters, that all of us, especially those who are coming into manhood and womanhood, may give sober thought to these glorious principles and be able to build our lives upon the sure foundation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, "whereon if men build they cannot fall."

I testify that he is real, he is the Savior. He was resurrected and he lives, and this is his plan for happiness and exaltation, and I do it humbly in the name of Jesus Christ, the Lord. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder ElRay L. Christiansen has just spoken to us. He is Assistant to the Council of the Twelve, and also president of the Salt Lake Temple. Elder George Q. Morris of the Council of the Twelve will now speak to us, and he will be followed by Elder LeGrand Richards.

can get the right relation to sin and adversity and its opposites we can intelligently understand life. There has always been a debate through the centuries as to what sin is, and more particularly why there should be so much sin in the world. Some who believe in God think that it is only an illusion. Some faiths are based on the belief that there is no sin—that it is only an idea in the mind. Others who believe in a God think that perhaps he did not quite make a perfect job of the creation, and there are other various ideas advanced as the reasons for sin. The sin and suffering in the world, says the atheist, proves there is no God.

It has been a great satisfaction to me

Friday, April 4

First Day

just to look over the Lord's explanation of why there is sin, and I want to bring to you the few short sentences in which he explains why sin is in the world. I think it will be enlightening to us and enable us to have the right understanding regarding this matter.

He said to his disciples:

Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! (Matt. 18:7.)

This is a very definite and clear declaration so far as we are concerned that in the world there must be offenses. There must be sin in the world, but the Lord blocks any illogical reasoning that because there is sin we cannot be blamed for having partaken of it with his statement: "but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!"

He also says, in the Doctrine and Covenants, 29:39, "And it must needs be that the devil should tempt the children of men, . . ." That is a necessary situation in our lives. Then we are told what happened when transgression occurred. Because of Adam's transgression, the Lord said: ". . . cursed shall be the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." (Moses 4:23.) I think we should bear in mind that the Lord said for the sake of Adam he would curse the land, and he followed this by saying,

By the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, until thou shalt return unto the ground—for thou shalt surely die—for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou wast, and unto dust shalt thou return. (*Ibid.*, 4:25.)

Now this seems to paint a very gloomy picture, and some people do not go much farther than this, and try to blame Adam for the sins and troubles that come into their lives. I just want to say here in passing that I hope none of us—no member of this Church—will speak lightly of Adam, an august and glorious personage close to the throne of God, the father of our race, and identified as Michael, the great archangel. We should think of him and speak of him with love and with reverence, and not tolerate any other attitude in our presence.

That gloomy picture does look serious, and life is serious, but the Lord explains further:

And it must needs be that the devil should tempt the children of men, or they could not be agents unto themselves; for if they never should have bitter they could not know the sweet— (D & C 29:39.)

This is a clear and definite statement that I think we must accept literally.

Further, the Lord said, after Adam had transgressed: "And I, the Lord God, said unto mine Only Begotten: Behold, the man is become as one of us to know good and evil;" (Moses 4:28) testifying that through his transgression Adam had attained a knowledge of good and evil which he did not have before.

Then the Father gives further instructions to Adam:

And the Lord spake unto Adam, saying: Inasmuch as thy children are conceived in sin, even so when they begin to grow up, sin conceiveth in their hearts, and they taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good. (*Ibid.*, 6:55.)

This being "conceived in sin," as I understand it, is only that they are in the midst of sin. They come into the world where sin is prevalent, and it will enter into their hearts, but it will lead them "to taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good." And then with further emphasis on the matter of agency, the Lord says, ". . . it is given to them to know good from evil; wherefore they are agents unto themselves." (*Ibid.*, 6:56.)

This matter of agency is the very essence of our existence. The Lord said unto Enoch:

Behold these thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands, and I gave unto them their knowledge, in the day I created them; and in the Garden of Eden, gave I unto man his agency. (*Ibid.*, 7:32.)

Also the revelation in the 93rd section of the Doctrine and Covenants emphasizes again this matter of agency. We are intelligences, and the Lord says,

All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence. (D & C 93:30.)

If we take away their free agency we nullify the purpose of the existence of mankind in the world. Satan attempted to do that.

By these revelations we see why sin is in the world and adversities and evils of various kinds. We can picture the plight of Adam and Eve. They had been condemned to sorrows, woes, troubles, and labor and they were cast out from the presence of God, and death had been declared to be their fate. A pathetic picture, indeed. But now a most important thing happened. Adam and Eve had explained to them the gospel of Jesus Christ. What would be their reaction? When the Lord explained this to them, that a redemption should come through Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten of the Father, Adam exclaimed:

Blessed be the name of God, for because of my transgression my eyes are opened, and in this life I shall have joy, and again in the flesh shall I see God. (Moses 5:10.)

And what was the response of Eve, his wife. She

heard all of these things, and was glad, saying: Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and . . . eternal life. (*Ibid.*, 5:11.)

There is the key to the question of evil. If we cannot be good, except as we resist and overcome evil, then evil must be present to be resisted.

So this earth life is set up according to true principles, and these conditions that followed the transgression were not, in the usual sense, penalties that were inflicted upon us. All these that I have named to you that seem to be sad afflictions of punishment, sorrow, and trouble are in the end not that. They are blessings. We have attained a knowledge of good and evil, the power to prize the sweet, to become agents unto ourselves, the power to obtain redemption and eternal life. These things had their origin in this transgression. The Lord has set the earth up so we have to labor if we are going to live, which preserves us from the curse of idleness and indolence; and though the

Lord condemns us to death—mortal death—it is one of the greatest blessings that comes to us here because it is the doorway to immortality, and we can never attain immortality without dying.

So these are all real blessings. We come to the earth with all these conditions arranged as they are so that we have to struggle constantly against evil, struggle to preserve our lives, struggle for everything of true value—that is the thing for us to understand—this is the course of life that is most desirable, and for our good. We have no need to find fault with these conditions. The Lord has ordained them all for our welfare and happiness. The truth as I understand and feel about it is simply that circumstances placed Adam in a position where by a technical transgression he could come into mortal life, moving out of immortality into these earth conditions for his blessing, for the blessing of the race, without which no immortality and eternal life and exaltation could ever come. And in doing this, also, of course, his body, taken from the earth, was made mortal—an absolute essential. There is no salvation or exaltation except through the possession of a body of flesh and blood.

In conclusion I want to give this inspired declaration by the Prophet Lehi.

For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things. If not so, . . . righteousness could not be brought to pass, neither wickedness, neither holiness nor misery, neither good nor bad. Wherefore, all things must needs be a compound in one; . . .

And now, behold, if Adam had not transgressed he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end.

And they would have had no children; therefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin.

But behold, all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things.

Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy. (2 Nephi 2:11, 22-25.)

Friday, April 4

The answer to all the problems in the world is the gospel of Jesus Christ, which enables us to overcome all adversities, sin, and death, and go back into the presence of God fit to dwell in his presence, through the Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

I bear this humble witness that this is the Church of Jesus Christ, organized by him personally; that President David O. McKay is conducting the affairs of

this Church as the Lord Jesus Christ directs him, and I bear this witness in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom we have just listened is Elder George Q. Morris, member of the Council of the Twelve. Our concluding speaker will be Elder LeGrand Richards of the same Council.

## ELDER LEGRAND RICHARDS

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

I rejoice, my brothers and sisters, in the privilege of attending this conference with you and with my Brethren here on this stand. I love them, I love the Saints.

I thought when we listened to the report of the growth of the Church, how your hearts must rejoice! When I think of our visits to your stakes and your missions and what you and your families are contributing to the growth of the Church, surely that is what we labor for with all our hearts and souls and that is what we pray for! The Lord is blessing the efforts of the Saints throughout the world. May he continue to do so.

I thought that in the few moments I have here today I would like to make a few comments on a question that was asked me in a letter I received a few weeks ago from a nonmember of the Church whom I met on one of my visits in the Church. The question was this: "Please, sir, tell me why you think Joseph Smith was a prophet of God." I have preached on that subject for fifty years, and the more I do the more my heart is made to rejoice. I make these comments:

I believe the Bible to be the word of God. I believe, as has already been stated here today, that God had a plan when he created this earth, when he placed man upon it, just as definitely as any architect ever draws a plan for a building before it is constructed.

I believe the words of Isaiah when he said that the Lord declared the end from the beginning. I think it is our duty to understand that plan, to study

it, that we might know and understand the purposes of the Lord in the creation of this world and what is yet to transpire before the coming of Christ, our Lord, to rule and reign as King of kings and Lord of lords, as he and the prophets have declared.

I believe the words of the Apostle Peter when he said that

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. (II Peter 1:19-21.)

I believe that the word of prophecy is a more sure word than anything else we have in this world.

I like the words of the Savior on that same subject as he walked beside his disciples on the way to Emmaus when he said:

. . . O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. (Luke 24:25.)

And then beginning with Moses and the prophets, he showed them how that in all things they testified of him.

Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures. (*Ibid.*, 24:45.)

Just as the prophets of old declared the coming of Christ in the Meridian