

Friday, October 10

First Day

President David O. McKay:

Elder Antoine R. Ivins of the First Council of Seventy has just spoken to

us. We shall now hear from Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, Assistant to the Twelve.

ELDER GORDON B. HINCKLEY

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

President McKay, President Richards, President Clark, my dear brethren and sisters:

I seek inspiration of the Lord at this time.

During the past six months Sister Hinckley and I have had the opportunity of participating in the dedication of the New Zealand and London temples. If I may, I should like to make some observations out of the experiences of those occasions and comment with appreciation on five great qualities or aspects that I have noted in this, our Father's work: (1) its breadth; (2) its depth; (3) the devotion of its advocates; (4) the effect of their teaching; (5) the strength of its leadership.

I am grateful, my brethren and sisters, for the breadth of this kingdom. My testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith has been strengthened by the manner in which this work has spread over the earth. I think of the statement made by Moroni in 1823 to an unknown farm boy in western New York that his "name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues." (Joseph Smith 2:33.) I think of the word of the Lord to the Prophet in the loneliness of Liberty Jail: "The ends of the earth shall inquire after thy name, and fools shall have thee in derision, and hell shall rage against thee;

"While the pure in heart, and the wise, and the noble, and the virtuous, shall seek counsel, and authority, and blessings constantly from under thy hand." (D & C 122:1-2.)

My brethren and sisters, I have witnessed the fulfilment of these marvelous promises. In the temples in Europe I have seen the people of Finland, Sweden, and Norway, of Denmark, Belgium, and Holland, of Germany, Austria, France, and England and even from South Africa—pure in heart, noble, virtuous men and women of those lands

seeking blessings under the authority which came through the Prophet Joseph Smith. In New Zealand I have seen the people of that land, of Australia, Tasmania, Samoa, Tonga, Raratonga, Fiji, and Tahiti, with the smile of truth upon their faces as they sought blessings in the house of the Lord, each in his own tongue testifying of this great latter-day work.

I marvel at, and am grateful, for the breadth of the kingdom, its spread over the world, and I know that the end is not yet—that this stone which was cut out of the mountain without hands, as the prophet foretold, shall roll forth and fill the earth, touching the hearts and lives of the virtuous and the wise and the pure in heart, wherever it is taught—for it is the kingdom of our God.

Secondly, as I am grateful for the breadth of the kingdom, I am likewise grateful for the depth of its teaching. To spread laterally is one thing. To grow in "the third dimension of religion," as one writer put it, is another.

I think we witnessed in these temples that third dimension. I shall never forget the testimony of a young man who had come from Perth on the west coast of Australia. He and his wife and children had traveled across Australia, a distance approximately as great as from San Francisco to New York, and then across the Tasman Sea to New Zealand. He said they had had to sell their furniture, their car, their dishes, and many other of their prized possessions, but, he said, as he looked at his wife and their lovely children, he knew these were more precious than car, furniture, or china. By hard work and careful saving he could replace his worldly goods, but he could never afford to lose those he loved.

And so they had come, with a sustaining conviction in their hearts that life, love, and family may all be eternal under the plan of the Lord. And as

they kneeled about the altar of the temple and were bound together under the authority of the Holy Priesthood in an imperishable relationship, one glimpsed the great, eternal purposes of God—the everlasting verities that transcend in beauty and satisfaction the thin values by which most men gauge their lives.

Inherent in the events of that day in the temple—in the instruction given in the endowment, in the covenants made, in the ordinances performed—were answers to the great eternal questions of where we come from, why we are here, and where we are going—of the purpose of life under the plan of our Creator. These are the things which give depth and meaning, a third dimension to our faith, for which I feel deeply grateful this day.

Thirdly, our experiences of the past six months have given me a new appreciation for the devotion of the advocates of this cause, our missionaries. I have come to a renewed sense of gratitude for the sacrifices of those who laid the foundations of this great work.

While in England I spent a few hours in Preston, my first field of labor as a missionary twenty-five years ago. It was in this city that missionaries first preached the gospel in Europe in 1837. As we moved along those old cobbled streets and flagstone walks, I thought of those seven men of 121 years ago—strangers in a strange land, walking in poverty, but with a great conviction and a great enthusiasm.

We stood beside Vauxhall Chapel where they first spoke, beside the River Ribble where they first baptized, on the site of the old Cockpit where they bore testimony. In spite of bitter opposition, in spite of mobbings, arrests, and every manner of persecution, they went forward, garnering souls in a harvest that will go on forever as the posterity of their converts increase in number.

And as they sacrificed and labored, so labor their successors. We met more than five hundred missionaries of Europe. One cannot witness these young men and women at work without marveling at their devotion. One cannot see the maturity that has come into their lives without recognizing the inspiration of this great program. One

cannot hear their testimonies without sensing the tremendous power of truth. The Lord bless them for their wonderful devotion and for their wonderful faith. You can be proud of them.

Fourthly, I am grateful for the effect of their teachings. The Lord has declared: “. . . this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.” (Moses 1:39.) You need not wait for the life beyond to see the accomplishment of that purpose. You may witness that process every day in the mission field. The revelation declares that “That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day.” (D & C 50:24.)

That sublime principle of growth was evident in the lives of those who came to these temples. Whether they were brown-skinned Maoris, Samoans, or Tongans, or fair-skinned Europeans, they seemed to have a quality indefinable and wonderful. Perhaps it was a certain kind of cleanliness—no more cigarets, no more liquor, no more tea. Perhaps it was the company they kept—the kind of company one ought to find in the Church. Perhaps it was their knowledge of the gospel, their assurance concerning the purpose of life. In any event, it was there, and it was inspiring.

I am grateful for the power of the gospel in the hearts and lives of men and women, and I never saw that power more evident than when the Saints came to the house of the Lord.

Finally, there came out of these experiences an increased gratitude for our leader and for a conviction of his divine appointment.

A short time ago while doing some research in the missionary records of the Church, I came across the appraisal made by Elder David O. McKay's mission president when he completed his first mission in the British Isles. That appraisal reads as follows:

“As a speaker: Good.

“As a writer: Good.

“As a presiding officer: Very good.

“Has he a good knowledge of the gospel? Yes.

“Has he been energetic? Very.

Friday, October 10

First Day

"Is he discreet and does he carry a good influence? Yes sirl

"Remarks: None better in the mission."

That was written in 1899.

As I read that I thought of another David, the son of Jesse, who was ordained to become the leader of Israel. And I thought of the solid consistency of President McKay's life, from the time he first labored in the British Isles as a young man, through the sixty years that passed prior to his return to dedicate the House of the Lord in this same land.

The affection in which he is held, his unflinching kindness and consideration, his ease in meeting every situation, the fruits of his ministry, all attest to his prophetic calling.

On his arrival at the New Zealand Temple he was given a great welcoming festival. As he walked through the crowd, elderly men and women, who first had met him in the islands in 1921, wept at the return of their apostle-prophet.

In London we watched him face with ease a battery of newspaper and television men and bear testimony to them. In both temples we heard him give counsel that was inspiring and offer prayers of dedication that were solemn and beautiful and moving.

In eleven languages today the worthy of the Church are enjoying the blessings of the temple because of the inspiration that has come through him. No one witnessing the joy of those who have received these blessings, could doubt the inspiration of his leadership.

I recall a little widow in New Zealand, the mother of seventeen children. Her husband was gone. A number of her children were gone. As she knelt about the altar with the beautiful children who were left to her and received

the assurance that all that she had lost would also be hers, she wept. And all who were with her on that sacred occasion in that dedicated room, wept also.

As I have witnessed these and many more inspiring situations during the past six months in these widely scattered lands, I have felt to sing with that convert from the steel mills of Sheffield: "We thank thee, O God, for a Prophet, to guide us in these latter days."

The other day I talked with a misguided young man who has become bitter. After he told his story, I said to him: "If you had seen what I have seen, if you had experienced what I have experienced, you would not feel as you now do."

I bear you witness that God's kingdom is here, that it is growing in breadth and depth, and in power in the lives of the people, and that those whom he has placed to lead it are his chosen and ordained servants. I so testify in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve, has just addressed us. The Choir and Congregation will now join in singing, "High On The Mountain Top," led by Sister Florence Jepperson Madsen. After the singing Elder Mark E. Petersen will address us.

The Singing Mothers Chorus and the congregation joined in singing the hymn, "High On The Mountain Top."

President David O. McKay:

Elder Mark E. Petersen of the Council of the Twelve will now speak to us. Our concluding speaker will be Elder Delbert L. Stapley.

ELDER MARK E. PETERSEN

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Last June while we were touring one of the missions of the Church in the eastern part of the United States, we stopped one morning about 8 o'clock to get breakfast at a café. This

café was located just a half block from a junior high school. As we were sitting there eating our breakfast, about a dozen of these junior high school students came into the café and played some