

the need of divine direction to save those who will hear, understand, and follow the truth. The ancient Prophet Amos declared, that God would do nothing, save he reveal his mind and will to his servants the prophets. (See Amos 3:7.) The need of the mind and will of our Heavenly Father, through his servant, a prophet, is greatly in evidence.

I want to leave my testimony, my brethren and sisters, that God does live and that he and his Son, Jesus Christ, are at the helm, and that prophets have been raised up from the very inception of this Church, commencing with Joseph Smith and others who have followed him, and that we are blessed

to have standing at the head of the Church today and directing us, a prophet of God, and if the children of men would but listen to the voice of that prophet we all could be led away from the difficulties that are oppressing us this very day. I bear this record in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Alvin R. Dyer, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us. Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy will now speak to us. He will be followed by Brother Hinckley.

ELDER BRUCE R. McCONKIE

Of the First Council of the Seventy

May I call attention to the great gospel truth that salvation is a family affair, that it is attained in and through, by and because of families.

For a text, may I read the words quoted by Moroni to Joseph Smith on the evening of September 21, 1823:

"Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

"And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers.

"If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming." (D&C 2:1-3.)

Now, what were the promises made to the fathers? Since the coming of Elijah, on April 3, 1836, in what way have these promises been planted in the hearts of the children?

In answer, and by way of illustration, may I read one of the greatest promises ever made to the fathers, one which is perhaps pre-eminent above all others. To Abraham the Lord said:

". . . I am the Lord thy God; . . .

"My name is Jehovah, and I know the end from the beginning; . . .

"And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations, and thou shalt be a

blessing unto thy seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations;

"And I will bless them through thy name; for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father;

"And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee (that is, in thy Priesthood) and in thy seed (that is, thy Priesthood)" and now note particularly what follows; it is the heart and core of all the promises made to the fathers—"for I give unto thee a promise that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee (that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal." (Abraham 2:7-11.)

In the nearly four thousand years since Abraham, uncounted millions of his literal seed have lived in the world, most of them in a day when the gospel, with its saving ordinances and truths, was not found among men. Yet the Lord promised Abraham, their father, that these millions who have sprung from him, these millions who are his literal seed, these hosts of his posterity who comprise a major portion of a multitude of nations, that all these are

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entitled by lineage and as of right to the blessings of the priesthood, of the gospel, of salvation, and of eternal life.

May I here note that in order for men to gain salvation in the kingdom of God, they must receive the ordinances of baptism and of the laying on of hands for the receipt of the Holy Ghost; and in order for them to gain eternal life, which is the fulness of the Father's kingdom, and be joint-heirs with his Son, they must in addition enter into the ordinance of celestial marriage.

Now by revelation the Lord in our day has singled out and identified the children in whose hearts the promises made to the fathers have been planted. To the elders of the Church in this day he said:

"Thus saith the Lord unto you, with whom the priesthood hath continued through the lineage of your fathers—

"For ye are lawful heirs, according to the flesh, and have been hid from the world with Christ in God—

"Therefore your life and the priesthood have remained, and must needs remain through you and your lineage until the restoration of all things spoken by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began.

"Therefore, blessed are ye if ye continue in my goodness, a light unto the Gentiles, and through this priesthood, a savior unto my people Israel. The Lord hath said it." (D&C 86:8-11.)

Well, we are latter-day Israel; we are part of the seed of Abraham; we hold the power and authority of this priesthood; we are a light to the gentile nations, and as a result we are under command to carry the message of salvation to them. But we are also chosen and appointed to be saviors to Israel itself, to the seed of Abraham—to the whole kingdom and nation of people of the chosen lineage, who have lived in all the days since Abraham—whether they lived when the gospel was here or whether they did not.

May I now show how these principles work by using myself as the illustration. I have received the gospel; I have been baptized under the hands of a legal administrator; I have received the gift of the Holy Ghost—all of which has put me on a path leading to an

inheritance of salvation in the celestial world. Also, I have gone to the temple and been sealed to one of God's choicest handmaidens and have thereby obtained a place on the path leading to an inheritance of eternal life in the highest heaven of the celestial world. By obedience I have power to press forward and obtain these great rewards.

Because I have some understanding and realization of the glory, importance, and worth of these gospel blessings, there has come into my heart a great desire to have my children after me become inheritors of the same identical blessings that I have received, and so I strive to bring up my children in light and truth. Next to my own salvation and that of my wife, there is nothing so important to me as the salvation of my children.

Further, because I know the priceless worth of the gospel and the blessings that flow from it, I have a desire that my ancestors—those who lived when the gospel was not on earth and who have not had the privileges which are mine—I have a great desire that they also should be inheritors of these blessings. In other words, the promises made to the fathers have been planted in my heart, and I am obligated to act as a minister for the salvation of those in my line who have lived and died without having the gospel preached to them.

And now, if I do what I should, I will search out and identify those who have gone before in my lineage, and will see that the ordinances of salvation and exaltation are performed for them.

Salvation is a family affair. It is I, my wife, my children, and my ancestors. It is you, your wives, your children, and your ancestors. Salvation is a family affair.

In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Brother Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy has just spoken to us. Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, Assistant to the Twelve, will be our concluding speaker.