

SECOND DAY

AFTERNOON MEETING

The Conference reconvened at 2 o'clock p.m., Saturday, October 10, 1959.

The singing for this session was by the University of Utah Choral Society (The Institute of Religion and the University of Utah Choruses and the Bonneville Strings), David A. Shand directing, and Alexander Schreiner at the organ.

President David O. McKay, who was presiding and conducting, made the following introductory remarks:

President David O. McKay:

For the information of those who are listening in over radio, or looking at television, we are pleased to announce that we are assembled in the great Tabernacle in Salt Lake City on Temple Square in the fourth session of the One Hundred Twenty-Ninth Semi-Annual Conference of the Church. For those who cannot find seats—there are some standing in the doorways—we announce that overflow meetings are being held in the Assembly Hall and in the Barratt Hall, and these services will be broadcast at both those places.

The singing for this afternoon's session will be furnished by the University of Utah Choral Society—the Institute of Religion and the University of Utah Choruses, and the Bonneville Strings—conducted by Professor David A. Shand, with Alexander Schreiner at the organ.

We shall begin these services by the Combined Choruses singing, "Though Deepening Trials." The opening prayer will be offered by Elder Edgar L. Wagner, formerly president of the Central American Mission.

The Combined Choruses sang the hymn, "Though Deepening Trials."

Elder Edgar LeRoy Wagner, formerly president of the Central American Mission, offered the invocation.

President David O. McKay:

The invocation was offered by Elder Edgar L. Wagner, formerly president of the Central American Mission. The University of Utah Choral Society will now favor us with, "He Watching Over Israel," conducted by Professor David Shand. After the singing Elder Spencer W. Kimball will speak to us.

Singing by the Combined Choruses, "He Watching Over Israel."

President David O. McKay:

Elder Spencer W. Kimball of the Council of the Twelve will be our first speaker. He will be followed by Patriarch Eldred G. Smith.

ELDER SPENCER W. KIMBALL

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My beloved brothers and sisters, it is a delight to welcome into our circle our new member, Brother Hunter. He has our admiration and our affection.

In the few moments at my disposal I should like to address my remarks to you, our kinsmen of the isles of the sea and the Americas. Millions of you have blood relatively unmixed with Gentile nations. Columbus called you "Indians," thinking he had reached the East Indies. Millions of you are descendants of Spaniards and Indians, and

are termed "mestizos," and are called after your countries, for instance: Mexicans in Mexico; Guatemalans in Guatemala; Chilianos in Chile.

You Polynesians of the Pacific are called Samoan or Maori, Tahitian or Hawaiian, according to your islands. There are probably sixty million of you on the two continents and on the Pacific Islands, all related by blood ties.

The Lord calls you "Lamanites," a name which has a pleasant ring, for many of the grandest people ever to live

upon the earth were so called. In a limited sense, the name signifies the descendants of Laman and Lemuel, sons of your first American parent, Lehi; but you undoubtedly possess also the blood of the other sons, Sam, Nephi, and Jacob. And you likely have some Jewish blood from Mulek, son of Zedekiah, king of Judah. The name "Lamanite" distinguishes you from other peoples. It is not a name of derision or embarrassment, but one of which to be very proud.

You came from Jerusalem in its days of tribulation. You are of royal blood, a loved people of the Lord. In your veins flows the blood of prophets and statesmen; of emperors and kings; apostles and martyrs. Adam and Enoch sired you; Noah brought you through the flood; in the sandals of Abraham you walked from Ur of the Chaldees to your first "promised land"; you climbed in faith with Isaac to the holy mount of sacrifice; and you followed the path of hunger to Egypt with your father Jacob, and with Joseph you established, under the Pharaohs, the first great known welfare project.

You are the children of Ephraim and Manasseh, Joseph's sons and of Judah, his brother. Your fathers crossed the Jordan River with Joshua, and after centuries' absence you were again in your first "promised land."

The Genoese Italian boy, with his three ships from Spain, thought he had discovered a new world, but he was thousands of years late. Your people were on the shores to welcome Columbus and his men. Cortez, Pizarro, and their contemporaries, conquerors, exploiters found your "old people" already decadent intellectually, culturally, and spiritually, but populous in your wealth and poverty. Norwegian Vikings are said to have discovered this land before Columbus, but your people were already scattered from the Arctic to the Antarctic before there was a Norway or Vikings.

When your prophet Lehi led you out of Jerusalem about 600 years B. C., you brought with you the best of the culture of Egypt and Palestine and of the then known world; also the written language of your fathers and the holy scriptures from Adam down to your own time, these engraved upon brass plates. You brought with you an absolute knowledge of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and

Jacob, and maintained for a long time thereafter open vision and clear, unobstructed lines of communication with your Lord.

In the new "promised land" the seeds you brought from Palestine multiplied and brought to you great prosperity on the extensive lands you farmed. In your explorations you found gold, silver, copper, and iron, and processed brass and steel. Your factories turned out machinery and tools for agriculture, architecture, and road building. And with those tools you build cities, such as you knew in Egypt and Palestine, highways which would carry your traffic, and temples after the order of the world-famed Solomon's Temple.

Your culture was beyond the imagination of moderns. In your prosperity you wore "silks, scarlets, fine-twined linen, and precious clothing." You bejeweled yourselves with ornaments of gold and silver and other metals, and with precious stones. You were fabulously wealthy in your day.

In the long years of prosperity and righteousness, your wealth graced temples and synagogues. You read, quoted, and lived by the teachings of the books of Moses and the inspired writings of the prophets. Your people knew faith such as has seldom been found upon the earth. There were years of conflict and wickedness, but also years of peace and unparalleled goodness.

You produced prophets of stature. There were your Lehis, Nephis, and Jacobs; your Almas, Abinadis, and Mormons. Your Lamanite prophet, Samuel, who prophesied of the Christ, had few peers and perhaps no superiors. Your scientists and teachers and engineers were able and efficient, and left notable monuments.

Then was the transcendently important coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to you. Many of you retain this experience in your traditions. Your people gathered about their temple en masse to hear the words of life from the lips of their Redeemer, who had so recently experienced death, resurrection, and ascension in the Holy Land, as recorded in the New Testament. As they sat with bated breath and eyes uplifted, he came to them from the clouds of heaven as he had so recently left his Saints in Judæa. As they looked into

his kindly eyes and wondered about his wounds, he told them of his birth and life and ministry. He repeated to them the vital and priceless sermons on the mount, on the Sea of Galilee, in Samaria, in Jerusalem. He taught them the power of faith, of the battle between truth and evil. He told them of the voice of God, his Father, at the time of his baptism, and of the special endowments to Peter, James, and John on the Holy Mount of Transfiguration, when they also heard the voice of God, the Father. Now Nephite-Lamanite ears were to hear the same voice of the same God, introducing the same Jesus Christ to them: "Behold my Beloved Son." (3 Nephi 11:7.)

He told them of his Church in Jerusalem, and displayed to them his hands, his feet, his side, torn by nails and spear at the hands of his own. He healed their sick, their lame, their blind, as he had in the Holy Land, and blessed their little children around whom fire came down from heaven to glorify. He called his twelve disciples and set them apart to carry on his Church, then ascended into heaven again.

Your Lamanite ancestors were not more rebellious than their Israelitish forebears, but their way of life guaranteed eventual decimation. You had a rugged history with many tribulations, but you have a brilliant future. You are a chosen people; your destiny is in your own hands, your friends', and the Lord's. You were scattered in the great dispersion six centuries before Christ, and again on this continent in the pre- and post-Christian eras, and your more complete dispersion came since Columbus, and the explorers and the colonists.

Someone has said that "the darkest hour is just before the dawn," and your shades of night are giving way to the dawn of a brighter day. Yesterday you roamed the wilderness in feast or famine; today you are finding security in education and industry; and tomorrow your destiny will be brilliant in self-sufficiency, faith, fearlessness, and power. Like the Israelites released from Egyptian bondage, you have been promised deliverance from your foes of superstition, fear, illiteracy, and from the curses of want and disease and suffering.

Yesterday you traveled uncharted oceans, wandered over trackless deserts, lost your high culture, your written tongue, and your knowledge of the true and Living God. Today you are arising from your long sleep and are stretching, yawning, and reaching. Tomorrow you will be highly trained, laying out highways, constructing bridges, developing cities, building temples, and joining in inspired leadership of the Church of your Redeemer.

Historians have written about your past; poets have sung of your possibilities; prophets have predicted your scattering and your gathering; and your Lord has permitted you to walk through the dark chasms of your ancestors' making, but has patiently waited for your awakening, and now smiles on your florescence, and points the way to your glorious future as sons and daughters of God. You will arise from your bed of affliction and from your condition of deprivation if you will accept fully the Lord, Jesus Christ, and his total program. You will rise to former heights in culture and education, influence and power. You will blossom as the rose upon the mountains. Your daughters will be nurses, teachers, and social workers, and, above all, beloved wives and full-of-faith mothers of a righteous posterity.

Your sons will compete in art, literature, and medicine, in law, architecture, etc. They will become professional, industrial, and business leaders, and statesmen of the first order. Together you and we shall build in the spectacular city of New Jerusalem the temple to which our Redeemer will come. Your hands with ours, also those of Jacob, will place the foundation stones, raise the walls, and roof the magnificent structure. Perhaps your artistic hands will paint the temple and decorate it with a master's touch, and together we shall dedicate to our Creator Lord the most beautiful of all temples ever built to his name.

Sad have been your experiences of the last sixteen centuries. From the unexcelled righteousness of the post-Christian era, your ancestors slipped into an apostasy which has brought centuries of suffering and distress to their posterity. Fabulously wealthy, they forgot their God. They divided into tribes

Saturday, October 10

and clans and went to war with each other, driving and plundering, till the continent was a pulsating war camp.

You had great warriors like Ammoron, Helaman, and Mormon, who in cunning strategy and leadership rivaled the Cyruses, Alexanders, and Caesars. Your downfall came when your people walked the way to war. Revenge and hatreds made cold war flame into hot shooting ones. Baptismal waters became rivers of blood. The parched earth policy was followed, and enemy armies surged back and forth across the land, tramping down crops, squandering livestock, and changing a stable people into nomads.

When armies march and people fight, education suffers, art languishes, buildings crumble, forests are exploited, farms return to desert, and orchards to jungle. Fighting men build temporary bridges, forts, and towers instead of homes, public buildings, and observatories. There is neither time nor inclination to carve statues, paint landscapes, compose music, or record history. Communities on the march or in retreat have no schools nor teachers. Priceless records are destroyed with the buildings and cities which are burned and pillaged. Artists, scholars, writers, and clergy alike shoulder arms, stalking enemies, and laying siege to cities. Plunder replaces honest industry. Cattle, goats, and poultry are devoured by voracious soldiers. Calves, kids, and piglets are eaten as are the seed-corn, and the wheat. Fruit is devoured, and trees are burned for wood. Today's insatiable hunger swallows tomorrow's plenty. Armies carry movable tents and abandon homes and churches. Temples fall in ruins and are overgrown by vegetation. With ever-decreasing flocks to shear, no weaving or knitting is done, and clothes are replaced with short skin girdles, and heads are shaven. Plowshares are turned into swords, and pruning hooks into spears. The manufacture of farm implements is turned to the making of the scimitar, the ax, and the sword. Life becomes a sordid existence, bloody, with little purpose except to survive.

Mormon said: "... they are led about by Satan, even as chaff is driven before the wind, or as a vessel is tossed about upon the waves, without sail or anchor,

or without anything wherewith to steer her. . . ." (Mormon 5:18.)

In all this prolonged period of war and drivings, your immediate ancestors lost their written language, their high culture, and worst of all their knowledge of God and his work. Faith was replaced by fear, language by dialects, history by tradition, and a knowledge and understanding of God and his ways by idolatry, even to human sacrifice. Your priceless thousand years of history, laboriously engraved on plates of metal, and the brass plates of the Old Testament, were hidden by your inspired prophet-historian in the sacred hill in a stone box, to remain undisturbed until a wise Heavenly Father should bring them forth for you, their resting place known only in heaven.

In the business of killing human beings, there could be little inclination to face a Creator and a gospel of peace; the many-times restored gospel of Jesus Christ was lost; and spiritual darkness enveloped the whole world.

When Columbus came, your tribes had covered the islands of the Pacific, and the Americas from Tierra del Fuego to Point Barrow. Every school child is familiar with that period of history when your more recent ancestors were pushed from the Appalachians to the Sierras, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. All know about the four hundred year "battle of America," wherein a disunited multitude of small Indian tribal nations retreated constantly with much bloodshed to far corners, and then on reservations in areas unwanted.

In all this distress your greatest miracle was aborning. When you were decimated by war and disease and all seemed lost, and you were spoken of as "the vanishing American," then hope discovered a star. The colonist, the Gentiles, took your lands, your streams, your forests, but brought something to you immeasurably more valuable—the Holy Bible with its glorious truths, and a written language and progressive schools, scientific development, and intellectual progress.

Centuries earlier your prophets saw in vision and foretold the coming of Columbus and the colonists, of the Revolutionary War, of the creation of the great Gentile nation of the United States of America; of your scattering,

and, above all, and most important to you now, of the gathering of your people and their restoration. Prophecies emanating from our Lord never fail, and the oft-predicted miracle of the "marvelous work and a wonder" was soon at hand. The war brought independence to the struggling colonies, and a mighty nation was born with a divinely inspired Constitution, granting to its people religious freedom. Early in the nineteenth century preparations were complete for the marvelous miracle. The long-sealed heavens opened. God, the Father, came down with Jesus Christ, whom he introduced to a young modern prophet, Joseph Smith, saying: "This is my Beloved Son." (P. of G. P., Joseph Smith 2:17.)

Your Redeemer, who ascended in the clouds in the Holy Land eighteen centuries earlier, and who had soon thereafter visited your ancestors on this continent, was now back upon the earth for a stay long enough to open a new dispensation, and charge his new prophet with responsibility, and to introduce the successive events which were to be world-shaking. His visit was brief but momentous. The gospel was returning. The wondrous work continued. Your priceless records, having lain in a vault for centuries, were revealed, Moroni, fourteen centuries dead but now resurrected, led the Prophet to the place. He removed the soil, took from the stone box the golden plates, and blessed with supernatural power gave to you and to your contemporaries the English translation of the miracle book written for you, preserved for you, and dedicated to you.

For you there were prayers of numerous prophets, including Nephi: "For I pray continually for them by day, and mine eyes water my pillow by night." (2 Nephi 33:3.)

Enos said:

"... I prayed unto him with many long strugglings for my brethren the Lamanites . . . [and] that the Lord God would preserve a record of my people . . . that it might be brought forth at some future day unto the Lamanites, that, perhaps, they might be brought unto salvation."

"And I had faith, and I did cry unto God that he would preserve the records; and he covenanted with me that he

would bring them forth unto the Lamanites in his own due time." (Enos 11, 13, 16.)

Many moderns, lay and trained, have speculated on the origin of the early Americans. Your history sets at rest that question. Many people have questioned the divinity of the Holy Bible. Your record establishes it as the Word of God. Many have denied that Jesus was the very Son of God. Your record leaves no doubt. With its companion scripture, the Bible, there is proof for every honest soul that God lives, that Jesus Christ who was begotten by him is the Redeemer, the Savior. It establishes the truth of the exalting gospel which now came rapidly from the throne of God to the Prophet, to you and to us. Missionaries are now teaching the true gospel to you and your children. You heard today of the organization of the first Lamanite mission in the southern hemisphere—the Andes Mission.

Your record, the Book of Mormon, named after one of its chief historians, makes clearer the numerous predictions of the Bible. Other plates will have their seals broken, and additional truths will be revealed. It tells of your brethren, the Ten Tribes of Israel, who disappeared from Babylon into north countries when your people headed west to this world. They will return with their prophets, and their sacred records will be a third witness for Christ. They, the Ten Tribes, you, the Lamanites, and the believing of us, also carrying the blood of Israel, will jointly build the city to our God, the New Jerusalem, with its magnificent temple. The end of time will come; the millennium will be ushered in; the Lord, Jesus Christ, will return to lead his people; and the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisaical glory.

My Lamanite brothers and sisters, we love you. Our bringing the gospel to you is "likened unto their being nourished by the gentiles and being carried in their arms and upon their shoulders. . . ." (1 Nephi 22:8.) Your God has performed many miracles to get the story written by his prophets, to preserve the records against threats of enemies and the ravages of nature, and to get them translated into a language you can understand, and bring to you this second witness of Christ. Your

Saturday, October 10

Book of Mormon record is as a voice from the dust, messages from the dead, warnings from the Lord:

"Return unto me and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts." (3 Nephi 24:7.)

Our Lord cries, "Wo unto him that spurneth at the doings of the Lord; yea, wo unto him that shall deny the Christ and his works!" (*Ibid.*, 29:5.)

You have been preserved to this epochal day, and the gospel is available to you now. Wash your souls in the blood of the Lamb. Cleanse your lives, study the scriptures, accept the gospel and ordinances.

These predictions can be fulfilled and

come to you through one channel only, the path of righteousness and faith; else all these promises are but empty, unfulfilled dreams.

May God bless you that you may accept the truths now revealed to you, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom you have just listened is Elder Spencer W. Kimball of the Council of the Twelve. Our next speaker will be Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church. He will be followed by Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin.

ELDER ELDRED G. SMITH

Patriarch to the Church

My brothers and sisters, I pray that the Spirit of the Lord will be with me to give me utterance of the thoughts that I have in mind to give in this conference. It is a privilege, that I enjoy very much, to meet with many of the new converts of the Church, for many who come to me to receive blessings are the results of our missionary work, and I want to express praise and commendation to the missionary work in the Church because I see the results of it. They are good, and I think it is probably the cream of the crop that come to me.

I enjoy very much hearing their stories of how they have become members of the Church, the processes they have gone through in overcoming difficulties and in receiving a testimony of the divinity of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Many tell miraculous experiences—experiences of miraculous healing, experiences of divine guidance, experiences of assistance to accomplish what otherwise would be impossible—and the Lord has said to us that "signs shall follow them that believe."

I would like to emphasize the word *follow* just a little bit. He did not say they would precede and be a guide and a testimony to us to prove in advance that this is the gospel of Jesus Christ. He said that the signs shall "follow" those that believe, and I find this to be the case in the stories that I hear.

The Lord has also warned us, saying, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." (Matthew 24:24.)

Also, in referring to the day of the judgment, he said, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?"

"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (*Ibid.*, 7:22-23.)

Those who have told these experiences, even miraculous experiences, testify to me that it is not the experiences alone that give them a testimony of the divinity of the gospel. True, they strengthen their testimony; true, they are experiences that make them think, cause them to investigate the Church, but they alone are not the things that give them a testimony of the gospel.

For instance, just recently a woman told me of her experience. She became very ill. It had been determined that she had cancer. She had gone through surgery on numerous occasions, until she had come to a point where the doctors had given her up and told her that she did not have months to live, but only weeks. There was no hope for her. She was living at home with a nurse to take care of her. A neighbor