

Sunday, April 3

Second Day

ductor, will direct the singing, after which we shall hear Elder Alma Sonne.

Singing by the Choir and congregation, "O Say, What Is Truth?"

### ELDER ALMA SONNE

*Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

My brethren and sisters, I believe the audience in this tabernacle has never looked so big to me as it does today, unless, perhaps, it was the first time I occupied this position nineteen years ago, when I was sustained as an Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. I have had many experiences during those nineteen years. It has been my privilege to travel in many of the countries of Europe. I believe I have borne my testimony in every state of the Union, in every province of Canada; in our sister republic on the south, in Mexico, and on the islands in the Hawaiian group.

I want to say to you that I have been greatly blessed; that the blessings which have come to me I could not possibly have anticipated nineteen years ago. We have heard many testimonies today and yesterday, most of them very fervent and well sustained. These testimonies have not come as a result of scholarly research or scientific study, but by prayerful investigation and by right living.

When Peter bore his testimony to the Savior, the Savior answered: "... flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 16:17.) He said on another occasion, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (John 7:17.) That doctrine, brethren and sisters, is sound and logical. Live it, and you will surely know. Introduce into your lives the everlasting principles of life and salvation, and you will have no doubts. Testimonies are the strength of the Church. They are solid convictions based on facts that cannot be ignored by an honest investigator of the truth.

A few years ago I rode in an automobile over a well-traveled highway down in Syria. We traveled through a country which is not unlike our own

President David O. McKay:

Elder Alma Sonne will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Hugh B. Brown.

Rocky Mountain region—the hills, the valleys, the vegetation, the clear mountain streams were similar to what we see around us here. For a time everything we saw reminded us of home. The driver of the car was well-informed, and kept us advised as to the historical background of the localities through which we passed.

At one juncture he stopped the car and pointed to a high rugged mountain near the highway. "That," he said, "is Mt. Hermon, the Mount of Transfiguration." Of course, we were immediately interested. He called our attention to the size of this gigantic mountain with its snow-capped elevations. He also told us in his own way the story of the Transfiguration. He explained that the Savior had led his three apostles to the very summit where they could worship God unmolested. He reminded us that they climbed to the top of the mountain, and to do so required great physical strength and endurance. Then he remarked: "They must have been strong men, physically."

It was an impressive story as he told it. It must have been a great event in the lives of Peter, James, and John. Matthew tells it in these words:

"And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,

"And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

"And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

"Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. . . .

"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said,

This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." (Matthew 17:1-5.)

He, the Lord, had been similarly introduced on the occasion of his baptism in the River Jordan. These three apostles learned two fundamental things: First, they learned on that memorable occasion that Jesus was in reality and actually the Son of God, the Messiah about whom the ancient prophets had spoken. Second, they learned that death was not the end; that through that mysterious change we call death, the personalities and the identities of Moses and Elias had been preserved. But the Lord told these three servants, "Tell it to no one until I am gone."

Well, I am sure they kept the secret, but many years later Peter remembered it. He referred to it in his second epistle written to the Church. To me it has always been very interesting. Said Peter:

"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty." (2 Peter 1:16.)

Will you remember the word, "eyewitnesses." These men were not deceived. They knew whereof they spoke. They were as certain and positive that Jesus was the Christ, and that there was a life after death as they were that they lived in a world of reality, "For he received from God the Father honour and glory," said Peter, "when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice came from heaven, we heard when we were in the holy mount." (*Ibid.*, 1:17-18.)

A great and strong testimony, isn't it,

my friends? We can receive the leadership of the Lord Jesus Christ without any doubts and without any misgivings. I know of no man in history who has made a bid for world leadership except only Jesus Christ. He actually made a bid to lead the world for he said: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd," (John 10:16) and he, of course, was to be the shepherd, the only one qualified to lead the world back to the place where he and God dwell.

He said, on another occasion, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, . . . for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:28-30.) He then admonished his disciples—those twelve wonderful men who went into the world and preached the gospel, revolutionizing the thinking habits of men and women everywhere, planting the seeds of freedom and democracy in the hearts of men, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15.)

May we do our part towards the fulfilment of this great commission, for today we are doing exactly what they did nineteen centuries ago, and we are preaching the selfsame gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation. I so testify in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

Elder Alma Sonne, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us. Elder Hugh B. Brown, a member of the Council of the Twelve, will now address us.

## ELDER HUGH B. BROWN

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

My dear brethren and sisters, I with you esteem it is a great blessing to attend this wonderful conference, and especially to listen to the profound and inspiring opening address of our President. I should like to add my tribute to the Tabernacle Choir. It seems to me the choir reached new heights today.

I am sure you all join me, too, in expressing thanks to the Lord for his blessing to President Clark in that he was able to speak to us despite his physical illness. We are thankful that there is no diminution in his great intellect, his wonderful spirit, or his powerful voice.

We express appreciation, too, for what