

Wednesday, April 6

Fourth Day

overflow the choir seats of the Salt Lake Tabernacle Choir. It is a magnificent sight. All who have been listening in over the radio have already heard their singing. They will be with us this afternoon. They constitute the Combined Choruses of the Brigham Young University. They will now sing, "Christ, the Lord, Is Risen Today." Brother Newel B. Weight is conducting.

After the singing, Elder Max A. Bryan, president of the East Long Beach Stake,

will offer the benediction, and this Conference will be adjourned until two o'clock this afternoon.

Selection by the Combined Choruses, "Christ, The Lord, Is Risen Today."

Elder Max A. Bryan, President of the East Long Beach Stake offered the closing prayer.

Conference adjourned until 2 o'clock p.m.

FOURTH DAY AFTERNOON MEETING

The concluding session of the Conference was held in the great Tabernacle at 2 o'clock, Wednesday afternoon, April 6.

The Brigham Young University Combined Choruses were present at this session and furnished the choral musical numbers. Don L. Earl directed the Combined Choruses; Alexander Schreiner was at the organ console.

President David O. McKay, who presided and conducted the exercises of the meeting, made the following introductory remarks:

President David O. McKay:

The music for this session will be rendered by the Brigham Young University Combined Choruses, with Professor Don L. Earl conducting, and Alexander Schreiner at the organ. We shall begin this service by the Combined Choruses singing, "He Watching Over Israel."

The opening prayer will be offered by Elder Grant Martin Bowler, president of the Moapa Stake.

As an opening number, the Combined Choruses sang the selection, "He Watching Over Israel."

Elder Grant Martin Bowler, President of the Moapa Stake, offered the opening prayer.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Don L. Earl is conducting the Choruses. President Grant Martin Bowler offered the opening prayer. The Combined Choruses will now sing, "Arise, O Glorious Zion," conducted by Professor Don L. Earl. After the singing Elder Harold B. Lee will speak to us.

The Combined Choruses sang the hymn, "Arise, O Glorious Zion."

President David O. McKay:

Elder Harold B. Lee of the Council of the Twelve will be our first speaker this afternoon. He will be followed by Elder Marion G. Romney.

ELDER HAROLD B. LEE

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My beloved brothers and sisters, for these next few moments I seek the indulgence of your faith and prayers to the end that, guided by the Spirit, I might make some small contribution to the proceedings of this great conference.

Because of the desire expressed by the Brethren that I say something about the history-making events of the past week in the British Mission, I have put aside the text of that which I might have prepared otherwise to say on this occasion. I have determined long since that

the expressed desire of my Presiding Brethren is to me as a command. Therefore, I trust that I might in some measure, give you a picture of some of the things which have transpired of a momentous nature in Great Britain.

This assignment from the First Presidency returned us to the scenes of some of the most soul-stirring incidents and experiences in the history of missionary work in this dispensation. We were at Preston in the midlands of Great Britain where the first missionary work was done. As you will remember the history, the first missionaries were submitted to one of the greatest demonstrations of the power of evil spirits perhaps ever experienced by anyone. Brother Heber C. Kimball, Elder Willard Richards, Elder Orson Hyde and Elder Isaac Russell had, for an hour and a half, as they timed the experience, an awful demonstration of that power.

President Heber C. Kimball, in writing about it afterward, said: "I cannot even now look back upon the scene without feelings of horror; yet by it I learned the power of the adversary; his enmity against the servants of God, and got some understanding of the invisible world."

When he returned home, he asked the Prophet Joseph what was the matter with them that they had to be subjected to such an experience, and the Prophet surprised them when he said something to this effect: "When I heard of it [your experience] it gave me joy, for I then knew that the work had taken root in that land [England.]" Then he related some of his own experiences, and made this significant statement: "The nearer a person approaches the Lord, a greater power will be manifested by the adversary to prevent the accomplishment of his purposes." (*Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 1945 ed., p. 132.)

I have no doubt that the Prophet had in mind the terrifying experience he had in the grove when he prayed for light and was seized upon by this power until he was released therefrom by the coming of the Father and the Son. He no doubt had in mind the experiences when he first went to see the plates, when, as he sought to receive them, he again saw a demonstration of the evil powers.

We were permitted, as we traveled in that same vicinity, to follow the course that Wilford Woodruff was directed under inspiration to go, from the potteries near Hanley down to Froomes Hill, probably some fifty or sixty miles to the south, where, directed by the Spirit, he found a people ready to receive the coming of the servants of the Lord. Within two days after his arrival there, after having met John Benbow and his wife and those who believed in the sect called the United Brethren, he had baptized six members, and in thirty days he had baptized forty-five preachers of the United Brethren, and one hundred sixty members, and obtained thereby the possession of one chapel and forty-five houses for use as meeting places. In eight months he had baptized over 1800—all 600 of the United Brethren with one exception—and 200 ministers of various denominations in the area.

As a true missionary would, without boasting, he wrote this simple summary: "The power of God rested upon us and upon the mission in our field of labor. . . . The sick were healed, devils were cast out, and the lame made to walk."

The work of these first missionaries was not without opposition, and later the *Times and Seasons* wrote about the work around Liverpool: ". . . They were so good in general" (meaning the ministers) "and so pure that they had no room for the gospel. They were too holy to be righteous, too good to be pure, and had too much religion to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 2, p. 404.)

And then they wrote: "It seemed that it almost required a horn to be blown from the highest heavens, in order to awaken the attention of the people." (Smith, *Documentary History of the Church*.) I thought of that when, after elaborate arrangements had been made by President T. Bowering Woodbury of the British Mission for all the publicity possible through the great news-gathering wire services throughout the world to get a full coverage, including the local newspapers, to find the next day, hidden down in an obscure place in one of the two Manchester papers, this brief reference to our missionary conference where

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we created this stake and organized a new mission. This is what the Manchester *Guardian* recorded:

Mormons Hold a Mass Meeting

"British Mormons formed their first diocese in Europe yesterday at a mass meeting of more than 2000 members of the Church of the Latter-day Saints in Manchester, the new center to be built without delay at Wythenshawe, Manchester, at a cost of about 100,000 pounds. The diocese, or stake, covers Manchester, Halifax, Huddersfield, Dewsbury, and Leeds."

I felt like saying what the other missionaries had said, "It seemed as if it almost required a horn to be blown from the highest heavens in order to awaken the attention of the people."

In one year, 1840 to 1841—one year and fourteen days, to be exact—nine members of the twelve were called to labor in the British Mission. If you remember the history here at home, those years marked the period of some of the severest persecution that the Church was to undergo in this dispensation. In that one year and fourteen days the nine members of the twelve, with their associates, established churches in every noted town and city in the kingdom of Great Britain. They baptized between 7000 and 8000 converts. They printed 5000 copies of the Book of Mormon, 3000 hymnbooks, and 50,000 tracts, and they published 2500 volumes of the *Millennial Star* and emigrated 1000 souls to America.

These figures of the summary of the missionary work as done in Great Britain might give you something of an idea of what has happened in the past 123 years in that great country. In 1849 and 1851 over 8000 baptisms were performed in each year, or approximately 1000 converts to each missionary for each of those years. The total number of converts from 1837, when the work was first started, until the end of 1959 totals 136,026. The recorded number of emigrants during that same period was 57,149, and we have reason to believe that thousands of others emigrated without any record being made.

The total number of missionaries who have labored in that field numbers 7398. Twelve of our General Authorities were

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British-born, including our own Elder John Longden, who was born at Oldham, now an organized ward in the new Manchester Stake. It is the estimate of Elder Richard L. Evans, who has written an excellent history of the Church in Great Britain during the first one hundred years, that a very large percent of the total membership of the Church today trace their genealogy to Great Britain.

By assignment of the First Presidency, in company with Elder Alvin R. Dyer, president of the European Mission, President T. Bowring Woodbury of the British Mission, and President Bernard P. Brockbank, now president of the new North British Mission, on Sunday, March 27, we organized the new Manchester Stake with a total membership of 2400 members.

In the afternoon session there were 2026 in attendance, in one of the largest theaters in the downtown Manchester City. This stake, including all of the Manchester and Leeds Districts of the mission, and part of the Liverpool District, is now organized with nine wards and two branches.

It was an interesting thing to discover that the leadership of the stake and wards and the branches had to be largely composed of brethren who were baptized converts to the Church of less than five years. Fortunately, and it seemed as though almost by the hand of Providence, we found a few "anchor" men who had been trained in the stakes here at home, who will become the trainers of these new, able, but inexperienced leaders. This stake becomes now, a training ground for leaders of organizations yet to come.

This new stake brings the full Church program into action, so that such an organization will be a demonstration to the world "to shine forth as a standard unto the nations," showing the work of the Church at full flower. Zion, which the Lord declared is "the pure in heart" in that land now, will "increase in holiness and in beauty." Zion will now begin "to arise and put on her beautiful garments." (See D&C 82:14, 97, 21.) This first stake will provide a pattern for stakes yet to come from these great missions. We think we have set it up in such a way that new leaders

so trained will shortly be able to take over still other stakes in that same vicinity, and become a pattern for leaders of stakes in that and the other European missions.

In truth, then, it now begins to build "a defense, a refuge from the storm, and wrath when it is poured out with mixture upon the whole earth," (see *ibid.* 115:6) which as the Lord declared, was the purpose of a stake being organized.

At that same conference, the new North British Mission was organized, with President Bernard P. Brockbank as the new president. Parenthetically I might tell you that he received his notice that he had been appointed as the president of that new mission only two weeks before he actually met us in New York to fly to his new assignment in the North British Mission, leaving his wife and children to make final preparations and the transfer of his business to other hands.

We now have organized in the North British Mission eight missionary districts, with nine missionary districts remaining in the British Mission which will continue to have headquarters in London, the new mission to have headquarters at Manchester, England. The power of God is resting again in the missions of Europe, today, as in the century which has passed.

During the month of March alone, in the British Mission they baptized 360 new converts. In the French Mission, there were another 114 new converts baptized in that mission, which seems for the first time in our day to give evidence that the work is beginning to take root in France, after a shocking demonstration of the power of evil in that mission only two short years ago. And from the North German Mission, to use another example, which we have usually thought of as being behind the Iron Curtain in part, they baptized in the month of March alone eighty-five new converts.

So it was likewise, during the three months of last fall, when we toured the Latin American Missions of South America and in Mexico, we saw evidences of the giant of God's eternal power, if I might speak of it that way, awakening among those wonderful people, where in some of those missions they are hav-

ing 600 to 700 convert baptisms each year, as compared with only fifty to seventy-five in previous years.

Indeed, in the language of Mark's testimony to the early missionaries of the Apostolic Period who received the divine commission of the Lord: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

"And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

"They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." (Mark 16:15-18.)

And then Mark records this significant fulfilment: "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." (*Idem* 20.)

President McKay, I have been a personal witness in these last six months that, as the apostles of old found, we are finding today that the servants of the Living God are going forth, the Lord is working with them confirming the work, with the same signs following.

I bear personal witness that the gift of tongues to a whole congregation, which I witnessed, as in the day of Pentecost, was observed down in one of the Latin American Missions, by which this congregation understood what was said, although what was being spoken to them was in a strange tongue. I have witnessed the healing of an impotent and crippled child from birth in the Brazilian Mission. I have witnessed the healing of a blind child in the Central American Mission.

And so, enumerating all of these, more important than any of these signs, I have witnessed the reformation in the personal lives of individuals who accept the gospel and are true to its principles, which results from a true conversion to the gospel of Jesus Christ. I bear you my solemn witness to the onrolling of the work of the Lord. The work is awakening everywhere.

I know that God lives. I bear per-

sonal testimony to the divinity of the mission of the Savior, and that this is his work, and that President David O. McKay is his true representative here upon this earth in our day, and I do it humbly in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Harold B. Lee of the Council of the Twelve has just addressed us. We shall now hear from Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve. Brother John Longden will be next.

ELDER MARION G. ROMNEY

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My beloved brethren and sisters, I bear witness to the truth of all that Brother Lee has just said. As he talked, I was reminded that my grandfather, Miles Romney, heard the first missionaries, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Hyde, and Willard Richards, preach on the streets in Preston, England, in 1837. He heard them on Market Square; he followed them to the Cockpit where they did much of their preaching in those early days. He joined the Church early in 1838, emigrated to Nauvoo in 1842, and now has about 2500 descendants in the Church.

I am tempted, in a way, to comment on my missionary labors of recent months, but will refrain from doing so for fear I might miss some of them. In the last twenty-six months I have toured, for which I am very grateful President McKay, fifteen missions, fourteen of them beyond the borders of the United States, eleven of them foreign-speaking missions. Last October conference time I was in Vienna. Last week I was in Sydney, Australia. I testify to you that the spirit is on the move in every one of the fifteen missions which I visited.

One thing I can say about them all is that in every one of them I heard fervent testimony to the mighty power of the Book of Mormon in bringing souls unto Christ. In my view, the Book of Mormon is the most effective piece of missionary literature we have.

I invite you to pray with me for a rich outpouring of the Holy Spirit, for I would like to stimulate you to resolve to read the Book of Mormon. As I speak, I shall have in mind particularly this fine group of young men and women who are singing for us and all others of their generation.

There are many reasons why we should read the Book of Mormon. To

begin with, the Lord has put us under obligation to do so. He said that he sent Moroni to reveal it (D&C 27:5) and that through his mercy he had given the Prophet Joseph "power from on high . . . to translate [it]" (see *ibid.*, 1:29; 20:8); that it contains ". . . the truth and the word of God—" and "the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles and to the Jews also." (*Ibid.*, 19:26; 20:9.)

Nephi tells us that its contents ". . . shall go from generation to generation as long as the earth shall stand; . . . and the nations who shall possess them shall be judged of them according to the words which are written." (2 Nephi 25:22.)

For me there could be no more compelling reason for reading the Book of Mormon than this statement of the Lord that we shall be judged by what is written in it.

Moroni says that the very reason the book has been given to us is that we may know the "decrees of God" set forth therein and by obedience to them escape the calamities which are to follow disobedience. (Ether 2:11.)

To the early Saints, the Lord spoke rather sharply about remembering the Book of Mormon. "Your minds in times past," he said to them, "have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received—Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation. And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all. And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, . . ." (D&C 84:54-57.) Prior to this he had already told them that "the Book of Mormon and the holy