

Wednesday, April 6

Fourth Day

of the resurrected Savior to the inhabitants of this land. The story of the marvelous events connected therewith are beautifully told in Third Nephi.

The Nephites apostatized from the true religion Christ taught them and later as a nation were destroyed, and the Lamanites became a degenerate, pagan, apostate people. Yet from age to age many of the principal ideas relative to Christ and his visit to ancient America persisted.

Following the discovery of America, the Europeans visited various tribes of Indians. From them they learned that practically every tribe had a strong tradition regarding the appearance to their ancestors of the white and bearded God. He had given the progenitors of the American Indians their culture and their religion. So deep was the impression made by Christ upon the minds of the ancient Americans, that their descendants—the various Indian tribes—retained the principal details of the history and teachings of the resurrected Messiah.

The Spanish Catholic fathers found that the religion of the American Indians was so much like Christianity that the claim was made that “the wicked devil had beaten the Catholic fathers to the New World and had put a counterfeit Christian religion in the hearts of the Indians.” A study of the religion of the American Indians seems to indicate that in some respects their Christianity was almost as true as that of the European conquerors.

My dear brethren and sisters, “. . . I

know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.” (Job 19:25-26.) I know, as Amulek testified, as recorded in Alma, that every man, woman, and child, male and female, bond and free, righteous and the wicked, through the atonement of Jesus Christ—through his grace—will rise from the grave and will receive immortality. I am also convinced that each person will stand before the judgment seat of the Messiah to be judged for the life lived here in mortality. We will be held accountable for every action that we commit, for every word that we speak, and for every thought that we think.

Furthermore, I bear witness that Jesus Christ not only through his atonement gave us immortality, but also through the gospel plan of salvation provided a means whereby we may gain eternal life. If we are faithful in keeping God’s commandments, being sufficiently obedient in all things, we shall rise in the resurrection and return to the presence of the Father and the Son and receive a glorious exaltation or eternal life. May God bless us that we may do so, I humbly pray, in Jesus’ name. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Milton R. Hunter of the First Council of the Seventy has just spoken to us. We shall now hear from Elder Henry D. Taylor, Assistant to the Twelve.

ELDER HENRY D. TAYLOR

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brethren and sisters, I have come to know how it feels to be the last leaf on the tree.

I am grateful for my membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and with these other Brethren, I bear my witness that I know that the gospel is true, and that this Church is led by divine and inspired leadership.

I rejoice in the growth of the Church. As Brother Lee reported on the organization of a stake in England, and we heard from Brother Stapley and Brother Rom-

ney of the organization of a stake in Australia, I was reminded of some prophetic words by President McKay. Sometime ago, as President and Sister McKay returned from New Zealand after the dedication of the temple there, many of us met them at the International Airport in Los Angeles. President John M. Russon of Los Angeles Stake and I were walking with President McKay from the plane toward the terminal, when he stopped us and said, “Brethren, next Thursday when the First

Presidency and the Council of the Twelve meet, I am going to recommend that a stake be organized in New Zealand." He continued, "You know, we live in a jet-age, and with these fast planes it will be possible for the General Authorities to travel swiftly to any part of the world, to visit stakes as they are organized."

Now we have seen those words fulfilled not only in New Zealand but also within the last week in England and Australia.

Recently I enjoyed my first experience of traveling on a jet-propelled plane. It was amazing the speed at which we traveled. Less than two hours after leaving Denver, we were in Chicago. Prior to departure we were required to place our luggage on a pair of scales. If the weight was under forty pounds the amount allowed each passenger, a green light flashed. But if the weight exceeded forty pounds, a red light flashed, and a bell rang. The weight exceeding the allowance is considered excess baggage and a penalty or additional charge is levied. When the red light flashes, one begins to consider the unnecessary articles he could have left behind, such as an extra pair of shoes, for example.

The thought occurred to me that this earth life is also a rapid flight or journey. We are traveling toward a desirable destination, that of eternal life and exaltation. Now the Lord has said, "For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39.)

Our goal should be to become perfect, even as our Father in heaven is perfect. It would be well in early life to select and make secure the characteristics and traits needed for this journey of life, discarding the ones which are harmful and which might be classed as excess baggage. We can then be sure as we continue our journey, that the green light and not the red one will be flashing.

What are some of the traits which might be regarded as excess baggage on our journey toward perfection? To mention but a few: hate and anger and the holding of grudges, a hot temper and a quick tongue, envy, jealousy, and greed, a critical attitude resulting in faultfinding, backbiting, and judging

harshly. All these are excess baggage and we shall have to pay dearly for them.

In contrast there are certain basic, essential characteristics or traits which are very desirable. They constitute legitimate or necessary baggage on our life's journey. One is love, love for our Father in heaven, love for fellow men and neighbors. The Savior taught, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." (Matt. 5:44.)

Someone has said, "Be kind to your enemies, for you are the one who made them."

One of the most beautiful stories of love, loyalty, and devotion, related in the scriptures is that of Ruth. It seems that there was a famine in the land of Bethlehem. A certain man took his wife, Naomi and their two sons and journeyed to the land of Moab. The husband became ill and passed away, leaving his widow and the two boys. Subsequently the two sons married Moab girls, but within ten years' time, both of the sons also died. Naomi felt impressed that she should return to her homeland in Bethlehem. Her two daughters-in-law expressed a desire to accompany her. But Naomi encouraged them to return to their former homes, friends, and loved ones. One left, but the other, whose name was Ruth, overcame Naomi's objections, when she uttered these tender and memorable words: "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

"Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me." (Ruth 1:16-17.)

Self-control is a very valuable asset to possess on life's journey. The ability to control one's temper, one's tongue, one's thoughts is highly commendable. As pointed out in Proverbs:

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." (Prov. 16:32.)

Another excellent quality is a forgiving nature and disposition. The Lord has admonished us to be ever ready and willing to forgive our fellow man. In these latter days he has counseled:

"Wherefore, I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there remaineth in him the greater sin.

"I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men." (D&C 64:9-10.)

One of the virtues possessed by the Savior so perfectly that we should strive to perfect in ourselves, is that of tolerance, that is, a willingness to be long-suffering, patient, to appreciate another's point of view. Let us be strict and critical with ourselves, but lenient and tolerant with others.

With the passing of each day we travel along our journey, some improvement should be found in our lives. As a woman testified in a prayer meeting, "I ain't what I ought to be; and I ain't what I'm gonna be; but anyway, I ain't what I was."

The Savior set us the example. We should earnestly strive to pattern our lives after his. If we do this, we will

discard those qualities that constitute excess baggage. We will carry with us only those characteristics that are essential and that will permit us to continue our journey unencumbered.

The poet Henry Van Dyke has given us these words of counsel regarding our way of living:

"To be glad of life because it gives you the chance to love and to work and to play, and look up at the stars; to be satisfied with your possessions, but not contented with yourself until you have made the best of them; to despise nothing in the world except falsehood and meanness and to fear nothing except cowardice; to be governed by your admirations rather than by your disgusts; to covet nothing that is your neighbor's except his kindness of heart and gentleness of manners; to think seldom of your enemies, often of your friends, and every day of Christ; and spend as much time as you can with body and with spirit in God's out-of-doors. These are little guide posts on the footpath of peace."

May we all live so that our life's journey may be pleasant and we can obtain the peace of God which passeth all understanding, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

PRESIDENT DAVID O. MCKAY

The Brigham Young University Combined Choruses have furnished the music for this session and this morning's session. We wish to express our appreciation to these young men and women of Brigham Young University. We know that they have spent many hours in practice in the weeks that have gone by so that we could enjoy their inspirational singing. We thank you young folks for the efforts you have put forth. We are grateful for the inspiration that you have given this conference, including all who have been listening in to this program. We are proud of you! We have reason to be proud of all our young people with a few exceptions.

I have frequently said, and I repeat, we have confidence in our young folks. It is our duty as adults and their parents to set them a proper example in the home and in society. It is our responsi-

bility to impress our children with our sincerity in our belief in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Never should parents teach one thing about the gospel and do another. Children are very susceptible to insincerity.

Yes, we thank you young folk for the effort you have put forth. May our Heavenly Father protect you as you go back to your homes, and may he ever bless you for the unselfish service you have rendered. We shall cherish the memory of your inspirational singing that you have given us this day.

I should like to express, also, our appreciation to the approximately 2,000 singers from Utah, California, and Oregon who have presented special music for this general conference—two thousand singers who have furnished music for the Primary conference sessions, for the priesthood meeting, and