

Friday, October 7

First Day

and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name's glory." (D & C 21:4-6.) To which I testify in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom you have just listened is Elder Henry D. Taylor, Assistant to the Twelve. Our next speaker will be Elder Marion D. Hanks of the First Council of Seventy.

ELDER MARION D. HANKS

Of the First Council of the Seventy

My dear brothers and sisters, I am deeply grateful this morning that I can identify in myself at least one virtue commonly associated with those who shall inherit the kingdom. I love to hear the angels sing. Thank God for wonderful Latter-day Saint mothers, for music, for harmony, for service, for leadership. I rejoice that the spirit of personal conviction invoked upon us by President Lewis, spoken of by the President of the Church, prayed for earnestly by each of us in our own closets, may be enjoyed by the least of us, as well as by those who are greatest among us. I pray for that spirit as I express my personal witness this morning.

While the people of Israel were on the plains of Moab, in the last part of the fortieth year of the Exodus, shortly before Moses was taken from them and Joshua led them over Jordan to their promised land, Moses delivered a series of marvelous discourses to the people. He reviewed the experiences and events of the past forty years and admonished and exhorted Israel to obey and appreciate and keep faith with God, who had preserved them as a people through their wanderings in the wilderness from Sinai to Jordan. He reminded them of the magnificence of their blessings at Sinai, repeated for them the Ten Commandments, and said to them:

"And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, (for the mountain did burn with fire,) that ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders;

"And ye said, Behold, the Lord our God hath shewed us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and he liveth." (Deut. 5:23-24.)

After bearing this great testimony, the people pledged themselves to obedience and to loyalty. They said to Moses: "Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say; and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it."

Moses gave moving response: "And the Lord heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the Lord said unto me I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken.

"O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!" (*Ibid.*, 5:27-29.)

The scripture teaches us that on that occasion Moses "stood between the Lord" and the people to show them "the word of the Lord." So President McKay has this day stood between us and the Lord to show us His word. Our hearts have responded. Surely many of us have covenanted anew, as did Israel of old: "Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say; and speak thou unto us all that he shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it." And as we so affirm our faith and sustain our prophet, is there an echo in your heart as there is in mine of the voice of the Lord to Israel?

"O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!"

The Lord wants more from us than these moving expressions of conviction and covenant. He wants more than expressions of gratitude and testimony and commitment. He wants us to fear

him, to love him, to keep all his commandments always. He wants our hearts.

In the 64th section of the Doctrine and Covenants is recorded: ". . . I, the Lord, . . . require the hearts of the children of men." (D&C 64:22.) His promise to those who give him their hearts is certainly the same as it was to ancient Israel—that we may expect his blessings to be with us always, and with our children.

What a marvelous promise! What a magnificent and moving covenant God has made with us—worth everything—worth our love, our obedience, our faith; worth our hearts.

What really happens when Israel gives God its heart? What happens when men honor their heritage and divine possibilities, love him and obey his commandments? There were certain humble Nephites not many decades before the advent of Christ who met this test, who, in the midst of affliction and persecution, followed a course and achieved the objective. I read from Helaman, the third chapter, these moving words: ". . . they did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ, unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts, which sanctification cometh because of their yielding their hearts unto God." (Helaman 3:35.)

King Benjamin, in concluding his magnificent sermon, pursued the course God has set out for his prophets. He instructed, he enjoined, he reaffirmed, he testified, and he promised. He said to the people: ". . . humble yourselves even in the depths of humility, calling on the name of the Lord daily, standing steadfastly in the faith of that which is to come, . . ." and "if ye do this ye shall always rejoice, and be filled with the love of God, and always retain a remission of your sins; and ye shall grow in the knowledge of the glory of him that created you, or in the knowledge of that which is just and true.

"And ye will not have a mind to injure one another, but to live peaceably, and to render to every man according to that which is his due." (Mosiah 4:11-13.)

Remember God's promise to Israel? Note this: "And ye will not suffer your children that they go hungry, or naked; neither will ye suffer that they transgress the laws of God, and fight and quarrel one with another, and serve the devil, who is the master of sin, . . .

"But ye will teach them to walk in the ways of truth and soberness; ye will teach them to love one another, and to serve one another." (*Ibid.*, 4:14-15.)

So have come the marvelous blessings and promises of God. In 1833, in Kirtland, after a great outpouring of the Spirit at a conference held there, the Lord gave to Joseph Smith a revelation we now know as section 90. In it he gave some further counsel relevant to our theme, and a marvelous promise. He said: "Search diligently, pray always, and be believing, and all things shall work together for your good, if ye walk uprightly and remember the covenant wherewith ye have covenanted one with another." (D&C 90:24.)

Although one does not read in any one verse of scripture all that he needs to know, and although there is no simple formula of faith that is any one verse to the exclusion of all else, for God has given us much of his revelation, yet in this verse and in these others which reflect the promises of God, there seems to me to be the kernel of the conduct God expects of us if we are to achieve the magnificent promise he made to us. "Search diligently, pray always, be believing, walk uprightly, remember your covenants."

Now I am not one to judge my brethren of the priesthood lightly. I know to the extent my intelligence permits of the faith in you and the devotion in you and of the wonderful service you give. I therefore speak from the standpoint of appreciation when I say that there are many among us who have not invested enough of themselves in the diligent search God requires of those who know his word and therefore, living it, achieve his marvelous promises. We must search, seek, ask, knock.

Do you remember the word of the Lord recorded in the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants? He said in this marvelous preface, looking to the foundation principles of the gospel: "Search these commandments, for they

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First Day

are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled." (*Ibid.*, 1:37.)

Nephi, explaining to his people why he quoted so freely from the great prophet Isaiah, said to them that he quoted Isaiah to ". . . more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord their Redeemer . . ." and said ". . . for I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning." Again, he told them to hear the words of the prophet, and "liken them unto yourselves." (1 Nephi 19:23-24.) Surely this is one of the greatest values of scripture—that we might learn them and liken them unto ourselves, apply the lessons and instructions of the revelations to our own lives. How can we do so unless we search, seek, ask, knock, invest ourselves earnestly, diligently in the effort to acquire and organize and share a knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ?

The Lord said we must "pray always." His promises are wonderful. He has told us that we may receive the Spirit by the prayer of faith; that we must "pray continually" that we will not be tempted beyond what we can bear; that we must "counsel with the Lord" in all our doings, night and day; that we must "not perform anything unto the Lord" without praying to the Father in the name of Christ. His marvelous promise is that "he will direct us for good."

We are taught that we must "be believing," for all things are possible to him who can believe. I talked with a group of young people about the Book of Mormon last night and quoted to them words of the great Goethe, who said: "I can promise to be sincere, but not impartial." I am not impartial toward the Book of Mormon. We cannot be impartial toward the gospel and the Lord. If we are to get faith, we must desire faith and seek faith. We must start with an attitude of desiring faith. We must "be believing."

This also the Lord said: we must "walk uprightly." Benjamin, near the end of his great sermon, bore his testimony to the people, reaffirmed the need for faith, repentance, humility, and sincere prayer, and added: ". . . and now, if you believe all these things see that ye do them." (Mosiah 4:10.) As Nephi bore

his witness to the people near the end of his ministry, he delivered a great sermon on the first principles of the gospel, and said: ". . . after ye have gotten into this straight and narrow path, . . . ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of men . . . and endure to the end, . . ." (2 Nephi 31:19-20.) Amulek testified of Christ, taught the first principles, admonished the people to pray, and then said: ". . . after ye have done all these things, if ye turn away the needy, and the naked, and visit not the sick and afflicted . . . behold, your prayer is vain, and availeth you nothing, . . ." (Alma 34:28.)

We must "walk uprightly." Within the last few days I was in a meeting in an eastern city talking with a group of people about youth leadership. During the discussion one of the professional employees of the Department of Agriculture whose civil service rating is not dependent upon who is Secretary of Agriculture said: "We don't need to interpret human fitness to our department. We don't have to talk about it a lot. We have a man who reflects it impressively in his own life, as Secretary of the department."

This same group heard our story of the programs of the Church, of the principles upon which those programs are based, and of those who lead the programs. One said: "Yes, but your situation is not like ours. Out there you have thousands of leaders." Another person, the directing head of one of the great youth programs in our land, said: "We really can't talk about Utah in the same context with the rest of us. There is an influence in Utah not like any place else on the earth." We know what the influence is of which she spoke. It is found not only in Utah but in every place where faithful members of the Church live the gospel and exemplify its principles.

With all our protestations, sincere and honorable, with all our expressions of conviction and faith and testimony, there is required of us that we develop in us the heart that will move us to obey all of God's commandments always, with the promise that things will be well with us and with our children always.

The last suggestion of the Lord in the verse quoted from the revelation to the Prophet was that we remember our covenants. We have covenanted in sacred places—at the waters of baptism, in holy houses, as we partake of the Sacrament—not alone with God but with each other. Consider again the moving charge that Alma gave the people at the waters of Mormon, that they were to “. . . bear one another’s burdens, . . . mourn with those that mourn; . . . comfort those that stand in need of comfort, . . . and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things and in all places . . . even unto death, . . .” (Mosiah 18:8-9.)

God help us, we who have been blessed with so much, to yield our hearts to him, for while men look at the outward appearance, “God looketh upon the heart.” That we may claim his promises by obeying his commandments, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER FRANK H. BROWN

President of the East Central States Mission

I sincerely pray that your voices have been raised to our Father in Heaven in my behalf.

I have been enjoying the past ten months with my lovely wife, in presiding over the East Central States Mission, in the states of Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia, parts of Indiana, Ohio, Maryland, Mississippi and Illinois. I bring you greetings from the missionaries of that mission to you lovely parents and express to you their love and their great devotion to the message that has been entrusted to them. Truly they are a great army of youth. We love them. We find a great increased devotion. The spirituality that is within their bosoms goes out to the people who desire to know the truth.

Many people have been brought to the waters of baptism by a sweet and humble testimony. We have encouraged the missionaries to teach by the spirit, that their testimonies bear great emphasis in the lives of people with whom they come in contact.

Just before leaving to come here at the

President David O. McKay:

Elder Marion D. Hanks of the First Council of Seventy has just addressed us. The Chorus and Congregation will now join in singing, “Come, O Thou King of Kings,” conducted by Sister Florence Jepperson Madsen.

After the singing, we should like to hear a few words from President Frank H. Brown of the East Central States Mission. He does not know about this, but he can worry about it while we are singing.

The Singing Mothers Chorus and the congregation joined in singing the hymn, “Come, O Thou King of Kings.”

President David O. McKay:

President Frank H. Brown of the East Central States Mission will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Harold B. Lee of the Council of the Twelve.

gracious invitation of President McKay, whom I dearly love and revere, and I only wish that momentarily my grand and lovely old father who served in a mission in his native land, back in 1903 and 1904 with President McKay as a humble missionary, leaving my lovely mother and seven children at home in Evanston, Wyoming, could be here just for this moment, because I recall very vividly as a young man hearing my father, after President McKay had been to our home as one of the Apostles, say to myself and members of our family, “I want to give you a promise that someday you will be able to uphold the hand of David O. McKay as President of this great Church, and no matter what you do, always sustain the General Authorities.” I am happy to say that I have tried to do that humbly.

So just before leaving to come out here, one of my missionaries called me on the phone and said, “President Brown, what should we do? We are up here in the smoke holes of West