

Friday, October 7

First Day

shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days." (*Ibid.*, 1:4.)

Today, there is difficulty in the world with war and the possibilities of war, but in the last days, the Lord has made it very clear that his disciples are to preach the gospel to all people, and then he said, "And they shall go forth and none shall stay them. . . ." (*Ibid.*, 1:5.) Regardless of what nation they go into as time goes on as this wonderful revelation says, ". . . and none shall stay them . . .," they are going to have the right, and they are going to have the opportunity and the privilege to preach the gospel to those not of our faith wherever they may be in the world. And the revelation goes on by saying, ". . . for I the Lord have commanded them." (*Idem.*)

In this marvelous revelation given

to us in 1831, the Lord fully intends that all of his sons and daughters over the earth are going to have the opportunity of hearing the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. If they live the gospel, they will enjoy the gift of the Holy Ghost whereby they can testify to the world that they know that God lives, that Jesus Christ is his Son, and that Joseph Smith actually saw the Father and the Son, which I pray will be the testimony of each and everyone of us, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin of the Presiding Bishopric has just concluded speaking. We shall now hear from Elder Spencer W. Kimball of the Council of the Twelve.

ELDER SPENCER W. KIMBALL

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Some years ago I attended a conference of missionaries in a little Arizona town which the nearby Indians gave an Indian name signifying "the place where the people prayed." That was Joseph City. A month ago I had the privilege of going into the mission field in the Southwest Indian Mission, and in another city which could well have been named by the Indians "the city of hospitality," we held a conference of the missionaries, and this city was Snowflake.

The missionaries of the Southwest Indian Mission told of their labors among the Indians, and perhaps this is one of the most foreign of all foreign missions, and is in a land of strange tongues and colorful people, a place of high mountain coolness and near sea level desert heat—a land where a new amalgamation of peoples and kindreds is taking place, and where the gospel of Jesus Christ is neutralizing the centuries of dwindling unbelief.

I found evidence of waning superstition and of growing faith in the gospel. I saw people who have for centuries been as chaff before the wind settling down to industry and security and

permanence—a people who for more than a millennium have been "as a vessel . . . tossed about upon the waves, without sail or anchor, or without anything wherewith to steer her. . . ." (Mormon 5:18.) I saw them beginning to accept the gospel of Christ.

I saw them reclaiming their forfeited blessings which the Lord reserved ". . . for the gentiles who shall possess the land." (*Ibid.*, 5:19.) I saw acceleration in their progress and the time is at hand when the Lord will ". . . remember the covenant which he made with Abraham and unto all the house of Israel." (*Ibid.*, 5:20.) ". . . and as the Lord liveth he will remember the covenant which he hath made with them. And he knoweth their prayers. . . ." (*Ibid.*, 8:23-24.)

The work is unfolding, and blinded eyes begin to see, and scattered people begin to gather. I saw a striking contrast in the progress of the Indian people today as against that of only fifteen years ago. Truly the scales of darkness are falling from their eyes, and they are fast becoming a white and delightful people.

In this mission alone there are 8400-

plus members of the Church. As I visited this area fifteen years ago, there were ninety-four. "Are they faithful?" I am asked. And the answer is, "Not all of them. They are just about like their white cousins in the stakes of Zion." "Are they making headway?" And the answer is, "Yes. Perhaps relatively greater headway than we ourselves."

Indians are people, and the longer I serve with them the more I realize that they respond to the same teaching and kindness and love as others do. They have the same emotions. Some can be godless, but most of them are religious. I found that faith is a basic element in their lives. I learned of a Navajo couple who rushed their baby to the mission home for a blessing—It was livid white, seemed to be dead. It was soon well and playing around—and the Indian woman who lost her hearing, who received it back through the administration of the young missionaries; or the elder whose Navajo mother asked him if he had faith in Heavenly Father when the little brother was lying desperately ill, and whose little brother was wholly well the next morning after he himself had hid in a closet and prayed for his brother.

Yes, the Indians have faith—a rather simple, pure, and unadulterated faith, as evidenced by the Indian mother who asked the elders to come to the hospital to bless her sick child. The next day the elders called at her home and asked, "How is the little boy?" And she rejoined, "Oh, he's all right," in a tone such as to say, "Well, you blessed him, didn't you? Of course he's well."

And another Indian whose hands were badly burned was in excruciating pain. The administration brought almost immediate relief, and she was using her hands in a day or two. There was the Indian family who pleaded with the elders to pray for rain for their crops and for the grass and for the cattle and the sheep. "But please be careful," they warned. "The last time the elders prayed for rain, it came too hard, and the sheep corrals were washed out and some of the sheep were drowned."

There was the Hopi elder in a Phoenix hospital with his arm and leg paralyzed, and with no use or movement. He asked the nurse to find a Mormon

elder. A bishop was called in who purchased oil, consecrated it, and administered to the Indian patient. "He sure had faith in the Lord," said the bishop. "We talked a little while, and I asked him if he could wiggle his toes, and you should have seen the expression on his face when he tried. Sure enough they moved, and before we left him he could raise the leg, and when I visited him last Sunday he could move both the leg and the arm."

The day of the Lamanites is here! Young white missionaries throughout the Church are happy in the service, glad that they were called to this special mission, some planning to change their college majors when they return from their missions so they can work among the Indians.

I see a dependent people becoming independent; for example, I see them coming in their pickups to meetings, whereas a decade ago they needed to be picked up by the missionaries, fed, and coddled. Some still must learn, but they are making progress; for instance, a party was arranged by two missionaries—the Indian people to bring the food, the elders to furnish the punch. When they assembled, they had only punch to drink. Later another party was arranged—the Indians to bring the food and the elders to bring the punch. They had both food and drink. They are learning.

We called for a picture of the Indian elders. Twenty of them came—five full-blood Navajo boys, and fifteen who were part Navajo and Apache and Ute and Sioux. One of the Navajo elders whose mother and family lived less than a hundred miles away in the same mission had not asked for leave to go and visit them, and he had served eight months in the mission. One Indian elder said: "The first missionaries planted a tree on the reservation years ago. Now the tree is bearing fruit—Navajo elders! The young tree yielded little fruit, but the aging tree more fruit—more elders."

There was the Navajo elder who testified of his happiness and said that when in battle—I think it was in Korea—he had dreamed one night that he was with his parents back on the reservation, but he awakened to find himself in mud

Friday, October 7

and water and fire. Now he is in the midst of another dream, a dream so glorious, he said, that he hopes he will never awaken from it.

These Indian elders are well-groomed, neat, smiling, and equal to their white companions—handsome and sincere—some struggling in the acquisition of the difficult English language, and others coming through the Utah Placement Program speaking perfect English and displaying the best of our own culture. White elders feel fortunate when they are lucky enough to have a Navajo companion.

I see these Indian youth praying and preaching and administering to the sick, and I remember the statement of the Prophet Joseph: "Take Jacob Zundell and Frederick H. Moeser . . . and send them to Germany and when you meet an Arab send him to Arabia; when you find an Italian send him to Italy; and a Frenchman, to France; or an Indian, that is suitable, send him among the Indians. Send them to the different places where they belong." (DHC 5:368.)

At last the Indians are suitable. I heard them bear their witness, saw them shed tears of joy, heard them express their affection for loved ones. I saw Indian boys actually coming in to the president to offer their services as missionaries. That couldn't have happened a decade ago. As we look into the future, surely we shall see thousands of Indian missionaries, for through our various agencies we are now training probably three thousand little Indian boys in our various departments who are growing toward missionary work. Very soon there will be an Indian boy paired off in missionary work with each white boy, and this will happen in the other Lamanite missions, I am sure.

The day of the Lamanites is nigh. For years they have been growing delightful, and they are now becoming white and delightful, as they were promised. In this picture of the twenty Lamanite missionaries, fifteen of the twenty were as light as *Anglos*; five were darker but equally delightful. The children in the home placement program in Utah are often lighter than their brothers and sisters in the hogans on the reservation.

At one meeting a father and mother and their sixteen-year-old daughter were present, the little member girl—sixteen—sitting between the dark father and mother, and it was evident she was several shades lighter than her parents—on the same reservation, in the same hogan, subject to the same sun and wind and weather. There was the doctor in a Utah city who for two years had had an Indian boy in his home who stated that he was some shades lighter than the younger brother just coming into the program from the reservation. These young members of the Church are changing to whiteness and to delight-someness. One white elder jokingly said that he and his companion were donating blood regularly to the hospital in the hope that the process might be accelerated.

The missionaries are having great experiences in proselyting, in teaching, in organizing, in carrying on Primaries, Relief Societies. They direct women in making quilts and towels and pot holders, which they say they can sell faster than they can make them; but always a Relief Society bazaar is in their future plans. They pound up broken pottery and clay to make new pottery. They do beadwork, learn cooking; they are taught first aid, bleeding-stoppage, use of splints, resuscitation, moving the injured; they are taught to speak and to sing. Three lovely Lamanite sisters sang a trio in one of our meetings. Two elders in one area were actually teaching the women how to make diapers.

We find the Indians are learning to be adaptable and resourceful, and from tradition they are coming to truth, from legend to fact, from sand paintings and sings to administration and ordinances. The Indians are beginning to pay their tithes. They are living the Word of Wisdom. They are attending their meetings. They are having family prayers, and for a period of this year the tithes in that mission are said to have been more than the budget for the mission.

They are grateful for that which is being done for them. A typical little nine-year-old Indian prayed: "Father in heaven, please bless the missionaries so their success will be good." A typical Indian woman pleaded: "When can I

be baptized?" And the answer was, "When you have learned a little more of the gospel." An Apache saddle maker, when given the Book of Mormon lessons, said: "I know that story. I know that it is true. My old people told me about it."

The Indians have legends which might be reminiscent of the three Nephites, of the creation, of the flood, of the coming of the Christ to them. They are beginning to recognize the similarity between their distorted tradition stories and the truth which has been recorded.

A Jicarilla—Apache Indian elder, first counselor in the branch presidency, drives sixty-four miles to his meetings with his family and sixty-four miles home each time, and he seldom misses a meeting, except in blizzard weather. He is sharp and clean and handsome and conducts the meetings with dignity. He speaks excellent English, and this is again in fulfillment of my own patriarchal blessing, in which I was promised: "You will see them organized and be prepared to stand as the bulwark round this people."

In the temple, in the June excursion, were a Navajo groom and a Pima bride, a Cherokee groom and a Navajo bride; and these, typical of the many Indians, are taking seriously to the gospel program. When they were in this convention, the good Mesa people graciously took care of their needs, and this again was in fulfillment of the prophecy of Joseph Smith. He said:

"There will be tens of thousands of Latter-day Saints who will be gathered in the Rocky Mountains, and there they will open the door for the establishing of the gospel among the Lamanites who will receive the gospel and their endowments and the blessings of God." (*Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, pp. 30-39.)

One's heart is touched when he sees thirty or forty little Hopi boys and girls gathered together in Primary, being taught by nineteen-year-old missionaries, and it is stirring even more to see twenty little wild Apache Indians galloping over the hills on their burros to attend Primary at Fort Apache.

The young missionaries are learning the difficult Navajo language, and the older couples are using largely the language of love. The Navajo tongue is so

difficult that it is said to have been used to send code messages in World War II because the Japanese could not decode it. It is heartwarming to hear the young Navajo elder struggling with his English pronunciation and vocabulary, but never hesitating to express his thoughts convincingly and bearing his testimony impressively. He had been told by his dying mother when he was a little boy: "Go to Mormon Church. It is true church." He choked and struggled with his tears.

One devoted missionary couple was stuck in the snow last winter, and the husband pushed the car while the wife steered it. In doing so he fell and broke his knee and then pleaded with the president: "Please do not send us home. Put us in the hospital for a little time." He was given a metal knee and then crutches, and Indians who saw him hobbling around said: "Anyone as sincere as that ought to be listened to." And this mother who now has her children reared told of her patriarchal blessing given long years ago, indicating she would go on a mission with her husband, but since she was tied with her large family of little children, her husband filled his mission alone and was killed in an auto accident returning home. How could her blessing ever be fulfilled, she wondered, with children to educate and sons to send on missions, and she in her widowhood? But when the family was educated and the sons had filled their missions, she married another man, a convert, and together they are now fulfilling the patriarchal blessing and filling glorious missions.

The day of the Lamanites has come. The Indians of this country, particularly of the southwest, have many blessings which are theirs today but which were not theirs yesterday. Government agencies, other groups as well as ourselves, have been conscious of their former serious plight. But today the dark clouds are dissipating. Whereas only a decade ago tens of thousands of children were without schooling, today practically every child has some educational opportunity. May I quote a paragraph from my address to this conference in 1947 regarding these Indians:

"The health conditions are deplorable. They have but one full-time dentist for

Friday, October 7

First Day

63,000 people and no field nurse or doctor. The death rate is very high, being 16 per thousand as against 6.36 for the Church. The large family lives in the dirt hogan being one small circular room with dirt floor, no windows, and with a stove or fire in the center. All members of the family sleep on sheep pelts on the floor. There is no privacy, practically no furniture or equipment. There are no sanitary conveniences inside or out. With a single towel, a common cup, no hot water nor disinfectants, it is easy to see why trachoma, impetigo, and other skin diseases run through the family, and why dysentery, venereal diseases, and tuberculosis run rampant. In a survey of thirty-one families it was found that an average of three in each family had tuberculosis. In their scattered condition, and with such limited hospital facilities, many lie in their hogans, coughing in the air, spitting on the floor, to finally die on the dirt floor without medical assistance. . . ." (See *The Improvement Era*, May 1947, p. 348.)

But today there are hospitals, doctors, nurses, and dentists. Many families live in comfortable homes, fairly well furnished. Disease is disappearing, tuberculosis much under control, and sanitation greatly improving. In our recent examination of over four hundred children in our health clinic as we brought them into Utah for this fall, we found that there were no positive results from our X-ray examinations.

In the 40's these people had an average income of about \$81 a year. They lived upon land which to most of us seemed worthless, barren, and forbidding; but the desolate land is producing oil and gas and uranium and coal and lumber, and many millions of dollars are flowing into the tribal treasury. In early days it was each family for itself; today the Tribal Council is using wisely these vast sums to build highways and hospitals and schools and to give scholarships. What a strange paradox, that the land given to the Indians, desolate and unwanted, turns out to be the source of many blessings! Was not Providence smiling on these folks and looking toward this day?

Today we teach the gospel to the Indian youth, and tomorrow there will

be thousands of them on missions. Nearly all their marriages will be performed in the temples. They will give leadership in wards and stakes which will be organized in their areas, and with their white brothers they will become leaders in the kingdom. Groups of stakes are organized into regional minority missions. About 320 of the 2300 Indians in Brigham City are members of the Church, and we have a delightful chapel which President McKay dedicated there.

At Albuquerque, Riverside, at Chilloco and at Lawrence in Kansas, at Carson City in Nevada, at Chemawa in Oregon, at Anadarko in Oklahoma, and elsewhere, our youth—hundreds and hundreds of them—are receiving comparable seminary training. At Aztec, Gallup, Richfield, Flagstaff, Holbrook, Snowflake, and Winslow we are training them in connection with the government peripheral schools.

About 420 Indian children are receiving the superior training in Utah homes under the educational placement program. These children are being fed, housed, clothed, and loved by the selfless people of Utah who take them into their finest homes—philanthropic people who come to love the Indian children as their own, and who give them every advantage—cultural, spiritual, and educational, and who train them in scouting organizational work, in family prayers, in seminary, and in home activities. I quote from a recent letter from an authority on Indian life and education:

"I think you have a very commendable program and one which is probably the only positive approach to the Indian problem in the United States. I have spent a great part of my life living with or working with Indian people and have yet to see any program which has taken the Indian out of himself and started him down the road to progress."

As these children complete their grade and high school work, Brigham Young University is ready to receive them, and special guidance courses and training advisers give them leadership, and each year now our Indian students parade in cap and gown with the other hundreds of graduates of this great institution.

We have follow-up programs to help the Indian youth gain employment as they complete their schoolwork.

A new class instruction program is organized on the reservation, whereby the little Indians are given religious training. At present some 2500 little fellows present themselves weekly or oftener to the young missionaries for religious instruction, assigned by the parents to the church of their choice. These little ones are being taught in about sixty classes, and young missionaries are proving their mettle in training them.

Two young elders teach 102 children in their classes, and another couple, a Navajo and a white elder, are teaching 135 little boys and girls together with some of their parents who asked for the privilege of coming.

Not only the southwest Indians, but Lamanites in general, are facing an open door to education, culture, refinement, progress, and the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Church has spent its millions in Hawaii and New Zealand and other islands to provide schools for the young Lechites. Surely, no descendants need go now without an education, and schools in Mexico will be followed by schools in other nations. Surely the number of deprived ones is being reduced, and opportunity is knocking at their door. Hundreds of Lamanites are serving in mission fields in both Americas and in the islands of the sea. Lamanites are exercising their priesthood and rearing their families in righteousness. A new world is open to them, and they are grasping the opportunities. God bless the Lamanites and hasten the day of their total emancipation from the thralldom of their yesterday.

I pray this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Spencer W. Kimball of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us. The Relief Society Singing Mothers will now favor us with "Abide With Me, 'Tis Eventide," conducted by

Sister Florence Jepperson Madsen. The benediction will be offered by President Austin G. Hunt, president of the American River Stake, after which this Conference will stand adjourned until ten o'clock tomorrow morning.

There will be a special Presiding Bishopric's meeting in the Tabernacle this evening at 6:30 o'clock. Expected to attend are bishops and their counselors, stake and ward committees for Aaronic Priesthood, those members under 21, and stake committees on ward teaching. Stake presidents and high councilmen are invited to attend.

A Welfare Agricultural meeting will be held tomorrow morning at 7:30 o'clock. Stake presidents, bishops, agricultural representatives, and all who are interested in agriculture are invited.

The singing for this session, as you know, and as you have enjoyed, has been furnished by the Relief Society Singing Mothers of the Ogden and Northern Utah Regions. You have enjoyed it and have been inspired. Do you realize how many hours these mothers have put in practicing for our enjoyment? Do we stop to think how many hours Sister Madsen has put in to train these and other groups throughout the Church? No wonder there radiates from them a spirit which touches the heart. These are our mothers. God bless them always, and all the mothers throughout Israel. They deserve our most tender care, husbands, fathers, and may they go from this Conference realizing that they have the love and friendliness and the blessing of the men and women who have rejoiced in the spirit they have radiated through song.

"Abide With Me, 'Tis Eventide," after which the benediction will be offered by President Austin G. Hunt of the American River Stake.

The Relief Society Singing Mothers sang the hymn, "Abide With Me, 'Tis Eventide," following which the benediction was pronounced by Austin G. Hunt, president of the American River Stake. Conference adjourned until Saturday morning, October 8, at 10:00 a.m.