

missionary work: ". . . and lo, he that thrusteth in his sickle with his might, the same layeth up in store that he perisheth not, but bringeth salvation to his soul." (*Ibid.*, 4:4.) The saving "grace" of the Lord's atoning power would extend to the giver as well as to those who would receive the saving ordinances of the gospel.

Surely, therefore, no one with that understanding of these fundamental principles would think he were doing our Heavenly Father's mortal children a disservice by giving them these priceless gifts.

May God bless us all and all our Father's children, that they may be responsive to the call of the missionaries. May this young man and all others like him, may they realize that this is a responsibility which the Lord has given to his Church in every dispensation, and to his authorized servants in the world of spirits, to teach the

gospel to every creature in order that each be left without excuse in the day of judgment, and that all might be redeemed from the Fall and brought back into the presence of the Lord. We who have the command to preach and teach must, like the Apostle Paul declared, "not be ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. . . ." (*Rom.* 1:16.)

I pray humbly we may all understand and so teach with the power and authority of God, 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 spoken to us. Bishop Carl W. Buehner of the Presiding Bishopric will be our next speaker.

## BISHOP CARL W. BUEHNER

### *Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric*

The message contained in the words of an old song suggest a few thoughts worthy of consideration:

"Who's on the Lord's side? Who?  
Now is the time to show;  
We ask it fearlessly;  
Who's on the Lord's side? Who?"

Ever since the great council was conducted in heaven for the purpose of providing a plan of salvation, the right of choice has become most important. The Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith, through the writings of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price, some of the things which took place on this occasion. He told how Satan went before the Father saying:

"—Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor." (*Moses* 4:1.)

Then the Father's Beloved Son came forth with another plan described by the Father as follows:

"But, behold, my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen from the

beginning, said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever." (*Ibid.*, 4:2.)

Satan's proposal was rejected. He rebelled, and as a result of this rebellion, he and his followers were cast out of heaven. Since that day, he has been trying to destroy man.

The primary purpose of our Father in heaven and his only Begotten Son is to exalt mankind. Satan's desire is to take away our free agency and reduce everyone to his level.

We are here today because of the choices we have made.

One verse of another song we frequently sing expresses a thought along this line:

"Choose the right! there is peace in  
righteous doing;  
Choose the right! there's safety for the  
soul;  
Choose the right in all labors you're  
pursuing;  
Let God and heaven be your goal."

History is replete with examples of blessings and adversity that came to

Thursday, April 6

First Day

nations and individuals as a result of choice. Israel, as a nation, was set free from oppressive bondage by the Lord. Time after time, her enemies were subdued, yet she persisted in idolatry.

In speaking to Israel, Joshua reviewed the many blessings he had received at the hand of the Lord. He concluded his exhortation by challenging Israel as follows:

“. . . choose you this day whom ye will serve; . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” (Joshua 24:15.)

Israel failed to give heed to repeated warnings, and you know her fate. She chose evil rather than good.

We are presently feeling the pressure of another great nation whose desire it is to rob man of his free agency and to force all mankind to accept the plan proposed by Lucifer in the beginning.

Look about you and observe those who have made the wrong choice. Evil seems to be prevalent everywhere. The influence of the destroyer has lured men to become thieves, liars, gamblers, adulterers, addicts, and into backbiting, evil-speaking, and the destruction of the home and all that pertains thereto.

Contrast these things with those who choose the right—happy people, happy homes, those filled with faith and hope for the future. These families make for themselves a heaven on earth.

Is there anything more beautiful than a young couple on their way to the temple to be married for time and eternity? This means preparation and choosing the Lord's way of marriage. We will probably never be closer to heaven while we live in this life than when we are in the temple of the Lord.

It is the desire of the Lord to lift us up, to be prepared one day to live again with him. It is Satan's desire to reduce us to his level, to live with him in his kingdom.

Our whole life involves the principle of choice. The Lord commands us to live close to him and to keep his commandments, and Satan seems to offer a counter proposal. Let us analyze a few of the things which bring a conflict between the forces of good and evil:

1. The Lord says, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy might,

mind and strength.” (See Mark 12:30.)

Satan, in substance, suggests, “Why love God? Why not disregard him?” Or he might even indicate there is no god at all but himself.

2. The Lord says, “Love thy neighbor as thyself.” (Mark 12:31.)

Satan might say, “Hate your neighbor and treat him with contempt.”

3. The Lord says, “Keep the Sabbath day holy.” (See Exodus 20:8.)

Satan would say, “Use the Sabbath day as a recreation day. What value is there in attending Church and in refraining from your labors on this day?”

4. The Lord says, “Honour thy father and thy mother.” (Exodus 20:12.)

Satan craftily puts into our minds the idea of disobeying our parents; your life is your own to choose as you wish. Take all your parents will give you. They will soon be old, and someone else can take care of them.

5. The Lord says, “Sustain and uphold the Lord's anointed.”

Satan would say, “Find fault with and weaken the position of the general and local authorities of the Church.”

6. The Lord says, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,” (Gen. 3:19.) and he also said, “Cease to be idle.” (D&C 88:124.)

Satan might say, “Get as much as you can for nothing. It is undignified to work for what you receive.” He would encourage indolence, laziness, and even the thought that the government owes you a living.

7. The Lord says, “Thou shalt not steal.” (Exodus 20:15.)

Satan might say, “Why not steal and be dishonest? Give short measure and short weight. Do not give an honest day's work for an honest day's pay.”

8. The Lord says, “Thou shalt not bear false witness.” (Exodus 20:16.)

Satan would say, “Dig a pit for your neighbors; lie about them; cause them personal injury; subject them to embarrassment.”

9. The Lord says, “Pay one tenth of your interest annually as tithing. For this, I shall give you a great reward.” (D&C 119:4.)

Lucifer would say, “Why pay your tithing? You need the money more than the Church needs it. The great-

est blessing is to spend your own money."

10. The Lord says, "Observe the Word of Wisdom, my law of health." (D&C 89.)

Lucifer contends that no harm will come from indulging in tobacco, liquor, tea, coffee, and other harmful abuses to the body such as overeating and over-indulgences. He would say, "Go along with the crowd and be a good sport. To acquire these contrary habits will make one popular."

11. The Lord says, "Parents, teach your children to pray and walk uprightly before the Lord." (See D&C 68:28.)

Satan would say, "Why teach your children to pray? There is no value in prayer. It is not necessary to discipline them."

12. The Lord says, "Seek the genealogy of your ancestors and complete the temple work for them."

Satan would say, "Postpone doing this work or, better still, don't do it at all."

In many other things the Lord has counseled us to prepare ourselves to live with him. In each instance, Satan's influence would attempt to destroy this faith and the desire of doing the Lord's work. He would enslave us and persuade us to join his forces.

We cannot cover up evil. Our sins are known to God. Neither can we serve two masters. The Lord has said, "He that is not with me is against me; . . ." (Matt. 12:30.) It is imperative that we choose the right.

John Oxenham wrote these few lines, entitled "A High Way and A Low":

"To every man there openeth  
A way, and ways, and a way,  
And the high soul climbs the high way,  
And the low soul gropes the low;  
And in between on the misty flats,  
The rest drift to and fro;  
But to every man there openeth  
A high way and a low,  
And every man decideth  
The way his soul shall go."

Happiness here is dependent upon moral decisions and obedience to the principles of truth. Our most important decision and obligation is to live the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This period is characterized by trial, suffering, sacrifice, and disappointment, as well as joy. All these experiences are dedicated to our progress and growth. During this life, we are our own judges. We judge ourselves continuously. We sentence ourselves to happiness through service or misery through sin.

In conclusion, I should like to repeat again:

"Who's on the Lord's side? Who?  
Now is the time to show;  
We ask it fearlessly;  
Who's on the Lord's side? Who?"

May our decisions lift us to celestial glory and eternal life, I humbly pray, and leave my testimony, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### President David O. McKay:

He who has just spoken is Bishop Carl W. Buehner of the Presiding Bishopric. The congregation and chorus will now join in singing, "High On The Mountain Top," conducted by Sister Lue Groesbeck. Brother Bruce R. McConkie will speak to us after the singing.

The Primary Teachers Chorus and the congregation joined in singing the hymn, "High On The Mountain Top," conducted by Sister Lue Groesbeck.

#### President David O. McKay:

We shall now hear from Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy. He will be followed by Elder Antoine R. Ivins.