

Sunday, April 9

Third Day

Salt Lake City in the concluding session of the One Hundred Thirty-First Annual Conference of the Church.

For those who are unable to enter the building, we announce that these services are being broadcast in the Assembly Hall and in Barratt Hall over television. These services are also being broadcast as a public service by television and radio stations throughout the West. The names of these stations were announced just a moment ago while we were waiting.

To all radio and television audiences, to our special guests, educational leaders, General Church officers, members of the Church, and friends assembled in this building, we bid you welcome.

The music for this session will be rendered by the Tabernacle Choir with Richard P. Condie and Jay E. Welch conducting. Alexander Schreiner is at the organ.

We shall begin these services by the Tabernacle Choir singing, "The Lord's Prayer," with Elder Jay E. Welch directing. The invocation will be offered by Elder Aura C. Hatch, president of the Provo Stake.

The opening number by the Choir was, "The Lord's Prayer," conducted by Jay E. Welch.

Elder Aura C. Hatch, president of the Provo Stake, offered the invocation.

President David O. McKay:

The invocation was offered by Elder Aura C. Hatch, president of the Provo Stake.

The women of the Tabernacle Choir will now sing, "The Artisan," conducted by Elder Richard P. Condie. After the singing, Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve will address us.

The women of the Tabernacle Choir sang "The Artisan," Elder Richard P. Condie conducting.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Marion G. Romney, a member of the Council of the Twelve, will be our first speaker. He will be followed by Elder John Longden.

ELDER MARION G. ROMNEY

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My beloved brothers and sisters, and I include all of you, both you in this building and you who are listening in on radio and television. I consider you all my brothers and sisters, for I know, as you do, that we are all the sons and daughters of our Father in heaven. I sincerely trust that you will join with me in a prayer that while I speak I may enjoy the Spirit and that you may enjoy the Spirit, for I am convinced with Nephi that ". . . when a man speaketh by the power of the Holy Ghost the power of the Holy Ghost carrieth it unto the hearts of the children of men." (2 Nephi 33:1.)

I have a prepared talk in my pocket, which took me five months to prepare, titled "The Book of Mormon—The Keystone of Our Religion." You, of course, know what Brother McConkie did to it. (laughter) He has made me feel

towards it as the player on a boys' baseball team felt towards left field. This player was taken out of a game to give Jimmy from the second string a chance to play. As luck would have it, Jimmy dropped the first two balls hit into left field. He was therefore taken out, and the left fielder put back in. The next two balls hit also went to left field, and the regular player dropped them. When he came off the field at the end of the inning, the coach said, "I wasn't surprised when Jimmy fumbled the ball, but I was surprised at you." "Well, Coach," said the player, "I'll tell you, Jimmy messed up left field so badly that no one can play it."

However, I do want to say one or two things about the Book of Mormon before I get to the point that I have in mind to comment on.

As you know, the Book of Mormon is

the current study course for Melchizedek Priesthood quorums. I urge everyone to read it during 1961, particularly Melchizedek Priesthood bearers. This I do because I think we need—as we increase in Church membership under the impetus of our great missionary program—to keep pace in the perfecting of our own lives. This we can do by putting on the “whole armour of God,” as Paul says, (Eph. 6:11) or, as Peter puts it, by more rapidly becoming “partakers of the divine nature.” (2 Pet. 1:4.) I do not know any more effective way to do this than to know and live the teachings of the Book of Mormon. The Prophet knew what he was talking about when he said that “. . . a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.” (DHC. 4:461.)

The Prophet also knew what he was talking about when he said “the Book of Mormon” is “the keystone of our religion.” We may not know all he had in mind when he said this, but we do know the statement was amply justified because the authenticity of the Book of Mormon rests upon two facts, acceptance of which is tantamount to acceptance of the whole of the restored gospel, namely: the fact of modern revelation, by which I mean direct communication from God to men, and the fact that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God.

Acceptance of the Book of Mormon requires acceptance of these two facts, because they are inseparably connected with its coming forth. If one accepts them and the Book of Mormon, he cannot deny the restored gospel, for it rests upon the same two facts. The person who knows the Book of Mormon is true has passed the point of no return, so far as conversion is concerned. He has come out of darkness into the glorious light of truth. He has, in effect, accepted the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I would now like to say a few words about the significance of this conference. I have been thinking about this as I have sat here on this stand during these conference sessions and considered what was going on. I do not think I have the language to convey to you its

full significance, but I can say that it represents the most effective force in the world for the good of humanity.

We have great gatherings, of course, in the United Nations. Representatives from the governments of the world convene to deliberate, to reason, to argue, to compromise, to try in every way devisable by the human mind to resolve differences. I suppose most of them come with honest hearts to try to bring peace to the world.

We have come to this conference from many nations of the world—not, however, as representatives of the governments of these nations. We are here representing the leadership of the kingdom of God. This Church is the literal kingdom of God in the earth. We did not come to argue, to jockey for position, to compromise differences and establish policies. We came here to hear and learn the word of God as he has and does now reveal it through his appointed servants, and to take it back and teach it to our people. We know that the gospel of Jesus Christ, of which this Church is the repository, is the one and only way of peace. We know that to everyone who accepts and lives it there comes peace—peace in his heart—even in the midst of turmoil in the world. We know that if the people of the world would accept it and live it, we would have peace in all the world. We are in very deed representatives of Jesus Christ our Redeemer and his Father, God our Eternal Father. Our authority comes from them.

This is the Church of Jesus Christ. It is the Church of Christ by his own statement as to what his Church had to be. I am going to take the time to read to you what he said his Church had to be. Brother [Milton R.] Hunter told about the visit of Jesus to the Nephites after he had completed his post-resurrection ministry among the Saints at Jerusalem. When he appeared to the Nephites, they saw him as he was—a glorified man of flesh and bone and spirit. He walked with them, and he talked with them. He organized his Church among them. He clearly pointed out to them two distinguishing characteristics of his Church. He chose, as you remember, twelve disciples who

Sunday, April 9

Third Day

were to serve among the Nephites as the Twelve Apostles served the people in the land of Jerusalem.

"And it came to pass that as the disciples of Jesus were journeying and were preaching the things which they had both heard and seen, and were baptizing in the name of Jesus, it came to pass that the disciples were gathered together and were united in mighty prayer and fasting.

"And Jesus again showed himself unto them, for they were praying unto the Father in his name; and Jesus came and stood in the midst of them, and said unto them: What will ye that I shall give unto you?

"And they said unto him: Lord, we will that thou wouldst tell us the name whereby we shall call this church; for there are disputations among the people concerning this matter.

"And the Lord said unto them: Verily, verily, I say unto you, why is it that the people should murmur and dispute because of this thing?

"Have they not read the scriptures, which say ye must take upon you the name of Christ, which is my name? For by this name shall ye be called at the last day—[That great day when we shall be called to stand before him to be judged];

"And whoso taketh upon him my name, and endureth to the end, the same shall be saved at the last day.

"Therefore, whatsoever ye shall do, ye shall do it in my name; therefore ye shall call the church in my name; and ye shall call upon the Father in my name that he will bless the church for my sake.

"And how be it my church save it be called in my name? For if a church be called in Moses' name then it be Moses' church; or if it be called in the name of a man then it be the church of a man; but if it be called in my name then it is my church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel." (3 Nephi 27:1-8.)

How about the name of this Church? What is it? It is "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." How did it get the name? Did Joseph Smith select it? No. The Lord Jesus Christ himself told Joseph Smith to name this

Church "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." I will not take time to read the instruction. You will find it in the 115th section of the Doctrine and Covenants. In that revelation Jesus refers to "all the elders and people of my Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints scattered abroad in all the world; For thus shall my church be called in the last days, even the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." (See D&C 115:3-4.)

Now what about the other point? It is my church "if it be called in my name . . . if it so be that they are built upon my gospel." Now what is the gospel of Jesus Christ? I would like to read to you out of this same chapter, the 27th chapter of 3rd Nephi, the gospel of Jesus Christ, as defined by the Master himself—not by Joseph Smith, not by men, but by Christ himself as he stood among the Nephites, as a resurrected being. To me it is marvelous:

"Behold I have given unto you my gospel [he said], and this is the gospel which I have given unto you—that I came into the world to do the will of my Father, because my Father sent me.

"And my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross; and after that I had been lifted up upon the cross, that I might draw all men unto me, that as I have been lifted up by men even so should men be lifted up by the Father, to stand before me, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil—

"And for this cause have I been lifted up; therefore, according to the power of the Father I will draw all men unto me, [in the universal resurrection], that they may be judged according to their works.

"And it shall come to pass, that whoso repenteth and is baptized in my name shall be filled; and if he endureth to the end, behold, him will I hold guiltless before my Father at that day when I shall stand to judge the world.

"And he that endureth not unto the end [this is the Redeemer speaking], the same is he that is also hewn down and cast into the fire, from whence they can no more return, because of the justice of the Father.

"And this is the word which he hath

given unto the children of men. And for this cause he fulfilleth the words which he hath given, and he lieth not, but fulfilleth all his words.

"And no unclean thing can enter into his kingdom; therefore nothing entereth into his rest save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins, and their faithfulness unto the end.

"Now this is the commandment [said the Redeemer]: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, this is my gospel; . . ." (3 Nephi 27:13-21.)

Then he adds that "if ye do these things blessed are ye, for ye shall be lifted up at the last day." (*Ibid.*, 27:22.)

Now this Church is the Church of Jesus Christ. Of course, no one can know this fact with certainty unless he has received a witness from the Holy Ghost. Everyone who will look can see, however, that the Church meets the requirement laid down by the Redeemer. It was named by him, it is called after him, and it is built upon the gospel as he defined it.

This Church is the standard which Isaiah said the Lord would set up for the people in the latter days. This Church was given to be a light to the world and to be a standard for God's people and for the Gentiles to seek to. This Church is the ensign on the mountain spoken of by the Old Testament prophets. It is the way, the truth, and the life.

I know these things are true. I know them by the witness of the Spirit to my soul, and I bear you that witness. I know Jesus Christ lives. When I think of him, my Redeemer, I am always moved. In my mind's eye, I see him in that great council before the world was, when he said in effect to his Father, "I will go. Mine be the willing sacrifice, the endless glory thine."

I view him as the Creator of this world and of the starry heavens. In this respect it is difficult for us to realize the greatness of Jesus. Enoch

was amazed when the Lord showed him his creations. He referred to the number of them in this language: ". . . were it possible that man could number the particles of the earth, yea, millions of earths like this, it would not be a beginning to the number of thy creations; . . ." (Moses 7:30.)

I think of this man—this Son of God, Jesus—as he stood on Mount Shelem before the brother of Jared in his full-length spirit body and said: "Behold, I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people. Behold, I am Jesus Christ. . . ."

". . . Seest thou that ye are created after mine own image? Yea, even all men were created in the beginning after mine own image.

"Behold, this body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; and man have I created after the body of my spirit; and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit will I appear unto my people in the flesh." (Ether 3:14-16.)

That was 2,200 years before he appeared on earth as the infant son of Mary. I think of his coming into this world, the Son of Mary and God the Eternal Father.

I think of him as he went through his life, teaching and blessing the people.

And, oh, I think of him in Gethsemane, when he suffered the pain of all men, that we might be forgiven of our sins on conditions of repentance. I think of Luke's statement describing Christ's suffering in Gethsemane: ". . . his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." (Luke 22:44.) And of Christ's statement to Joseph Smith: ". . . Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—"

"Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men." (D&C 19:18-19.)

By his suffering he put into effect the plan of mercy, the merciful gospel

Sunday, April 9

Third Day

plan of redemption by which all men may be cleansed of their sins.

And then I think of him on the cross. I think of him in the garden, when he spoke to Mary, following which the light and knowledge broke through upon his disciples that he in reality had won the victory over death, bringing about not only his own, but the resurrection of all people.

I think of him with the Father in the grove with the Prophet Joseph. I know he lives.

I know my Redeemer lives. "Hear, O ye heavens, and give ear, O earth, and rejoice ye inhabitants thereof, for the Lord is God, and beside him there is no Savior." (D&C 76:1.)

I bear you my testimony that this statement is true, and this witness which

I bear will be binding upon you; for I, like my brethren of the presiding councils of the Church, am a called and ordained personal witness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This Church is the Church of God. We do have the gospel of Jesus Christ. If we will live it, we will gain the promised blessings. That this may so be, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

We have just listened to Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve. Elder John Longden, Assistant to the Twelve, will now speak to us. He will be followed by Elder Henry D. Taylor.

ELDER JOHN LONGDEN

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

From this conference, these excellent sessions which have been held, with the Spirit of the Lord in attendance, we have been fed the bread of life, and we have been fed those things pertaining to eternal life which will help us in our daily lives here in mortality. I believe there are a few lines which would sum up very beautifully the truths that have been spoken from this pulpit.

It is a simple prayer, and as far as I am concerned, the author is anonymous. "O God, our Father, always keep us thankful, and never let us forget the source of all our blessings and our great privilege to share them with others."

I am so grateful for those words because I feel they sum up beautifully the things which have been given in these marvelous sessions from those who have preceded me. The opening remarks of President McKay, saluting youth, commending them for their courage and fortitude in seeking to know the truth and to follow it, were most inspirational, as has been each of the brethren, to Brother Romney who has just preceded me with his beautiful testimony of the divinity of Jesus Christ.

There is one, I should like to say at

this point, whom I have missed, and I am sure I voice the thoughts of thousands who have been and are here; the voice and the words of President J. Reuben Clark, Jr. God bless you, President Clark.

Because of this sharing, there was an assignment that came to Sister Longden and me last November—it came earlier than that but because of conditions and circumstances over which we had no control, we were not able to start our journey until the fourth of November 1960.

We left Salt Lake City with President and Sister Kendall W. Young, who were to be installed in the French Polynesian (or Tahitian) Mission, and with us were their four little children—the oldest not yet seven. You talk about faith—here it is exemplified—these people willing to leave the comforts of home and the pursuits here of their daily labors to go out and serve the Lord in those beautiful but faraway islands of the South Pacific.

We arrived in Papeete, Tahiti, after twenty-seven hours. The final journey from Honolulu to Papeete took ten hours and fifteen minutes which is quite a long time to be in the air. But we were blessed. We arrived there Saturday