

praying God's choicest blessings on you all and particularly that you, yourself, may be magnified in your important calling."

Telegram from President and Sister Fred W. Schwendiman of the New Zealand South Mission: "Missionaries and members of the New Zealand South Mission send greetings and love to the Church Authorities, members, and our representatives assembled in the General Conference of the Church."

We are especially happy to welcome, and are grateful for the presence of our Stake Presidencies, Temple Presidents, Bishoprics, High Councilmen, general auxiliary officers, and other general officers of the Church, many of whom have traveled long distances to be in attendance at this conference.

We note men, prominent men, about us who show their interest by their presence this morning: Senator Wallace F. Bennett, United States Senator; Senator Frank E. Moss, United States Senator; Laurence J. Burton, United States Congressman; George D. Clyde, our Governor of Utah; Education, Ernest L. Wilkinson, President of Brigham Young University; John L. Clarke, President of Ricks College; William P. Miller, President of Weber College; M. Lynn Bennion, Superintendent of Salt Lake City Public Schools; and possibly others whom Brother Kimball could not see, and I cannot see you from the rostrum here, but you are welcome and we are glad to have you with us.

The singing for this morning's ses-

sion, as already announced, will be furnished by the Logan Institute of Religion Choir. They will now sing "Still, Still With Thee," conducted by Brother James L. Bradley. The invocation will be offered by Elder Douglas H. Driggs, formerly President of the Northwestern States Mission.

The Logan LDS Institute of Religion Choir sang the selection, "Still, Still With Thee."

Elder Douglas H. Driggs, formerly President of the Northwestern States Mission, offered the invocation.

President David O. McKay:

The invocation was just offered by Elder Douglas H. Driggs, formerly President of the Northwestern States Mission.

The Logan Institute of Religion Choir will now sing "I Need Thee Every Hour." After the singing President Hugh B. Brown of the First Presidency will speak to us.

Singing by the Institute Choir, "I Need Thee Every Hour."

President David O. McKay:

Our first speaker this morning will be President Hugh B. Brown of the First Presidency of the Church. He will be followed by Elder Thorpe B. Isaacson.

PRESIDENT HUGH B. BROWN

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

Let us quote two well-known definitions of religion, one from the Old Testament and one from the New; these might well sound the keynote or prelude to this conference. First from the Prophet Micah: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8.)

And the Apostle James admonishes: "But be ye doers of the word, and not

hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

"If any man among you seem to be religious, and brideth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

"Pure religion and undefiled before

Friday, April 5

First Day

God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:22, 25-27.)

We pray that all who speak during this conference may be inspired by the Holy Spirit. Especially we pray that the many thousands, seen and unseen, who may attend the various sessions may enjoy the same inspiration. The effect upon the "hearers of the word" depends upon their being spiritually in tune and open-mindedly responsive.

As the relish with which one enjoys a meal depends upon the appetite he brings to the table more than upon the quality and variety of food placed before him, so the degree of enjoyment and assimilation of spiritual refreshment will depend upon whether or not we "hunger and thirst" as enjoined by the Savior, and be promised the reward of satisfaction. The Savior said: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." (Rev. 3:20.)

We are all familiar with the parable of the sower, where ". . . some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

"Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: . . .

"And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

"And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

"But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, . . ." (Matt. 13:4-8.)

In explanation of the meaning of the parable, the Savior emphasized the responsibility of all who hear the word, and he expressed concern for the quality and depth of the soil in which the seeds are planted. Mark defines the seed as the word of God: "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

"But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

"Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

"He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

"But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." (*Ibid.*, 13:19-23.)

This parable applies to all to whom the seed—the word of God—may come, whether they be lifetime members of the Church, new converts, or investigators seeking truth. Let us be united in our prayers that the seeds of truth which may be broadcast during this conference may take root in fertile soil and bear fruit. Paul said of some to whom the gospel was preached in his day that it did not profit them ". . . not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." (Heb. 4:2.)

Truth is challenging and calls for action as is evidenced by another parable of the Savior: "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

"And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." (Matt. 7:24-27.)

It should be noted that the rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon the house which was built upon the rock with the same force as that which destroyed the other house. This house did not escape the storm but, having a rock foundation, withstood it.

Some have thought that upon joining the Church and being faithful all trials would end, all difficulties disappear,

and all temptations cease. We are reminded of the young bride who, on her wedding day, said to her mother, "I am the happiest girl in the world. I have come to the end of all my troubles."

And the wise mother replied, "Yes, my dear, but you don't know which end."

Both the storms of nature and the storms of life are indiscriminate. As the house built upon the rock survived the storm, so the life whose roots are firmly planted in the soil of faith will endure adversity and be made stronger by the struggle. As Douglas Malloch said in verse:

"Good timber does not grow in ease,
The stronger wind, the tougher trees,
The further sky, the greater length,
The more the storm, the more the strength.

"By sun and cold, by rain and snow,
In trees or men, good timbers grow."

Sometimes defeat may serve as well as victory to shake the soul and let the glory out.

Let us not bemoan our lot in life or chafe under the trials, losses, or problems which beset us. Let us rather enumerate and express gratitude for our many blessings. Some go through the year or through life unappreciative of life's bounties because they are unaware of them. One's awareness becomes the measure of his aliveness. All about us we see evidences of a benevolent providence. For example, anyone who reverently looks into the starry skies will feel to exclaim with the Psalmist: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy-work." (Psalm 19:1.)

As we become more aware and appreciative of his love and of the beauty and wisdom which are everywhere apparent, we thank the Lord for life and for its bracing trials and challenges, its educative disciplines and rewards. Our faith in God is deepened and sustained by life's experiences and by convincing evidence on every hand that our universe is governed by law under a beneficent and omnipotent Father.

As this faith and knowledge develops, one becomes conscious of his own weaknesses and shortcomings and undertakes to bring his conduct up to the level of his ideals; this is called repentance.

But if his faith is not kept radiant by good works, he will be tempted to lower his ideals to the level of his conduct. This is retrogression.

In these ominous and threatening times, we need physical, intellectual, and moral courage and sustaining faith. It may seem trite to say the world is imperiled and divided and that these are times of historic decisions, but on all levels of life, from individual and family to national and international, challenging situations demand attention and difficult problems require solution. We all face a common challenge and share a common cause.

The threat of communism is sinister, and its dangers are imminent. Hundreds of millions of our fellow beings are being relentlessly imbued with the satanic ideology that the Fatherhood of God, the Saviorhood of Christ, and the brotherhood of man are stupid myths, that religion is nothing but a tranquilizing opiate. They seek to deprive men of physical, mental, and spiritual freedom while endowing the state with monstrous supremacy. This relentless indoctrination is but a continuation of the war that began when Satan's plan of force was rejected by the Father. We live in the most dangerous period of all history. The sixth chapter of Ephesians was never more applicable than today: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Eph. 6:12.)

The Church is the main bulwark against communism. The gospel is the most effective rebuttal to their godless ideologies. It is a spiritual force which can crash and overcome all physical barriers. Surely we must put on the whole armor of God, consisting, as Paul said, of truth, righteousness, peace, faith, with the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. Because of our faith in a living, personal, and all-powerful God,

Friday, April 5

we do not fear the final outcome in our fight against the emissaries of Satan, though we must ever be alert, united, and on guard. We are reassured by John's wonderful vision on the Isle of Patmos:

"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

"And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

"And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season." (Rev. 20:1-3.)

Nothing but the gospel of love, the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, which we gratefully proclaim, can save the world or the individual from the dangers that threaten us. This is a gospel of character-building activity; of invincible faith and the courage that is born of faith; of repentance, the doorway to progress; of sanctification through baptism of water and of the Spirit, the doorway to the celestial kingdom. Let us take courage in the knowledge that Christ, the Prince of Peace, is at the helm. He has declared that the worth of souls is great in the sight of God; so great that he gave his only Begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life.

The transcendent love of God the Father has its counterpart in Christ, the Son, whose redeeming sacrifice, which was voluntary and love inspired, loosed the bonds of death and assured to all men the blessings of the resurrection. He declared it to be his work and his glory to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. The Apostle Paul gives us an appraisal of the enduring quality of God's love in his epistle to the Romans: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

"Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate

us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:38-39.)

But this divine love elicits response from us, not only by declarations of our love but by our attitude toward our fellow men. Benjamin Franklin prayed, "Accept my kind offices to thy children as the only return in my power for thy continual favors to me."

John, in his first epistle, wrote: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

"And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also." (1 John 4:20-21.)

How can a man have communion with God if he does not have fellowship with his fellow men?

Jesus, when asked which was the great commandment, replied: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

"This is the first and great commandment.

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

"On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Matt. 22:37-40.)

When on another occasion the Master was asked who is my neighbor, he replied with the parable of the good Samaritan, which teaches the lesson that all who need our help, all whose lives we touch are our neighbors, whether they live across the street, over the fence, across the continent, or over the ocean. Our neighborhood has become world-wide.

Abou-Ben Adhem's name headed the list of those whom love of God had blessed because he, apparently more than others, loved his fellow men.

The depth, direction, and quality of our religious life depend upon our understanding of the nature, purposes, and methods of God and our relationship and responsibility to him. The scriptures are replete with reassuring promises that right will prevail over might, good over evil, truth over error, Christ over anti-Christ. John the Beloved was

inspired when he wrote the rhapsody in his first epistle:

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:1-2.)

In a book titled *A Century's Change in Religion*, quoted by Dr. James L. Barker, George Harris tells us: "There has been a change in our thought of God, from the conception of sovereignty to the conception of Fatherhood; speaking broadly, it may be said, that the Latin theology made sovereignty the central doctrine. The Roman government was a type of the divine government. This theology stamped the doctrine of decrees, of predestination and reprobation, the mere good pleasures of God as the cause of all events. The belief engendered fear and hate rather than love and trust. . . . The center of doctrine has shifted from sovereignty to fatherhood." The inspired concept of the actual fatherhood of God and the concomitant brotherhood of man is a basic doctrine of Mormonism and is the most profound and hopeful philosophy in the world today.

We believe in a living, personal God; that his glory is intelligence, which denotes purpose and plan; that he has the will and the power to realize his purposes. He is our Father, and that fact assures love and inspires trust.

May the Holy Spirit direct all who participate in the proceedings of this conference, in song, prayer, or discourse, and inspire in all who listen a desire for renewed dedication and activity. May our lives attest our gratitude for the priceless privilege of living in the greatest of all dispensations and participating in the final preparation for the

second coming of Christ. No era in history was more momentous than our own, for it heralds his coming.

The words of the poet are prophetic:

"You that have faith to look with fearless eyes upon the tragedy of a world at strife

And know that out of death and night shall rise the dawn of ampler life, Rejoice, whatever anguish rend the heart,

That God has given you the priceless dower to live in these great times and have your part

In freedom's crowning hour, That you may tell your sons who see the light high in the heavens, their heritage to take,

I saw the powers of darkness take their flight,

I saw the morning break."

What then shall we take home from this conference, and in what measure shall we take it? This depends upon "patient continuance in well doing," upon the quality and depth of soil into which the seeds of truth may fall, and upon whether we become doers of the word and not hearers only. Shall the seed be received by the wayside, in stony places, in shallow soil, or among the thorns; shall the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word that the seeds become unfruitful; or shall it be received into good ground and bear fruit? Each one must answer for himself. Let us pray for strength to ". . . do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God" (see Micah 6:8) in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

He to whom you have just listened is President Hugh B. Brown of the First Presidency of the Church. We shall now hear from Elder Thorpe B. Isaacson, Assistant to the Twelve. He will be followed by Elder Antoine R. Ivins.