

Saturday, April 6

Second Day

**President David O. McKay:**

President Henry D. Moyle of the First Presidency of the Church has just spoken to us.

The following cablegram: "Apia, Samoa. Church members of the Samoan Mission express great appreciation for opportunity to hear General Conference. Reception fine. President Hanks."

"Aloha Nui Loa from all the residents of Laie. We thrill with anticipation of receiving General Conference for the first time tomorrow throughout Hawaii by video-tape. For many people here it is the dream of a lifetime come true. Our deepest, heartfelt thanks for this wonderful opportunity. Sterling Pro-

vost, President, Laie Community Association, Laie, Hawaii."

Following a brief organ interlude for station identification the Tabernacle Choir and the Congregation will sing "Redeemer of Israel," with Richard P. Condie conducting and Alexander Schreiner at the organ.

The Tabernacle Choir and the congregation joined in singing the hymn, "Redeemer of Israel."

**President David O. McKay:**

We shall now hear from Elder Alvin R. Dyer, Assistant to the Twelve.

**ELDER ALVIN R. DYER***Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

It is difficult to imagine how one could attend this conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints without feeling the surge of inspiration and the gravity of its importance in pointing the way to all mankind who at this very hour are troubled and confused and in need of divine direction.

The message of the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which has relentlessly been declared unto the world since its organization, means that the kingdom of God or Christ's Church has been set up as a result of the restoration of truth unto the Prophet Joseph Smith, wherein divine messengers have been sent from the presence of God to convey the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ and to confer all needed keys of authority to establish a dispensation of the gospel.

The disciples of Jesus who were with him upon the earth found it difficult to accept that which he had declared unto the chief priests and the scribes concerning the kingdom to be given at a later time to another people, for said he, "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." (Matt. 21:43.)

But this same Jesus when later speak-

ing to the Jews concerning this latter kingdom to be established as a sign of his coming refers to the words of the Prophet Daniel who describes the kingdom to be established which would never be given to another people. "And in the days of these kings," who were described as being in the latter days, ". . . shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, . . ." (Dan. 2:44.)

Finally, as Jesus instructed his disciples as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, they seemed to accept the finality of this, and with that understanding asked of him this question: ". . . Tell us, (then) when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, . . .?" (Matt. 24:3.) In the answer which Jesus gave to this question he said, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, . . ."

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; . . ." (Matt. 24:15, 14.)

The meridian apostles who were closest to him understood clearly, as judged from their own declarations, that

the kingdom of God which the Lord established upon the earth would not continue at that time, and they themselves looked forward to the future time of restitution or restoration. The Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost declared:

“. . . the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

“Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution (or restoration) of all things, . . . (concerning) which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:19-21.)

The Apostle Paul to the Saints at Thessalonica and also at Ephesus said this concerning this future day:

“. . . be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

“. . . for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, . . .” (2 Thess. 2:2-3.)

“That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; . . .” (Eph. 1:10.)

The Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos, a prisoner, saw the coming of the gospel in the latter days: “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,” (Rev. 14:6.)

When the Prophet Joseph Smith, as a young man blessed with the gift of faith and an inquiring heart to know the will of God, went into a grove of trees near his home at Palmyra, New York, in the spring of 1820 to inquire of the Lord what he should do about his religious affiliation, he did not then know of the magnitude of that which was to transpire, as he came to know later. Here was to occur one of the great foreordained events of life destined to be of vital importance to all mankind.

For, as in the placing of Adam and Eve, our first earth-life parents, in the Garden of Eden; of the calling and work

of the utopian prophet Enoch; of the mission and labors of the great prophet of human tragedy, Noah, who with his three sons and their families witnessed the complete destruction of mankind which they only survived; of the coming of Melchizedek, the great high priest, before the Lord; of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; of Joseph, the beloved of his father and the Lord; of Moses, the law-giver, the Godly appointed leader of the exodus of the children of Israel from the bondage of Egypt; followed by the other prophets in their own time according to the will of the Lord; and then the surpassing earth-life ministry and atonement of Jesus Christ our Lord, the very Son of God the Father; so now, in this great modern event, in the sequence of its full importance, was to unfold unto Joseph Smith the coming of a new dispensation of the gospel attended as it was upon this occasion, and with subsequent happenings, with divine intercession through messengers sent from the presence of God.

In all of these events, ancient, meridian, and now in our own day and time, when the foreordained time in which they were to transpire arrived, they came about as simply and naturally as the opening and closing of a door—each in its own dispensation of time.

Thus, on this beautiful spring morning in the Sacred Grove, Joseph Smith witnessed the renewal of God's dealing with his children in accordance with the great gospel plan of redemption. Upon this occasion God the Father and his Beloved Son Jesus Christ appearing as glorified Resurrected Beings unto a chosen servant of God, made known once again the state of immortality which man will attain in preparation for the next estate of eternity; that also the world once again could know the reality of the personal nature of God the Father and his Beloved Son. In this appearance of Holy Deity we see, as in times past, the need of God's appearing unto man in mortality; man who also, as in times past, had gone astray in his concept and understanding of the True and Living God; for man as man, with all his wisdom, cannot find out the truth about God. Such must be revealed to him by divine ap-

pearance to a prophet of God, who then became the witness unto others.

As this sacred interview proceeded, the glory of the last dispensation of mortal time was inaugurated. The truth about God and his Son Jesus Christ and their glorious plan of redemption was once again placed upon the threshold of human understanding.

This divine interview placed a great calling upon Joseph Smith, the chosen prophet of the latter days. In addition to an incident of simple faith and prayer, with an answer for him personally, the time had come to usher in the final period of preparation in the culmination of God's work for his children here upon the earth.

Joseph Smith was informed that he had been foreordained and consequently called to be the instrument through whom God would work to establish his kingdom here upon the earth as it had been in former intermittent dispensations. But this, the last of all dispensations, is to be characterized by even greater truth, a depository period when all truths, all laws, all covenants, all promises planned by God our Heavenly Father in the pre-existence and revealed to man in part at various times in mortality for the redemption and exaltation of his spirit children, were now to be fully revealed and made available to mankind. The Lord had thus spoken unto the Prophet Joseph Smith.

The instructions and answers which the Lord gave to the Prophet Joseph Smith during the interview in the Sacred Grove announced many great truths. I shall refer to only a part of that interview as it was later testified to by the Prophet Joseph Smith, but I encourage all everywhere to read the complete testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith. He said this in part:

"... When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*

"My object in going to inquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join. No sooner, therefore, did I get

possession of myself, so as to be able to speak, than I asked the Personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right—and which I should join.

"I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong; and the Personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt; that 'they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.'" (Joseph Smith 2:17-19.)

Each of the declarations which the Lord made to Joseph Smith upon this occasion is of the deepest import to this final dispensation of the gospel and to the plan of life and salvation in general. His answers to the inquiry made by Joseph Smith were not simply a disparagement to the existing Christian bodies who had departed from the truth. Though announced by the Lord that they were all in error in teachings and false practices intended to redeem mankind, there was no vindictive reprisal against these Christian societies who were using his name, but who were fully unaware of the truth of his person and divinity or of his mission or of the plan of salvation of which he is the author so far as we are concerned.

Truly among these very societies of Christian believers then in the world were many noble spirits of the pre-existence, who upon subsequently hearing the truth as proclaimed by the heralds of the restoration, would accept it and abide its commandments and teachings; many of whom would themselves become leaders and great champions of the cause of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Lord used no meaningless words upon this momentous occasion. All that was spoken reflects the deepest of meaning. President Joseph F. Smith, one of the prophets of this dispensation, has said this, "The Lord never did anything that was not essential or that was superfluous."

It will be of interest to list the answers which the Lord gave to Joseph Smith's direct question as to which of

the Christian churches he should join. These are as follows:

1. That all their creeds were an abomination.

2. That their professors (or ministers) were all corrupt.

3. That they draw near to the Lord with their lips, but their hearts are far from him.

4. They teach for doctrines the commandments of men.

5. That they have a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.

There can be no question as to the direct and positive answers which the Lord gave to the Prophet Joseph Smith, but perhaps a brief explanation of each of these answers can be given to those of the Christian churches of the world who can then understand the true significance of the sacred interview which God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ had with the Prophet Joseph Smith.

As to the creeds being an abomination, this simply means that the Christian churches of the world were not following the accepted pattern which he, the Lord, had established in his Church, and that they had strayed from the customs and the manner which he had established, and the term *abomination* fits that which is at variance only with the established truth of God.

With regard to the fact that all ministers were corrupt—this could not be the literal meaning, because the ancient meaning of the word *corrupt* meant any who did not teach doctrines which had been established in accordance with the law. Surely they were not regarded as corrupt because of morals or dishonesty and not desirous of doing God's will as they understood it, but only in the sense of failing to teach the gospel as Christ had taught it.

As to worshiping him with their lips but their hearts being far from him, this I believe involved the work made possible by the "sealing power."

This work embodies the sealing through specific rights of the priesthood of both living and dead, one to another, as with husband and wife, as with father and mother to children; that families living upon the earth in this day and age, connected with ancestors and

progenitors, may be bound one with another, thereby linking the past with the present and both the past and the present with the future. Thus, the hearts of the fathers may be bound in holy sealing with their children and children with the fathers in the patriarchal order of family relationship in linked fashion as an endless chain with each link secure and interwoven.

This is to prepare man for life in the celestial kingdom which will in due time follow earth-life existence. This is the patriarchal form of government or government by and through the family units which are then to worship and to associate with the Lord. They not only worship through the utterances of their lips, but by their hearts also; this will mean complete sincerity of purpose and intent based upon truth. We will be bound family to family; we will be linked one with another by the sealing authority which the Prophet Elijah held, reaching to the very realms of the family of God and his Son Jesus Christ. There all shall be bound forever by lips or stated committed purpose; and bound by heart also, thus manifesting obedience to God's will and purpose in glorious family relationship.

As to the teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, even the reformers as great as they were and as sincere as they were in protesting against that which they felt was false, there is no evidence in the founding of these various sects that any form of divine intercession occurred wherein holy messengers were sent from God, giving instruction and direction in the establishing of that particular church. What they did, therefore, was in accordance with their best knowledge, devoid of any divine revelation. Thus the commandments which they taught were of men and not of God. Though they simulate in form the Christian body, they nevertheless teach for commandments the doctrines of men.

As to a form of Godliness but denying the power thereof, this applies to the need of the priesthood of God or divine authority within the Church authorized to act for and in behalf of God. And that through the Holy Melchizedek Priesthood in the true Church of Christ

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there is to be the functioning and use of the keys of the kingdom that must be conferred by those who hold them. In this manner the purity of important truths and ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ can be preserved.

Now I bear witness, my brothers and sisters, to the reality of the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ with all of its powers and authority and knowledge and understanding to bring salvation and exaltation unto mankind. And I bear record of this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

He to whom we have just listened is

Elder Alvin R. Dyer, Assistant to the Twelve Apostles.

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing "Lord, Thou Hast Made Us For Thine Own."

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Singing by the Choir, "Lord, Thou Hast Made Us For Thine Own."

**President David O. McKay:**

Elder Robert L. Simpson, First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric, will be our concluding speaker.

### BISHOP ROBERT L. SIMPSON

*First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric*

A great prophet who lived 2,500 years ago stated that: ". . . men are, that they might have joy." (2 Nephi 2:25.) The Church of Jesus Christ in this day holds fast to this inspired scripture as an eternal truth.

The quest for joy and happiness is common to all regardless of race, color, or creed. While the objective is common, the understanding on how to achieve it is often another story.

The existence of man in this mortal sphere finds him involved in a grand system of physical force and physical law, all held together and seemingly pre-set into a magnificent system of amazing order and synchronization. We marvel at the seasons, the celestial bodies. All about us is evidence of natural law and an overwhelming suggestion of divine assemblage. The laws of gravity, heat, and motion all follow precise patterns under given conditions. If we enter the fiery furnace, we die. If we attempt to defy the laws of gravity, we are killed. If our car sweeps along the highway uncontrolled, we crash, and we must all agree that the human body in similar manner is subject to the law and order of the universe, for it is physical.

Obedience to the law whether it be physical, intellectual, or spiritual brings

harmony, peace, joy, and happiness. This thinking was confirmed by the Master who said through the Prophet Joseph Smith: "There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated—

"And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated." (D&C 130:20-21.) We are blessed by obedience to law. Transgression of the law always brings unhappiness. Carried to the extreme it could mean death.

I believe with all my heart that natural law is the handiwork of a Loving Father in heaven, and I further bear record that this same Loving Father has not left us without specific instruction concerning the care of our physical bodies, for he created us, and he knows that true happiness and total growth, moral, spiritual, and intellectual, are largely dependent upon our physical well-being.

Through this same great latter-day Prophet Joseph Smith the Lord has revealed an entire volume of scripture known as the Doctrine and Covenants. In the 89th section of this inspired work, the Lord gives to all men who would listen what he calls "A Word of Wisdom." Let us read a part of this inspired