

Dr. Carl Joachim Hambro, late president of the League of Nations, said that in World War I alone, thirty-five million human beings died of starvation and epidemics. But that is only a drop in the bucket compared to the possible horror and mutilation of present-day war. We can now drop concentrated fire on a nation and literally roast its population. War doesn't solve a single human problem, and yet the one place where our generation excels most is in its ability to make war. Modern war is undoubtedly the most highly developed of all of our sciences. Even a horrible kind of destructive cold war now seems to have become a fixed part of our unfortunate way of life. But sinful, unstable man now holds in his hands the ability to destroy everything upon the earth in just a few hours. Our failure has been that while we have perfected weapons, we have failed to perfect the men who may be asked to use them. But still there is no letup in our evil. Like the ancients, we can discern the face of the sky, but we fail in reading the signs of the times. This has always been one of the world's most serious problems.

The Gospel shall be preached for a witness

On the Mount of Olives the Lord also foretold another event that would precede his glorious second coming. He said: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matt. 24:14.) Angelic messengers with authority from God have been sent to the earth in our day to restore the simple principles and ordinances of the gospel that fulfill this prophecy. The Church of Jesus Christ has again been established upon the earth, built upon its necessary foundation of apostles and prophets. (See Eph. 2:19-20.)

In obedience to God's command, the world has also been given three great volumes of new scripture outlining in every detail the simple principles of the gospel of Christ. These modern scriptures add many additional prophetic statements to those of the Old and New Testaments, warning us to make ourselves ready for this tremendous event that is now at our doors. May God help us so to do, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

BISHOP VICTOR L. BROWN

Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

My dear brethren and sisters, I am grateful to be here today and to participate in this great conference. I pray that what I shall say will in some way be helpful in lifting the heavy burdens carried by some.

Someone has written:

MY NAME IS LEGION

"Within my earthly temple, there's a crowd;
There's one of us that's humble, one that's proud,
There's one that's broken-hearted for his sins,
There's one that unrepentant sits and grins;

There's one that loves his neighbor as himself,
And one that cares for naught but fame and pelf.
From much corroding care, I should be free
If I could once determine which is me."

(By Edward Sanford Martin)

Within my earthly temple, there's a crowd. There's one of us that's humble—one that's proud. There's one that's brokenhearted for his sins. It is these to whom I wish to address my remarks today.

Hope for the sinner

It seems that one of the tragedies of sin is that once a mistake has been

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made, many feel there is no redemption. Consequently, they continue to live in error. There are others who, once having made a mistake, repent, and yet carry the burden of guilt throughout their lives, burying it deep in their hearts, letting it tear at their secret heartstrings until many times, later in life, they find it impossible to bear any longer. This often results in serious psychological problems. They have failed to realize that the Lord, through the blessing of repentance, does not expect this. He has said:

"Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more." (D&C 58:42.)

The essence and purpose of the Savior's life was salvation—not condemnation. He died that we might live, opening the way to eternal life and blessing us with the principles of the gospel, the second of which is repentance. He recognized that none of us is perfect nor free from sin.

Repentance assures salvation

Many times the principle of repentance is not fully understood. It is the blessing of hope that offers each of us forgiveness.

The first step in repentance is recognition and sorrow for the sin committed. Of course, if we are brokenhearted for our sins, we have recognized them. This sorrow is not simply remorse and a fleeting twinge of conscience. The sorrow I refer to has no mental reservation, no feeling that perhaps our sins are not so gross or serious after all.

Paul said: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation. . . : but the sorrow of the world worketh death." (2 Cor. 7:10.) This kind of sorrow means abandonment of the sin. This means complete cessation from such actions from that point forward.

Confession purges

Another vital step in repentance is confession. The Lord said, ". . . I, the Lord, forgive sins unto those who confess their sins before me and ask forgiveness, who have not sinned unto death." (D&C 64:7.)

The Lord retains unto himself the right to judge the whole man. However, in the ecclesiastical order of his Church, he has appointed what are known as common judges in Israel, more commonly known as bishops.

The bishop receives the confessions of the members of the Church when a serious sin has been committed, such as one involving the moral law. His authority as a judge has to do with the retention of the individual's full fellowship in the Church. He has been given the responsibility to forgive as far as church membership is concerned. The Lord is the only one who can truly forgive.

Each bishop recognizes his special role as a servant of the Lord in assisting him to accomplish his purpose. He said:

"For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39.)

The bishop knows that the confession received from a member of his ward is a sacred trust. He does not divulge it to his wife or any other person. A bishop who violates such a sacred confidence is, himself, guilty of an offense before God, the Church, and the individual.

We sit today with several thousands of these wonderful men who have been called and ordained by proper authority to this very special position of bishop. They come from all walks of life. They span many years in age. They are your neighbors and mine. They have grown up with us. Some of them have grown up with our children, and for these reasons and others, we too often fail to recognize them for what they have become. At the time of their ordination to bishop, they were given the authority to act as a common judge within the boundaries of their wards. They were given the blessing of discernment, wisdom, and understanding. They were counseled to be kind and thoughtful in their dealings with the membership.

Each bishop understands fully the following scripture:

"No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;

"By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile—

"Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reprov'd, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy. . . ." (D&C 121:41-43.)

Bishop, the spiritual counselor

As already stated, the bishop is the spiritual counselor to his people. He is the one to whom we should confess our serious transgressions. He is not a harsh judge but rather he constantly asks himself, "What would the Savior's judgment be in this case?" If we are truly repentant, we should be willing to place our trust in him and follow his guidance, because, after all, his whole purpose is not to condemn us but to help us.

May the Lord bless those who have transgressed, that they may understand his love for them and the blessings that can be theirs through repentance, never forgetting that the Lord himself has said:

"Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more." (D&C 58:42.)

My brothers and sisters, it is my humble witness that God lives. I know it with all the fiber of my being. I know that he loves us, and I know that he has the same love for the sinner as for the Saint. May he bless us, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Hugh B. Brown:

Brother James A. Cullimore, kindly come to the stand and sit among the Assistants to the Twelve.

We have listened to Elder Sterling W. Sill, Assistant to the Twelve; Victor L. Brown of the Presiding Bishopric. Elder Delbert L. Stapley will be our concluding speaker.

ELDER DELBERT L. STAPLEY

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brothers and sisters and friends, it is a privilege always to attend the general conferences of the Church.

Lehi's vision

My message is taken from the Book of Mormon account of the vision God gave to the Prophet Lehi, who, with his family, lived in Jerusalem about 600 years before the birth of Christ. This prophet was warned concerning the destruction of Jerusalem by invading Babylonian armies. God therefore commanded Lehi to take his family and a small select group and to depart from the city. The Lord gave assurance that he would lead them to a promised land—the Americas as we know them today. These families belonged to the house of Israel, and Lehi was a de-

scendant of that Joseph who was sold into Egypt.

After their departure from Jerusalem and while in the Valley of Lemuel, near the border of the Red Sea, God blessed the prophet with an inspiring vision. (2 Ne. 8.) In this vision Lehi beheld a dark and dreary wilderness. He was led by a messenger from God, a man clothed in a white robe. It seemed to Lehi they were moving deeper into the wilderness of darkness, and he therefore earnestly petitioned his God for mercy. Following his supplication the dream unfolded to his vision important and significant events. Lehi beheld a large and spacious field and a tree, the fruit of which was desirable to make one happy. He went forth and partook of the fruit and in ecstasy declared it to be the most