

Friday, April 5

First Day

in New York, and KMBC at Kansas City, beginning at midnight tonight, and on Sunday, and Monday, and can be heard in many parts of the United States and the world, including Alaska, Canada, Mexico, and the islands of the Pacific.

The General Priesthood Conference, to be held Saturday night, will be transmitted by closed-circuit wire from the Salt Lake Tabernacle to over 95,000 men of the priesthood assembled in approximately 500 buildings throughout the United States and Canada.

In addition, the proceedings of the priesthood session will be broadcast publicly over KSL Radio and Television, and will be received by many throughout a wide area of Utah and in parts of other adjoining states.

We wish to express heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the owners and operators of the radio and television stations for their cooperation in making possible such an extensive coverage of the proceedings of this conference.

To all assembled here in this historic Tabernacle, and to the vast radio and television audience, we extend a cordial and hearty welcome.

We should like to express our appreciation for the lovely flowers which decorate the rostrum. The Tacoma Stake made arrangements with the Puyallup Valley Daffodil Festival for 3,000 King Alfred daffodils. The beautiful calla lilies were sent to us by the Oakland-Berkeley Stake High Priests quorum. This is a wonderful contribution to the atmosphere of this conference, and we express deep appreciation to these brethren and sisters for their kindness.

### President David O. McKay

(Read by his son, David Lawrence McKay)

My dear brethren and sisters, and friends of the radio and television audience: At this moment there is just one supreme wish in my heart. It is that the Spirit of the Lord and of this great conference may be felt in every home and in every heart in the Church, as well as in the hearts and homes

We are pleased to welcome here this morning the Combined Brigham Young University Choruses. Ralph Woodward will conduct these young students, and Brother Robert Cundick is at the organ.

We shall begin this session by the chorus rendering, "The Morning Breaks, the Shadows Flee," following which the invocation will be offered by Elder Wayne B. Hales, president of the Brigham Young University Sixth Stake.

As the opening musical number, the Brigham Young University Combined Choruses sang the anthem, "The Morning Breaks, the Shadows Flee."

Elder Wayne B. Hales, president of the Brigham Young University Sixth Stake, offered the invocation.

### President Hugh B. Brown

The Combined Choruses of the Brigham Young University will now sing, "Behold, the Lamb of God."

The Combined Choruses of the Brigham Young University sang the anthem, "Behold, the Lamb of God."

### President Hugh B. Brown

We are all delighted with the presence here of President David O. McKay. Upon the advice of his physicians, he has asked his son, David Lawrence McKay, to read the message which he has for this conference and for the world.

of all peoples everywhere who may come within the radius of the broadcasts of the various sessions, which will be carried worldwide.

### Thanksgiving for blessings

I pray for the blessings of the Lord, not only during this session, but

throughout all of the sessions of this 138th annual conference of the Church.

My heart is filled with thanksgiving for our blessings and for God's great love for his children. The older I grow, the more grateful and impressed I am with the glorious truths and great possibilities and opportunities of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I appreciate the loyalty, faith, brotherly love, and prayers of the membership of this Church. Realizing the great responsibility that rests upon me this morning in giving to the Church a message at a general conference, I earnestly pray for his guidance and for your faith and prayers.

I extend a hearty welcome to all present in this historic Tabernacle, erected on Temple Square by our pioneers 100 years ago, and to all who may be listening in, and pray that God's blessings may be with each of you in rich abundance.

### The greatest event of history

On April 14, there will be celebrated throughout Christendom the greatest event of all history—the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In speaking of that event, the Apostle Paul declared: “. . . if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain. . . .

“Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ. . . .” (1 Cor. 15:14-15.)

He who can thus testify of the living Redeemer has his soul anchored in eternal truth. In our time, the most direct confirmation that Jesus rose from the grave is the appearance of the Father and the Son to the Prophet Joseph Smith, eighteen hundred years after the event Christendom will celebrate this Easter.

That the spirit of man passes triumphantly through the portals of death into everlasting life is one of the glorious messages given by Christ, our Redeemer. To him this earthly career is but a day, and its closing but the setting of life's sun; death, but a sleep, is followed by a glorious awakening in the morning of an eternal

realm. When Mary and Martha saw their brother only as a corpse in the dark and silent tomb, Christ saw him still a living being. This fact he expressed in just two words: “Lazarus sleepeth.” (See John 11:11.)

### Reality of the resurrection

If everyone participating in Easter services knew that the crucified Christ actually rose on the third day from the tomb, that after having greeted others and mingled with others in the spirit world his spirit did again reanimate his pierced body, and after sojourning among men for the space of 40 days he ascended a glorified soul to his Father, what benign peace would come to souls now troubled with doubt and uncertainty!

On the reality of the resurrection in the minds of the apostles, the beginning of early Christianity was founded. For over four thousand years man had looked into the grave and had seen only the end of life. Of all the millions who had entered therein, not one had ever returned.

It was, therefore, a new and glorious message that the angel gave to the woman who, fearfully and lovingly, had approached the sepulcher in which Jesus had been buried: “. . . Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here. . . .” (Mark 16:6.)

### A stupendous miracle

If a miracle is a supernatural event whose antecedent forces are beyond man's finite wisdom, then the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the most stupendous miracle of all time. In it stand revealed the omnipotence of God and the immortality of man.

The resurrection is a miracle, however, only in the sense that it is beyond man's comprehension and understanding. To all who accept it as a fact, it is but a manifestation of a uniform law of life. Because man does not understand the law, he calls it a miracle. Someday man's enlightenment may bring this momentous event out of the dusk of mystery into the broad day of understanding.

That the literal resurrection from the grave was a reality to the disciples who knew Christ intimately is a certainty. In their minds there was absolutely no doubt. They were witnesses of the fact. They knew, because their eyes beheld, their ears heard, their hands felt the corporeal presence of the risen Redeemer.

### Gloom of death banished

At Jesus' death, the apostles were stricken with gloom. When he lay dead, their hopes all but died. Their intense grief, the evident preparation for a permanent burial, combined to illustrate the prevalence of a fear that the redemption of Israel had failed.

Notwithstanding the often-repeated assurances of Christ that he would return to them after death, the apostles did not seem fully to comprehend it. At the crucifixion, they were frightened and discouraged. For two and one-half years they had been upheld and inspired by Christ's presence. But now he was gone. They were left alone, and they seemed confused, fearful, helpless.

The world would never have been stirred by men with such wavering, doubting, despairing minds as the apostles possessed on the day of the crucifixion.

What was it that suddenly changed these disciples to confident, fearless, heroic preachers of the gospel of Jesus Christ? It was the revelation that Christ had risen from the grave. His promises had been kept, his messianic mission fulfilled. In the words of an eminent writer, "The final and absolute seal of genuineness has been put on all his claims, and the indelible stamp of a divine authority upon all his teachings. The gloom of death had been banished by the glorious light of the presence of their Risen, Glorified Lord and Savior."

### Testimony of eyewitnesses

On the evidence and testimony of these unprejudiced, unexpectant, incredulous eyewitnesses of the risen Christ, faith in the resurrection has its impregnable foundation.

The direct evidence that the tomb

did not hold Jesus is threefold; (1) the marvelous transformation in the spirit and work of his disciples; (2) the practically universal belief of the early Church, as recorded in the Gospels; and (3) the direct testimony of Paul, the earliest New Testament writer.

### Latter-day witness

In the very beginning of this dispensation of the fulness of times, the 14-year-old Joseph Smith said:

"... 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!*" (Joseph Smith 2:17.)

Later, speaking of the reality of this vision, he testifies as follows:

"... I had seen a vision; I knew it, and I knew that God knew it, and I could not deny it, neither dared I do it; at least I knew that by so doing I would offend God, and come under condemnation." (Joseph Smith 2:25.)

Confirming the irrefutable testimony of Christ's early apostles, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints proclaims the glorious vision of the Prophet Joseph Smith:

"And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!

"For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father." (D&C 76:22-23.)

In the light of such unimpeachable testimony as given by the ancient apostles' testimony, dating from a few years subsequent to the event itself; in the light of that most marvelous revelation in this age of the living Christ, it seems difficult indeed to understand how men can still reject him and can doubt the immortality of man.

### The way, the truth, and the life

"How can we know the way?" asked Thomas, as he sat with his fellow apostles and their Lord at the

table after the supper on the memorable night of the betrayal; and Christ's divine answer was: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. . . ." (John 14:5-6.) And so he is! He is the source of our comfort, the inspiration of our life, the author of our salvation. If we want to know our relationship to God, we go to Jesus Christ. If we would know the truth of the immortality of the soul, we have it exemplified in the Savior's resurrection.

If we desire to learn the ideal life to lead among our fellowmen, we can find a perfect example in the life of Jesus. Whatsoever our noble desires, our lofty aspirations, our ideals in any phase of life, we can look to Christ and find perfection. So, in seeking a standard for moral manhood, we need only to go to the Man of Nazareth and in him find embodied all virtues that go to make the perfect man.

### **Virtues of perfect character**

The virtues that combined to make this perfect character are truth, justice, wisdom, benevolence, and self-control. His every thought, word, and deed were in harmony with divine law and, therefore, true. The channel of communication between him and the Father was constantly open, so that truth, which rests upon revelation, was always known to him.

His ideal of justice is summed up in the admonition: "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." (See Matt. 7:12.) His wisdom was so broad and deep that it comprehended the ways of men and the purposes of God. The apostles could not always comprehend the significance and depth of some of his simplest sayings; the lawyers could not entrap him, nor get the better of him in a discussion or argument; the greatest teachers were but pupils in his presence. Every act that is recorded of his short, though eventful, life was one of benevolence that comprehends charity and love. His self-control, whether exemplified in his power over his appetites and passions or his dignity and poise when before his persecutors, was perfect—it was divine.

Now, what are the teachings of the Church regarding these virtues and all they comprehend? If the Church fails to make men true, fails to foster moral manhood, then there is no reason for its existence, and its pretension to be Christ's Church is a farce.

### **Love of truth**

No man can be a true member of this Church and not love truth. Being true is a fundamental doctrine of the Church. When we stop to consider what this means, we begin to realize what an important element in character building truth is. A man who is true is upright, is conscientious, is honorable in all his dealings; he is faithful in fulfilling his obligations; he is trustworthy and diligent in the performance of duty; he is true to himself and, therefore, to his fellowmen and to his God.

### **Justice**

As for justice, all the teachings of the Church cry out against injustice, and its condemnation is most severe upon him who oppresses his brother. Members are admonished to use their authority justly, for "the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness." (D&C 121:36.) Justice is rendering to every man his due. To be just, one must of necessity be honest, fair, and impartial. He will be respectful and reverential. It is impossible for a man to be just and at the same time be disrespectful or irreverent, for when disrespectful or irreverent, he is unjust in not giving respect and reverence where they are merited. True manhood possesses justice and is an attribute of the divine nature.

### **Honesty**

Honesty, as included in justice, is the first virtue mentioned in the Church's thirteenth Article of Faith. It is impossible to associate manhood with dishonesty. To be just with one's self, one must be honest with one's self and with others. This means honesty in speech as well as in actions. It means to avoid telling half-truths as well as

untruths. It means that we are honest in our dealings—in our buying as well as in our selling. It means that an honest debt can never be outlawed, and that a man's word is better than his bond. It means that we will be honest in our dealings with the Lord, for "true honesty takes into account the claims of God as well as those of man; it renders to God the things that are God's, as well as to man the things that are man's."

### Wisdom

Wisdom: ". . . seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith." (D&C 88:118.) Such is the commandment of the Lord given to this generation through the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the full significance of it may be more fully realized when we know that man's eternal salvation—God's greatest gift to man—is dependent upon his knowledge; for "it is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance." (D&C 131:6.) Wisdom is the right use of knowledge and comprehends judgment, discrimination, prudence, discretion, and study. "To know is not to be wise," says Spurgeon. "Many men know a great deal and are all the greater fools for it. There is no fool so great a fool as a knowing fool. But to know how to use knowledge is to have wisdom."

### Benevolence

Benevolence in its fullest sense is the sum of moral excellence, and comprehends every other virtue. It is the motive that prompts us to do good to others and leads us to live our life for Christ's sake. All acts of kindness, of self-denial, of self-devotion, of forgiveness, of charity, of love, spring from this divine attribute. So when we say "we believe in being benevolent," we declare a belief in all the virtues that go to make a Christ-like character. A benevolent man is kind and true to his family, is active for good in his city and state, and is a faithful worker in the Church.

### Virtue of self-control

Great as are these virtues I have named, they do not seem so practical and applicable to daily life as the virtue of self-control. It is as impossible to think of moral manhood apart from self-control as to separate sunlight from the day. Self-control means the government and regulation of all our natural appetites, desires, passions, and affections; and there is nothing that gives a man such strength of character as the sense of self-conquest, the realization that he can make his appetites and passions serve him and that he is not a servant to them. This virtue includes temperance, abstinence, bravery, fortitude, hopefulness, sobriety, chastity, independence, tolerance, patience, submission, continence, purity.

One of the most practical teachings of the Church regarding this principle is the Word of Wisdom. It is true. It deals principally with the appetite. You show me a man who has complete control over his appetite, who can resist all temptations to indulge in stimulants, liquor, tobacco, marijuana, and other vicious drugs, and I will show you a youth or man who has likewise developed power to control his passions and desires.

### Loss Through Indulgence

As I have read recently of the prevalent use of these drugs among our high school and university students and others, I have become greatly alarmed. With all my heart I warn the youth of our Church and of this nation that they will lose their manhood and womanhood if they yield to this enticement of Satan. A person who indulges his appetites, either secretly or otherwise, has a character that will not serve him when he is tempted to indulge his passions.

The sexual impurity of the world today is the result of the loss of true manhood through indulgence. Unchaste thoughts have bred unchaste words, and unchaste words, unchaste acts. In the teachings of the Church, next to the crime of murder comes that

of adultery, and sexual unchastity. If the members of the Church will remain true to their belief in chastity, and will develop true manhood through practicing self-control in other ways, they will stand as beacon lights whose rays will penetrate a sin-stained world.

### A Troublous Age

We are indeed living in a troublous age, and many people in the Church, as well as millions in the world, are stirred with anxiety; hearts are heavy with feelings of foreboding. At the crucifixion of Christ, a little group of men faced a future that was just as threatening and foreboding to them as that which the world faces today. Their future, so far as Christ's triumph on earth was concerned, seemed all but blighted. They had been called and set apart to be "fishers" of men, and to Peter had been given the keys of the kingdom.

Notwithstanding all this, in that hour of despondency, when the resurrected Christ said to Peter, the discouraged leader of the Twelve, who had turned to his old vocation of fishing: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" Peter answered, "Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." Said the Lord, "Feed my sheep." (John 21:15-16.) On that occasion Peter became conscious of his responsibility, not only as a fisher of men, but also as a shepherd of the flock. It was then that he sensed finally and completely the full meaning of the divine injunction, "Follow me." (John 21:19.) With that never-failing light, those 12 humble men succeeded in changing the course of human relations.

### True guide to mankind

Jesus' teachings may be applied just as efficaciously to social groups and national problems as to individuals, if men would only give them a trial. In our efforts to develop true manhood, we must accept Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is the Light of Humanity. In that light man sees his way clearly. When it is rejected, the soul of man stumbles in darkness.

It is a sad thing when individuals and nations extinguish that light—when Christ and his gospel are supplanted by the law of the jungle and the strength of the sword. The chief tragedy in the world at the present time is its disbelief in God and his goodness.

The gospel, the glad tidings of great joy, is the true guide to mankind; and that man or woman is happiest and most content who lives nearest to its teachings, which are the antitheses of hatred, persecution, tyranny, domination, injustice—things which foster tribulation, destruction, and death throughout the world. What the sun in the heavenly blue is to the earth struggling to get free from winter's grip, so the gospel of Jesus Christ is to the sorrowing souls yearning for something higher and better than mankind has yet found on earth.

What a glorious condition will be in this old world when it can truthfully be said to Christ, the Redeemer of mankind, "All men seek for thee." (Mark 1:37.) Selfishness, envy, hatred, lying, stealing, cheating, disobedience, quarreling, and fighting among nations will then be no more!

### Testimony of risen Lord

Brethren and sisters, I have cherished from childhood the truth that God is a personal being and is, indeed, our Father whom we can approach in prayer and receive answers thereto. My testimony of the risen Lord is just as real as Thomas', who said to the resurrected Christ when he appeared to his disciples: "My Lord and my God." (John 20:28.) I know that he lives. He is God made manifest in the flesh; and I know that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12.)

I know that he will confer with his servants who seek him in humility and in righteousness. I know because I have heard his voice, and I have received his guidance in matters pertaining to his kingdom here on earth.

### Divinity of restored church

I know that his Father, our Creator,

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lives. I know that they appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith and revealed to him the revelations which we now have recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants and in other Church works. This knowledge is as real to me as that which occurs in our daily lives. When we lay our bodies down at night, we know—we have an assurance—that the sun will rise in the morning and shed its glory over all the earth. So near to me is the knowledge of Christ's existence and divinity of this restored Church.

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are under obligation to make the sinless Son of Man their ideal—the One Perfect Being who ever walked the earth.

God bless the Church, particularly our young people who are going to maintain its standards. God bless fathers and mothers and teachers who instill this faith in the hearts of the youth and proclaim it throughout the world, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President Hugh B. Brown

I am sure that the profound and inspiring message from our President will find an echo in the hearts of all of us. It is a fitting and inspiring keynote to this great conference.

President Joseph Fielding Smith, president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, will now address us.

### President Joseph Fielding Smith

President of the Council of the Twelve and Counselor in the First Presidency

My dear brothers and sisters, it is a pleasure to me to have the privilege of being here with you in this conference.

We as Latter-day Saints have a great many duties to perform. I wonder if we do not sometimes get a little careless, a little thoughtless, a little neglectful; and we do not pay attention to the simple things that belong to the gospel.

#### Reasons for prayer

I wonder if we ever stop to think why the Lord has asked us to pray. Did he ask us to pray because he wants us to bow down and worship him? Is that the main reason? I don't think it is. He is our Heavenly Father, and we have been commanded to worship him and pray to him in the name of his Beloved Son, Jesus Christ. But the Lord can get along without our prayers. His work will go on just the same, whether we pray or whether we do not. He knows the end from the beginning. There are many worlds that have passed through the same experience that we are going through. He has had sons and daughters on other earths, where they have had the same privileges and the same opportunities

to serve him and the same commandments that we have had given to us. Prayer is something that we need, not that the Lord needs. He knows just how to conduct his affairs and how to take care of them without any help from us. Our prayers are not for the purpose of telling him how to run his business. If we have any such idea as that, then of course we have the wrong idea. Our prayers are uttered more for our sakes, to build us up and give us strength and courage, and to increase our faith in him.

Prayer is something that humbles the soul. It broadens our comprehension; it quickens the mind. It draws us nearer to our Father in heaven. We need his help; there is no question about that. We need the guidance of his Holy Spirit. We need to know what principles have been given to us by which we may come back into his presence. We need to have our minds quickened by the inspiration that comes from him; and for these reasons we pray to him, that he may help us to live so that we will know his truth and be able to walk in its light, that we may, through our faithfulness and our obedience, come back again into his presence.