

lude, and then Elder Harold B. Lee, one of the senior members of the Council of the Twelve, will be our concluding speaker.

The Tabernacle Choir sang the anthem, "Listen to the Lambs," following which there was a brief organ interlude.

Elder Harold B. Lee

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My beloved brothers and sisters, you in this vast audience that we can see, and you who may be listening elsewhere to the proceedings of this conference, I am reassured this morning by a revelation in which the Lord has said that if one speaks by the Spirit and others listen by the Spirit, all of us may be edified together. I therefore yield myself to the spirit of this great conference, and I invite this vast audience to listen by that same spirit.

Friends of the Lord

Recently, during a mission tour, I listened to a brilliant young man bear his testimony wherein he quoted a recorded incident in which the Master referred to his disciples as his "friends." Then the young man impressively expressed his most fervent hope that he too could so conduct his life that one day the Master would find him worthy to be called by the Lord "his friend."

Possibly he had read what the apostle James had said about Father Abraham: "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God." (Jas. 2:23.)

He remembered what the Master had said as he defined the bond of brotherhood existing between him and his disciples. The Master said:

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you:

"Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." (John 15:13-15.)

System hostile to God

The apostle James had elsewhere declared: ". . . a friend of the world is the enemy of God." (Jas. 4:4.)

The use of the word "world" in this sense is defined in the scriptures when speaking of the "end of the world" as the destruction of the wickedness that is in the world. (See Joseph Smith 1:4.)

The world to which the apostles James and John and the Master make reference is that moral and spiritual system which is hostile to God and which seeks to delude us into thinking that we and mankind generally do not need God. It is a society which in every age has operated and is operating on wrong principles, from selfish desires, from improper motives, unworthy standards, and false values. Those who do not accept God's revelation through his prophets have devised numerous philosophies from their limited human reasoning and seemingly think that they can find happiness and the satisfaction of their souls by ignoring God's plan of salvation.

One of the greatest threats to the work of the Lord today comes from false educational ideas. There is a growing tendency of teachers within and without the Church to make academic interpretations of gospel teachings—to read, as a prophet-leader has said, "by the lamp of their own conceit." Unfortunately, much in the sciences, the arts, politics, and the entertainment field, as has been well said by an eminent scholar, is "all dominated by this humanistic approach which ignores God and his word as revealed through the prophets." This kind of worldly system apparently hopes to draw men away from God by making man the "measure of all things," as some worldly philosophers have said.

Measure of good and evil

That this danger would be among us today was foreshadowed by the ancient prophets, who gave us a sure measure by which we might know that which is of God and that which emanates from evil sources.

Here is a prophet speaking: ". . . for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.

"But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; for after this manner doth the devil work; for he persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels, neither do they who subject themselves unto him." (Moro. 7:16-17.)

You will note that this statement makes no distinction as to whether it be labeled as religion, philosophy, science, or politics, or ugly dress patterns of today, or the world of so-called entertainment.

Nature of eternal struggle

True Christians who know the word of God understand that there are invisible forces which are waging war against God and his people who are striving to do his will.

The apostle Paul understood this and clearly depicts the nature of this eternal struggle. He wrote to the Ephesians: "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 Master referred to Satan as the "prince of this world" when he warned: "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." (John 14:30.)

At the same time our Lord gave them comfort with his words: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

"Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a

little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, . . . for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." (John 12:31, 35.)

If we would be free from the pitfalls of these evil forces, we must understand the Master's words. Satan and his hordes are ever present in the midst of us. We must make certain that when he comes, as the Master warned, he will have nothing on us and will go away and leave us alone. As long as we walk in the light of the revealed truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we need never walk in darkness but may always be sure of our course and know "whither [we] goeth."

Present threats to the kingdom

One of our pioneer leaders foresaw this battle with invisible forces that would come to us in these supposedly sheltered valleys. It was as though this prophet-leader saw the very conditions existing in 1968, in which some would be relaxing in fancied security, thinking that they were well isolated from the outside world. While his words are directed to those in these mountain valleys, they could just as well be applied to the Church members as well as Christian peoples everywhere.

In this prophetic statement he said: ". . . we think we are secure here in the chambers of these everlasting hills, where we can close those few doors of the canyons against . . . the wicked and the vile . . . but I want to say to you, my brethren, the time is coming when we will be mixed up in these now peaceful valleys to that extent that it will be difficult to tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy to the people of God. . . ." (Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, p. 446.)

Need I say more to this people, in light of present threats to the influence of the kingdom of God in this state and elsewhere? Now is the time for the Saints and righteous people in this and other lands to again revive that old rallying song of our fathers:

"Who's on the Lord's side? Who?

Now is the time to show;

We ask it fearlessly;

Who's on the Lord's side? Who?"

(*Hymns*, No. 175.)

It seems a curious thing that in all dispensations, our worst enemies have been those within—who have betrayed the works of the Lord. There were the sons of Mosiah and the younger Alma before their miraculous conversions. It was so in the days of the Master, who said of his betrayer, Judas, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (John 6:70.) Likewise did Joseph Smith have his betrayers.

We may well expect to find our Judases among those professing membership, but, unfortunately for them, they are laboring under some kind of evil influences or have devious motives.

Troubled state of world

A great thinker and scientist describes most aptly the troubled state of the world today. Said he: "Rarely before has mankind had such an urgent need for the guidance and healing qualities of spiritual insight, because rarely before has man been so confused and frightened.

"The tomorrows ahead of us will be crowded with great challenges and opportunities. But they will be crowded, too, with great dangers.

"Already the human race has at its disposal the power to destroy in a moment what it would take many years to rebuild. And the precious lives that would be extinguished could never be rebuilt." (David Sarnoff, *Wisdom*, April 1958.)

Over one hundred years ago the Lord spoke to our day as though we were then present. He said: ". . . in that day shall be heard of wars and rumors of wars, and the whole earth shall be in commotion, and men's hearts shall fail them, and they shall say that Christ delayeth his coming until the end of the earth.

"And there shall be earthquakes also in divers places, and many desolations; yet men will harden their hearts against me, and they will take up the sword, one against another, and they shall kill one another." (D&C 45:26, 33.)

Places of safety

In these days of our generation,

many of you are asking: Where is safety?

The word of the Lord is not silent. He has admonished us: "But my disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved; but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God and die." (D&C 45:32.)

The Lord has told us where these "holy places" are: "And it shall come to pass among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety." (D&C 45:68.)

Where is Zion?

During the various periods of time or dispensations, and for specific reasons, the Lord's prophets, his "mouth-pieces," as it were, have designated gathering places where the Saints were to gather. After designating certain such places in our dispensation, the Lord then declared: "Until the day cometh when there is found no more room for them; and then I have other places which I will appoint unto them, and they shall be called stakes, for the curtains or the strength of Zion." (D&C 101:21.)

Thus, clearly the Lord has placed the responsibility of directing the work of gathering in the hands of his divinely appointed leaders. May I fervently pray that all Saints and truth-seekers everywhere will attune their listening ears to these prophet-leaders instead of to some demagogue who seeks to make capital of social discount and gain political influence.

Meaning of Zion

There are several meanings of the word Zion.

It may have reference to the hill named Mt. Zion or by extension in the land of Jerusalem.

It has sometimes been used, as by the prophet Micah, to refer to the location of "the mountain of the house of the Lord"—as some place apart from Jerusalem.

Zion was so called by Enoch in reference to the "City of Holiness," or the "City of Enoch." The Land of Zion has been used to refer, in some connotations, to the Western Hemisphere.

Saturday, October 5

Second Day

But there is another most significant use of the term by which the Church of God is called Zion, comprising, according to the Lord's own definition, "the pure in heart." (D&C 97:21.)

As one studies the Lord's commandments and attending promises upon compliance therewith, one gets some definite ideas as to how we might "stand in holy places," as the Lord commands—if we will be preserved with such protection as accords with his holy purposes, in order that we might be numbered among the "pure in heart" who constitute Zion, as I have read from the Lord's own words.

Beacon lights

Listen to some of the Lord's beacon lights pointing the way to safety. Some have been referred to already in this service.

If you would have the windows of heaven opened and have blessings poured out "that there should not be room enough to receive it," then "bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house," as the Lord commanded through his prophet Malachi. (Mal. 3:10.)

If you would keep yourself and your own "unspotted from the sins of the world," the Lord said you should "go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day." (D&C 59:9.)

In other words, keep the Sabbath day holy!

If you would qualify so that in times of trouble you could call and the Lord would answer, that you could cry and the Lord would say, "Here I am," the Lord gave the answer through his prophet Isaiah: You must observe the fast day of the Lord and deal out your "bread to the hungry . . . and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh." (See Isa. 58:9, 7.)

If you would escape from the devastations when God's judgments descend upon the wicked, as in the days of the children of Israel, you must remember and do what the Lord commands: ". . . all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings," meaning keep

his great law of health, known as the Word of Wisdom to you Latter-day Saints, and in addition thereto "walk in obedience" to the commandments, which would include honesty, moral purity, together with all the laws of the celestial kingdom, then "the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them." (See D&C 89:18, 21.)

Hear the proclamation

Now, in conclusion may I say with words familiar to many of us and in the language of my young missionary friend to whom I have made reference, in a song that we often sing:

"Hear, O men, the proclamation:
Cease from vanity and strife;
Hasten to receive the gospel,
And obey the words of life.

"Soon the earth will hear the warning.
Then the judgments will descend!
Oh, before the days of sorrow
Make the Lord of hosts your friend!

"Then when dangers are around you
And the wicked are distressed,
You, with all the Saints of Zion,
Shall enjoy eternal rest."

(*Hymns*, No. 342.)

As one studies the commandments of God, it seems to be made crystal clear that the all-important thing is not where we live but whether or not our hearts are pure. "In this dark world of strife," as this wonderful choir has sung, may we pray: "Father in heaven, Guide me to thee!"

God grant that it may be so for all of those whose minds are distressed and who are worried and frightened during these disturbing times: "Stand ye in holy places and be not moved." (See D&C 46:32.) ". . . watch, therefore, for you know not at what hour your Lord doth come." (Joseph Smith 1:46.) The Lord's promises are sure, and his word will not fail. To that I testify and bear solemn witness that he lives, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.