

Sunday, October 6

Third Day

ing as he has done in all the other meetings of our Conference. He has asked me to conduct this session, and to extend his blessings and heartfelt greetings to all.

It is a great pleasure for us to welcome our special guests, including Federal and State officials, civic and educational leaders, and all who are present this morning in this Tabernacle, together with the vast television and radio audience in this the sixth session of the 138th Semi-Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The Tabernacle Choir under the direction of Richard P. Condie, with Alexander Schreiner at the organ, will open these services by singing, "The Last Words of David," following which Elder L. Flake Rogers, president of the East Provo Stake, will offer the invocation.

Selection by the Choir, "The Last Words of David."

President L. Flake Rogers of the East Provo Stake offered the invocation.

---

### President N. Eldon Tanner

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing, "I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes," after which President Alvin R. Dyer, a counselor in the First Presidency will speak to us.

---

Singing by the Tabernacle Choir:  
"I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes."

### President N. Eldon Tanner

President Alvin R. Dyer, a counselor in the First Presidency will be our first speaker this morning.

## President Alvin R. Dyer

### *Of the First Presidency*

My brothers and sisters and friends of our vast television audience, I occupy this position this morning by assignment from our beloved leader, President David O. McKay. We are so grateful he is present with us this morning, and I bear record that he is a prophet of God.

### The destiny of America

My talk this morning concerns the destiny of America, which directly and indirectly affects all of mankind.

Since the founding of this country, political leaders have spoken of the greatness of America and of its place in the world as the cradle of freedom and democracy, with a destiny to disseminate these principles throughout the world.

We have witnessed America's attempt at this by various methods, but she is learning by hard and costly experience that freedom cannot be *taken* or *given* to any people, nor can it be bought. America of today will need to learn the lesson, as did our Founding Fathers, that freedom must

be *sought* after with courage and sacrifice, and that she cannot maintain it at home or convey it unto others, unless this type of pursuit is involved.

As to the destiny of America, politically speaking, I am not prepared to say, but I do know that long before the ships of Columbus touched the shores of the New World, long before our independence and our Founding Fathers established a new nation, events had long since transpired to give unto this land, which we now call America, its committed purpose and destiny.

### True destiny spiritual

I have a firm conviction that the true destiny of America is *religious*, not political; it is *spiritual*, not physical.

Much has been said by many of the purpose of its founding. The Prophet Joseph Smith himself declared its constitution to be heavenly inspired, and because of this we earnestly pray for its purposeful continuity. But noble and great as are the political phases of its establishment, its real significance lies in its spiritual purpose, for which it

was truly founded. I have chosen two of these spiritual and therefore God-purposed reasons for reference:

First: America was founded to fulfill a covenant that God made with the patriarchal ancestors of the house of Israel. The Lord, speaking unto a remnant of this house who had inhabited this land, had this to say:

"For it is wisdom in the Father that they should be established in this land, and be set up as a free people by the power of the Father, that these things might come forth from them unto a remnant of your seed, that the covenant of the Father may be fulfilled which he hath covenanted with his people, O house of Israel." (3 Ne. 21:4.)

#### Preservation of moral agency

Second: America and its constitution were founded to preserve unto mankind the God-given right of moral agency. I quote from a revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith on this subject:

"According to the laws and constitution of the people, which I have suffered to be established, and should be maintained for the rights and protection of all flesh, according to just and holy principles;

"That every man may act in doctrine and principle pertaining to futurity, according to the moral agency which I have given unto him, that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment.

"Therefore, it is not right that any man should be in bondage one to another,

"And for this purpose have I established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose, and redeemed the land by the shedding of blood." (D&C 101:77-80. Italics added.)

The people whom Columbus found were the ebbing remnants of those who came to this land by heavenly direction and in fulfillment of the covenants which God had enacted long before their migrations and occupancy of the land, which the Lord announced to them as a land of promise and inheritance.

#### Migration of Jaredites

According to the Book of Mormon, the Jaredites began their migration to this land at the time when the great tower of Babel was under construction. This occurred in about the year 2200 B.C. At this time the language of the people was confused. This tower has been identified in our modern time at a place called Hillah in modern Iraq, southwest of the city of Baghdad, on the east bank of the Euphrates River. Here is found a ruin known as Birs Nimrud, standing like a watchtower on a vast plain. Inscriptions on the pyramid-shaped ruins were found by Professor Rawlinson to bear the name of "The Temple of the Seven Planets." This ruin is supposed to be what is left of the Tower of Babel.

In the course of the travels of the Jaredites, first northward into the valley of Nimrod and then, after crossing many lakes and rivers, eventually reaching the great sea which separated the continents, they established a community named Moriancumer after their great leader, the brother of Jared. (See Eth. 2:1-6, 13.)

We learn that the Lord gave instructions to the brother of Jared for the building of submersible barges that would enable his colony to cross the great waters to a land of promise, concerning which Mahonri-Moriancumer wrote:

"And now, we can behold the decrees of God concerning this land, that it is a land of promise; and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall serve God, or they shall be swept off when the fulness of his wrath shall come upon them. And the fulness of his wrath cometh upon them when they are ripened in iniquity.

"For behold, this is a land which is choice above all other lands; wherefore he that doth possess it shall serve God or shall be swept off; for it is the everlasting decree of God." (Eth. 2:9-10.)

#### Lehi led to promised land

About 1,600 years later, or 600 B.C., a prophet by the name of Lehi with his family left doomed Jerusalem, as the Lord had directed him. Lehi and

his colony, as with the Jaredites many centuries before, were to be led to the promised land. Speaking unto Nephi, the son of Lehi, while they were yet in the wilderness prior to their embarkation, the Lord said:

"And inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments, ye shall prosper, and shall be led to a land of promise; yea, even a land which I have prepared for you; yea, a land which is choice above all other lands." (1 Ne. 2:20.)

Eventually, after much tribulation and a perilous journey over the great waters in a ship built as directed by the Lord, Lehi and his colony, somewhat enlarged since their departure from Jerusalem, reached the promised land, probably in the year of 589 B.C.

Later, Nephi made this declaration:

"But," said he, "notwithstanding our afflictions, we have obtained a land of promise, a land which is choice above all other lands; a land which the Lord God hath covenanted with me should be a land for the inheritance of my seed. Yea, the Lord hath covenanted this land unto me, and to my children forever, and also all those who should be led out of other countries by the hand of the Lord." (2 Ne. 1:5.)

### Land of man's beginning

While the Reformation and the surge for freedom were gaining momentum in Europe and England, events were transpiring that led to the re-discovery of the land of America, for God touched the heart of a mariner by the name of Christopher Columbus, who eventually pioneered a passage-way to the promised land in 1492. But neither Columbus, the Nephites, nor the Jaredites were its original discoverers, nor did they establish the purpose of America's destiny. This had already been established in the infancy of earth's habitation. In these migrations they were but directed to the land of man's beginning upon the earth.

### Christ's visit to America

We have learned that following his earth-life ministry among the Jews, visiting the sheep of another fold here in the land of America and establishing his Church among the people, the

resurrected Christ tells of the founding of America and the coming forth again of his gospel unto the remnant of the seed of those then occupying this land, and unto all of the children of God. This was to follow a period of spiritual darkness upon the earth. In this declaration the Lord tells of the sacred destiny of the great land of America, and I quote the words of the Savior:

"And verily I say unto you, I give unto you a sign, that ye may know the time when these things shall be about to take place—that I shall gather in, from their long dispersion, my people, O house of Israel, and shall establish again among them my Zion." (3 Ne. 21:1.)

### The land of inheritances

The Lord in the following declaration designates the land of America as the land of inheritances unto those who are of the house of Israel, who shall be gathered from throughout the earth, for, said he:

"And then shall the remnants, which shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, be gathered in from the east and from the west, and from the south and from the north; and they shall be brought to the knowledge of the Lord their God, who hath redeemed them.

"And the Father hath commanded me that I should give unto you this land, for your inheritance.

"And behold, this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; and it shall be a New Jerusalem. And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you." (3 Ne. 20:13-14, 22.)

To speak of America, both north and south, as "the choice land," "a land consecrated," we will need to go back to the beginning for an understanding.

### The Garden of Eden

From the writings of the prophet Moses, dealing with the placement of man upon the earth, this statement is made:

"And I, the Lord God, planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there I

put the man whom I had formed." (Moses 3:8.)

Then, as it was not good for man to be alone, a helpmeet, or a woman, was placed beside him, that both man and woman together could occupy the garden thus planted.

As to what and where the Garden of Eden was, it is well to call to mind that in the process of the creation, during the third period, all waters were gathered in one place, and the dry land was in one place. The land was called earth and the waters sea.

The dry land, or earth, is also given another name, that of Eden, and it was eastward in Eden or eastward on the dry land that the garden of our first earth-life parents was placed.

In the course of time from the creation, in the days of Peleg, or about the year 2200 B.C., just prior to the confusion of the languages, the single continent of land that had continued from creation was divided to produce the hemispheres as we now know them. But notwithstanding this, the geographic location of the Garden of Eden was made known to the Prophet Joseph Smith by revelation as here in the land of America, in Jackson County, Missouri, with Independence as the center place.

### Beginning of mortal life

When Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden, they traveled in a northerly direction less than 100 miles to settle in a place that we now have come to know by the revealed word of God as Adam-ondi-Ahman. (See D&C 116.) Here is where mortal family life began, as Adam and Eve begat sons and daughters, all of this here in the land of America.

Adam and Eve, shut out from the presence of God, settled in the place of their earthly abode and called upon God. They were instructed to offer the firstlings of their flocks upon altars as a sacrifice unto the Lord, to which commandment they were obedient even though they did not know the reason. An angel of the Lord then appeared and explained the similitude of the sacrifice of Christ the Lord, who would come to earth at an appointed time. Thereafter the gospel plan of

salvation and exaltation, by reconciliation with God the Father, from whose presence they had been banished, was revealed for the first time to man upon the earth.

### Keys of salvation given to Adam

The Holy Priesthood, after the order of the Son of God, which "administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God" (D&C 84:19), was conferred upon Adam. Hence, unto Adam, the great progenitor of the human family, were given the "keys of salvation." The Lord, or Ahman, thus made known unto Adam and Eve that though they had fallen and were subject to both physical and spiritual deaths, they could be redeemed and reconciled with God the Father.

In conferring the "keys of salvation" upon Adam, the revealing and unlocking of the conditions of salvation were made known to them and through them to mankind. In this we can understand the true meaning of the term "Adam-ondi-Ahman," or simply: from "Ahman," who is the Lord—"ondi," meaning through Adam unto mankind.

In the revelation referred to, but to which more attention is now given, the Lord speaks clearly of the "keys of salvation" having been given to Adam (or Michael, his premortal name), identifying the purpose for which they were conferred.

"That you may come up unto the crown prepared for you, and be made rulers over many kingdoms, saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Zion, who hath established the foundations of Adam-ondi-Ahman;

"Who hath appointed Michael your prince, and established his feet, and set him upon high, and given unto him the keys of salvation under the counsel and direction of the Holy One, who is without beginning of days or end of life." (D&C 78:15-16.)

"... for it is necessary in the ushering in of the dispensation of the fulness of times, which dispensation is now beginning to usher in, that a whole and complete and perfect union, and welding together of dispensations, and keys, and powers, and glories should

Sunday, October 6

Third Day

take place, and be revealed from the days of Adam even to the present time." (D&C 128:18.)

### A choice land

Thus, from these brief accounts we see the reasons why America, or the continent of America, is the promised and choice land, choice above all other lands, for it was here that the habitation of man began, and here that the covenants of God were first established. And it is from the center of this land that God has started his great latter-day work that will carry to the finish.

It is of compelling interest to learn that in the sequence of the Lord's time, the earth and the waters will return to their original place. On this subject we have this revelation from the Lord:

"And he shall utter his voice out of Zion, and he shall speak from Jerusalem, and his voice shall be heard among all people;

"And it shall be a voice as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder, which shall break down the mountains, and the valleys shall not be found.

"He shall command the great deep, and it shall be driven back into the north countries, and the islands shall become one land;

"And the land of Jerusalem and the land of Zion shall be turned back into their own place, and the earth shall be like as it was in the days before it was divided.

"And the Lord, even the Savior, shall stand in the midst of his people, and shall reign over all flesh." (D&C 133: 21-25.)

### Zion will not fail

America as Zion will not fail. Since America is the land choice above all other lands, and it is in the "Center Place" that Zion will be established, it will not fail.

America as Zion will not fail, not

simply because it is the land of our illustrious independence and constitutional fathers, but because it is the land of Joseph, the son of Jacob, and has been so established by God's covenant. It is the land for the gathering of Israel in the culminating period of the last dispensation, which God has established through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

To accomplish his purposes in the destiny of America as Zion, we have these words from the Lord concerning his people:

"But first let my army become very great, and let it be sanctified before me, that it may become fair as the sun, and clear as the moon, and that her banners may be terrible unto all nations." (D&C 105:31.)

I bear testimony of the fulfillment and the destiny of the land of America as Zion, and I do it in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President N. Eldon Tanner

He to whom we have just listened is President Alvin R. Dyer of the First Presidency.

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing, "Let Their Celestial Concerts All Unite," after which Elder Franklin D. Richards, Assistant to the Twelve, will address us.

---

The Tabernacle Choir sang the anthem, "Let Their Celestial Concerts All Unite."

---

### President N. Eldon Tanner

To those who have just tuned in on this Conference we wish to extend a hearty welcome.

Elder Franklin D. Richards, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us.