

the Brigham Young University Seventh Stake offered the opening prayer.

which President Nathan Eldon Tanner, a counselor in the First Presidency of the Church, will speak to us.

President Hugh B. Brown

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing "Souls of the Righteous," after

The Tabernacle Choir sang the number, "Souls of the Righteous."

PRESIDENT N. ELDON TANNER

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

On behalf of the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and the other General Authorities, I wish to extend a warm welcome to our radio and television audiences to join with us here in this historic Tabernacle on Temple Square this lovely Easter morning.

Commemoration of resurrection

We are commemorating today the greatest event that has ever taken place in the history of mortal man: the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Creator of the world, who came and gave his life for us and was resurrected. The fact that Christ rose from the dead has made secure the resurrection of all mankind from the grave and offers an opportunity for them to return to their Father in heaven. Yes, all sons and daughters of Adam and Eve are to be resurrected, raised from the dead, and each shall enjoy the glory for which he has prepared himself.

The birth, life, death and resurrection, and the message of our Lord and Savior is the central theme of all scriptures—the Old Testament, the New Testament, and our latter-day scriptures, the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price. What would the scriptures be without this message? All other things lose their meaning and purpose and fade into insignificance.

Joseph Smith, the Prophet, said: "The fundamental principles of our religion are the testimonies of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and

ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it." (*Documentary History of the Church*, Vol. 3, p. 30.)

In fact, without this great message of the Redeemer, we are left without a purpose, without an anchor, and without hope.

Predictions of resurrection

As the Christian world commemorates the crucifixion and resurrection of our Savior, who is the source of Christianity, I should like to review some of the predictions and events surrounding this most important occasion. Centuries before the crucifixion of the Savior, the psalmist wrote:

"... the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

"They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." (Ps. 22:16, 18.)

Also centuries before, Isaiah said: "... he hath poured out his soul unto death: ... and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." (Isa. 53:12.)

Long before the birth of Christ, Alma was asked: "What does this mean which Amulek hath spoken concerning the resurrection of the dead, that all shall rise from the dead, both the just and the unjust, and are brought to stand before God to be judged according to their works?" (Al. 12:8.)

In his discourse following this question, Alma explained: "... it meaneth the reuniting of the soul with the body. . . ." (Al. 40:18.)

Jesus also predicted his death and resurrection time and again as he went about his mission. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John record such statements as: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." (John 6:51.)

Again: "... he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

"But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him." (Mark 9:31-32.)

Purpose of Christ's mission

Christ himself, however, clearly understood the purpose of his mission and what would happen; and as the time approached, he was very much concerned. As he felt the time pressing upon him he prayed:

"... Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

"Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." (John 12:27-28.)

Let us try to visualize what took place as Christ was with his apostles at the Passover.

"And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me.

"And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I? ...

"And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish." (Mark 14:18-20.)

Following this they went out into the Mount of Olives and came to a place called Gethsemane. Leaving his disciples there, he took with him Peter, James, and John, "And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

"And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that,

if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

"And he said, . . . Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt." (Mark 14:34-36.)

As he returned to Peter, James, and John, who were not fully aware of what was taking place, he found them asleep. He left them a second and third time and prayed the same words, but each time as he returned he found them asleep again. Finding them asleep the third time, he said: "Sleep on now, and take your rest: . . . the hour is come. . ." (Mark 14:41.) How alone he must have felt!

Betrayal and trial

Immediately following this we see Judas Iscariot betraying his Master with a kiss. We remember how he was led away to the high priests and how there he was falsely accused, but the witnesses disagreed. When he answered that he was Christ, the Son of God, they ridiculed him, spat upon him, and struck him and told him to prophesy. "... And they all condemned him to be guilty of death." (Mark 14:64.)

As the Jews could not impose the death penalty in the Sanhedrin, he was taken to Pilate. Pilate said, after questioning him, "I find no fault in this man." (Luke 23:4.) The multitude then renewed their demand for his crucifixion. Pilate, learning he was a Galilean, sent him to Herod, but Herod sent him back, not knowing what judgment to pass. Pilate again began to examine Jesus. At least three times he pleaded with the multitude to release Jesus instead of Barabbas, who was guilty of murder, but each time they said, "... release unto us Barabbas," and when he asked concerning Jesus, they cried, "Crucify him." (Luke 23:18, 21.)

It is interesting to note that Pilate finally took water, "and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.

"Then answered all the people, and

said, His blood be on us, and on our children." (Matt. 27:24-25.)

The crucifixion

As he was turned over to be crucified, he was scourged, and a wreath of thorns was placed upon his head. In his agony, as he was hanging on the cross, the Savior cried out in his God-like manner, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34.)

Also, while hanging on the cross, he made this very significant statement to one of the thieves who pleaded for mercy: ". . . To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:43.)

While he lay in the tomb, the chief priests and Pharisees went to Pilate, "Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.

"Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

"Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can." (Matt. 27:63-65.)

Try to imagine how heavyhearted, discouraged, and gloomy the apostles and others who had followed Jesus were as they realized their leader had been crucified. They were left alone, in doubt, confused, not knowing what to do. Though they had been with him and had listened to his words, they had not understood him when he said he would rise again. They thought their cause was lost. Peter said, "I go a fishing." Others said, "We also go with thee." (John 21:3.) They were prepared to go back to their old vocations.

Evidences of resurrection

Let us review briefly some of the visual demonstrations that were given in the early days following the resurrection, or the irrefutable evidence of the fact that he was literally resurrected.

In the early morning of the third day Mary Magdalene and others came to the tomb with the idea of preparing the body for a proper burial. How surprised, fearful, and perplexed they were to find the tomb was empty. An angel who was in the tomb said: "Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

"He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. . . ." (Matt. 28:5-6.)

They were told to go and tell the disciples, and also told that the risen Lord had gone to Galilee, where they would see him. Imagine their fear and great joy! On the way, Jesus appeared to them. They then hurried and reported their experience to the apostles, who doubted what they said. But Peter and John hastened to the sepulchre and found it to be true. Later two of the disciples, traveling to Emmaus, saw and talked to him. That same evening the apostles were sitting together and recounting the happenings of the day when suddenly the Savior stood among them, and said:

"Peace be unto you.

"But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

"And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

"And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet." (Luke 24:36-40.)

Thomas, who was not present on the first occasion, when told of the appearance refused to believe. A week later Christ appeared again to the eleven, including Thomas. When the Lord spoke, ". . . Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

"Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." (John 20:28-29.)

Later he appeared to over five hundred persons, most of whom were still living when Paul bore his testimony

that he had been visited by Christ and called to his ministry.

Appearance on American continent

Two other very important occasions on which the risen Lord appeared were on this the American continent. We read in the Book of Mormon that, as the Lamanite prophet, Samuel, had predicted concerning the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, there was darkness for the space of three days over the face of the land, and there was great and terrible destruction. Cities were destroyed, many persons were killed, and great was their terror and mourning, as they were heard to say: "O that we had repented before this great and terrible day, and had not killed and stoned the prophets, and cast them out; then would our mothers and our fair daughters, and our children have been spared. . . ." (3 Ne. 8:25.)

Following this great destruction, multitudes of the people who were saved gathered together around the temple in the land Bountiful. They heard a voice, as if it came out of heaven, but did not understand until it spoke a third time, saying: "Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name—hear ye him." (3 Ne. 11:7.)

And then they saw a man descending out of heaven. He showed them his hands and his feet, and said:

"Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world.

". . . I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning."

At his invitation, ". . . the multitude went forth . . . and did feel the prints of the nails in his hands and in his feet . . . and did know of a surety and did bear record, that it was he, of whom it was written by the prophets, that should come." (3 Ne. 11:10-11, 15.)

Modern-day testimony

Then we have the testimony of our modern-day prophet, Joseph Smith, 1,800 years following the crucifixion

and resurrection. He says that as he was kneeling in the grove in prayer, ". . . I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me.

". . . 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!*" (Joseph Smith 2:16-17.)

Here we have the testimony of a young man in this dispensation who actually saw and talked with the risen Lord, and who, as some of the prophets of old, sealed his testimony with his blood. These are the testimonies of only a few of those who knew and followed him.

Doubting Thomases

There are many, many in the world today, however, who find it hard to believe that there was a literal resurrection, and though the testimonies and evidences before them are irrefutable, it is difficult for them to believe because they do not understand just how it could take place. It leaves them as Thomas—doubting, because they have not seen.

We all know that there are many, many things in science which we do not understand, but which we must and do accept. Where would we be if the laws of nature and the laws of God were limited to man's understanding? We have been admonished: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." (Prov. 3:5.)

Acceptance on Faith

How much wiser we would be to accept the word of the Lord, the Creator of the world, and his teachings, and prepare ourselves for immortality and eternal life through accepting by faith those things we cannot understand. Our faith should be strengthened by the testimonies of all those who saw and talked with Christ, both in Jerusalem and here on the American continent.

How can anyone believe that these stories were concocted or are figments of the imagination, when there were so many predictions and testimonies of the prophets and others, living in different lands and at different times, all testifying and telling the same story about the same individual? The stories have to be true. What comfort and joy and security it gives to those who believe what Christ and his prophets have told us about death and the resurrection.

Immortality and eternal life

Christ said of his mission here upon the earth: ". . . this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39.) He further stated:

"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

"And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. . . ." (John 11:25-26.)

He also said:

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

"And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5:28-29.)

The time is fast approaching when death and the resurrection will come to every one of us. What must we do to come forth unto the resurrection of life and not to the resurrection of damnation? How do we take upon us his name? What do we do to come unto the Father by him? His answer was clear and simple: Repent and be baptized and believe the gospel, and "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15.)

Good news of gospel

What is the gospel? It is the good news which the Savior brought and which he taught during his ministry. His gospel has been restored and is being taught today in his Church by those who have been called, just as he called his disciples, to go throughout the world and proclaim his message of peace and goodwill toward all men.

Every living soul should be earnestly striving to learn the teachings of the gospel and how to live them, thus making it possible to gain immortality and eternal life. May we accept these truths, follow his teachings, and enjoy the blessings of the faithful.

It is my testimony that he lives, and that his Church is upon the earth today, and is being directed through his chosen Prophet; that the prophecies of the scriptures will all be fulfilled, and that, as we are told, ". . . this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11.)

May we prepare ourselves to meet him when he comes again, and prove ourselves worthy to dwell with him forever when we have finished our work upon the earth, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Hugh B. Brown

The inspiring address and testimony to which we have just listened was given by President N. Eldon Tanner of the First Presidency.

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing "Surely He Hath Borne Our Grievs." After the singing President Joseph Fielding Smith of the First Presidency of the Church will address us.

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