

After the singing Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve Apostles will address us.

The Tabernacle Choir sang the hymn, "Now We Sing Thy Praise."

President Lee:

Many stations have just tuned in on this conference, and we wish to extend to them a cordial welcome.

Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve Apostles will now address us.

Elder Marion G. Romney

Of the Council of the Twelve

● Last fall, near the conclusion of a three-mission tour in which I had interviewed personally about 400 missionaries, I was abruptly cut down to size by a missionary who, in answer to my inquiry as to whether he had anything further he would like to comment on or ask, said: "What is so great about an interview with a General Authority?"

Sparrring for time, I responded, "What do you mean?"

To this he replied, "Well, most of the missionaries look forward in anticipation to an interview with a General Authority, and then they talk about it for a long time after. I don't see anything so great about it."

Having recovered my composure, I then said, "Maybe you can answer this question. Why is it that two men can sit side by side in a conference and then when they leave, one of them says to the other: 'Wasn't that the most glorious meeting we ever attended? It thrilled me.' The other responds: 'Oh, I didn't think it was so wonderful. It just sounded like the same old stuff to me.'"

The power of the Holy Ghost

This morning when I awoke about 5 a.m., these words kept going through my mind:

"... now I, Nephi, cannot write all the things which were taught among my people; neither am I mighty in writing, like unto speaking; for when a man speaketh by the power of the Holy Ghost the power of the Holy

Ghost carrieth it unto the hearts of the children of men." (2 Ne. 33:1.)

My message for today is not at all complicated. It is plain and simple. It is well known to most of us. I have titled it "The Key to Peace." Its importance is of the first magnitude. I realize, however, that it will be just the same old stuff unless I speak and you hear by the power of the Holy Ghost. I have fasted and prayed that we can all enjoy that spirit and power. I ask you now to join with me in silent prayer to this effect: O God, our Heavenly Father, let us now speak and listen by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The answer to muddled thinking

I shall introduce what I have to say by quoting from a recent convert:

"I have tried nearly all the churches," she wrote, "only to feel empty, and yet I had this feeling of something important in religion. . . . After trying to find the answer for years and years, I let my church-going drop for three years, not attending any church at all. I prayed, though, and I still had this yearning for this unknown something.

"Then one Thursday lunch-time a knock came on my door and there stood two happy young men. They said they were missionaries from The 'Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' and had a message of importance to give. . . . I knew after the second visit, this was what I had been searching for all my life. . . .

"What really impressed me most,"

she continues, "was the new and wonderful knowledge that ours was a living God. Now I knew what our God was like. Joseph Smith had seen him, and He had flesh and bones as we do. This was wonderful to me, for before I imagined something spiritual floating about all over the place. Nothing to fasten on to. Now our God became real to me; *someone*, no longer something. This was the answer to all my muddled thinking." (*Millennial Star*, June 1960.)

The key to peace

In her new-found knowledge of the true and living God, this humble woman had found what all right-minded people seek: the key to peace—peace in one's own heart and soul, and peace and goodwill among men and nations.

Our convert's experience is an illustration of how such knowledge brings peace to the individual. Peace among men and nations will be the natural sequence when enough individuals have peace in their hearts.

How a knowledge of the true and living God inspires men to walk in the ways of peace is so impressively stated by Josephus in his introduction to *Antiquities of the Jews*, which I take the liberty to quote. He says:

"Moses deemed it exceeding necessary, that he who would conduct his own life well, and give laws to others, in the first place should consider the *Divine nature . . . and . . . endeavor to follow after it*; neither could [Moses] himself have a right mind without such a contemplation; nor would anything he should write tend to the promotion of virtue in his readers; . . . unless they be taught first of all, that God is the Father and Lord of all things, and that thence he bestows a happy life upon those that follow him, but plunges such as do not walk in the paths of virtue into inevitable miseries. Now when Moses was desirous to teach this lesson to his countrymen, [continues Josephus,] he did not begin the establishment of his laws after the same manner that other legislators did; I mean, upon contracts and other rites between one man and another, but

by raising their minds upward to regard God, and his creation of the world; and by persuading them, that we men are the most excellent of the creatures of God upon earth. Now when once he had brought them to submit to religion, he easily persuaded them to submit to all other things . . . [for, concludes Josephus] when he had once demonstrated that God was possessed of perfect virtue, he supposed that men also ought to strive after [such virtues]." (*The Works of Josephus*, pp. 38-39.)

The lodestar of men's lives

Now this is exactly what happens. When men correctly understand and have faith in the true and living God, they strive to develop within themselves his virtues. He becomes the lodestar of their lives. To emulate him is their highest aspiration. As they strive to "be . . . perfect, even as [their] Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48), they actually become partakers of his divine nature. In doing so, they add to their faith and knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, love, and charity, virtues that are perfected in the true and living God. These virtues drive out of their hearts selfishness, greed, lust, hate, contentions, and war. Happiness, contentment, joy, and peace naturally follow.

Return to God

The almost universal prescript for peace today is "return to God." "We must turn to God to find peace" is the cry of right-minded people throughout all the land. It is not because we do not know the remedy that peace escapes us. It is because we do not know the God to whom we must return.

Turning to false gods will not bring peace. Turning to the gods of mythology, heathen gods, graven images, ethereal gods created in the minds of the worldly wise has only increased selfishness, greed, and lust, and has intensified contention, conflict, and strife. What men must do to find peace is discover and emulate the true

and living God—the God discovered by our recent convert.

To find and follow him is the greatest need of this generation, as it has been of all generations.

A knowledge of God is the key to peace in the hearts of men and nations on this earth, as much as it is the key to eternal life in the world beyond the grave. Because the knowledge of God is of such great importance, he has revealed himself time and again through the ages past. Men are, therefore, not justified in their continued ignorance of him.

Moses explains nature of God

In the very first chapter of Genesis, Moses clearly explains the form and nature of God in this simple statement:

"God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (Gen. 1:27.)

Any man of faith can understand this unambiguous statement. Moses was not speculating when he thus put God and men in the same mold. He spoke from a personal knowledge. By the power of the Almighty he had been "caught up into an exceedingly high mountain." There "he saw God face to face, and he talked with him. . . ."

"And God spake unto Moses, saying: Behold, I am the Lord God Almighty. . . ."

"And, behold, thou art my son. . . ."

"And I have a work for thee, Moses, my son; and thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten; and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior. . . ." (Moses 1:1-4, 6.)

This clear and certain knowledge of God the Eternal Father and his Only Begotten Son and man's likeness and relationship to them was given to Moses at the time he led Israel from Egypt. The revelation was then necessary, because during their bondage Israel's knowledge of God had been corrupted.

Instruction to Adam

It was not, however, the first such revelation. Following his expulsion from the garden, and in answer to his prayers, Adam, at the beginning of

the world, "heard the voice of the Lord from the way toward the Garden of Eden" commanding him to offer sacrifices. This he did, whereupon he was visited and instructed by an angel. "And in that day the Holy Ghost fell upon" him and bore record of both the Father and the Son. (See Moses 5:9.)

Adam was taught as clearly and specifically as was Moses about the true and living God. To him the Lord said, ". . . thou art one in me, a son of God. . . ." (Moses 7:68.)

Adam and Eve made all these things known to their children. But ". . . Satan came among them, saying: . . . Believe it not; . . . and they loved Satan more than God. . . ." (Moses 5:13.)

Revelation to apostolic church

As God's revelation of himself to Moses was not the first, neither was it the last. In the meridian of time Jesus Christ, the Firstborn Son of God in the spirit, came to earth as God's Only Begotten Son in the flesh. One of the purposes of his coming was to reveal himself and his Father. This he did in no uncertain manner. Paul understood and declared this when he said that Jesus was "the express image of his [Father's] person. . . ." (Heb. 1:3.)

To those who, at the time of his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, inquired, saying: ". . . who is this Son of man? . . . Jesus . . . said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me." (John 12:34, 44-45.)

In the upper chamber, in response to the request of Philip, "Lord, shew us the Father, . . . Jesus saith unto him . . . he that hath seen me hath seen the Father. . . ." (John 14:8-9.)

These teachings were plain enough to convince men in the apostolic church that Jesus was a true revelation of the same true and living God who had revealed himself to Adam and to Moses.

An apostate church

But men in the meridian of time were little different than they are now

or than they were in the days of Adam and Moses. They loved Satan more than they loved God, and when Satan came among them and, through his pagan philosophies and other sophistries, taught them "believe it not," they believed it not. By 325 A.D. an apostate church had sunk, in its understanding of the true and living God, to the confusion evidenced by the Nicene Creed. In this awful darkness men strayed until the nineteenth century.

Then, in his infinite mercy, "knowing the calamity which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth" if they did not come to an understanding of and faith in the true and living God, which would induce them to "seek . . . the Lord to establish his righteousness," God revealed himself anew.

Knowledge of God restored

As in times past he had chosen to reveal himself to Adam, Moses, Jesus, and others, so now in this last dispensation he selected Joseph Smith. When God took him in hand, Joseph was to the world but an obscure youth. But to God he was no stranger. In the heavens he had been chosen by the Lord and foreordained to be the mighty prophet of the latter-day restoration.

When this boy prophet came out of the Sacred Grove in the spring of 1820, he had a sure knowledge of the true and living God, for he had seen and conversed with him and his Beloved Son, Jesus Christ.

He knew with the same certainty as did Adam and Moses that these heavenly beings were personages of flesh and bone as tangible as man's; that God did indeed create men in his own image.

Twenty-four years later, Joseph Smith sealed with his life's blood his testimony of the true and living God.

During this short period, having been endowed from heaven with God's priesthood, he had, under divine direction, established The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which church through him had received anew the divine commission to declare the

true and living God in all the world to every creature. (See D&C 68:8; 112:28.) This is the mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and this it is doing with all its might.

Witness of living God

And now, my beloved brethren and sisters, in and out of the Church, all you who are within the sound of my voice, as one whose obligation and honor it is to bear witness of the true and living God, I testify to you that I do know that these manifestations which God has given of himself, to which I have called your attention, are true. I also bear witness that to every soul who will accept him, and seek to establish his righteousness, will come the peace spoken of by our convert, and that if enough people will come to know him, their knowledge and faith will work in them a transformation that will bring peace not only to themselves but also to this troubled world. For the key to peace, for individual men and for nations, is the knowledge of and faith in the true and living God. The only alternative to peace obtained in this manner is more contention and strife, which will eventually culminate in the destruction foretold by the prophets. God grant that we may choose peace, by seeking and finding the true and living God, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

President Harold B. Lee

He to whom we have just listened is Elder Marion G. Romney of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

The Choir and the congregation will now join in singing: "How Firm a Foundation," following which we shall have a brief organ interlude.

The congregation and choir sang the hymn, "How Firm a Foundation." This was followed by an organ interlude.
