

S. Dilworth Young of the First Council of the Seventy.

President Tanner

The Tabernacle Choir, under the direction of Richard P. Condie, and with Alexander Schreiner at the organ, will now sing, "Still, Still With Thee," after which Elder Harold B. Lee of the First Presidency will be our first speaker.

The musical selection "Still, Still With Thee" was sung by the Tabernacle Choir.

President Tanner

President Harold B. Lee, first counselor in the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, will be our first speaker this morning.

President Harold B. Lee

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

● This morning in my remarks I desire to direct your attention to some principles of vital importance to every human soul, by relating an incident with which almost everyone will be familiar, which may serve as something of an introduction to what I would say to you in this great conference, on this the Lord's day, in this historic Tabernacle, which has been the forum for some of the greatest discourses given in our generation.

Humbled by this realization, I seek for divine guidance, that I might be in harmony with the spirit of this wonderful occasion.

Flight of Apollo 13

To introduce my text I want to use, as an illustration, a well-remembered incident to which other speakers at this conference have already made reference.

Some months ago, millions of watchers and listeners over the world waited breathlessly and anxiously the precarious flight of Apollo 13. The whole world, it seemed, prayed for one significant result: the safe return to earth of three brave men.

When one of them with restrained anxiety announced the startling information, "We have had an explosion!" the mission control in Houston immediately mobilized all the technically trained scientists who had, over the years, planned every conceivable detail pertaining to that flight.

The safety of those three now depended on two vital qualifications: on the reliability of the skills and the knowledge of those technicians in the mission control center at Houston, and upon the implicit obedience of the men in the Aquarius to every instruction from the technicians, who, because of their understanding of the problems of the astronauts, were better qualified to find the essential solutions. The decisions of the technicians had to be perfect or the Aquarius could have missed the earth by thousands of miles.

Analogous to troublous times

This dramatic event is somewhat analogous to these troublous times in which we live. The headlines in the public press only this week made another startling announcement by a presidential commission to the President of the United States. "U.S. Society Is in Peril." Many are frightened when they see and hear of unbelievable happenings the world over—political intrigues, wars and contention everywhere, frustrations of parents, endeavoring to cope with social problems that threaten to break down the sanctity of the home, the frustrations of children and youth as they face challenges to their faith and their morals.

Only if you are willing to listen and obey, as did the astronauts on the Aquarius, can you and all your households be guided to ultimate safety and security in the Lord's own way.

There are, in these troubled times, agonizing cries of distress among the peoples of the earth. There are intense feelings of a need for some way to find a solution to overwhelming problems and to ease this distress from all that affects mankind.

Fulfillment of prophecies

To one who is acquainted with and well versed in the prophetic teachings of the past generations, there should be little question as to the meaning of all that is going on among us today, when it seems as though everything is in turmoil.

Prophecy may well be defined as history in reverse. Before our very eyes we are witnessing the fulfillment of prophecies made by inspired prophets in ages past. In the very beginning of this dispensation we were plainly told in a revelation from the Lord that the time was nigh at hand when peace would be taken from the earth and the devil would have power over his own dominion. (See D&C 1:35.) The prophets of our day also foretold that there should be 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 the love of men shall wax cold, and iniquity shall abound." (D&C 45:26-27.)

Signs of second coming

When the disciples asked the Master, prior to his crucifixion, as to signs that should immediately precede his coming again to the earth, as he foretold, he answered by saying that "in those days, shall be great tribulations on the Jews, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem;

"... and except those days should be shortened, there should none of their flesh be saved.

"But for the elect's sake, according to the covenant, those days shall be shortened.

"For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there shall be famine and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places." (In-

spired Version, Matt. 24:18-20, 30; see also Joseph Smith 1:18-20, 29.)

The Master undoubtedly spoke of times such as these when he foretold that a man would be "at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

"And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." (Matt. 10:35-36.)

With all of this in mind, one may ask: To whom may those in distress and in great anxiety look for the answer and for "refuge from this storm" raging all about them?

Guide to safety

Almighty God, through his Son, our Lord, has pointed the way and has given to all mankind a sure guide to safety, when he declared that the Lord shall have power over his saints and would reign in their midst, when his mighty judgments would descend upon the world. (See D&C 1:36.)

He said to all men: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." (Matt. 24:42, 44.)

He has counseled that his "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.)

From the incident of the Apollo 13 as I have related, and having in mind the promises of the Lord to which I have made reference, I will now, in a few moments, undertake to outline briefly the wondrously conceived plan upon obedience to which the salvation of every soul depends in his journey through mortality to his ultimate destiny—a return to that God who gave him life. This is that way by which the Lord will keep his promise "to have power over his saints and to reign in their midst."

Everlasting covenant

This plan is identified by name, and the overarching purpose is clearly set forth in an announcement to the Church in the beginning of this gospel dispensation.

More than a century ago the Lord declared:

"And even so I have sent mine everlasting covenant into the world, to be a light to the world, and to be a standard for my people, and for the Gentiles to seek to it, and to be a messenger before my face to prepare the way before me." (D&C 45:9.)

This plan, then, was to be as a covenant, which implied a contract to be participated in by more than one person. It was to be a standard for the Lord's elect and for all the world to benefit by it. Its purpose was to serve the needs of all men and to prepare the world for the second coming of the Lord.

Participants in plan

The participants in the formulation of this plan in the premortal world were all the spirit children of our Heavenly Father. Our oldest scriptures, from the writings of the ancient prophets Abraham and Jeremiah, affirm also that God, or Eloheim, was there; his Firstborn Son, Jehovah, Abraham, Jeremiah, and many others of great stature were there.

All the organized intelligences before the earth was formed, who had become spirits, were there, including many great and noble ones whose performance and conduct in that premortal sphere qualified them to become rulers and leaders in carrying out this eternal plan.

Roles defined

The apostle Paul in his writings to the Corinthians taught that "there be gods many, and lords many," and then he added, "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." (1 Cor. 8:5-6. Italics added.)

I would have you note particularly the use of the preposition "of," in reference to the Father, and the preposition "by," in reference to our Lord, Jesus Christ. In this statement is clearly defined the role of each, the Lord to do the bidding of the Father,

in the execution of the whole plan of salvation for all mankind. (See Abr. 4.)

Understanding this principle in the plan of the government of God, we are given a glimpse of the council meeting of Gods, as briefly recorded in revelations to ancient prophets.

The earth prepared

Under the Father's instruction and by Jehovah's direction, the earth and all pertaining thereto was organized and formed. They "ordered," they "watched over" and "prepared" the earth. They took "counsel among themselves" as to the bringing of all manner of life to the earth and all things, including man, and prepared it for the carrying out of the plan, which we could well liken to a blueprint, by which the children of God could be tutored and trained in all that was necessary for the divine purpose of bringing to pass, "to the glory of God," the opportunity of every soul to gain "immortality and eternal life." Eternal life means to have everlasting life in that celestial sphere where God and Christ dwell, by doing all things we are commanded. (See Abr. 3:25.)

The plan embodied three distinctive principles:

Free agency

First, the privilege to be given to every soul to choose for himself "liberty and eternal life" through obedience to the laws of God, or "captivity and death" as to spiritual things because of disobedience. (See 2 Ne. 2:27.)

Next to life itself, free agency is God's greatest gift to mankind, providing thereby the greatest opportunity for the children of God to advance in this second estate of mortality. A prophet-leader on this continent explained this to his son as recorded in an ancient scripture: that to bring about these, the Lord's eternal purposes, there must be opposites, an enticement by the good on the one hand and by the evil on the other, or to say it in the language of the scriptures, ". . . the forbidden fruit in opposition to the tree of life; the one

being sweet and the other being bitter." This father further explained, "Wherefore, the Lord God gave unto man that he should act for himself. Wherefore, man could not act for himself save it should be that he was enticed by the one or the other." (2 Ne. 2:15-16.)

Atonement of Savior

The second distinctive principle in this divine plan involved the necessity of providing a savior by whose atonement the most favored Son of God became our Savior, as a "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8), as revealed to John on the Isle of Patmos. Another prophet-teacher explained that the mission of the Son of God was to "make intercession for all the children of men; and they that believe in him shall be saved." (2 Ne. 2:9.)

We hear much from some of limited understanding about the possibility of one's being saved by grace alone. But it requires the explanation of another prophet to understand the true doctrine of grace as he explained in these meaningful words:

"For," said this prophet, "we labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do." (2 Ne. 25:23.) Truly we are redeemed by the atoning blood of the Savior of the world, but only after each has done all he can to work out his own salvation.

Salvation through obedience

The third great distinctive principle in the plan of salvation was the provision that "all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel." (Article of Faith 3.) These fundamental laws and ordinances by which salvation comes are clearly set forth:

First, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Second, repentance from sin, meaning the turning away from the sins of disobedience to God's laws and never returning again thereto. The Lord spoke plainly on this point. Said he:

". . . go your ways and sin no more; but unto that soul who sinneth [meaning, of course, returning again to the sins from which he has repented] shall the former sins return, saith the Lord your God." (D&C 82:7.)

Third, baptism by water and of the Spirit, by which ordinances only, as the Master taught Nicodemus, could one see or enter into the kingdom of God. (See John 3:4-5.)

This same teaching was forcibly impressed by the resurrected Savior to the saints on this continent, in what it appears likely was his final message to his disciples. The Master taught his faithful saints that "no unclean thing can enter into his kingdom; therefore nothing entereth into his rest save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins, and their faithfulness unto the end.

"Now this is the commandment: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, this is my gospel. . . ." (3 Ne. 27:19-21.)

Promise to the faithful

If the children of the Lord, which includes all who are upon this earth, regardless of nationality, color, or creed, will heed the call of the true messenger of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as did the three astronauts on the Aquarius to the trained technicians at Mission Control in the hour of their peril, each may in time see the Lord and know that he is, as the Lord has promised, then their calling and election will be made sure. They will "become the sons of Moses and of Aaron, and the seed of Abraham, . . . and the elect of God." (D&C 84:34.)

This promise of the glory which awaits those who are faithful to the end was plainly portrayed in the Master's parable of the Prodigal Son. To the son who was faithful and did not squander his birthright, the father,

who in the Master's lesson would be our Father and our God, promised this faithful son: "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." (Luke 15:31.)

In a revelation through a modern prophet, the Lord promises to the faithful and obedient today: ". . . all that my Father hath shall be given unto him." (D&C 84:38.)

Obedience to law

Or will we be like those foolhardy ones on the river above the Niagara Falls who were approaching the dangerous rapids? Despite warnings of the river guards to go toward safety before it was too late, and in complete disregard of the warnings, they laughed, they danced, they drank, they mocked, and they perished.

So would have been the fate of the three astronauts on the Aquarius if they had refused to give heed to the minutest instruction from Houston Control. Their very lives depended upon obedience to the basic laws which govern and control the forces of the universe.

Jesus wept as he witnessed the world about him in his day which had seemingly gone mad, and continually mocked his pleading that they come unto him along "the strait and narrow way," so plainly marked out in God's eternal plan of salvation.

Response to pleadings

O that we could hear again his pleadings today as he then cried out: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matt. 23:37.)

O that the world would see in another parable to John the Revelator the sacred figure of the Master calling to us today as he did to those of Jerusalem:

Said the Master, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will

come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Rev. 3:20-21.)

The plan of salvation

Here, then, is the plan of salvation as taught by the true church, which is founded upon apostles and prophets, with Christ, the Lord, as the chief cornerstone (Eph. 2:20), by which only can peace come, not as the world giveth, but as only the Lord can give to those who overcome the things of the world, as did the Master.

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12.)

To all of this I bear my sincere witness in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanks for one more day

In a recent meeting I listened to a young girl's heartwarming testimony. Her father was afflicted with what the doctors had pronounced was an incurable malady. To his wife one morning, this stricken father, after a night of pain and suffering, had said with great feeling, "I am so thankful today." "For what?" she asked. He replied, "For God's giving me the privilege of one more day with you."

Today I could desire with all my heart that all within the sound of this broadcast would likewise thank God for one more day! For what? For the opportunity to take care of some unfinished business. To repent; to right some wrongs; to influence for good some wayward child; to reach out to someone who cries for help—in short, to thank God for one more day to prepare to meet God.

Strength for today

Don't try to live too many days ahead. Seek for strength to attend to the problems of today. In his Sermon on the Mount, the Master admonished: "Take therefore no thought of the

morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." (Matt. 6:34.)

Do all that you can do and leave the rest to God, the Father of us all. It is not enough to say I will do my best, but rather, I will do everything which is within my power; I will do all that is necessary.

Acceptance of lessons taught

In a plaque on the walls of the Radio City Music Hall in New York City are these profound words of wisdom:

"Man's ultimate destiny depends, not upon whether he can learn new lessons, or make new discoveries, and conquests, but upon his acceptance of the lessons taught."

My prayer is that the message of those words of wisdom may be translated into a determination on the part of all of us listening here this day, to the end that our eyes will be so single to God, that our whole bodies shall be so filled with light, that there shall be no darkness in us, to the end that we may be able to comprehend all things. (See D&C 88:67.)

Elder Boyd K. Packer

Of the Council of the Twelve

● I come to this pulpit this Sabbath morning with a new obligation, anxious perhaps as never before for the sustaining influence of the Spirit of the Lord, for an interest in your faith and prayers for us here and for those who shall be listening, as I speak to the parents of wayward and lost children.

Missing children

Sometime ago, a father, worried about a serious problem with his son, was heard to remark, "When he leaves and we don't know where he is, there's pain in our hearts, but when he's here there are times when he's a pain in the neck." It's about that pain in the

God grant that it might be so, I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

President N. Eldon Tanner

That powerful address was delivered by President Harold B. Lee, first counselor in the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing, "Jesus, Our Lord, We Adore Thee."

After the singing, Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Council of the Twelve will address us.

The Tabernacle Choir sang "Jesus, Our Lord, We Adore Thee."

President Tanner

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

Elder Boyd K. Packer of the Council of the Twelve will now address us.

heart that I want to speak. I speak to a very large audience, I fear.

Hardly is there a neighborhood without at least one mother whose last waking, anxious thoughts and prayers are for a son or a daughter wandering who knows where. Nor is there much distance between homes where an anxious father can hardly put in a day's work without being drawn within himself time after time, to wonder, "What have we done wrong? What can we do to get our child back?"

Home under attack

Even parents with the best intentions—some who have really tried—now know that heartache. Many par-