

direction of Richard P. Condie, with Alexander Schreiner at the organ, will now sing "The Morning Breaks, the Shadows Flee" by George Careless following which Elder Joseph Anderson, Assistant to the Twelve, will offer the invocation.

"The Morning Breaks, the Shadows Flee" was sung by the Tabernacle Choir.

Elder Joseph Anderson, Assistant to the Twelve, offered the invocation.

President Lee

The Tabernacle Choir will now favor us with the anthem, "Welcome

Welcome Mighty King" by Handel after which President Marion G. Romney, second counselor in the First Presidency, will address us.

The anthem, "Welcome, Welcome Mighty King," was sung by the Tabernacle Choir.

President Lee

It will now be our privilege to hear from President Marion G. Romney, second counselor in the First Presidency.

Following President Romney, we shall hear from Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Council of the Twelve.

President Marion G. Romney

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

My beloved brothers and sisters, far and near, members of the Church and nonmembers:

The first Article of Faith of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints reads: "We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost."

Last spring in general conference I spoke about "God, the Eternal Father." Today I shall speak about "His Son, Jesus Christ," our Redeemer. Since this is such a sacred theme I invite each of you to join with me in a prayer that our Heavenly Father will help each of us to get a deeper understanding and a greater appreciation of his Only Begotten Son—our Savior.

Pre-earth council

Chronologically, we get our earliest information about Jesus from the scriptures, which tell of a great pre-earth council attended by the spirit children of God. In that council the Father's plan

for man's eternal progression was presented. Whereupon, Jesus volunteered and was appointed to make the atonement required to make possible man's salvation and exaltation. Abraham records the proceedings of that council as he had seen them in vision.

"Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham," he says, "the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones;

"And God saw these souls that they were good, . . . for he stood among those that were spirits . . ." (Abr. 3:22-23.)

In the following lines from his "Elias: An Epic of the Ages," the late Elder Orson F. Whitney paraphrased what Abraham and other seers have revealed concerning the proceedings and consequences of that heavenly council and the role Jesus played in it. Now listen to these majestic lines of Brother Whitney:

"In solemn council sat the Gods, . . .

". . . That awful hour was one
When thought doth most avail;
Of worlds unborn the destiny
Hung trembling in the scale.
Silence self-spelled; and there arose,
Those kings and priests among,
A power sublime, than whom appeared
None nobler 'mid the throng.

"A stature mingling strength with grace,
Of meek though godlike mien;
The glory of whose countenance
Outshone the noonday sheen
He spake;—attention grew more grave,
The stillness e'en more still.

"'Father!'—the voice like music fell, . . .
'Father,' it said, 'since one must die,
Thy children to redeem,
From spheres all formless now and void,
Where pulsing life shall teem;

"'And mighty Michael [Adam] foremost
fall
That mortal man may be;
And chosen saviour Thou must send,
Lo, here am I—send me!
I ask, I seek no recompense,
Save that which then were mine;
Mine be the willing sacrifice,
The endless glory Thine! . . .'

"Still rang that voice, when sudden rose
Aloft a towering form,
Proudly erect as lowering peak
'Lumed by the gathering storm; . . .

"'Send me! 'coiled 'neath his courtly
smile
A scarce concealed disdain—
'And none shall hence, from heaven to
earth,
That shall not rise again.
My saving plan exception scorns.
Man's will?—Nay, mine alone.
As recompense, I claim the right
To sit on yonder Throne!'

"Ceased Lucifer. The breathless hush
Resumed and denser grew.
All eyes were turned; the general gaze

One common magnet drew.
A moment there was solemn pause—
Listened eternity,
While rolled from lips omnipotent
The Father's firm decree:

"'Jehovah, thou my Messenger!
Son Ahman, thee I send;
And one shall go thy face before,
While twelve thy steps attend.
And many more on that far shore
The pathway shall prepare,
That I, the first, the last may come,
And earth my glory share

"'Go forth, thou Chosen of the Gods,
Whose strength shall in thee dwell!
Go down betime and rescue earth,
Dethroning death and hell.
On thee alone man's fate depends,
The fate of beings all.
Thou shalt not fail, though thou art free—
Free, but too great to fall.

"'By arm divine, both mine and thine,
The lost thou shalt restore,
And man, redeemed, with God shall be,
As God forevermore.
Return, and to the parent fold
This wandering planet bring,
And earth shall hail thee Conqueror,
And heaven proclaim thee King.'

"'Twas done. From congregation vast,
Tumultuous murmurs rose;
Waves of conflicting sound, as when
Two meeting seas oppose.
'Twas finished. But the heavens wept;
And still their annals tell
How one was choice of Elohim,
O'er one who fighting fell."

Chosen as Redeemer

All the prophets, from Adam to President Harold B. Lee, our present prophet, have testified that Jesus Christ, the firstborn spirit Son of God, was so chosen to be and is our Redeemer.

The prophets who preceded Jesus into mortality bore witness to the fact that he had been so chosen and that he

would come to earth and fulfill his mission.

In the very beginning, as Adam offered sacrifice in obedience to divine command, "... an angel of the Lord appeared unto [him], saying: Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me.

"And then the angel spake, saying: This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father. . . ." (Moses 5:6-7.)

From that time until Christ's mortal ministry, all people who understood God's plan for man's eternal progression offered like sacrifice. This the Father required them to do that they might constantly be reminded of the coming of Christ and the atonement he would make in his role as Redeemer.

God's divine program

The Lord further said to Adam: "... If thou wilt turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, and believe, and repent of all thy transgressions, and be baptized, even in water, in the name of mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth, which is Jesus Christ, the only name which shall be given under heaven, whereby salvation shall come unto the children of men, ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. . . ." (Moses 6:52.)

"Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son, and thou shalt repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore.

"And Adam and Eve . . . made all things known unto their sons and their daughters." (Moses 5:8,12.)

From Adam to the meridian of time the inhabitants of the earth were repeatedly reminded of God's divine program for the salvation of men—the gospel of Jesus Christ. Enoch, Noah, Melchizedek, Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets taught it.

Christ in America

During the 2,000 years immediately preceding the birth of Christ there flourished in America two great civilizations. To them also the mission of Christ was made known. The Book of Mormon reveals the fact that to one of the leaders of a colony being divinely led from "the great tower" to America, "the Lord showed himself . . . and said . . . :

"Behold, I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people. Behold, I am Jesus Christ. . . . In me shall all mankind have light, and that eternally, even they who shall believe on my name. . . .

"Behold, this body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; . . . and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit will I appear unto my people in the flesh." (Eth. 3:13-14,16.)

The Book of Mormon further records that some 2,200 years later, on the night before Christ was born, "the voice of the Lord came unto" another American prophet, saying:

"Lift up your head and be of good cheer; for behold, the time is at hand, . . . and on the morrow come I into the world, to show unto the world that I will fulfill all that which I have caused to be spoken by the mouth of my holy prophets." (3 Ne. 1:13.)

Christ's earthly ministry

Every one of us, of course, knows of the angelic announcement on the fields of Bethlehem, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11.)

Both the Father and the Son have repeatedly borne convincing witness that Jesus is our Redeemer. At Christ's baptism the Father said: "... Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased" (Luke 3:22); and later on the Mount of Transfiguration, "... This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matt. 17:5).

The New Testament repeatedly makes record of Christ's own witness to his identity and mission. One of the most impressive declarations of both the Father and the Son was to the Nephites in America, whom Christ visited following the close of his post-resurrection ministry in the land of Jerusalem. To them the Father introduced the resurrected Jesus with these words:

"Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name—hear ye him." (3 Ne. 11:7.)

Whereupon, Jesus himself, the resurrected Jesus, descended from heaven ". . . and stood in the midst of them. . . .

". . . and spake unto [them], saying:

"Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world." (3 Ne. 11:8-10.)

"Behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin.

"Therefore, whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive; . . . therefore repent, and come unto me ye ends of the earth, and be saved." (3 Ne. 9:21-22.)

Testimony of Christ's mission

Since time will permit but one more testimony to Christ's appointment and mission as Redeemer, I now want to bear my own testimony.

I bear personal witness to the truth of all the testimonies I have cited. I testify that through the atonement wrought by Jesus Christ men are to be resurrected to immortality and, conditioned upon obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ, to eternal life.

I know that Jesus Christ was the firstborn spirit child of God the Father: that he is the Only Begotten Son of God in the flesh—that, as the scriptures teach in the spirit world before this earth was created he sponsored the Father's plan for the mortality, the death, the resur-

rection, and the eternal life of men; that, commissioned of the Father, he was the creator of this earth; the *Jehovah* of the Old Testament. "the God of Adam and of Noah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of Israel, the God at whose instance the prophets of the ages have spoken, the God of all nations, and [that] He shall yet reign on earth as King of kings and Lord of lords." (James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, p. 4.)

He came to earth as the Babe of Bethlehem, begotten of the Father, born of Mary; the gospel he taught is the one and only means by which men can fulfill the full measure of their creation. "His immaculate life in the flesh" and "his voluntary death as a consecrated sacrifice for the sins of mankind," with his victory over death, secured for all men resurrection and immortality and, upon the conditions specified by him, eternal life.

Modern theophany

I bear personal witness to these truths and to the further fact that in the spring of 1820 this same Jesus Christ, in company with his Father, appeared to Joseph Smith, Jr., in a grove near Palmyra, New York, in one of the greatest theophanies ever given to man. The Prophet thus spoke of it:

". . . 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 2:17.)

Light of the world

Jesus is as he said, "the life and light of the world" (D&C 10:70): ". . . Jesus Christ is the name which is given of the Father, and there is none other name given whereby man can be saved" (D&C 18:23). His "Spirit giveth light to every man that cometh into the

world” and continues to enlighten “every man through the world, that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit.

“... every one that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit cometh unto God, even the Father.” (D&C 84:46-47.)

I further testify that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—presently presided over by the Lord’s prophet, President Harold B. Lee—is Christ’s church, established at his direction, endowed with his authority, and charged by him to teach his gospel and administer its saving ordinances, all to the end that men may qualify for the blessings, joy and glory placed within their reach by Jesus Christ, their Lord and their Redeemer. I bear witness to all these things in the holy name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

Without announcement and following President Romney’s address, the Tabernacle Choir sang “O Lord Most Holy.”

President Harold B. Lee

We have heard from President Marion G. Romney, second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church, who has delivered a remarkable testimony of the mission of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, not only scripturally but his own personal witness.

It will now be our privilege to hear from Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Council of the Twelve.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie

Of the Council of the Twelve

If the Lord himself had chosen to come down, open the conference, and address the Saints, what message would he have delivered? If he had elected and chosen to come and speak at this session, what word would he have given us for our blessing and benefit and salvation?

Such an appearance is not wholly outside the realm of possibility. The Prophet Joseph Smith said that if we would come together and strip ourselves of jealousies and have perfect faith, that the veil might as well be rent today as at any time. (See D&C 67:10; *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 9.) I think that when the Lord dwelt in the city of Enoch, without question he spoke in their congregations; and when in due course he will reign in millennial splendor on the earth, he will do exactly the same thing again.

The Lord’s representatives

But we also operate under the principle that the word of eternal truth

which is given to the children of men, whether it comes by his own voice or the voice of his servants, it is the same. And I had it impressed upon me, when President Lee opened the conference yesterday, and again when President Romney bore the persuasive and powerful and true witness that has just come from his lips, that if the Lord himself were here, those statements which came from them are the very things that he would say at this time.

These brethren who stand in the First Presidency of the Church are the Lord’s agents, his representatives. They hold the keys of the kingdom of God on earth at this hour and from them come the words of life and truth and revelation that will give us, if we conform to them, peace in this life and eternal glory in the life to come.

Affirmative attitude

Now I desire very much to have the same spirit attend me that has rested so mightily upon these others