

Lake City, Utah, and those in the Assembly Hall and the Salt Palace, in this last general session of the 144th Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Elders ElRay L. Christiansen and Sterling W. Sill are presiding at the Assembly Hall and Elders Henry D. Taylor and Bernard P. Brockbank are presiding at the Salt Palace.

Sessions of this conference have been carried in the United States and to many parts of the world over hundreds of radio and television stations cooperating to provide the extensive coverage of this conference to a vast audience.

We extend our blessings and warm greetings to members of the Church and many friends everywhere witnessing these proceedings by radio and television.

Special transmission of this morning's session was carried by oceanic cable to Europe and received by members assembled in 110 chapels in England, France, Germany, Austria, Holland, Switzerland, and Belgium.

The Tabernacle Choir, with Jerold D. Ottley conducting and Robert Cundick at the organ, will begin this service by singing, "For All the Saints."

The invocation will be offered by

Elder Hartman Rector, Jr. of the First Council of Seventy.

The number, "For All the Saints," was sung by the Tabernacle Choir.

Elder Hartman Rector, Jr. of the First Council of Seventy offered the invocation.

President Tanner

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing "What Was Witnessed in the Heavens?"

Following the singing, we shall hear from Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve.

The Tabernacle Choir sang "What Was Witnessed in the Heavens?"

President Tanner

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Joseph Anderson, Assistant to the Twelve.

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley

Of the Council of the Twelve

My brethren and sisters, I seek the direction of the Holy Spirit that I may say something that will add to your faith. I've recently had a great experience. For the better part of a week, with others, I stood in the entrance to the Washington Temple as a host to special guests. These included the wife of the president of the United States, justices of the Supreme Court, senators and congressmen, ambassadors from various nations, clergymen, educa-

tors, and business leaders. Since that week of special invitations, other visitors, more than 300,000 of them, have come to see this sacred edifice.

A vast amount of newspaper and magazine space has been given the temple, and radio and television have carried its story far and wide. It is doubtful that any building constructed in the East in recent years has attracted so much attention.

Almost without exception, those

who have come have been a appreciative and reverent. Many have been deeply touched in their hearts. Upon leaving the temple, Mrs. Ford commented: "This is a truly great experience for me. . . . It's an inspiration to all."

History of the past

As I, with others, stood in that sacred edifice day after day shaking hands with many of the honored and respected of this country and of the world, two trains of thought repeatedly crossed my mind. The first concerned the history of the past. The second was occupied with the present and the future.

Watching the First Lady having her photograph taken with President Spencer W. Kimball, my mind drifted back 135 years. Our people were then in Commerce, Illinois, homeless and destitute, facing the bitter winter that soon followed. They had been driven from Missouri and had fled across the Mississippi seeking asylum in Illinois. Where the river makes a wide bend, they had purchased a tract of land, beautiful in its location, but so swampy that a team could not cross it without becoming mired in mud. This site, with tremendous effort and great sacrifice, was to become Nauvoo the beautiful. But in 1839 it was Commerce, a rendezvous for thousands driven from their homes and now homeless. They had left behind the labors of years—houses and barns, churches and public buildings, and hundreds of productive farms. Moreover, buried beneath the Missouri sod, they had left loved ones who had been killed by the mob. Destitute now, and dispossessed, unable to get redress from Missouri, they determined to petition the president and Congress of the United States. Joseph Smith and Elias Higbee were assigned to go to Washington.

Appeal in Washington

They left Commerce October 20,

1839, riding in a light horse-drawn buggy. They arrived in Washington five weeks later. Much of their first day was spent trying to find accommodations they could afford. They noted in a letter to Hyrum Smith: "We found as cheap boarding as can be had in this city." (*History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:40.)

Calling upon the president of the United States, Martin Van Buren, they stated their case. Responded he: "Gentlemen, your cause is just, but I can do nothing for you. . . . If I take up for you, I shall lose the vote of Missouri." (*History of the Church*, 4:80.)

They then appealed to Congress. In the frustrating weeks that followed, Joseph returned to Commerce, much of the way by horseback. Judge Higbee remained to plead their cause, only finally to be told that Congress would do nothing.

How far the Church has come in the respect and confidence of public officials between 1839 when Joseph Smith was repudiated in Washington and 1974 when President Spencer W. Kimball is welcomed and honored. Such, in essence, were the first and last chapters of my thoughts during these past, recent, beautiful days at the Washington Temple.

Harsh days

And between those two first and final chapters there ran the thread of a score of other chapters that spoke of the death of Joseph and Hyrum that sultry day of June 27, 1844; of the sacking of Nauvoo; of long trains of wagons crossing the river into Iowa Territory; of the camps in the snows and mud that fateful spring of 1846; of Winter Quarters on the Missouri, and the black canker, the fevers, and the plague that decimated the ranks; of the call for men to join the army, issued by the same government which earlier had been deaf to their pleas; of the grave-marked trail up the Elkhorn, the Platte, and the Sweetwater, over South Pass, and

thence to this valley; of the tens of thousands who left the East and England to thread their way over that long trail, some pulling handcarts and dying in the Wyoming winter; of the endless grubbing of sagebrush in these valleys; of the digging of miles of ditches to lead water to the thirsty soil; of decades of hue and cry against us, born of bigotry; of the deprivation of rights of citizenship under laws enacted in this same Washington and enforced by marshals sent out from the seat of the federal government. These are among the chapters of that epic history.

Thanks be to God those harsh days are past. Thanks be to those who remained true while walking through those testing fires. What a price; what a terrible price they paid, of which we are the beneficiaries. We had better never forget it, my brethren and sisters. Thanks for those who through the virtue of their lives have since earned for this people a new measure of respect. Thanks for a better day, with greater understanding and with wide and generous appreciation extended The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

A city upon a hill

These were my thoughts as I shook hands with many of the thousands who came to the Washington Temple with curiosity and left with appreciation, some with tears in their eyes.

But those thoughts were largely of the past. There were others of the present and the future. One day while riding along the beltway in the traffic, I looked with wonder, as must all who travel that highway, at the gleaming spires of the Lord's house rising heavenward from a hill in the woods. Words of scripture came into my mind, words spoken by the Lord as he stood upon the mount and taught the people. Said he:

"A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

"Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a

candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

"Let *your* light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5:14-16. Italics added.)

Not alone the Washington Temple, but this entire people have become as a city upon a hill which cannot be hid.

Sometimes we take offense when one who is nominally a member of the Church is involved in a crime and the public press is quick to say that he is a Mormon. We comment among ourselves that if he had been a member of any other church, no mention would have been made of it.

Is not this very practice an indirect compliment to our people? The world expects something better of us, and when one of our number falters, the press is quick to note it. We have, indeed, become as a city upon a hill for the world to see. If we are to be that which the Lord would have us, we must indeed become "a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that [we] should shew forth the praises of him who hath called [us] out of darkness into his marvellous light." (1 Pet. 2:9.)

A peculiar people

Unless the world alters the course of its present trends (and that is not likely); and if, on the other hand, we continue to follow the teachings of the prophets, we shall increasingly become a peculiar and distinctive people of whom the world will take note. For instance: As the integrity of the family crumbles under worldly pressures, our position on the sanctity of the family will become more obvious and even more peculiar in contrast, if we have the faith to maintain that position.

As the growing permissive attitude toward sex continues to spread, the doctrine of the Church, as consistently taught for more than a century, will become increasingly singular and even strange to many.

As the consumption of alcohol increases each year under the mores of our society and the allurements of advertising, our position, set forth by the Lord more than a century ago, will become more unusual before the world.

As government increasingly assumes the burden of caring for all human needs, the independence of our social services, and the doctrine which lies behind that position will become more and more unique.

As the Sabbath increasingly becomes a day of merchandising, those who obey the precept of the law written by the finger of the Lord on Sinai and reinforced by modern revelation will appear more unusual.

It is not always easy to live in the world and not be a part of it. We cannot live entirely with our own or unto ourselves, nor would we wish to. We must mingle with others. In so doing, we can be gracious. We can be inoffensive. We can avoid any spirit or attitude of self-righteousness. But we can maintain our standards. The natural tendency will be otherwise, and many have succumbed to it.

A coming test

In 1856, when we were largely alone in these valleys, some thought we were safe from the ways of the world. To such talk, Heber C. Kimball, the grandfather of our beloved president, responded: "I want to say to you, my brethren, the time is coming when we will be mixed up in these now peaceful valleys to that extent that it will be difficult to tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy to the people of God. Then, brethren," he went on, "look out for the great sieve, for there will be a great sifting time, and many will fall; for I say unto you there is a test, a *Test*, a TEST coming, and who will be able to stand?" (Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, Bookcraft, 1945, p. 446.)

I do not know precisely the nature of that test. But I am inclined to think

the time is here and that the test lies in our capacity to live the gospel rather than adopt the ways of the world.

I do not advocate a retreat from society. On the contrary, we have a responsibility and a challenge to take our places in the world of business, science, government, medicine, education, and every other worthwhile and constructive vocation. We have an obligation to train our hands and minds to excel in the work of the world for the blessing of all mankind. In so doing we must work with others. But this does not require a surrender of standards.

Integrity of the family

We can maintain the integrity of our families if we will follow the counsel of our leaders. As we do so, those about us will observe with respect and be led to inquire how it is done.

We can oppose the tide of pornography and lasciviousness, which is destroying the very fiber of nations. We can avoid partaking of alcoholic beverages and stand solidly for legislation which will limit points of sale and exposure to its use. As we do so, we shall find others who feel as we do and will join hands in the battle.

We can more fully care for our own who may be in need rather than pass the burden to government and thereby preserve the independence and dignity of those who must have and are entitled to help.

We can refrain from buying on the Sabbath day. With six other days in the week none of us needs to buy furniture on Sunday. None of us needs to buy clothing on Sunday. With a little careful planning we can easily avoid the purchase of groceries on Sunday.

A light to the world

As we observe these and other standards taught by the Church, many in the world will respect us and find strength to follow that which they too know is right.

And, in the words of Isaiah, "Many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." (Isa. 2:3.)

We need not compromise. We must not compromise.

The candle which the Lord has lighted in this dispensation can become as a light unto the whole world, and others seeing our good works may be led to glorify our Father in heaven and emulate in their own lives the examples they may have observed in ours.

Symbol of virtues

Said one of the leaders of our nation as he left the Washington Temple the other evening and looked up to its spires, "This beautiful structure is a symbol of those virtues which have made of us a great nation and a great people. We need such symbols."

There can be many more such

symbols than the temple in Washington and even more impressive ones. Beginning with you and me, there can be an entire people who by the virtue of our lives in our homes, in our vocations, even in our amusements, can become as a city upon a hill to which men may look and learn, and an ensign to the nations from which the people of the earth may gather strength. I bear witness of him who is our living God. I bear testimony of him who is our Savior and Redeemer. I bear witness of the truth of this, their work, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us.

We shall now hear from Elder Joseph Anderson, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve. He will be followed by Bishop Victor L. Brown, Presiding Bishop of the Church.

Elder Joseph Anderson

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

Mankind's greatest need today is a sincere conviction that Jesus Christ was and is in very deed the Savior and Redeemer of the world; that he is the Son of the Father, the firstborn in the spirit and the Only Begotten in the flesh; that it was necessary and a part of God's plan before the world was created, that he should come to earth and take upon himself mortality, mend the law broken by Adam and Eve, and provide for us the plan whereby we might resurrect from the grave and return into the presence of our Heavenly Father from whence we came.

We read in the first chapter of the gospel according to John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God."

(John 1:1-2.) This would indicate that Christ, Jehovah, the Great I Am, was with the Father in that early state of existence; he was the firstborn of his spirit children. He was taught by the Father during that incalculable time.

The spirit state

Before we came here we lived in the heavens in the spirit state as children of our Heavenly Father. The poet Wordsworth caught a flash from the eternal semaphore when he wrote:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar: