

## Elder Adney Y. Komatsu

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

My dear brothers and sisters, and friends: In humility I stand before you and thank my Father in heaven for this opportunity and blessing of being in attendance at this semiannual conference. I have enjoyed the wonderful spirit of the conference and the many instructions and the advice given by our prophet, President Spencer W. Kimball and all the General Authorities of the Church. I hope and pray that the Spirit of the Lord may guide and direct me to say those things that will add to the spirit of this conference.

### God's love for us

In the New Testament we read the words of John: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.)

Our Father in heaven, because of the great love that he has for his children on this earth, gave us the opportunity to experience an earthly life and prepared a way that we may return to his presence after this earthly experience through the Savior, Jesus Christ.

The Savior said during his ministry: "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.)

The Savior further said: "He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me." (John 12:44.)

### Work in Asia

We, who are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as well as many of the Christian world today, understand and believe that there is a God, and that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and the Savior of the world.

Yet, in the Far East among the many Asian countries today where we find the great majority of the population of the world living, this simple truth is not understood and accepted as God's plan for his children on earth.

However, the work of the Lord is progressing among the Asian people. Ten years ago there were three missions in the Far East; today there are fifteen missions and five stakes.

In the recent area general conferences held in Japan, the Philippines, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Korea, it was a great and wonderful experience to see the tears of joy of the members of the Church as they listened to President Spencer W. Kimball, our prophet, and other General Authorities.

It was reported that approximately 45,000 members and nonmembers attended the area general conferences in these countries. For many members and nonmembers of the Church, this was their first experience of hearing a living prophet of God.

### Temple in Tokyo

In Tokyo, when President Kimball made a proposal for the building of a temple, there was a spontaneous applause of joy and happiness by the congregation; then a quiet appreciation of tears followed while they raised their hands to sustain the proposal. Likewise, in all the other countries where an area general conference was held, the members of the Church were happy to sustain the proposal made by the prophet for the first temple to be built in Asia.

It was a great and wonderful experience to see President Kimball counsel and advise the members of the Church in Asia and see their faces full of appreciation and love for the guidance and direction they received.

President Kimball encouraged the members of the Church in the different

countries to live the gospel of Jesus Christ and keep the commandments of the Lord. He reminded them of the importance and need for more genealogy work and emphasized the importance of temple marriage. This great blessing will be available to the members of the Church in a few short years when the temple is built; and for some it will be only a few hours away from their homes, while for others it will take a longer journey, but not as far as Hawaii where the majority of the members are now going. President Kimball also stressed the importance of the family and the raising of young men who will be worthy to serve missions.

### Missionary work

Because of the large population in the Asian countries, and if we are to bring the gospel message to the many people there, we must lengthen our stride in missionary work and adhere to the counsel and advice of President Kimball by preparing our local young men to assist in this great work. It will take the efforts of every member of the Church in Asia, and we must follow President McKay's appeal that "every member be a missionary" in his daily life.

### Blessings of Area Conference

For many members of the Church, the area general conferences were miracles, for they had never dreamed that the day would come when they could listen to a prophet speak in person, nor attend area general conferences under their difficult and trying conditions and circumstances.

I am reminded of a statement made by a Book of Mormon prophet when he said:

"And now, I, Moroni, would speak somewhat concerning these things; I would show unto the world that faith is things which are hoped for and not seen; wherefore, dispute not because ye

see not, for ye receive no witness until after the trial of your faith. . . .

"For if there be no faith among the children of men God can do no miracle among them; wherefore, he showed not himself until after their faith. . . .

"And neither at any time hath any wrought miracles until after their faith; wherefore they first believed in the Son of God." (Eth. 12:6, 12, 18.)

Surely the many members of the Church in the different countries exercised faith to receive the great blessings of area general conferences.

### Faith-promoting experiences

There were many faith-promoting experiences witnessed by the members of the Church as they prepared for the area general conference in their respective countries. All these experiences helped to increase their faith and strengthen their testimonies.

May I share with you an experience that took place on the island of Okinawa in the Servicemen's District? As the local Okinawan members were excitedly preparing to go to Tokyo, which is nearly 900 miles away, for the area general conference, the young people of the Servicemen's Branch found out that an active young Okinawan family was not planning to go with the rest of the branch. When approached and asked why he was not going to conference, this faithful brother hesitantly replied that he just could not afford to take his wife and children at this time; it was out of the question.

The young people of the Servicemen's Branch immediately met and planned a cookie sale project to raise funds necessary to send this family to conference. The young people baked cookies in their parents' homes; later when they were busily engaged in selling these cookies, they were pleasantly surprised when they approached the servicemen to purchase their cookies, explaining the purpose of their project. Without hesitation the servicemen all bought cookies and donated money in

excess of the purchase price, so that the young people could reach their goal. The happy result was that this young Okinawan family was able to go to Tokyo to conference with the rest of their branch, because of the help they received.

The young people of the Servicemen's Branch all learned a great lesson in giving and loving; they learned through experience that persons who really care for others and who give some of their time, talents, and belongings for the good of others are the ones who really receive the fullest blessings of life.

### Love begets love

The Prophet Joseph Smith tells us that love begets love in this way: "It is a time-honored adage that love begets love. Let us pour forth love—show forth our kindness unto all mankind, and the Lord will reward us with everlasting increase; cast our bread upon the waters and we shall receive it after many days, increased to a hundredfold. Friendship is like Brother Turley in his blacksmith shop welding iron to iron; it unites the human family with its happy influences." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 316.)

Surely the many members of the Church in Asia who participated in the preparation for the different area conferences learned this great lesson of giving and loving. They also received the blessings of the Lord as they sang in choruses, danced in the cultural programs, or served on the many committees in the different countries.

### Give of ourselves

To give our time and self for the good of others is more important than giving material things in life. This most important part of the gospel is the very foundation of God's commandments, for he said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy might, mind, and strength; and in the

name of Jesus Christ thou shalt serve him.

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (D&C 59:5-6.)

This means, brothers and sisters and friends, that one does things for and with his neighbors. He visits the sick and the needy. He buoys up the discouraged and gives encouragement at every turn, while seeking the happiness of others.

Robert Louis Stevenson said, "If we would have friends we should be rich in admiration and free from envy; rejoice greatly in the good of others; love with such generosity of heart that your love becomes a dear possession in absence or unkindness."

When we actively participate in Church activities, and give of ourselves in home teaching, visiting teaching, or fellowshipping a newly converted family or a less active person, we are showing our love for our fellowman. The Savior said, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." (John 15:12.)

### Testimony

I bear you my testimony, brothers and sisters, that I know that the gospel is true. I know that God lives and that he hears and answers our prayers, and that Jesus is the Christ, the Only Begotten of the Father, the Son of the living God, and the Savior of the world. Joseph Smith was the prophet called by God in these last days to restore the gospel in its fulness.

And I bear you this humble testimony that I know that President Spencer W. Kimball today is a prophet of God on this earth, guiding and directing the Lord's work here upon this earth. I bear you this testimony humbly, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President Marion G. Romney

We have just listened to Elder Adney Y. Komatsu, Assistant to the Twelve.