

## President Spencer W. Kimball

President Brigham Young, the second president of this dispensation, said: "It is supposed by this people that we have all the ordinances in our possession for life and salvation, and exaltation, and that we are administering in those ordinances. This is not the case. We are in possession of all the ordinances that can be administered in the flesh; but there are other ordinances and administrations that must be administered beyond this world. I know you would like to ask what they are. I will mention one. We have not; neither can we receive here, the ordinance and the keys of resurrection." (*Journal of Discourses*, 15:137.)

### The keys of the resurrection

Do we have the keys of resurrection? Could you return to the earth as ones who would never again die your own parents, your grandparents, your ancestors? I buried my mother when I was eleven, my father when I was in my early twenties. I have missed my parents much. If I had the power of resurrection as did the Savior of the world, I would have been tempted to try to have kept them longer. I have been called to speak in numerous funerals for people whom I have known, people whom I have loved, and people whom I have served and helped in a limited way. We do not know of anyone who can resurrect the dead as did Jesus the Christ when he came back to mortality.

"[The keys] will be given to those who have passed off this stage of action and have received their bodies again. . . . They will be ordained, by those who hold the keys of the resurrection, to go forth and resurrect the Saints, just as we receive the ordinance of baptism then receive the keys of authority to baptize others for the remission of their sins. This is one of the ordinances we can not receive here [on the earth], and there are many more." (*JD*, 15:137.)

We remember when the Lord Jesus was in the hinder part of the ship and was sleeping on a pillow, and his disciples awakened him and said unto him, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?"

"And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. . . .

"And they . . . said [to themselves], What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" (*Mark* 4:38-39, 41.)

### Man's power limited

Perhaps there is something else that we will learn as we perfect our bodies and our spirits in the times to come. You and I—what helpless creatures we are! Such limited power we have, and how little can we control the winds and the waves and the storms! Remember the numerous scriptures which, concentrated in a single line, were said by a former prophet, Lorenzo Snow: "As man is, God once was; and as God is, man may become." This is a power available to us as we reach perfection and receive the experience and power to create, to organize, to control native elements. How limited we are now! We have no power to force the grass to grow, the plants to emerge, the seeds to develop.

"We have no such ordinance here," said Brigham Young. "We organize according to men in the flesh. By combining the elements and planting the seed, we cause vegetables, trees, grains, etc. to come forth." But we do not give them life. "We are organizing a kingdom here according to the pattern that the Lord has given for people in the flesh, but not for those who have received the resurrection, although it is a similitude." (*JD*, 15:137.)

Millions of us have contributed toward the creation and the development of a spirit, but "the germ of this,

God has placed within us. And when our spirits receive our bodies, and through our faithfulness we are worthy to be crowned, we will then receive authority to produce both spirit and body. But these keys we cannot receive in the flesh." (*JD*, 15:137.) Again, the powers of heavens.

### Vision of God's creations

Here is another man, Abraham, a mortal creature and the ancestor of Moses, who "talked with the Lord, face to face, as one man talketh with another." (*Abr.* 3:11.)

The Lord said: "My son, my son, . . . I will show you all these. . . . I saw those things which his hands had made . . . they multiplied before mine eyes, and I could not see the end thereof." (*Abr.* 3:12.)

The Lord showed Abraham the constellations, the worlds as numerous as the sands of the sea; and the Lord said, "Abraham, I show these things unto thee before ye go into Egypt, that ye may declare all these words." (*Abr.* 3:15.) And then came a succession of planets and worlds which had no end.

The Lord had sent his angel to deliver Abraham from the hands of an assassin who would have taken his life on the altar. The Lord would show him the things which he did not know, "for," said he, "I rule in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, in all wisdom and prudence, over all the intelligences thine eyes have seen from the beginning; I came down in the beginning in the midst of all the intelligences thou hast seen." (*Abr.* 3:21.)

### Intelligences organized

And then he opens a new world to the prophet Abraham. The Lord had shown to Abraham "the intelligences that were organized before the world was [created]; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones;

"And God saw these souls that they

were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto me: Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born.

"And there stood one among them that was like unto God, and he said unto those who were with him: We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these may dwell."

And then he continued with these promises: "And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them;

"And they who keep their first estate [that is, their spiritual life] shall be added upon; and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate; and they who keep their second estate [and that is the mortal life] shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever" (*Abr.* 3:22-26)—if they keep their estate; if they keep the commandments; if they do all things whatsoever the Lord God has commanded them.

### Limitations in mortality

God has created these intelligences, given to them spirit bodies, and given them instructions and training. Then he proceeded to create a world for them and sent them as spirits to obtain a mortal body, for which he made preparations. And when they were upon the earth, he gave them instructions on how to go about developing and conducting their lives to make them perfect, so they could return to their Father in heaven after their transitions. Then came the periods of time when souls were placed upon the earth and born to parents who were permitted to furnish the bodies. But no parent has ever yet on this earth been

the parent of a spirit, because we are so far yet from perfection. Remember what was said a while ago, that "As man is, God once was; and as God is, man may become."—with the definite understanding that they could return to become like God and go forward in their great development and progress.

Could you produce a spirit? Has anyone whom you know ever produced a spirit? This is a power not given to mortal man. There is much for us to learn.

"We have not the power in the flesh to create and bring forth or produce a spirit [with all the vaunted knowledge of the experts in the world, this has not been given to man]; but we have the power to produce [with the help of God] a temporal body [for our children]. The germ of this, God has placed within us. . . . Herein, brethren, you can perceive that we have not finished, and cannot finish our work, while we live here [on the earth], no more than Jesus did while he was in the flesh." (JD, 15:137.)

Could we mention one more thing? While we are in the mortal body we cannot "fashion kingdoms [or] organize matter, for [that is] beyond our capacity and calling, beyond this world. In the resurrection, men who have been faithful and diligent in all things in the flesh, [who] have kept their first and second estate, and [are] worthy to be crowned Gods, even the sons of God, will be ordained to organize matter. How much matter do you suppose there is between here and some of the fixed stars which we can see? Enough to frame many, very many millions of such earths as this, yet it is now so diffused, clear and pure, that we look through it and behold the stars. Yet the matter is there. Can you form any conception of this? Can you form any idea of the minuteness of matter?" (JD, 15:137.)

Can you realize even slightly how relatively little we know? As Paul said, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath pre-

pared for them that love him." (1 Cor. 2:9.)

### Perfecting our lives

We talk about the gospel in its fullness; yet we realize that a large part is still available to us as we prepare, as we perfect, and as we become more like our God. In the Doctrine and Covenants we read of Abraham, who has already attained godhood. He has received many powers, undoubtedly, that we would like to have and will eventually get if we continue faithful and perfect our lives.

Let me conclude with this thought, the song "O My Father":

*O my Father, thou that dwellest  
In the high and glorious place,  
When shall I regain thy presence,  
And again behold thy face?  
In thy holy habitation,  
Did my spirit once reside?  
In my first primeval childhood,  
Was I nurtured near thy side?*

*For a wise and glorious purpose  
Thou hast placed me here on earth,  
And withheld the recollection  
Of my former friends and birth,  
Yet oftimes a secret something  
Whispered, "You're a stranger here;"  
And I felt that I had wandered  
From a more exalted sphere.*

*I had learned to call thee Father,  
Through thy Spirit from on high;  
But until the key of knowledge  
Was restored, I knew not why  
In the heavens are parents single?  
No; the thought makes reason stare!  
Truth is reason, truth eternal  
Tells me I've a mother there.*

*When I leave this frail existence,  
When I lay this mortal by,  
Father, Mother, may I meet you  
In your royal courts on high?  
Then, at length, when I've completed  
All you sent me forth to do,  
With your mutual approbation  
Let me come and dwell with you.*  
(Hymns, no. 139.)

My brothers and sisters, God bless you as we carry forward our lives toward perfection so that we may attain and receive the blessings that we are promised, that we may reach godhood eventually and have the blessings appertaining thereto.

I ask the Lord to bless us as we go to our homes, as we train our children, as we teach them the truths of the everlasting gospel; that they too may arrange their lives early so that they may point them toward that perfection which the Lord will recognize in the eternities. I ask these blessings, leaving our blessings upon you, with the testimony that this is the truth, that God lives, and that Jesus is the Christ. You know it and I know it, and our lives should show it in all of our activities. I bear this testimony to you in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### **President Spencer W. Kimball**

We have just received telegrams from the far-away reaches of the world, Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere, saying that they are receiving these messages here tonight and they have been so grateful for them.

Sessions of the conference tomorrow will be broadcast to a large audience in many parts of the United States and Canada over the many television and radio stations cooperating to provide extensive coverage of this conference.

Over seventy radio stations will broadcast conference tomorrow morn-

ing (Sunday) in major cities of Mexico and Central America, and by satellite transmission in Australia, the Philippines and countries of South America, to a potential Latin American audience of probably seventy-five million people.

The Nationwide CBS Radio Tabernacle Choir Broadcast will be from 9:30 to 10:00 tomorrow morning. Those desiring to attend must be in their seats before 9:15 A.M.

In leaving this great Priesthood Meeting tonight, we remind you, as we always do, to obey traffic rules, to use caution, and always to be courteous in driving.

The beautiful music for this Priesthood Session has been furnished by the Combined Men's Choir from the Tabernacle Choir and the Mormon Youth Chorus. We are grateful to you men for your beautiful music and express sincere thanks for the service you have rendered here tonight.

Under the direction of Donald Ripplinger, the Choir will close this meeting with the song, "Oh Say, What Is Truth?" following which Elder Neal A. Maxwell, a president of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will offer the benediction.

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The Combined Men's Choir sang "Oh Say, What Is Truth?"

The closing prayer was offered by Elder Neal A. Maxwell, a president of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

The conference was adjourned until Sunday morning at 10 o'clock.

## **SECOND DAY MORNING MEETING**

#### **FOURTH SESSION**

The Fourth Session of the General Conference commenced at 10:00 A.M.

on Sunday, April 3, 1977, with President Spencer W. Kimball presiding and conducting.

Music was provided by the