

our lives, and then serve God with all our hearts and do unto others as we would be done by as we travel down the road to Jericho. And that we may do so is my humble and earnest prayer in the sacred name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

He to whom you have just listened is Elder Mark E. Petersen of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Before calling upon the concluding speaker, we should like to express, on behalf of all who have listened to the singing during sessions of this General Conference, appreciation and our sincere gratitude to the members of the Tabernacle Choir and the Mormon Youth Chorus for giving so generously of their time to bring us the beautiful and inspiring music heard at this conference. We are thankful to their conductors and organists.

We thank all who have contributed in various ways to the success and inspiration of this conference, especially the General Authorities who have given such appropriate and inspiring messages.

We appreciate the attention given by local and national press representatives, and by representatives of radio and television in reporting the sessions of this conference.

We thank our city and state officials for the cooperation given this

Conference; the city traffic officers for courteously and efficiently handling the increased traffic; the fire department and the Relief Society and Church Health Unit Nurses, who have been on hand to render service throughout the conference.

We are grateful to the Tabernacle Ushers for seating the great audiences of these conference sessions in such a courteous manner.

We again express appreciation to the owners and managers of the many radio and television stations who have given public service time to carry sessions of this conference in the United States, Mexico, Central America, and Canada; by satellite to Australia, the Philippines, and South America; and by shortwave to Europe, Africa, and Latin America.

We thank the interpreters who have provided translation for the sessions of the conference.

Now we will have the privilege and pleasure of listening to our beloved Prophet, President Spencer W. Kimball, who will be our concluding speaker, after which the Tabernacle Choir, directed by Brother Jerold Ottley will sing, "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me."

The benediction will then be offered by Elder George P. Lee, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy and President of the Arizona Holbrook Mission, following which this conference will stand adjourned for six months.

President Spencer W. Kimball

A conference of inspiration and revelation

We have come to the close of these glorious days of great spiritual uplift, during which we have listened to words of inspiration and revelation from our

presiding brethren. We have been blessed by hearing praises to the Lord sung by this great Tabernacle Choir.

We have all felt the outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord as we have assembled in his name to worship and be instructed by the power of the Holy

Ghost. This has always been the pattern of the meetings of the saints, for we read in the Book of Mormon the words of Moroni, who said:

"And their meetings were conducted by the church after the manner of the workings of the Spirit, and by the power of the Holy Ghost; for as the power of the Holy Ghost led them whether to preach, or to exhort, or to pray, or to supplicate, or to sing, even so it was done." (Moro. 6:9.)

We have been counseled in the ways of righteousness, urged to be faithful and to keep the commandments of God, to love the Lord and our fellowmen. We have been warned against the pitfalls of following the ways of Satan and counseled to resist evil by being humble, prayerful, and submissive to the constant promptings of the Spirit. We have this great promise from our Lord given in our day:

"Assuredly as the Lord liveth, who is your God and your Redeemer, even so surely shall you receive a knowledge of whatsoever things you shall ask in faith, with an honest heart, believing that you shall receive. . . .

"Yea, behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart.

"Now, behold, this is the spirit of revelation. . . ." (D&C 8:1-3.)

Rock of revelation

Of all things, that for which we should be most grateful today is that the heavens are indeed open and that the restored church of Jesus Christ is founded upon the rock of revelation. Continuous revelation is indeed the very lifeblood of the gospel of the living Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

We proclaim to the world in one of our Articles of Faith, "We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important

things pertaining to the Kingdom of God." (Ninth Article of Faith.)

From the scripture of ancient time comes this ringing declaration: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." (Amos 3:7.)

This postulation to the prophet Amos has come down from antiquity and speaks of the Lord "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." (Heb. 13:8.)

We read of the unchangeable Lord in the holy scriptures. In the Bible, which we proclaim "to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly" (Eighth Article of Faith), the Old Testament prophets from Adam to Malachi are testifying of the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ and our Heavenly Father. Jesus Christ was the God of the Old Testament, and it was He who conversed with Abraham and Moses. It was He who inspired Isaiah and Jeremiah; it was He who foretold through those chosen men the happenings of the future, even to the latest day and hour.

And the New Testament is what it implies—a new, additional witness and testimony of the sonship of Jesus Christ and the fatherhood of the Father and the divinity of this work, and the necessity of living the gospel, which he outlined and proclaimed.

We do not accept the theory of the so-called teachers of Christianity, that the Old Testament constituted the total words of God's prophets; nor do we believe the New Testament to be the end of revelation. We testify that rather than an end of revelations of God, they continue to pour forth from God for the welfare and benefit of men.

I believe with Peter of old who said: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: But holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Pet. 1:21.)

Need for revelation

How this confused world of today

needs revelation from God. With war and pestilence and famine, with poverty, desolation, with more and more graft, dishonesty, and immorality, certainly the people of this world need revelation from God as never before. How absurd it would be to think that the Lord would give to a small handful of people in Palestine and the Old World his precious direction through revelation and now, in our extremity, close the heavens.

However, it is the sad truth that if prophets and people are unreachable, the Lord generally does nothing for them. Having given them free agency, their Heavenly Father calls, persuades, and directs aright his children, but waits for their upreaching hands, their solemn prayers, their sincere, dedicated approach to him. If they are heedless, they are left floundering in midnight's darkness when they could have the noonday sun.

When the children of Israel would not live the commandments, believe in him, and follow his program, the Lord said: "And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass:

"And your strength shall be spent. . . ." (Lev. 26:19-20.)

The "dark ages"

If the Bible were "the end of the prophets," then it was through lack of faith and belief, and that is the reason the heavens at times were closed and locked and became as iron, and the earth as brass. When the heavens are sealed, the spiritual darkness that follows is not unlike that physical darkness in Nephite history, when "neither candles, neither torches; neither could there be fire kindled with their fine and exceedingly dry wood." (3 Ne. 8:21.)

The Lord will not force himself upon people, and if they do not believe, they will receive no revelation. If they are content to depend upon their own

limited calculations and interpretations, then, of course, the Lord will leave them to their chosen fate.

Speaking of miracles and revelation, the Book of Mormon prophet Moroni states this:

"If these things have ceased, then has faith ceased also; and awful is the state of man, for they are as though there had been no redemption made." (Moro. 7:38.)

In the meridian of time, the Son of God, the Light of the World, came and opened the curtains of heaven, and earth and heaven were again in communion.

But when the light of that century went out, the darkness was again impenetrable; the heavens were sealed and the "dark ages" moved in.

The heavens opened

I bear witness to the world today that more than a century and a half ago the iron ceiling was shattered; the heavens were once again opened, and since that time revelations have been continuous.

That new day dawned when another soul with passionate yearning prayed for divine guidance. A spot of hidden solitude was found, knees were bent, a heart was humbled, pleadings were voiced, and a light brighter than the noonday sun illuminated the world—the curtain never to be closed again.

A young lad spoken of by brethren today, Joseph Smith of incomparable faith, broke the spell, shattered the "heavens of iron" and reestablished communication. Heaven kissed the earth, light dissipated the darkness, and God again spoke to man, revealing anew "his secret unto his servant unto prophets." (Amos 3:7.) A new prophet was in the land and through him God set up his kingdom, never to be destroyed nor left to another people—a kingdom that will stand forever.

Revelation to remain

The foreverness of this kingdom and the revelations which it brought into existence are absolute realities. Never again will the sun go down; never again will all men prove totally unworthy of communication with their Maker. Never again will God be hidden from his children on the earth. Revelation is here to remain.

In the early years of his newly established dispensation, the Lord set his divine law of succession, and prophets have followed each other and will continue to follow each other in never-ending, divinely appointed succession, and the secrets of the Lord will be revealed without measure.

By the power of God other books of scripture have come into being. Vital and priceless records of ancient America, with teachings of Christ, another testimony of his divinity, form the Book of Mormon, which we declare to be divine scripture, contemporary with and sustaining the Bible.

Additional scripture

Since that momentous day in 1820, additional scripture has continued to come, including the numerous and vital revelations flowing in a never-ending stream from God to his prophets on the earth. Many of these revelations are recorded in another scripture called the Doctrine and Covenants. Completing our Latter-day Saint scriptures is the Pearl of Great Price, another record of revelation and translated writings of both ancient and modern prophets.

There are those who would assume that with the printing and binding of these sacred records, that would be the "end of the prophets." But again we testify to the world that revelation continues and that the vaults and files of the Church contain these revelations which come month to month and day to day. We testify also that there is, since 1830 when The Church of Jesus Christ

of Latter-day Saints was organized, and will continue to be, so long as time shall last, a prophet, recognized of God and his people, who will continue to interpret the mind and will of the Lord.

Warning

Now, a word of warning: Let us not make the error of the ancients. Numerous modern sectarians believe in the Abrahams, the Moses, and the Pauls, but resist believing in today's prophets. The ancients also could accept the prophets of an earlier day, but denounced and cursed the ones who were their contemporaries.

In our day, as in times past, many people expect that if there be revelation it will come with awe-inspiring, earth-shaking display. For many it is hard to accept as revelation those numerous ones in Moses' time, in Joseph's time, and in our own year—those revelations which come to prophets as deep, unassailable impressions settling down on the prophet's mind and heart as dew from heaven or as the dawn dissipates the darkness of night.

Expecting the spectacular, one may not be fully alerted to the constant flow of revealed communication. I say, in the deepest of humility, but also by the power and force of a burning testimony in my soul, that from the prophet of the Restoration to the prophet of our own year, the communication line is unbroken, the authority is continuous, a light, brilliant and penetrating, continues to shine. The sound of the voice of the Lord is a continuous melody and a thunderous appeal. For nearly a century and a half there has been no interruption.

Man never needs to stand alone. Every faithful person may have the inspiration for his own limited kingdom. But the Lord definitely calls prophets today and reveals his secrets unto them as he did yesterday, he does today, and will do tomorrow: that is the way it is.

Every prophet contributed great service

As we sang "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet" earlier in the afternoon, a thought ran through my mind which I have expressed before. I hope you were all thinking of Joseph Smith, of Brigham Young, of John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and all the other Brethren. I hope you were thinking of Brother McKay and Brother Smith, Brother Lee and all of those who have filled this position in these days.

They have filled a great service. They have done a great work for the people of this world. They have organized the Church and continued to develop it, and it has grown tremendously under their care.

I hope we will always remember that and not let it all be centered in the living person who currently serves, because the works of God continue in all these areas.

Statues

Before I close I should like to mention two other matters. One, I hope you have had the opportunity to see the four beautiful statues that have been placed just east of the temple in the central Church plaza. These four are a part of the group of thirteen statues honoring women that will be set up next year in the Relief Society park in Nauvoo, at the visitors center there. These four have been placed in the plaza for your enjoyment. They are lovely indeed. We invite you to visit that area and see the statues while you are here in Salt Lake City.

"A poor, wayfaring man of grief"

I was impressed when Brother Hinckley spoke of Joseph Smith so tenderly, and sweetly, and the thought went through my mind of that last night in Carthage, Illinois. They were gathered together with the mob all

around them and the Prophet Joseph Smith asked one of the brethren to sing for him "A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief."

*A poor wayfaring Man of grief
Hath often crossed me on my way,
Who sued so humbly for relief
That I could never answer, Nay.
I had not power to ask his name,
Whereto he went, or whence he came;
Yet there was something in his eye
That won my love; I knew not why.*

*"Once, when my scanty meal was spread,
He entered, not a word he spake;
Just perishing for want of bread,
I gave him all he blessed it, brake,
And ate, but gave me part again;
Mine was an angel's portion then,
For while I fed with eager haste,
The crust was manna to my taste.*

*I spied him where a fountain burst
Clear from the rock; his strength was
gone;
The heedless water mocked his thirst;
He heard it, saw it, hurrying on.
I ran and raised the sufferer up;
Thrice from the stream he drained my
cup,
Dipped and returned it running o'er;
I drank and never thirsted more.*

*'Twas night; the floods were out; it blew
A winter hurricane aloof;
I heard his voice abroad and flew
To bid him welcome to my roof.
I warmed and clothed and cheered my
guest
And laid him on my couch to rest,
Then made the earth my bed, and seemed
In Eden's garden while I dreamed.*

*Stript, wounded, beaten nigh to death,
I found him by the highway side;
I roused his pulse, brought back his
breath,
Revived his spirit, and supplied
Wine, oil, refreshment—he was healed;
I had myself a wound concealed,
But from that hour forgot the smart,
And peace bound up my broken heart.*

*In prison I saw him next, condemned
To meet a traitor's doom at morn;
The tide of lying tongues I stemmed,
And honored him 'mid shame and scorn.
My friendship's utmost zeal to try,
He asked if I for him would die;
The flesh was weak; my blood ran chill;
But the free spirit cried, "I will!"*

*Then in a moment to my view
The stranger started from disguise;
The tokens in his hands I knew;
The Savior stood before mine eyes.
He spake, and my poor name he named,
"Of me thou hast not been ashamed;
These deeds shall thy memorial be,
Fear not, thou didst them unto me."*

(Hymns, no. 153.)

Blessing

God bless you, brothers and sisters.

It's been a wonderful conference and a joy to mingle with you these days. Peace be with you; and may his joy and peace continue with you. We know it is true. I know the Lord lives and I know that he's revealing his mind and will to us daily, so that we can be inspired as to the direction to go.

We ask this all, with our affection for you, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Tabernacle Choir sang the hymn, "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me."

The benediction was pronounced by Elder George P. Lee of the First Quorum of the Seventy and President of the Arizona Holbrook Mission.

The Conference was adjourned for six months.

WELFARE SERVICES SESSION

A Welfare Services Session was held in connection with General Conference on Saturday morning, April 2, 1977, at 7 o'clock. Invited to attend this meeting were General Authorities, Regional Representatives, stake presidencies, high councilors involved in welfare work, bishoprics, and stake and ward Relief Society presidencies and others responsible for operating welfare production projects. President Spencer W. Kimball was present and presided at this session.

Presiding Bishop Victor L. Brown conducted the meeting. Speakers at this meeting included Bishop Victor L. Brown and Bishop J. Richard Clarke of the Presiding Bishopric, President Ezra Taft Benson and Elder L. Tom Perry of the Council of the Twelve, and Sister Barbara B. Smith, President of the Relief Society.

President Marion G. Romney of the First Presidency then gave the following address:

President Marion G. Romney

My beloved brothers and sisters, I ask you to join with me in a prayer that the Lord will be with the talks given here this morning, and I hope my re-

marks will be in harmony with them. I hope that every one of you bishops and branch presidents has a clear understanding of the many resources avail-