

than redemption." God grant us the wisdom to know that life is a great journey, and may we have the sense to enjoy it. I bear witness to these truths in the holy name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Paul H. Dunn, a President of

the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just addressed us.

Elder Wm. Grant Bangerter, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy and Supervisor of the Brazil Area, will now speak to us. He will be followed by Elder Adney Y. Komatsu of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder W. Grant Bangerter

My dear brethren and sisters, I extend special greetings from the Saints in Brazil and report that the construction of the new temple in São Paulo is nearing completion.

I have in mind a special moment in Church history which has a great bearing on our testimonies and on the progress of the gospel. I hope that it has been duly recorded by those who keep the history. I refer to what happened on the 4th of April, 1974.

President Lee's death

The story really begins on the 26th of December, 1973. President Harold B. Lee passed away suddenly on that day. His death was completely unexpected. It is necessary to remember that over a period of twenty-five years, members of the Church had awaited the time when Harold B. Lee would become the president. There had been every reason to think that this would eventually happen, due to his relative youthfulness and because he occupied a position in seniority following Joseph Fielding Smith and David O. McKay, both of whom were of advanced age. In addition, Harold B. Lee had gained more than average prominence. His leadership in the welfare and priesthood programs of the Church, his forceful nature, and his sound judgment had made

him one of the apostles most listened to and one whose influence and advice were most respected. He had an evident spiritual stature which commended him to the members of the Church as one of the great men of our time. He possessed an unusual ability to relate as a personal friend to countless people. It was expected that when he became president he would preside for twenty years or more.

President Kimball

Suddenly he was gone!—called elsewhere after only one and one-half years. It was the first time probably since the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith when the president had died before the Church membership felt it was time for him to die. In deep sorrow and concern, the surging questions arose in the minds of the people, much as they did at the time when Joseph Smith was killed in Carthage, Illinois. "What will we do not? How can we carry on without the prophet? Our great leader has gone. Can the Church survive this emergency?"

Of course we knew that the Church would survive, but it would not be the same. We had not thought of Spencer W. Kimball becoming the president, nor looked to him for the same type of leadership evident in the life of Harold

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First Day

B. Lee. We knew, of course, that he would manage somehow, but it would not be easy for him, and things would not be the same. "O Lord," we prayed, "please bless President Kimball. He needs all the help you can give him." Such seemed to be the attitude in the hearts of the Latter-day Saints during those days of mourning.

April 4, 1974

We return to the 4th of April, 1974. There were gathered that morning in the Church Office Building, all of the General Authorities as well as the Regional Representatives and other leaders from around the world. We were to be instructed once again, as we had been periodically during the past seven years. On each preceding occasion Harold B. Lee had given us our direction and sounded the trump of leadership. Now he was no longer there, and we all felt his absence deeply. Again came the questions: "How can we proceed without our great leader?" "How can President Kimball fill the empty space?" And again the prayers went forth: "Please bless President Kimball."

The moment came when President Kimball arose to address the assembled leadership. He noted that he also had never expected to occupy this position and that he missed President Lee equally with the rest of us. Then he reviewed much of the instruction which President Lee had given over the past years, and our prayers in behalf of President Kimball continued.

As he proceeded with his address, however, he had not spoken very long when a new awareness seemed suddenly to fall on the congregation. We became alert to an astonishing spiritual presence, and we realized that we were listening to something unusual, powerful, different from any of our previous meetings. It was as if, spiritually speaking, our hair began to stand on end. Our minds were suddenly vibrant and mar-

veling at the transcendent message that was coming to our ears. With a new perceptiveness we realized that President Kimball was opening spiritual windows and beckoning to us to come and gaze with him on the plans of eternity. It was as if he were drawing back the curtains which covered the purpose of the Almighty and inviting us to view with him the destiny of the gospel and the vision of its ministry.

I doubt that any person present that day will ever forget the occasion. I, myself, have scarcely reread President Kimball's address since, but the substance of what he said was so vividly impressed upon my mind that I could repeat most of it at this moment from memory.

A glorious vision

The Spirit of the Lord was upon President Kimball and it proceeded from him to us as a tangible presence, which was at once both moving and shocking. He unrolled to our view a glorious vision. He told us of the ministry performed by the apostles in the day of the Savior, and how the same mission was conferred on the apostles under Joseph Smith. He demonstrated how these men had gone forth in faith and devotion and were clothed with *great power*, by which they had carried the gospel to the ends of the earth, reaching further, in some ways, than we with the strength of this modern church are doing at the present time. He showed us how the Church was not fully living in the faithfulness that the Lord expects of His people, and that, to a certain degree, we had settled into a spirit of complacency and satisfaction with things as they were. It was at that moment that he sounded the now famous slogan, "We must lengthen our stride." (See *ENSIGN*, Oct. 1974, p. 5.) I doubt that everyone fully understands that directive even now. If it were put into the vernacular it would sound much more like: "Let's get off our dime!" "Get going!" "Move!"

President Kimball bespoke other messages: "We *must* go to all the world." "Every boy should go on a mission." "Open the door to new nations." "Send missionaries from Mexico, South America, Japan, Great Britain, and Europe." (See "When the World Will Be Converted," *ENSIGN*, Oct. 1974, pp. 2-14.) This was a new vision, disturbing and exciting, added to the old.

The thought came to me: "Imagine! At any moment the president might call any or all of us to go to distant lands or otherwise extend the preaching of the gospel." I little realized that within six months I would be en route to Portugal for that very purpose.

Power of the Lord

President Kimball spoke under this special influence for an hour and ten minutes. It was a message totally unlike any other in my experience. I realized that it was similar to the occasion on the 8th of August, 1844, when Brigham Young spoke to the Saints in Nauvoo following the death of the Prophet Joseph. Sidney Rigdon had returned from Pittsburgh, where he had apostatized, to try to capture the Church. Many people testified, however, that as Brigham Young arose, the power of the Lord rested upon him to the extent that he was transfigured before them, with the appearance and the voice of Joseph Smith. That moment was decisive in the history of the Church, and the occasion of April 4, 1974, is parallel.

When President Kimball concluded, President Ezra Taft Benson arose and with a voice filled with emotion, echoing the feeling of all present, said, in substance: "President Kimball, through all the years that these meetings have been held, we have never heard such an address as you have just given. Truly, there is a prophet in Israel."

A new era

Now I affirm that since April 1974

things have indeed *not* been the same. This is no attempt to eulogize President Kimball into a figure greater than other presidents of the Church, but to point out the continuing spiritual power which attends the prophet of the Lord, whoever he may be. But President Kimball has nevertheless launched us into a new perspective and is causing us to take giant strides. Since that day no one has worried the least little bit about who is the Lord's prophet.

We suddenly find ourselves in a new era of the gospel. The members of the Church should recognize it for what it is. These years are decisive!

Think of what President Kimball says and does! With a word he has called forth nearly 10,000 new missionaries. He has opened many new lands, ushered in the day of the Lamanite, called on the Saints to be true messengers of salvation, proclaimed with new emphasis the urgency of the work for the dead, and projected the construction of many new temples. As have all the prophets, he has called on the Church to purge itself of all evil and unrighteousness, such as immorality, divorce, faithlessness, apathy, slothfulness, dishonesty, and to repent and seek forgiveness whenever necessary. He has warned us to prepare with food, gardens, and financial stability, and to put our homes and families in order. Since we call ourselves a Zion people, President Kimball seems to think we should act like it. Both he and the Lord will be impatient with us if we don't.

What we heard on April 4, 1974, and what we have heard since, sounds very similar to the declarations of Moses, Malachi, and Brigham Young. I feel, through President Kimball, the Lord's impatience with leaders who don't move; with members who won't listen; especially with a world madly throwing everything overboard, including the anchor, the compass, the helm, and even the pilot. *Our* purpose is to keep the commandments, proclaim the

gospel, baptize to repentance, confer the priesthood, organize the kingdom, and redeem the dead. In all this we are expected to leave footprints.

Since the Lord has been gracious enough to open the heavens in the last days, speaking to us through angels, messengers, and prophets in order that we might obtain eternal life, we cannot afford to languish in apathy. Let us take it seriously. It will be well worth it. Since April 4, 1974, things truly are no longer the same.

I pray the Church will listen to President Kimball. I think it does. There is great growth and improvement. There must be more—much, much more. The great history of the

gospel is still in the future. We thank thee, O God, for a prophet. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder W. Grant Bangerter, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and Supervisor of the Brazil Area, has just spoken to us.

Elder Adney Y. Komatsu, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy and Supervisor of the Japan-Korea Area, will be our next speaker. He will be followed by President Ezra Taft Benson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder Adney Y. Komatsu

My dear brothers and sisters and friends, I am humbly grateful for this opportunity to share my testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Law of sacrifice

In the Gospel of Mark we find:

"And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

"And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.

"Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

"And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

"Then Jesus beholding him loved

him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

"And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions." (Mark 10:17-22.)

The law of sacrifice is a fundamental doctrine of the gospel of Jesus Christ and contributes to the building of faith, love, and many other virtues. Many great blessings are predicated upon obedience to the eternal law of sacrifice.

Missionaries sacrifice

Sacrifice has always been required of missionaries. Brigham Young recorded: "In company with several of the Twelve I was sent to England in 1839. We started from home without purse or scrip, and most of the Twelve were sick; and those who were not sick when they started were sick on the way