

Elder LeGrand Richards

Of the Council of the Twelve

I would like to extend, with all of you, my love and welcome to these new General Authorities, and my greatest desire and wish for them is that they will get as much joy and happiness out of their service as I have had in the forty years since I was sustained as one of the General Authorities of the Church.

Prophecy

I thought today I would like to refer to the fact that a week ago the entire Christian world celebrated one of the greatest, if not the greatest, events that has transpired in this world since the foundations thereof were laid, and that is the resurrection of Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God. No wonder that after the apostles had seen him crucified and laid away in the tomb and the women brought the report that he had arisen from the dead, the apostles felt as if it were an idle tale. As Jesus walked along the road with two of his disciples on the way to Emmaus following his resurrection (and we are told that "their eyes were holden" that they didn't recognize him [Luke 24:16]), he heard what they had to say about him and his life and crucifixion. He realized that they didn't understand all that the prophets had said concerning him, and so he said: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." (Luke 24:25.) Then commencing with Moses and the prophets he showed them how in all things the prophets had testified of him, and that they did even to the minutest details, even to the casting of lots for his clothing at the time of his crucifixion.

And Peter said:

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

"Knowing this first, that no proph-

ecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

"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. 1:19-21.)

Well, if prophecy is the most sure way of knowing what is to happen—and Isaiah said that the Lord had declared the end from the beginning (see Isa. 46:10)—it's all there when we understand it. And so I think that if Jesus pronounced such judgment upon those who failed to understand the scriptures relating to his first coming, how would he feel toward us and the world if we fail to recognize the value of the words of the holy prophets relating to his second coming? And so I thought I would like to just mention one or two of the things that the prophets have foretold.

Restitution of all things

First, I think of the words of Peter following the day of Pentecost as he talked to those who had put to death the Christ. He said:

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

"And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

"Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-21.)

This is the only church, I am sure, that believes in such a restitution of all the things that the holy prophets have spoken. Other churches believe in a reformation, but that is only man's wisdom. Restitution comes from God the Eternal Father. And so we can't look forward to the second coming of the Savior without there being a restitution

of all things, and that's the message of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

I would like to refer now to the prophecies of just one of the holy prophets—there isn't time to discuss more than that—and I choose for the text of my talk today the signs that are to precede his second coming according to the words of Malachi the prophet, the last prophet recorded in the Old Testament.

The Lord, speaking through Malachi, said that he would send his messenger to prepare the way for his coming, and he would come swiftly to his temple. But who could abide the day of his coming, because he would be as refiner's fire and fullers' soap? (See Mal. 3:1-2.) Now obviously that had no reference to his first coming. But we are told that when he comes in power and great glory, with all the holy angels, the wicked shall cry out to the rocks: "Fall on us, and hide us [from his presence]." (Rev. 6:16.)

Second Coming

And you will remember when Jesus told his disciples that the temple should be broken down and that there should not be one stone left upon another. They inquired: "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming [that would be his second coming], and of the end of the world?" (Matt. 24:3.) Jesus told them of the wars, and rumors of wars, and pestilence, and earthquakes, and famines, and that nation should rise against nation, "and this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matt. 24:14.)

Then he told them that as the days of Noah were, so should be the days of the coming of the Son of Man. They should be eating and drinking and making merry and would say that the Lord delayeth his coming, and then he would come as a thief in the night. And he said there would be two men upon the land;

one would be taken and the other would be left. Two women would be grinding at the mill; one would be taken and the other would be left. (See Matt. 24:37-41.) All of that was what the Savior said to identify the signs that would precede his second coming.

Malachi's prophecies fulfilled

Malachi saw the messenger that was to be sent—and incidentally, when the Lord sends a messenger, that messenger can be none other than a prophet. Jesus bore witness of John the Baptist, who was sent as a messenger to prepare the way for his coming in the meridian of time. He said that there was no prophet in Israel greater than John the Baptist. (See Luke 7:28.) The prophet Amos said: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." (Amos 3:7.) How, then, could all things be restored, as Peter said, from all the holy prophets since the world began, unless there was a prophet to receive such restitution? And that prophet was none other than Joseph Smith, who, under the direction, divine guidance, and authority of the Father and the Son, organized this great church—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The second thing that Malachi said relating to the preparation for the coming of the Savior in the latter days was that the whole house of Israel had departed from Him, and they wanted to know how. He indicated that it was in the paying of their tithes and offerings. He said: "Ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." Then he said: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, . . . if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." (See Mal. 3:8-10.) What an invitation! The Lord extended to Israel in the latter days, as preparation for his coming, an invitation to return to him in the pay-

ment of their tithes and their offerings! Then he went a little further and said that he would rebuke the devourer for their sakes, that their crops should not fall before their time, and that all men should call them blessed. (See Mal. 3:11-12.)

We are a blessed people. The Lord has blessed us. After our pioneers were driven a thousand miles from civilization and transportation, they landed here in this wilderness. Isaiah saw that the Lord would cause the wilderness to blossom as the rose. (See Isa. 35:1.) He saw the rivers flow in the desert and flow down from the high places to make this land productive. (See Isa. 41:18.) And why? So that the Saints, when they were gathered here, could fulfill his promises. For if this gospel that Jesus referred to was to be preached in all the world, it had to be done by his children. And hundreds of thousands of Latter-day Saint missionaries since that time have been all over the world—some 25,000 of them at the present time—to declare the restoration of the gospel as one of the steps in the preparation for the return of the Savior, for he so indicated that it must be preached in all the world.

And then there were so many other things that needed to be done that required money in order to build the kingdom of God in the earth, like the building of our places of worship, these beautiful buildings that you see here in this city, this great metropolis. All of this because the Lord has truly blessed his people. And then the building of holy temples, including those that are now on the drawing boards, which will make, I think, a total of twenty. We are the only temple-building people in this whole world—and if the world were to build them, they wouldn't know what to do with them!

That brings us to one more thing that Malachi saw. He said:

"I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:

"And he shall turn the heart of the

fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." (Mal. 4:5-6.)

Just think of all that Malachi saw when he saw the coming of Elijah. What a consequence if it were not for his coming, for the Lord said that the whole earth would be utterly wasted. (See D&C 2:3.) Nobody in this world, I am sure, outside of this church, could tell you what the message of Elijah was. We wouldn't know either, except that Elijah came and appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on the third day of April 1836 in the Kirtland Temple. As a result of that, and of the keys of the dispensation that Elijah brought, we have built all these holy temples. We understand the value of genealogical research, so we have built here in this city a genealogical library and these great vaults out in the mountains, a miracle in and of themselves. There is nothing else like them in the entire world. And all of that has been done to fulfill the mission of Elijah, lest the Lord come and smite the whole earth with a curse.

We are advised to study the scriptures, the older scriptures and the modern scriptures, to see what the prophets have said. Remember the words of Peter, that we have a more sure word of prophecy and that we do well to take heed. I want to bear you my testimony here that this is the work of God the Eternal Father.

As I stand here as an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, I bear you my witness that the prophecies of Malachi that I have referred to have been fulfilled in the restoration of the gospel at the hands of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the holy prophets who have succeeded him at the head of this church, even to our present prophet, President Spencer W. Kimball, whom I honor with all my heart, as I do all my brethren of the General Authorities. So I leave with you that witness, and pray God to give us the strength and the faith to do our part in the preparation of his kingdom.

In the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ, amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder LeGrand Richards of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us.

Before hearing President Kimball's concluding remarks, we should like to express, on behalf of all who have listened to the singing during the sessions of this General Conference, appreciation and our sincere gratitude to the members of the Tabernacle Choir for again giving so generously of their time to bring us the beautiful and inspiring music heard at this conference. We are grateful for the lovely music performed by the Primary Children's Choir at the Saturday Afternoon Session and for the Prospective Elders' Choir that sang at the Priesthood Session. We are also thankful to their conductors and organists.

We also thank all who have contributed in various ways to the success and inspiration of this lovely 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 sessions of this conference.

We thank our City officials for the cooperation given, 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.

Our beloved Prophet, President Spencer W. Kimball, will be our concluding speaker of the conference, after which the Tabernacle Choir will sing, "Come, Follow Me."

The benediction will then be offered by Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy and President of the Texas San Antonio Mission, following which this conference will stand adjourned for six months.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Beloved brothers and sisters, wasn't it a happy moment when we were permitted to be here today to hear that beautiful testimony of Brother LeGrand Richards? and the four new members of the First Quorum of the Seventy who poured out their hearts in those moments they had? and to hear all the other brethren who have given of their rich lives?

Tribute to Primary

I should like first to pay special tribute to the divinely inspired Primary organization of the Church. It is just a hundred years ago that Bishop Hess, with the approval of the First Presidency, called Aurelia Spencer Rogers to organize the first Primary in Farmington, Utah. From that humble begin-