

SECOND DAY MORNING MEETING

FOURTH SESSION

The Fourth Session of the General Conference commenced at 10:00 A.M. on Sunday, April 1, 1979, with President Spencer W. Kimball presiding and conducting.

The Tabernacle Choir provided the music for this session, with Brothers Jerold Ottley and Donald Ripplinger conducting, and Brother John Longhurst at the organ.

Prior to the beginning of the session, the Tabernacle Choir sang the hymn, "Jehovah, Lord of Heaven and Earth," without announcement.

President Kimball then made the following remarks:

President Spencer W. Kimball

We welcome all who are present this morning in the historic Tabernacle, on Temple Square, in this fourth session of the 149th Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We also acknowledge those who are seated in the overflow congregations in the Assembly Hall, and Salt Palace, and those tuned to this Conference by radio and television.

Elders A. Theodore Tuttle and Vaughn J. Featherstone preside in the Assembly Hall, and Elders J. Thomas Fyans and Dean L. Larsen preside in the Salt Palace.

We acknowledge the presence this morning of government, education, and civic leaders, and officers and members of the Church from many lands, who have assembled to worship, and to counsel together in this Conference.

The Tabernacle Choir, under the direction of Brothers Jerold Ottley and Donald Ripplinger, with Brother John Longhurst at the organ, is providing the music for this session. The Choir opened these services by singing, "Jehovah, Lord of Heaven and Earth," and will now sing, "Lovely Appear," following which Elder Charles A. Didier, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy and, Supervisor of the Europe West Area, will offer the invocation.

The Choir sang, "Lovely Appear." Elder Charles A. Didier offered the invocation.

Following the invocation, the Choir sang the hymn, "How Wondrous and Great" without announcement.

President Kimball

The Tabernacle Choir has sung, "How Wondrous and Great."

It will now be our privilege to hear from President Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency of the Church.

President Marion G. Romney

My beloved brothers and sisters and, particularly, nonmember friends, you are listening to the proceedings of a session of the annual April general conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, frequently referred to as the Mormon Church.

"Mormon"

The nickname *Mormon* is associated with the Church and its members because we accept as scripture a book titled the Book of Mormon. This book is a translation of an an-

cient record inscribed on gold plates which, in September 1827, were delivered by an angel to Joseph Smith, a twenty-one-year-old youth.

When the angel first advised Joseph concerning the plates, he said, to quote Joseph, "that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Moroni; that . . . there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fulness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in [the record]. . . .

"Also, that there were two stones in silver bows—and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted 'seers' in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book." (Jos. Smith 2:33-35.)

By the power of God, Joseph translated the record and in 1830 published the translation in book form, under the title the Book of Mormon.

The record revealed the fact that Mormon was the father of Moroni. He was an able military leader in his day, a learned historian, and a great prophet. He lived in America during the last half of the fourth century A.D. The book bears his name because he made a compilation and an abridgment of the then extant historical records. His abridgment constituted most of what Joseph Smith translated from the gold plates, which he received from Moroni, who had deposited them in the Hill Cumorah, located in western New York state, in about A.D. 421.

Correct name of Church

Members of the Church do not resent being referred to as Mormons,

nor does the Church resent being referred to as the Mormon church. As we have said, however, it is not the correct name of the Church. Its correct name is, as we have already explained, "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (D&C 115:4).

This name was officially confirmed by Jesus Christ himself when, on April 26, 1838, at Far West, Missouri, in a revelation addressed to the presiding officers of the Church, he said—and this is Christ himself speaking:

"Verily thus saith the Lord unto you, my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and also . . . unto all the elders and people of my Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, scattered abroad in all the world;

"For thus shall my church be called in the last days, even *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.*" (D&C 115:1, 3-4; Italics added.)

"Take upon you the name of Christ"

This declaration by the Lord is reminiscent of the account the Book of Mormon gives of Christ's statement to his disciples in America as he ministered among them immediately following his resurrection.

"And it came to pass [reads that record] that as the disciples of Jesus were journeying and were preaching the things which they had both heard and seen, and were baptizing in the name of Jesus . . . that the disciples were gathered together and were united in mighty prayer and fasting.

"And Jesus [this was the resurrected Jesus, in America] again showed himself unto them, for they were praying unto the Father in his name; and Jesus came and stood in the midst of them, and said unto them: What will ye that I shall give unto you?

"And they said unto him: Lord, we will that thou wouldst tell us the name whereby we shall call this

church; for there are disputations among the people concerning this matter.

“And the Lord said unto them: Verily, verily, I say unto you, why is it that the people should murmur and dispute because of this thing?”

“Have they not read the scriptures, which say ye must take upon you the name of Christ, which is my name? For by this name shall ye be called at the last day;

“And whoso taketh upon him my name, and endureth to the end, the same shall be saved at the last day.

“Therefore, whatsoever ye shall do, ye shall do it in my name; therefore ye shall call the church in my name; and ye shall call upon the Father in my name that he will bless the church for my sake.

“And how be it my church save it be called in my name? For if a church be called in Moses’ name then it be Moses’ church; or if it be called in the name of a man then it be the church of a man; but if it be called in my name then it is my church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel.

“Verily I say unto you, that ye are built upon my gospel; therefore ye shall call whatsoever things ye do call, in my name; therefore if ye call upon the Father, for the church, if it be in my name the Father will hear you;

“And if it so be that the church is built upon my gospel then will the Father show forth his own works in it.

“But if it be not built upon my gospel, and is built upon the works of men, or upon the works of the devil, verily I say unto you they have joy in their works for a season, and by and by the end cometh, and they are hewn down and cast into the fire, from whence there is no return.

“For their works do follow them, for it is because of their works that they are hewn down; therefore

remember the things that I have told you.

“Behold I have given unto you my gospel, and this is the gospel which I have given unto you—[this is the Christ, now defining his gospel] that I came into the world to do the will of my Father, because my Father sent me.

“And my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross; and after that I had been lifted up upon the cross, that I might draw all men unto me, that as I have been lifted up by men even so should men be lifted up by the Father, to stand before me, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil—

“And for this cause have I been lifted up; therefore, according to the power of the Father I will draw all men unto me, that they may be judged according to their works.

“And it shall come to pass, that whoso repenteth and is baptized in my name shall be filled; and if he endureth to the end, behold, him will I hold guiltless before my Father at that day when I shall stand to judge the world.

“And he that endureth not unto the end, the same is he that is also hewn down and cast into the fire, from whence they can no more return, because of the justice of the Father.

“And this is the word which he hath given unto the children of men. And for this cause he fulfilleth the words which he hath given, and he lieth not, but fulfilleth all his words.

“And no unclean thing can enter into his kingdom; therefore nothing entereth into his rest save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins, and their faithfulness unto the end.

“Now this is the commandment [by the risen Redeemer to the ancient Americans, and it is still his com-

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Second Day

mandment]: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day." (3 Ne. 27:1-20.)

Such is the name and such are the basic doctrines taught by the Church sometimes referred to as the Mormon Church.

The true and living Church

Not only did the Redeemer personally name his Church, "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" as recounted already in these remarks, he also declared it to be "the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, with which I, the Lord, am well pleased" (D&C 1:30).

The background for this declaration was as follows:

"Through a period of more than six years prior to [April 6th, 1830, when the Church was organized] Joseph Smith, the Prophet, had received at intervals Divine revelations and commandments. . . .

"As early as the summer of 1830, the Prophet, acting under Divine commandment, was engaged in copying and arranging the revelations received up to that time, evidently with a view to their publication in book form. On November 1, 1831, at a conference of the Elders of the Church held at Hiram, Ohio, definite action relating to the publication of the revelations [which the Prophet had received and compiled] was taken, and the compilation was called the *Book of Commandments*. The Lord's acceptance of the undertaking was made manifest by the giving of the revelation . . . appearing as Section 1 [of our Doctrine and Covenants] . . . known as the *Preface*." (D&C, Explanatory Introduction, iii; see also

History of the Church, 1:222 and the introductory note to D&C 1.)

Because of the universal importance of the content of this revelation, I shall conclude these remarks by quoting therefrom. The Lord began it by calling for the attention of all men—not just members of the Church, but all men, he said as he opened the revelation:

"Hearken, O ye people of my church, saith the voice of him who dwells on high, and whose eyes are upon all men; yea, verily I say: Hearken ye people from afar; and ye that are upon the islands of the sea, listen together.

"For verily the voice of the Lord is unto all men, and there is none to escape; and there is no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated.

"And the rebellious shall be pierced with much sorrow; for their iniquities shall be spoken upon the housetops, and their secret acts shall be revealed.

"And the voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days.

"And they shall go forth and none shall stay them, for I the Lord have commanded them.

"Behold, this is mine authority, and the authority of my servants, and my preface unto the book of my commandments, which I have given them to publish unto you, O inhabitants of the earth.

"Wherefore, fear and tremble, O ye people, for what I the Lord have decreed in them shall be fulfilled. . . .

"Wherefore the voice of the Lord is unto the ends of the earth, that all that will hear may hear:

"Prepare ye, prepare ye for that which is to come, for the Lord is nigh;

"And the anger of the Lord is kindled, and his sword is bathed in

heaven, and it shall fall upon the inhabitants of the earth.

“And the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, shall be cut off from among the people;

“For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant;

“They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own God, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.

“Search these commandments”

“Wherefore, I the Lord, knowing the calamity which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him commandments;

“And also gave commandments to others, that they should proclaim these things unto the world. . . .

“Behold, I am God and have spoken it; these commandments are of me, and were given unto my servants in their weakness, after the manner of their language, that they might come to understanding. . . .

“And after having received the record of the Nephites, yea, even my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., might have power to translate through the mercy of God, by the power of God, the Book of Mormon.

“And also those to whom these commandments were given, might have power to lay the foundation of this church, and to bring it forth out of obscurity and out of darkness, the

only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, with which I, the Lord, am well pleased, speaking unto the church collectively and not individually—

“For I the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance;

“Nevertheless, he that repents and does the commandments of the Lord shall be forgiven;

“And he that repents not, from him shall be taken even the light which he has received; for my Spirit shall not always strive with man, saith the Lord of Hosts.

“And again, verily I say unto you, O inhabitants of the earth: I the Lord am willing to make these things known unto all flesh;

“For I am no respecter of persons, and will that all men shall know that the day speedily cometh; the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand, when peace shall be taken from the earth, and the devil shall have power over his own dominion.

“And also the Lord shall have power over his saints, and shall reign in their midst, and shall come down in judgment upon Idumea, or the world.

“Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled.

“What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same.

“For behold, and lo, the Lord is God, and the Spirit beareth record, and the record is true, and the truth abideth forever and ever. Amen.” (D&C 1:1-7, 11-18, 24, 29-39.)

To the truth of these great revelations, I bear my personal witness. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, amen.