

also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem."

### Accept God as he really is

My dear brothers and sisters, I bear you my testimony that this is the day of the establishment of the kingdom of Christ on this earth—that nobody will be able to escape the

decision to accept God as he really is and not as he has been made to appear according to man-made philosophies. I know that this is the work of the living God, working through a living prophet, Spencer W. Kimball. I say this in humility in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, amen.

### President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder F. Enzo Busche, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just spoken to us.

Elder Marion D. Hanks, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, will now address us.

## Elder Marion D. Hanks

### Enoch

In that same chapter of the book of Moses to which Brother Busche has just referred, there is a conversation recorded that is for me one of the most instructive and tender in all literature. Enoch had "built a city that was called the City of Holiness, even Zion," which "in process of time, was taken up into heaven. . . .

"And . . . the God of heaven looked upon the residue of the people [that is, upon those who had not been taken up], and he wept" (Moses 7:19, 21, 28).

Then Enoch said to the Lord: "How is it that the heavens weep, and shed forth their tears as the rain upon the mountains?"

". . . How is it that thou canst weep, seeing thou art holy, and from all eternity to all eternity?" (Moses 7:28-29).

Enoch then reminded God of the limitlessness and ongoing nature of his creations, and of his holy perfections and glory and accomplishments, and said: "Naught but peace, justice, and truth is the habi-

tation of thy throne; and mercy shall go before thy face and have no end; *how is it thou canst weep?*

"The Lord said unto Enoch: Behold these thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands, and I gave unto them their knowledge, in the day I created them; and in the Garden of Eden, gave I unto man his agency;

"And unto thy brethren have I said, and also given commandment, that they should *love one another*, and that they should *choose me*, their Father; but behold, they are without affection, and they hate their own blood.

". . . and the whole heavens shall weep over them, even all the workmanship of mine hands; wherefore should not the heavens weep, seeing these shall suffer?" (Moses 7:31-33, 37; italics added).

God, from whom all blessings come, asked of his children only that they should love each other and choose him, their Father.

But as in our day, many neither sought the Lord nor had love for each other, and when God foresaw

the suffering that would inevitably follow this self-willed, rebellious course of sin, *he wept*. That, he told Enoch, was what he had to cry about.

Long ago I heard an important story which has been helpful to me. I have not seen it in writing and therefore cannot give credit as I would like. The story has obviously been deliberately fashioned to teach in a provocative way principles in which I believe.

#### At the gate

Over a period of time three men, as each of us ultimately will, passed from mortal life to ongoing immortality. Each, as he made the transition, at once found himself in the presence of a gracious person who made him feel comfortable and calmed his apprehensions.

Each man in turn found himself responding to questions which somehow formed in the mind and heart, vital above all other considerations. "What do you think of Christ? What is your relationship with him? Do you know him?"

The first man answered reluctantly, with some chagrin. He had not been, he said, one who had participated in organized religious activity. There seemed to be too much formalism, too much hypocrisy, too little real religion. Neither had he on his own sought a personal relationship with the Lord. He had been a good husband and father, an active citizen, a man of integrity, but it now came to him very clearly that he had missed the central purpose of his life, that he had been distracted from what he should have been seeking. With gratitude, he was received into a circumstance where he could begin to learn what he needed to know.

The second man had a briefer interview. Quickly perceiving the import of the questions, he quickly answered. He had, he said, been a

soldier for Christ, a crusader for him in business, a spokesman for him in industry. He seemed crestfallen to be ushered after a time into a circumstance where he too could begin to learn what he needed to know.

The third traveler came into the presence of his host with an overwhelming sense of warmth and wonder. Understanding the questions, looking tearfully into the loving eyes of him who stood at the gate, he fell to his knees at his feet and worshiped him.

#### The Holy One

In the scripture it is written:

"O . . . my beloved brethren, . . . the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him, and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there; and there is none other way save it be by the gate; for he cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name" (2 Ne. 9:41).

Salvation and exaltation, I believe, are not matters of heavenly bookkeeping, but of the qualifying of the soul that comes with knowing the Lord.

#### Willing to receive

It is also written that one who does not abide laws pertaining to the various conditions of eternal opportunity cannot enjoy the blessings of those kingdoms. There are those who will not enjoy the blessings of *any* kingdom of glory, but must function, says the record, in a kingdom *not of glory* (see D&C 88:22-24). And of them it is written:

"And they who remain shall also be quickened; nevertheless, they shall return again to their own place, to enjoy that which they are willing to receive, because they were not willing to enjoy that which they might have received.

"For what doth it profit a man if a gift is bestowed upon him, and he receive not the gift? Behold, he rejoices not in that which is given unto him, neither rejoices in him who is the giver of the gift" (D&C 88:32-33).

Each of us will enjoy all of God's blessings that we are willing to receive.

But how do we manifest that willingness? A prophet answers: "How knoweth a man the master whom he has not served, and who is a stranger unto him, and is far from the thoughts and intents of his heart?" (Mosiah 5:13).

We know and choose him and enjoy his blessings through serving him, through qualifying for his friendship, and by keeping him always in our hearts and minds. In our afflictions and gropings and forebodings we turn to him for comfort and support. He is always accessible to those who seek him.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).

"Lo, I am with you alway," he said, "even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20).

"I will not leave you comfortless" (John 14:18).

He understands our infirmities and pressures and problems. Better than any other, he understands how it is to feel all alone.

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46).

### Love each other

But loving him, reaching out to him, we have also to live his commandment to love each other. He taught us and showed us the paths we must follow. When he returned to Nazareth and entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day, he opened the book of Isaiah and read what had been written 700 years earlier about His ministry:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Luke 4:18).

In the magnificent story of the return of the King, he taught us unforgettably our responsibility to the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and those in prison. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25:40).

Millennia before, through Isaiah, there was delineated the course of helpfulness he expected his children to follow:

"To loose the bands of wickedness, . . . undo the heavy burdens, . . . let the oppressed go free, . . . deal thy bread to the hungry, . . . bring the poor that are cast out to thy house, . . . when thou seest the naked, . . . cover him, . . . satisfy the afflicted soul" (Isa. 58:6, 7, 10).

We know, you and I, that we need the Lord. And he has made it plain that he also needs us as instruments of his love to his other children.

### His instruments

A little girl living in a place for homeless children earned displeasure from annoyed attendants by depositing a note in a tree limb which could be reached from outside the institution. The apprehended little rule-breaker was quickly fetched to the superintendent, who opened the note which read, "To whoever finds this, I love you."

God's children need to be loved, and to have someone to love.

But it is written, "let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 Jn. 3:18).

"Not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (Eph. 6:6).

In the sermon Amulek preached, to which Brother Busche has referred, encouraging prayer and faith, there was added this invitation:

"And now behold, my beloved brethren, I say unto you, do not suppose that this is all; for after ye have done all these things, if ye turn away the needy, and the naked, and visit not the sick and afflicted, and impart of your substance, if ye have, to those who stand in need—I say unto you, if ye do not any of these things, behold, your prayer is vain, and availeth you nothing, and ye are as hypocrites who do deny the faith" (Alma 34:28).

The poet expressed it another way:

*Love is not all: it is not meat nor drink*

*Nor slumber nor a roof against the rain;*

*Nor yet a floating spar to men that sink.*

(Edna St. Vincent Millay, *Collected Poems*, ed. Norma Millay, New York: Harper and Row, 1956, p. 659).

We speak of the love of Christ that is greater than faith, greater than hope; that expresses itself in sacrifice, in service, in giving.

Now, some of those who need our love are near at hand, others are far away. A few of the latter are arriving in our communities to remind us that vast numbers of displaced people are now and will be increasingly in need of help across the earth. We have heard a little of the tragedy of the boat people. Yet the problem of the hungry, the homeless, the hopeless, the poor and cast out, is beyond anything most of us can comprehend.

### Near at hand

There are others nearer at hand who struggle with problems with which we must also be concerned. Major organized institutional welfare and social service efforts are in process, thank the Lord, but these are to augment our individual concern for the strangers who are among us, resident or passing through, for the wayward, the elderly, and the ill.

The widowed and divorced suffer devastating displacement, also, often alone and often in need of encouragement and help. Broken-hearted parents who have really tried, but whose progeny have chosen another path, are heartsick and often find little comfort in sermons or in the success of others. The numbers of single-parent families burgeon, each one representing special needs not understood by those who have not experienced them.

We have the testimony of scripture that the Lord God weeps when we do not choose him or truly love each other. The saddest circumstance any of us can envision, indeed the only evil that ultimately can really harm us, is in not choosing him and thus to be separated from him. But the companion tragedy—one that also brings suffering that makes him weep—is to fail in our affection for each other, affection expressed in unselfish efforts to give the Christian service President Kimball referred to thrice this morning, Christian service to the hungry, the naked, the oppressed, those who are cast out, the widow, the orphan, the afflicted, the brokenhearted, the bruised, the abandoned, the elderly, the sick, and the imprisoned.

### Choose him—and love

We have two great challenges, you and I, and the challenge never ends as long as breath lasts: to

choose him and to love each other. Then we may be sure we will know him in this world and at last in that kingdom which is not of this world, where "God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:3-4).

God bless us that we may meet the test, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Marion D. Hanks, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just spoken to us.

President Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will be our concluding speaker.

## President Ezra Taft Benson

### A marvelous work and a wonder

Seven centuries before the birth of Christ, Isaiah foresaw and foretold the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in these latter days. He declared it would be a "marvelous work and a wonder" to all mankind (Isa. 29:14). When Jesus appeared to the Nephites in America, He confirmed the prophecy of Isaiah in these words: "For my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a great and a marvelous work" among the people of the land of America in the last days (3 Ne. 21:9).

April 6, 1830, in the state of New York, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had its beginning in this dispensation, a beginning that went largely unnoticed by the world. A small number of men and women, including the Prophet Joseph Smith, gathered in the home of Peter Whitmer, Sr., to witness and participate in the official organization of the Church. Today there are over 4½ million members in eighty-one countries. We now look in retrospect on 150 years of the history of the Church and are led to exclaim with Isaiah, "Truly the work is marvelous and wonderful!"

That the Church of Jesus Christ would have an inconspicuous beginning and then enjoy phenomenal growth was likewise predicted. Jesus used the comparison of the small mustard seed to describe the early beginning of His church. But eventually, He declared, that insignificant seed would become a great tree and many would find refuge in its branches (see Matt. 13:31-32).

The prophet Daniel described the beginning and remarkable growth of the Church as a small stone which would become a great mountain and fill the entire earth! (see Dan. 2:34-35, 44).

As men have attempted to assess the Church at a given period of time, in many instances they have not been able to see its forward movement and potential. The growth of the Church, like the growth of grass or trees, has been almost imperceptible to the eye, but little by little, line by line, precept by precept, the Church has matured.

### Church survives persecution

Simultaneous with the early development of the Church was a spirit of opposition and persecution.