

Of Him and His good tidings, of the publication of His peace in this conference and in this His true Church, and of His living prophet who is about to speak to us, I bear grateful and joyful witness in the merciful name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

NOTES

1. Isaiah 2:2-3.
2. Isaiah 52:7.
3. "Carry On," *Hymns*, no. 255.
4. Mosiah 15:18; italics added.
5. Doctrine and Covenants 59:23.
6. Psalm 121:3-4.
7. Romans 8:31.
8. See John 16:33.
9. Philippians 4:7.
10. Psalm 34:14.
11. Luke 23:34.
12. Adapted from George MacDonald.
13. 2 Nephi 2:11.
14. Moses 5:11.
15. Abraham Lincoln, First Inaugural Address, 4 Mar. 1861.
16. Isaiah 40:28-29.
17. Isaiah 40:31.
18. 3 Nephi 22:10.

President Monson

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has just spoken to us.

As we conclude the conference, we express appreciation to the Mormon

Youth Chorus; the Primary children's choir from stakes in Sandy and Draper, Utah; the Provo MTC men's choir; and the Tabernacle Choir; and to their conductors and organists for the beautiful and inspiring music during the conference. The music has been outstanding.

We thank our city officials for the cooperation given the conference; the doctors, Church Health Unit nurses, and ambulance services who have been on hand to render assistance; the ushers and interpreters—a great army of interpreters; and those who are responsible for the beautiful flowers on Temple Square and in the Tabernacle.

We express appreciation to local and national press representatives for the coverage of the conference.

And we are grateful to the owners and operators of the many radio and television stations and cable systems who have given time and made facilities available to carry sessions of the conference in many countries.

We shall now be pleased to hear from our beloved President of the Church, President Gordon B. Hinckley, who will be our concluding speaker.

Following President Hinckley's remarks, the Tabernacle Choir will sing "I Believe in Christ." The benediction will be offered by Elder W. Craig Zwick of the Seventy, and this conference will then be adjourned for six months.

President Gordon B. Hinckley

A remarkable outpouring of the Spirit

Just a few words as we bring to a close this great general conference of the Church. It's been a wonderful occasion. The weather has favored us here in Salt Lake City. This is a beautiful season of the year, with the fall flowers in bloom.

The harvest is largely in, and by and large it has been good. We are grateful for the mercies of the Lord upon us.

We have been able to meet together in peace and comfort and security here in the sacred precincts of Temple Square, where our forebears built so well that we might be so comfortable.

We have had unprecedented coverage of the conference, reaching across the continents and the oceans to people far and wide.

Though we are far removed from some of you, we feel of your brotherhood and express our great appreciation for you.

Most importantly, we have enjoyed a remarkable and wonderful outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord. The Brethren and the sisters have spoken to us, and we have been blessed by their messages.

I hope that we will long remember what we have heard. I hope that we will take the time to read the talks which will be reprinted in the *Ensign*. I hope that each of us may have been touched in a personal way by something that was said, and that as a result of that, there will be a turnabout in any unseemly attitude or action.

Anniversary days

As Brother Ballard has reminded us, this is an anniversary year, and next year will be another anniversary year when we commemorate the arrival of the Mormon pioneers in this valley in 1847. There will be much of remembering. It will all be to the good. All of us need to be reminded of the past. It is from history that we gain knowledge which can save us from repeating mistakes and on which we can build for the future.

These are days for remembering and celebrating the past. These are anniversary days.

The rescue of destitute pioneers

I think of what occurred in this Tabernacle 140 years ago this Sunday. I spoke of it from this pulpit some years back, but I wish to mention it again as we bring to a close this conference.

I take you back to the general conference of October 1856. On Saturday of that conference, Franklin D. Richards

and a handful of associates arrived in the valley. They had traveled from Winter Quarters with strong teams and light wagons and had been able to make good time. Brother Richards immediately sought out President Young. He reported that there were hundreds of men, women, and children scattered over the long trail from Scottsbluff to this valley. Most of them were pulling handcarts. They were accompanied by two wagon trains which had been assigned to assist them. They had reached the area of the last crossing of the North Platte River. Ahead of them lay a trail that was uphill all the way to the Continental Divide with many, many miles beyond that. They were in desperate trouble. Winter had come early. Snow-laden winds were howling across the highlands of what is now western Nebraska and Wyoming. Our people were hungry; their carts and their wagons were breaking down; their oxen dying. The people themselves were dying. All of them would perish unless they were rescued.

I think President Young did not sleep that night. I think visions of those destitute, freezing, dying people paraded through his mind.

The next morning he came to the old Tabernacle which stood on this square. He said to the people:

"I will now give this people the subject and the text for the Elders who may speak. . . . It is this. . . . Many of our brethren and sisters are on the plains with handcarts, and probably many are now seven hundred miles from this place, and they must be brought here, we must send assistance to them. The text will be, 'to get them here.' . . .

"That is my religion; that is the dictation of the Holy Ghost that I possess. It is to save the people. . . .

"I shall call upon the Bishops this day. I shall not wait until tomorrow, nor until the next day, for 60 good mule teams and 12 or 15 wagons. I do not want

to send oxen. I want good horses and mules. They are in this Territory, and we must have them. Also 12 tons of flour and 40 good teamsters, besides those that drive the teams. . . .

"I will tell you all that your faith, religion, and profession of religion, will never save one soul of you in the Celestial Kingdom of our God, unless you carry out just such principles as I am now teaching you. *Go and bring in those people now on the plains*" (in LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion* [1960], 120-21).

That afternoon, food, bedding, and clothing in great quantities were assembled by the women.

The next morning, horses were shod and wagons were repaired and loaded.

The following morning, Tuesday, 16 mule teams pulled out and headed eastward. By the end of October there were 250 teams on the road to give relief.

Wonderful sermons have been preached from this pulpit, my brethren and sisters. But none has been more eloquent than that spoken by President Young in those circumstances.

Reach out to help, lift, feed, and nurture

Stories of the beleaguered Saints and of their suffering and death will be repeated again and again next year. Stories of their rescue need to be repeated again and again. They speak of the very essence of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I am grateful that those days of pioneering are behind us. I am thankful that we do not have brethren and sisters stranded in the snow, freezing and dying, while trying to get to this, their Zion in the mountains. But there are people, not a few, whose circumstances are desperate and who cry out for help and relief.

There are so many who are hungry and destitute across this world who need help. I am grateful to be able to say that

we are assisting many who are not of our faith but whose needs are serious and whom we have the resources to help. But we need not go so far afield. We have some of our own who cry out in pain and suffering and loneliness and fear. Ours is a great and solemn duty to reach out and help them, to lift them, to feed them if they are hungry, to nurture their spirits if they thirst for truth and righteousness.

There are so many young people who wander aimlessly and walk the tragic trail of drugs, gangs, immorality, and the whole brood of ills that accompany these things. There are widows who long for friendly voices and that spirit of anxious concern which speaks of love. There are those who were once warm in the faith, but whose faith has grown cold. Many of them wish to come back but do not know quite how to do it. They need friendly hands reaching out to them. With a little effort, many of them can be brought back to feast again at the table of the Lord.

My brethren and sisters, I would hope, I would pray that each of us, having participated in this great conference, would resolve to seek those who need help, who are in desperate and difficult circumstances, and lift them in the spirit of love into the embrace of the Church, where strong hands and loving hearts will warm them, comfort them, sustain them, and put them on the way of happy and productive lives.

I leave with you my beloved friends, my co-workers in this wonderful cause, my testimony of the truth of this work, the work of the Almighty, the work of the Redeemer of mankind. I leave with you my love and my blessing, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

The choir sang "I Believe in Christ."
Elder W. Craig Zwick offered the benediction.
