

and confidently, with an eye single to the glory of God—without pressuring our listeners or feeling that we have failed in our duty if they do not immediately accept what we believe.

When we have the companionship of the Holy Ghost, we can then do simple things to help bring better understanding of the gospel into the lives of the less-active members of the Church, as well as those who are not of our faith. There is no need for any new program to do this. We don't need a handbook or a calling or a training meeting. The only need is for good members of the Church to learn to rely upon the power of the Holy Ghost and, with this power, reach out and touch the lives of our Father's children. There is no greater service we can render than sharing our personal testimonies with those who lack an understanding of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

### **Resolve to do more to bless others**

So, brothers and sisters, "how is it with us?" Are we ready to do something? Can each one of us resolve today to increase our personal spiritual preparation by seeking the guidance of the Holy Ghost and then, with His power as our companion, bless more of our Father's children with understanding and knowledge that the Church is true?

I testify that the Savior lives and He will bless each one of us if we will do all that we can to move this great work of His Church forward. May each one of us resolve to do something more as we be-

gin this new millennium is my prayer, which I offer humbly in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### **President Faust**

Elder Gary J. Coleman of the Seventy has just spoken to us, followed by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

We remind the brethren of the general priesthood meeting which will convene here in the Conference Center this evening at 6:00 P.M. mountain standard time.

We call your attention to the need to move your clocks ahead one hour before retiring tonight because of the change to daylight time.

The nationwide Tabernacle Choir broadcast tomorrow morning will be from 9:30 to 10:00 A.M. mountain daylight time. The Sunday morning session of conference will immediately follow.

We express gratitude to the combined choir from Brigham Young University for the beautiful music they have provided this afternoon.

As you leave the conference this afternoon, we ask that you obey traffic rules, use caution, and be courteous in driving.

Elder David B. Haight of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles will be our concluding speaker at this session. Following his remarks, the choir will sing "More Holiness Give Me." The benediction will then be offered by Elder Athos M. Amorim of the Seventy.

## **Elder David B. Haight**

### **A joy to be here**

A little over two years ago at a meeting when President Gordon B. Hinckley announced this building would be built

in the year 2000, he then turned to me and said, "David, I expect you to be there."

President, I'm here. And I hope that if he says that we need another year or

so or whatever and that he expects me to be there, I hope that he says so, because I will follow his instructions.

It's a joy to be here with you and to witness this great historic meeting facility. I enjoyed President Hinckley's comments regarding the walnut from which this pulpit is made. The Tabernacle pulpit had both a red light and an amber light to assist the speaker with his time. As we get older, our eyesight usually isn't as sharp as it used to be. The amber light would come on, and if you didn't pay attention to that, the red light would start to blink. Brother LeGrand Richards, when the light was first installed, said, "Someone's put a silly light up here." He said, "I'll just put my hand over it." There isn't a light here today, so I don't know when I will end.

### **The Church's humble beginnings**

What a joy it is to be here with all of you! As I look at this vast audience and reflect upon our beginnings—our humble, humble beginnings—just imagine the Peter Whitmer log cabin in Fayette, New York. The dimensions as I recall were about 20 feet by 30 feet. There were two little bedrooms upstairs. The Peter Whitmer family lived there. There were no plumbing facilities in the house. There was a well outside and only a fireplace for cooking and heating, but in that humble building 170 years ago the Church was organized. Just imagine.

The Prophet Joseph had received a revelation with instructions regarding the organization of the Church. And in that humble little cabin, not only was the Church organized but the translation of the Book of Mormon was completed within one of those upstairs bedrooms made available to the Prophet Joseph and Oliver Cowdery. And in that little farmhouse the first elders of this Church were ordained, when the Prophet Joseph ordained Oliver Cowdery and then Oliver ordained the Prophet Joseph Smith. And

in that little farmhouse the first sacrament meeting was held after the Church was organized. Just imagine. The sisters brought bread and some grape juice for that first sacrament. Those were the humble beginnings of what we witness here today.

As we sit here and look at this vast audience, it's thrilling to contemplate our future and reflect upon the humble pioneer beginnings. In 1820 at the Sacred Grove, in answer to the Prophet Joseph's humble prayer, God the Father and His Son appeared to that 14-year-old young man, ushering in this work, the restoration of the gospel.

Think of 1830—the meeting in that little log cabin, which for a while was the headquarters of the Church. Imagine such a historical but heavenly meeting in that 20-by-30-foot frontier cabin. Part of the account tells of Peter Whitmer's wife, Mary. Mary Whitmer got up earlier that Sunday morning and walked out into the living room, where people were sleeping on the floor covered with homemade quilts. They had come by wagon or buggy or horse—friends and people who had heard about what would be happening on April 6th. There were probably 50 people assembled for the meeting.

With that humble, humble beginning, we assemble here today. We just want to say, "Hallelujah! Thank the Lord for all that's taken place." Words come into my mind, as I stand here, of faith, devotion, and gratitude—the faith of the people and the faith that we demonstrate by being here today; the devotion of those early members and the devotion that we have; and our hearts are full of gratitude for what has happened and what lies ahead.

### **Tradition of sustaining leaders**

I'm so grateful for my being able to be here, for my ancestry, for my wife, Ruby, for our children and all of our grandchildren. Our family has started a

tradition that on this day, wherever we might be living, we stand in front of the television set if we are at home or attend in our meetinghouse or Conference Center and we raise our right hand to sustain the officers of the Church, especially our living prophet. And so in my mind's eye, I have imagined today our own posterity in Brussels, Belgium; in London; Virginia; North Carolina; Texas; and California—raising their hands to the square on this day, learning how to do it, learning that it's important in the Church that they sustain the leaders.

### **Gratitude for the Restoration**

My heart is full of gratitude on this day for the revelations given to the Prophet Joseph Smith and for all that he did to set in motion the Restoration, the revelations necessary for the onrolling of this work, line upon line and precept upon precept. Ponder the ruggedness of our beginning—the humble, humble beginning—and then look at us today.

He received the revelation, now the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants, in which the Lord promised that Joseph Smith and others would receive the power and the authority to bring the Church “out of obscurity and out of darkness” (D&C 1:30). Think about what has happened under the inspired leadership of President Hinckley. The Joseph Smith Building we have today—in the preserving of that wonderful old building that was the Hotel Utah and is now the fine edifice that it is—we saw that come from the inspiration given to President Hinckley. And think of this building, as he explained to us, the direction that had come to him. And so to all of us as we assemble here today, I hope that we have grateful hearts for the knowledge that we have and the testimonies we have and for the feelings we have, that this is only the beginning. This is only a chapter in the onrolling of this work.

In that humble setting in Fayette, New York, when we think of what has taken place since then and what has happened in our lives and with our ancestors, I hope all of us have that gratitude and would have a desire to pass that on to our posterity and the knowledge that we have and the testimonies that we have that this work is true. I hope that we feel grateful for the eternal blessings we can receive as we watch and are part of the unfolding of the temple expansion throughout the world and of that blessing coming to the people.

### **Challenges in Ghana will be resolved**

As Brother Pace was speaking here a few moments ago about the challenges that we have in Ghana, I know that that will be taken care of. I stood under a tree on the campus of the university there and dedicated Ghana for the preaching of the gospel. Brother Banyan Dadson, who was vice president of the university and a member of the Church, stood there on that day and explained to the people how the natives in Ghana had settled that part of West Africa, and what a blessing it had been for those tribes of people. I know that that problem will be resolved; that will only be a chapter in the onrolling of this work.

### **Be a strong link in our family chains**

President Hinckley, in a comment a short time ago, talked about the links of his family, his family chain, and hoping that he would be a strong link in that chain and that *his* link would remain strong. He told the account of attempting to pull the stump of a tree out of the ground on their property and how the chain had broken. He went to the store to try to get another link to fix the chain so they could pull the tree stump out, which they were finally able to do. He said he thought of his own responsibility

ity to his posterity, to remain a strong link in that chain (see "Keep the Chain Unbroken," *Brigham Young Magazine*, spring 2000, 6).

I would hope and pray that in our own families, all of us, that we would have a desire to be a strong link in our own family chain, in our posterity, so that the eternal blessings that are part of the gospel, the blessings of the temple and the eternities, will be taught to our families in such a way that they will go on and on forever to affect many, many people. Be sure that those links are strong in your chain and that you pass the testimony that you have, the devotion that you have, to future generations. This vast audience here today is only a chapter in what will take place in the spreading of this work throughout the world.

#### Share testimonies; be a good example

The Savior, following His Resurrection, appeared on the seashore when Peter and the others had gone back to fishing. He called out, asking if they had caught any fish, and they hadn't. He asked them to cast their nets on the other side. You remember the story so well.

They brought in the nets full of fish, and as they sat on the seashore, the Savior asked Peter, "Lovest thou me more

than these?" pointing to the valuable fish jumping in the nets. "Lovest thou me more than these?"

And Peter says, "Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee."

Then He said, "Feed my lambs." Then He asked Peter the second time and the third time, then directed, "Feed my sheep. . . . Feed my sheep." (See John 21:15-17.)

May we have that testimony, that desire in our hearts, to teach others, to explain what we believe, and to live lives of righteousness, to live the good life, to be an example to mankind, and to be able to spread this work not only by what we say but by the way we act, the way we live, the way we represent the Church, and the type of example we are to mankind.

I know that God lives, that He is our Father—He loves us all—and that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of a *living* God, and that they're real and they live today. I so bear witness, leaving you my love and testimony, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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The choir sang "More Holiness Give Me."

Elder Athos M. Amorim offered the benediction.

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## GENERAL PRIESTHOOD SESSION

The general priesthood session, the third session of the 170th Annual General Conference, convened in the Conference Center on Saturday, April 1, 2000, at 6:00 P.M. President Gordon B. Hinckley conducted this session.

Music was provided by male members of the Tabernacle Choir, joined by returned missionaries. Craig Jessop and Mack Wilberg directed the choir, and Richard Elliott was the organist.

President Hinckley opened the meeting with the following remarks.

#### President Gordon B. Hinckley

Brethren, we welcome you to this general priesthood session of the 170th Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

These services are being relayed by closed-circuit and satellite transmission