

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 "I Believe in Christ." The benediction will

then be offered by Elder Earl M. Monson of the Seventy, and the conference will then be adjourned until 2:00 this afternoon.

## Elder David B. Haight

When President Gordon B. Hinckley announced that I would be the concluding speaker, I'm sure he was wondering if I could make it to the pulpit all right. He knows that I've just had my 94th birthday. So I'm in my 95th year, and he would be wondering.

He also knows that my eyesight isn't very good, but as my eyesight dims somewhat, I think my vision improves—my vision of the long road, my vision of what lies ahead. And so with all of you here this morning, I am sure you would join with me in saying what a marvelous time to be alive and what a marvelous time to be a member of this Church and how wonderful it is to have the freedoms that we have—the freedom of assembly and of religious gathering.

### **The gospel makes a difference**

When Ruby and I knelt in the Salt Lake Temple at the altar on September 4, 1930, holding hands and looking at one another, little did we realize what was ahead for us. We were two young people. I had come out of the country in southern Idaho, and Ruby had come out of Sanpete County, Utah. Our fathers were dead, but we had two wonderful widowed mothers, and they were with us in the temple. As we knelt and made covenants and promises, I knew that that was for real.

Now, after we have been married 70 years, I can say to all of you that it gets better, that it gets better year after year, with the preciousness and the tenderness and the realization of some of the eter-

nal blessings that lie ahead for us. And so to all of you I would say, and Ruby would join with me if she could be standing here, that life can be wonderful and so meaningful, but we have to live it in a simple way. We must live the principles of the gospel. For it is the gospel in our lives that makes the difference as we wend our way through life.

I have moved our family all over the country. Our children have grown up being in school when they were the only members of the Church in their class. We've done that many times, but that added to their development and their understanding and helped in the development of their testimonies to see the world in action but also to see the blessings of the gospel in our lives.

### **Blessing of a precious little baby**

Last Sunday, Ruby and I attended a sacrament meeting of a ward here in central Salt Lake. The meeting was most interesting because in that ward there is some affluence as well as people who are living in halfway houses. Just before the testimony meeting, a young lady walked up to the bishop on the stand, holding a little baby in her arms, wanting the baby to receive a blessing. The bishop stepped down and took the little baby, and the baby was blessed.

Later on during the testimony meeting, a little seven-year-old boy, with his five-year-old sister by the hand, walked up to the pulpit. He helped fix a little stool there for her to stand on, his five-year-old sister, and he helped her as she

bore her testimony. And as she would falter just a little, he would lean over and whisper in her ear, this little loving seven-year-old brother.

After she finished, he stood on the stool, and she stood watching him, and he bore his testimony. She had that sweet expression on her face as she watched him. He was her older brother, but you could see that family love and relationship with those two little children. He stepped down from the stool, took her by the hand, and they walked back down to take their seat.

Near the end of the testimony meeting, when there were a few moments for me to speak, I asked the young lady who had brought her child up to be blessed if she would come up and stand by me, which she did. In the meantime, while the meeting was going on, I asked the bishop, whispering into his ear, "Where is her husband?"

The bishop said, "He's in jail."

I asked, "What is her name?" and he told me her name.

She came up and stood by my side, carrying the little baby. As we were standing at the pulpit, I looked down at this little precious baby, only a few days old, and this mother—the mother of that little daughter, who had brought her to receive a blessing at the hands of the priesthood. As I looked at the mother and looked at that precious little child, I wondered what she might become or what she could be.

### **Family proclamation guides us**

I spoke to the audience and to this young mother about the proclamation that was issued five years ago by the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve—a proclamation on the family—and of our responsibility to our children, and the children's responsibility to their parents, and the parents' responsibility to each other. That marvelous document brings

together the scriptural direction that we have received that has guided the lives of God's children from the time of Adam and Eve and will continue to guide us until the final winding-up scene.

As we talked about it and as I looked at that beautiful little baby, I thought of last summer. Ruby and I were up in Idaho for a short visit, and we met some people from Mountain Home, Idaho—the Goodrich family. Sister Goodrich had come to see us and had brought her daughter Chelsea with her. In part of the conversation that we were having, Sister Goodrich said Chelsea had memorized the proclamation on the family.

To Chelsea, who is now 15 years old, I said, "Chelsea, is that right?"

She said, "Yes."

I said, "How long did it take you to do that?"

She said, "When we were young, my mother started a program in our house to help us memorize. We would memorize scripture passages and sacrament meeting songs and other types of things that would be helpful to us. So we learned how to memorize, and it became easier for us."

I said, "Then you can give it all?"

She said, "Yes, I can give it all."

I said, "You learned that when you were 12 years old; you're now 15. Pretty soon you'll start dating. Tell me about it. What has it done for you?"

Chelsea said, "As I think of the statements in that proclamation, and as I understand more of our responsibility as a family and our responsibility for the way we live and the way we should conduct our lives, the proclamation becomes a new guideline for me. As I associate with other people and when I start dating, I can think of those phrases and those sentences in the proclamation on the family. It will give me a yardstick which will help guide me. It will give me the strength that I need."

### Be a strong link

A short time ago President Hinckley was speaking to the students at the Brigham Young University. He made the statement that life is a great chain of generations, link following link, until the end of time. In talking to the students, he encouraged them not to be a weak link but to be a strong link in their family.

We've heard a lot of instruction here this morning in the conference regarding family history and families, the reason for linkage, and the responsibility that we have to do temple work for tens of thousands of people who could be a part of our own families waiting on the other side to receive the ordinances that must be done on this side of the veil so that they can carry on with what needs to be done on the other side. This we all understand so well.

So I would say to all of you here this morning, I hope you could develop a strong feeling in your own families—and with you personally—about not wanting to become a weak link in the chain of your family and of your ancestors. I encourage you also to be a strong link for your posterity. Do not be the weak link. Wouldn't that be a terrible thing to do? To think of that long chain and of all the precious work that needs to be done in the saving of souls, wouldn't it be sad if you were the one who was the weak link that caused your descendants not to be able to be part of that strong linkage.

### Anxiety to do temple work in Nauvoo

When the Saints were preparing to leave Nauvoo, and with the Nauvoo Temple unfinished, it was possible for them to endow only a few people. President Brigham Young, as President of the Quorum of the Twelve, was the senior Apostle at that time. He wrote in his journal about the anxiety that the people felt when they were trying to get their wagons equipped to start the trek west into that new area

they knew nothing of. They were following their leaders, getting ready the few possessions they could take with them on the wagons.

Amidst all these preparations, there was an opportunity for some of them to be endowed, and the people were anxious to be endowed. Brigham Young stopped doing all of the regular, routine work he was doing. He put that to one side so that he could stay in the temple and conduct the endowment work that was so necessary. In commenting about the experience, he said he was anxious to do what the Saints were anxious to have done. That word, *anxiety*, is interesting as it appears in his account. He writes of the anxiety that they had, hoping that the important endowment work could be accomplished before the people left on the trek west.

### Strengthen family links

I leave you my love and my witness and the knowledge that I have that this work is true. I know that God lives. I know that He loves us. He loves us, just as we love our children and our posterity. We now have 65 great-grandchildren, and of course we'll have more on their way. We love them all, and we hope that the chains and the links in our family will be strong and that our children will be blessed. We're proud of all of them and pray that they will grow up with the strong knowledge and the feeling that I have regarding God—that He lives, that He's our Father, and that all of this work is under His direction, that of His Son, who is our Savior, Jesus the Christ. This is the Church of Jesus Christ, restored to the earth in these latter days. I know it is true.

### Marvelous happenings in the Church

I know that we have a living prophet upon the earth today, and you can see the marvelous things that are happening

in the Church now with 100 operating temples. Some of you here will live to see the day when there are 200 operating temples and then 300 operating temples, and whatever the number might eventually become.

Well, we're living at this time and this day and age when marvelous things are happening. When we talk about a living prophet who receives revelations from on high in directing this work, I testify to you that those of us who work and associate with him can testify that he is God's prophet here upon the earth,

leading us in doing what is right and what is proper.

May your links be strong. May you personally find the great joy and happiness that can be ours through living the principles of the gospel. I leave you my love and this witness that the Church is true, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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The choir sang "I Believe in Christ."

Elder Earl M. Monson offered the benediction.

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## SATURDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

The second general session of the 170th Semiannual General Conference convened in the Conference Center on Saturday, October 7, 2000, at 2:00 P.M. President Thomas S. Monson conducted this session.

Music was provided by a combined Missionary Training Center choir. Douglas Brenchley directed the choir. Linda Margetts was the organist.

President Monson made the following remarks as the meeting began.

### **President Thomas S. Monson**

My beloved brothers and sisters, we welcome you to this, the second general session of the 170th Semiannual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. President Gordon B. Hinckley, who presides at this conference, has asked that I, Brother Monson, conduct this session.

We extend our greetings to all who are in attendance or who are participating by means of television, cable, radio, or the Internet, and to the many who are watching in stake centers in various parts of the world where the conference is being carried by satellite transmission.

The music for this session will be provided by a combined Missionary Train-

ing Center choir, under the direction of Douglas Brenchley, with Linda Margetts at the organ.

The choir will open these services by singing "We Will Sing of Zion." Following the singing, the invocation will be offered by Elder Ben B. Banks of the Presidency of the Seventy.

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The choir sang "We Will Sing of Zion."

Elder Ben B. Banks offered the invocation.

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### **President Monson**

The choir will now sing "Hark, All Ye Nations!" President James E. Faust, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, will then present the General Authorities, Area Authority Seventies, and general auxiliary presidencies of the Church for your sustaining vote.

Following President Faust, Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles will address us.

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The choir sang "Hark, All Ye Nations!"

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