

REMARKS

BY

ELDER ORSON PRATT

DELIVERED AT THE

Forty-sixth Semi-annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Saturday Morning, Oct. 9th, 1875.

REPORTED BY DAVID W. EVANS.

It is with peculiar feelings that I arise on this occasion to speak a few words to this vast assembly. While listening to the sacred words of the prayer that has been offered up this forenoon in the dedication of this large building as a place of worship, and the dedication of the ministry who administer therein, my heart has been full of joy and satisfaction, and, while listening to these glorious words, my mind was led to reflect upon dedications of houses and tabernacles of the Most High in former ages of the world, and also upon the peculiar manifestations of times connected with those dedications.

The Lord our God accepts the dedication, by his servants the priesthood, of those things which he has ordained and established; and though he may not always manifest that acceptance in a visible manner, so that all the people may see, yet there is a peculiar manifestation that we can feel if we can not see, which whispers to us that God is manifest in his works, ordinances and institutions, and in his own buildings that are built with an eye single to his glory, and in his name. It is an easy matter for the Great Jehovah to manifest himself, if he pleases so to do, upon a mountain or hill, or in the secret closet; or while we slumber upon our pillows by night, the visions of eternity may be opened to our minds, and we may receive great consolation, joy and peace, through the manifestations given us by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost. But then, the Lord has oftentimes laid out a great work for his people to perform, and when that work is performed by the sons of men with all their hearts and might, and with all the strength, ability and power that God has given them, it is then that he shows forth his approbation from the heavens, and fills them with a peculiar feeling of joy and gladness that it is impossible for language to describe. How often have we felt these peculiar feelings and sensations pervading our minds, when we have assembled on occasions something similar to the present one!

I look back to the first temple that was built in this generation by command of the Most High, some forty years ago, in the State of Ohio, in Kirtland, according to the pattern which God showed by vision. When that was completed, and the servants of God were called in from the east and west, and north and south, and entered that sacred edifice, God was there, his angels were there, the Holy Ghost was in the midst of the people, the visions of the Almighty were opened to the minds of the servants of the living God; the veil was taken off from the minds of many; they saw the heavens opened; they beheld the angels of God; they heard the voice of the Lord; and they were filled from the crown of their heads to the soles of their feet with the power and inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and uttered forth prophecies in the midst of that congregation, which have been fulfilling from that day to the present time.

It was in that temple that the visions of the Almighty were opened to our great prophet, seer and revelator, Joseph Smith, wherein the future was portrayed before him, wherein keys were committed to him in relation to this great latter-day dispensation, and the power of God was made manifest through the holy priesthood sent down from heaven. In that temple, set apart by the servants of God, and dedicated by a prayer that was written by inspiration, the people were blessed as they never had been blessed for generations and generations that were passed and gone. Why? Because that work was of God. God had raised up a mighty prophet; God had brought to light great and glorious revelations; God had sent down the holy priesthood from the heavens; the Lord our God had established his kingdom on

the earth; he, therefore, gave unto his servants power, wisdom and strength that they might administer among the people and do them good.

Since that time buildings have been reared to the name of the Most High, and the priesthood have been called together, and the councils of the priesthood have been blessed, endowments have been made manifest, and ordinances of endowments, keys of endowments, signs and tokens of endowments, and principles that were calculated to give joy and to impart happiness, for the Lord had commanded, that in the midst of Zion, life for ever more should be poured out upon the fallen sons and daughters of his people.

Now another occasion is afforded us of dedicating a large and commodious tabernacle, which has been built to the name of the Most High. God is here; God is with his servants, with the quorums of the everlasting priesthood, and his Spirit is here; and the prayer that has been offered up is accepted by the heavens, and we rejoice and give praise to God who has redeemed us, who sits upon his throne, whose bowels of mercy yearn towards all of his sons and daughters; whose bosom is filled with compassion towards all his people. We praise his name, and though we have not the opportunity of giving expression to the joy and thanksgiving of our hearts, still we feel to say—"Hallelujah to the Lord God Almighty, who sits upon his throne, who reigns for ever and ever, for he will bless his Zion, he will extend forth her borders, he will pour out his Spirit upon his ministry, and he will fulfill and accomplish his work unto the uttermost. Amen."

DISCOURSE

BY

ELDER JOSEPH F. SMITH,

DELIVERED AT THE

Forty-sixth Semi-annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday Morning, Oct. 10th, 1875.

REPORTED BY DAVID W. EVANS.

I HAVE been very much interested and instructed during our Conference, and in rising at this time—a few moments only remaining before the close of our forenoon meeting—I feel that I can only bear my testimony to, and express my conviction of, the truths that we have had delivered unto us during our meetings from the first day of our Conference. We have had instructions here upon spiritual and upon temporal matters sufficient, if they were carried out, to make this people the best, purest, noblest and greatest people that inhabit the world. The instructions that have been given unto us in regard to temporal matters and in regard to bringing us to a union of faith and works, are calculated in their nature, if adopted and carried out in the practices of the Latter-day Saints, to make them the most independent people that live upon the face of the earth, depending indeed only upon the Lord our God, the giver of every good and perfect gift. I can see, as clearly as it is possible for me to see the light of the sun, that if the instructions that were given here yesterday and the day before in relation to uniting ourselves together in temporal affairs were carried out by the people we would soon no longer be beholden to the world, and it could be said of us, that we were dependent upon no power upon the earth but the power of God. It is very different, however, with us at present, for now we are very dependent, notwithstanding the vast amount of blessings that the Lord has poured out upon us—blessings of the soil, of the labors of our hands of the elements that surround us. He has given us an abundance of everything our hearts can desire in righteousness, inasmuch as it was remarked yesterday, that we have become almost recreant to these blessings; we squander and waste them, run over them, trample them under our feet as it were, and regard them as of very little importance, or worthless. The Lord truly has blessed his people; he has poured out his Spirit upon us, opened our way, delivered us from our enemies blessed and enriched the soil, tempered the elements and made them

favorable to us, turned away cursings and given us blessing on every hand and has prospered us in the earth. But we have been careless, and in a measure blind to the presence and value of the blessings that have been poured out upon us so abundantly and have failed to recognize, as we should at all times, the hand of God therein. We have also come far short of appreciating our brethren the prophets, who have borne the burden in the heat of the day; who have stood boldly and fearlessly, filled with wisdom and intelligence from above, to give us counsel and to guide and direct us in the channels of prosperity, peace and happiness.

Will we come to a knowledge of the truth? Will we learn to appreciate the blessings that we enjoy and to realize from whence they come? Will we begin to follow more faithfully the counsels that are given to us by the servants of the Lord, and come together in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, that we may become perfect men in Christ Jesus, even to the fullness of the measure of his stature?

There is a circumstance recorded in the Scriptures that has been brought forcibly to my mind while listening to the remarks of the elders who have spoken to us during Conference. A young man came to Jesus and asked what good thing he should do that he might have eternal life. Jesus said unto him—"Keep the commandments." The young man asked which of them. Then Jesus enumerated to him some of the commandments that he was to keep—he should not murder, nor commit adultery, nor steal, nor bear false witness, but he should honor his father and mother, and love his neighbor as himself, &c. Said the young man—"All these I have kept from my youth up, what lack I yet?"—Jesus said—"If thou wilt be perfect go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me." And we are told that he turned away sorrowful, because he had great possessions. He would not hearken to or obey the law of God in this matter. Not that Jesus required of the young man to go and sell all that he possessed and give it away; that is not the principle involved. The great principle involved is that which the elders of Israel are endeavoring to enforce upon the minds of the Latter-day Saints to-day. When the young man turned away in sorrow, Jesus said to his disciples—"How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!"

Is this because the rich man is rich? No. May not the rich man who has the light of God in his heart, who possesses the principle and spirit of truth, and who understands the principle of God's government and law in the world, enter into the kingdom of heaven as easily and be as acceptable there as the poor man may? Precisely. God is not a respecter of persons. The rich man may enter into the kingdom of heaven as freely as the poor if he will bring his heart and affections into subjection to the law of God and to the principle of truth; if he will place his affections upon God, his heart upon the truth, and his soul upon the accomplishment of God's purposes, and not fix his affections and his hopes upon the things of the world. Here is the difficulty, and this was the difficulty with the young man. He had great possessions and he preferred to rely upon his wealth rather than forsake all and follow Christ. If he had possessed the spirit of truth in his heart to have known the will of God and to have loved the Lord with all his heart and his neighbor as himself he would have said to the Lord—"Yea, Lord, I will do as you require, I will go and sell all that I have and give it to the poor." If he had had it in his heart to do this, that alone might have been sufficient, and the demand would probably have stopped there, for undoubtedly the Lord did not deem it essential for him to go and give his riches away, or to sell his possessions and give the proceeds away in order that he might be perfect, for that, in a measure, would have been imprudent. Yet, if it had required all this to test him and to prove him, to see whether he loved the Lord with all his heart, mind and strength and his neighbor as himself, then he ought to have been willing to do it, and if he had been he would have lacked nothing and would have received the gift of

eternal life, which is the greatest gift of God, and which can be received on no other principle than the one mentioned by Jesus to the young man. If you will read the sixth lecture on faith in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants you will learn that no man can obtain the gift of eternal life unless he is willing to sacrifice all earthly things in order to obtain it. We cannot do this so long as our affections are fixed upon the world.

It is true that we are in a measure of the earth, earthly; we belong to the world. Our affections and our souls are here; our treasures are here, and where the treasure is there the heart is. But if we will lay up our treasures in heaven; if we will wear our affections from the things of this world, and say to the Lord our God—"Father, not my will but thine be done," then may the will of God be done on earth as it is done in heaven, and the kingdom of God in its power and glory will be established upon the earth. Sin and Satan will be bound and banished from the earth, and not until we attain to this condition of mind and faith will this be done.

Then let the Saints unite; let them hearken to the voices of the servants of God that are sounded in their ears; let them hearken to their counsels and give heed to the truth; let them seek their own salvation, for so far as I am concerned, I am so selfish that I am seeking after my salvation, and I know that I can find it only in obedience to the laws of God, in keeping the commandments, in performing works of righteousness, following in the footsteps of our file leader, Jesus, the exemplar and the head of all. He is the way of life, he is the light of the world, he is the door by which we must enter in order that we may have a place with him in the celestial kingdom of God.

May God grant that we may see and comprehend the whole truth, and be submissive to the requirements of the gospel and obedient to the priesthood of God upon the earth in all things, that we may obtain eternal life, is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Rabbit Hunt—Woman's Rights—Methodist Preaching.

PAROWAN, Dec. 31st, 1875.

Editor Deseret News:

On the 28th instant snow fell here fifteen inches deep.

On the 29th Brothers Horace Calvin Smith and Thomas Rowley chose sides for a rabbit hunt. They started out about two o'clock in the afternoon with clubs and on horseback, according to Brother Orson Hyde's plan recommended by him through the News. The arrangements were that each party cut the ears of all the rabbits they killed, when the hunt was over they would count, the losing side to pay the expenses of a party for the whole company. During the afternoon they were overtaken with a whirling and blinding snow storm, with heavy mist, so that it was somewhat difficult to find their way home. When they arrived, some of the smaller boys were nearly frozen, but it did not hinder them in the least from striking out after the rabbits next morning. The hunt was continued late in the afternoon, making nearly one and a half days' hunting. The counting was done to-day, the 31st. Horace Calvin Smith's side killed 1,153, Thomas Rowley's side killed 620, making in all 1,773. It is proposed to have more such hunts during the winter.

On the evening of the 23rd of November last the citizens of this place were very highly entertained by Sister Barney, on the subject of Woman's Rights. It has seldom been our lot to be more richly entertained. The meeting was continued from seven to eleven p. m., while the interest in the meeting increased instead of flagging.

On the 8th of the present month, Rev. E. W. Pierce, pastor of the Methodist church at Beaver City, preached in our meeting house to a large and attentive audience. He preached from the 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th verses of the thirty-third chapter of Isaiah. He seemed to regard the feelings of his audience, and his discourse was free from the slightest unkind remark or insinuation.

The present bids fair to be a hard winter here.

W. C. MCGREGOR.

By Telegraph.

CONGRESSIONAL.

SENATE.

WASHINGTON, 5.—The Chair presented various memorials of citizens of Michigan, in favor of a law giving \$200 bounty to each Union soldier and sailor, in lieu of a homestead donation without actual settlement, and for an amendment to the pension law, so as to grant pensions to soldiers of the war of 1812 who served five days, and were honorably discharged; and that the homestead law be amended so that soldiers and sailors who, by the loss of a limb, or an equivalent disability, are prevented from making a settlement, be entitled to an amount of land equal to that they would have obtained with a settlement, all of which were referred.

Conkling introduced a bill to amend the act to provide a national currency secured by a pledge of U. S. bonds, and to provide for the circulation and redemption thereof, approved June 3d, 1864; referred to the financial committee. It is a copy of the bill, by the same title, reported from the Senate finance committee April 14, 1874, relating to national banks in liquidation, and proceeding to enforce the individual liability of the stockholders.

Harvey introduced a bill to provide for an investigation as to the habits of the Rocky Mountain locusts, or so called grasshoppers; referred to the committee on agriculture. It directs the committee on agriculture to appoint three commissioners to make an investigation, and report the best method of preventing the incursion of said locusts into fertile States and territories.

Boutwell presented a petition from H. A. Bronson, late special agent of the U. S. Treasury, asking a hearing in regard to the revenue frauds by systematized undervaluation of imported merchandise, crooked invoices and other devices, owing to the extent and facilities provided by the loose conduct of the customs business; referred.

WASHINGTON, 6.—The Chair laid before the Senate a communication from the Secretary of War, enclosing the reports of the heads of bureaus in the War Department, showing the inaccuracies and omissions which, upon careful examination, had been found to exist in the revised statutes of the U. S.; referred.

Sherman presented five hundred and ninety-six petitions, signed by twenty-nine thousand, eight hundred and ninety-six persons, praying for the abolition of the bank check stamp tax; referred.

Morton, from the committee on privileges and elections, to which was referred the resolution of Edmunds in regard to the election of a president *pro tem.* of the Senate, made a report, which was ordered to be printed, and lie upon the table.

Cooper said, as a member of the committee, he was unwilling to let the report go out without placing on record his dissent from certain portions.

Merriman said he also dissented from so much of the report as favored the power of the Senate to remove a president *pro tem.* of the Senate at will.

The committee agreed, by a vote of five against two that it is within the constitutional power of the Senate to elect a new president *pro tem.* at the present time, if the majority of the senators so desire. The committee make no recommendation however as to the advisability of exercising this power. The report is concurred in by Senators Morton, Wadleigh, Mitchell, Cameron, of Wis., and McMillen, all republicans, Senators Cooper and Merriman, democratic, dissent from its conclusions.

Boutwell said that after consultation with his colleagues he desired to qualify the notice given yesterday in regard to announcing the death of the late Vice President; as one of his colleagues in the other house was sick, he could not now name the day when the announcement would be made.

The Chair laid before the Senate a communication from the Secretary of War, enclosing the report of General Howard, commanding the Department of Columbia, of his tour in Alaska in 1875, and recommending that Alaska be attached to Washington Territory as a county; referred.

Morton presented several peti-