

Since the organization of this church its progress has been rapid, and its gain in numbers regular. Besides these United States, where nearly every place of notoriety has heard the glad tidings of the gospel of the Son of God, England, Ireland and Scotland have shared largely in the fulness of the everlasting gospel, and thousands have already gathered with their kindred saints to this the corner stone of Zion. Missionaries of this church have gone to the East Indies, to Australia, Germany, Constantinople, Egypt, Palestine, the Islands of the Pacific, and are now preparing to open the door in the extensive dominions of Russia.

There is no correct data by which the exact number of members composing this now extensive, and still extending Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, can be known. Should it be supposed at 150,000 it might still be short of the truth.

Believing the Bible to say what it means, and mean what it says; and guided by revelation, according to the ancient order of the fathers, to whom came what little light we enjoy; and circumscribed only by the eternal limits of truth, this church must continue the even tenor.

Called at the office, and administered the laying on of hands to sister Partington and her two children.

Dreadful conflagration at Studtswissenburg in Hungary; about six hundred houses destroyed.

Friday, 8.—I was at home all day, my wife being sick.

Stephen Markham started for Dixon with the court papers in relation to the writ of habeas corpus, and as a witness.

I directed William Clayton to go to Augusta, Iowa, to get a deed signed by Mr. Moffit for the steamer "Maid of Iowa."

Muster day of the first cohort.

The Twelve held a meeting in Boylston Hall, Boston; present Elders H. C. Kimball, O. Pratt, Geo. A. Smith, Wilford Woodruff and J. E. Page.

Saturday, 9.—My wife a little more comfortable. William Clayton went to Augusta, got the deed signed by Mr. Moffit and his wife, and returned in the evening.

General training of the Nauvoo Legion.

The quorum of the Twelve met the church in Boston, at Boylston Hall, in conference; 16 branches were represented, containing 878 members. A great deal of valuable instruction was given by the Twelve, and the Hall, a very large one, was crowded. A number were baptized during conference which lasted three days. The minutes of conference I here insert:—

"CONFERENCE

Held at Boylston Hall, Boston, September 9, 1843.

Present of the quorum of the Twelve—Elders Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Parley P. Pratt, Orson Pratt, Orson Hyde, John E. Page, Wilford Woodruff and George A. Smith.

Reported by Wilford Woodruff.

Conference opened with prayer by Elder George A. Smith.

After the various branches in the New England States were represented, Elder P. P. Pratt made a few remarks, of which the following is a synopsis:—

"Some elders tell us that they have taught the gathering according to the scriptures; but it is not sufficient to teach the principle from the scriptures alone; for if there was no other guide, the people would be left in doubt as to whether they should gather to Jerusalem, Africa, America, or elsewhere. It is right to teach the gathering according to the scriptures, although some predictions of the prophets are obscure, but we are not left to them alone. We know, and all the Saints ought to know, that God has appointed a place and time of gathering; and has raised up a prophet to bring it about; of which we are witnesses. Our message is, that we are witnesses of the fulfillment of the predictions of the prophets.

We have not to lay down a long round-about of arguments and calculations—the specific time and place are pointed out, the stakes are driven, the foundations of the city and Temple are laid, and a people already gathered. We therefore know where to go; and to reject the revelations of God which have pointed out these things to us, only brings condemnation. If this is not the case, then our faith is vain, and our works and hopes are vain also.

We worship a God who can inspire his servants to tell the people what to do. We have already got the opinions of men enough concerning the coming of Jesus Christ; but we need the voice of a Prophet in such a case, and we have it. I am willing to risk my all upon it; and if the elders understand the principle of gathering and teach it correctly, the people will have the correct spirit of the gathering.

It is time we came out, and declared boldly and definitely what God has for the people: we want more than opinions—we want your works. He has said he would send a prophet to prepare the way; and let me ask these profound sectarians, why he has not done it? If the angels found a God in heaven able to give instructions, shield them from sword and famine; &c., why have we not found him? Let the teachers bear the message they are entrusted with; and if they wish then for scripture, tell them that they were in fulfillment of prophecy; but let them have the whole message.

Elder E. P. Maginn said he for one had taught the gathering according to the scriptures, but he considered all modern revelations scripture as well as those given anciently.

Elder Brigham Young addressed the meeting on the subject of our faith. "We hear the elders represent the feeling of the brethren concerning the gathering—this is right. The Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ is a gathering spirit: its tendency is to gather the virtuous and good, the honest and meek of the earth,

and in fine the Saints of God. The time has come when the Lord is determined to fulfil his purposes. The people are apt to say that if they had lived in the days of Jesus Christ they would have received his work; but judge ye if the people are better now than then. They are not. When the full set time was come, the Lord came in the flesh to do his work, whether the people were prepared or not, and he would not have come at all if he had waited till the people were prepared to receive him. It was decreed from all eternity that he should come, and he came; the people were not prepared then, nor are they any more prepared now. And now the full set time has come for the Lord God Almighty to set his hand to redeem Israel. We are not bound to make the people believe, but we are bound to preach the gospel, and having done this, our garments are clear.

The Lord does not require every soul to leave his home as soon as he believes: some may be wanted to go to the isles of the sea, and some to go north and some south—but he does require them to hearken to counsel, and follow that course which he points out, whether to gather or stay to do some other work.

The Spirit of the Lord, and this work, are on the alert, and those who keep up with the work must be on the alert also. The Spirit of the Lord will leave them who sit down, and refuse to obey. When the Lord says, 'Gather yourselves together,' why do you ask him what for? Had you not rather enjoy the society of Saints, than sinners whom you cannot love? Is it not the principle of the Saints to mingle together and promote the great cause in which they are engaged?

Perhaps some of you are ready to ask, 'Can not the Lord save us as well where we are as to gather together?' Yes, if the Lord says so; but if he commands us to come out and gather together, he will not save us by staying at home. Have you not received the gospel? Yes; then do you believe what we say. Have you not received the Holy Ghost, by receiving the gospel which we have brought unto you? Yes; thousands have, and it stands as a testimony that God has got a prophet on the earth. You might have been baptized seventy times seven in any way except the way God had ordained, and pointed out, and you would not have received the Holy Ghost; this also is a testimony to you.

Are you engaged with us in this great work? 'Yes, certainly,' you answer, 'heart and hand; can we do any good?' Yes, you can. The sectarian world send the Bible to the nations of the earth: the poor among them put sixpence, fifty cents, or a dollar into the box to carry out that object; and can the Latter Day Saints do nothing? Let them do what God requires; he has required that we should build a house unto his name, that the ordinances and blessings of his kingdom may be revealed, and that the elders may be endowed, go forth, and gather together the blood of Ephraim—the people of God, from the ends of the earth.

Can you get an endowment in Boston, or anywhere, except where God appoints? No, only in that place which God has pointed out. Now, query—Could Moses have obtained the law, if he had staid in the midst of the children of Israel, instead of going up on to the mountain? The Lord said, 'Go and do so and so, stand before Pharaoh, pull off thy shoes, for the place is holy.' Moses obeyed, and obtained blessings which he would not have received, if he had been disobedient.

Has the Lord spoken in these last days, and required us to build him a house? Then why query about it? If he has spoken, it is enough. I do not care whether the people gather or not, if they don't want to do so; I do not wish to save the people against their will; I want them to choose whether they will gather and be saved with the righteous, or remain with the wicked and be damned. I would like to have all people bow down to the Lord Jesus Christ; but it is one of the decrees of the Lord that all persons shall act upon their agency, which was the case even with the angels who fell from heaven.

Now, will you help us to build the Nauvoo House and Temple? If so, you will be blessed; if not, we will build it without you; and if you don't hearken you will not have the Spirit of the Lord; for the Spirit of the Lord is on the move.

The apostles tried to gather the people together in their day; Christ said he would gather the Jews oft as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but they would not. Neither God nor angels care whether men hear or forbear; they will carry on their work, for the full set time is come for God to set up his kingdom; and we go about it—we must build a house, and get an endowment, preach the gospel, warn the people, gather the Saints, build up Zion, finish our work, and be prepared for the coming of Christ.

Now, we want to send four missionaries to the Pacific Islands, and we want a little clothing, and beds, and money to pay their passage. Can you do something for them? This is not all; we want you to give us all you have to spare towards building the Temple. We shall be able to build it, if we have to work with a sword in one hand. But, perhaps, you are afraid you will not have enough for yourself when you get there; yet how easy it is for the Lord to take it away from you by fire or otherwise.

Elder Maginn had an ivory cane; I asked him for it, but he declined making me a present of it; not long after he had it stolen from him in a crowd, and it now does neither of us any good. Perhaps your purse may slip through your pocket, or you may lose your property; for the Lord can give and take away. Jacob with his faith obtained all the best cattle his father-in-law had.

If I had a wife and ten children, I would give all my money to build the Temple and Nauvoo House, and I would trust in God for their support; yet I will be richer for it; for God would prosper me in business. Men are apt to serve God on Sunday, and neglect him all the week. Who blesses you and all the people? God; but do the people acknowledge the hand of God in all these things? No, they turn away from him, and do not acknowledge him or realize from whom their blessings flow. They know not who blesses them; it never comes into their heart. So with the farmer; the blessings are constantly flowing to him, and he considers not whence they come.

Let me tell you a secret, when the Lord shakes the earth, and every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, he will bring gold for brass, silver for iron, brass for wood, and iron for stones. Then you will have no use for gold, for money, and Gods as you now have; you will not care so much about it; but the Lord will think as much of it then as now.

But now we want some of the gods of the gentiles—some of the gold and silver to build the Temple and Nauvoo House for the accommodation of the kings, princes and nobles of the earth, when they come to inquire after the wisdom of Zion—that they may have a place for their entertainment, and for the weary traveler to be refreshed. Let us have your gold to take to Nauvoo for this purpose.

Is there wisdom in Zion? We think so, and the world begins to think so. Let the world come forward, and translate the plates that have of late come forth, if they have wisdom to do it. The Lord intends to take away the gods of the gentiles; he pulleth down and buildeth up at his own pleasure.

Sacrifice your gods for the building up of Zion; administer of your substance; send our missionaries to the islands of the sea; don't be afraid of a dollar, or a hundred dollars, or even a thousand dollars; I would not; I have made a sacrifice of all I possessed a good many times. I am richer the more I give; for the Lord has promised and does reward me a hundred fold; and if I sacrifice all for the cause of God, no good thing will be withheld from me. I have taken this course to get rich; I have given all I had, and God has given many blessings in consequence. If I am too bold in asking, be too bold in giving. I ask expecting to receive. Put your shoulder to the wheel with all your might—give your all and become rich by receiving a hundred fold.

Adjourned until half-past two o'clock, when the meeting was opened by singing.

Prayer by Elder Parley P. Pratt.

Singing.

Elder Parley P. Pratt said, 'I have a few remarks to make concerning the subject spoken of in the forenoon by Elder B. Young, who said we wanted all your gold, silver and precious things. We not only want your all as pertaining to gold, silver, &c., but we want you, your wives and children, and all you have, to be engaged in the work of the Lord.

I don't know that I can give you a better pattern of what we want, than the case of Joseph in Egypt. Israelites will get all they can; they are very great to go a head. The Egyptians believed in dreams, and by the peculiar gift of interpretation of dreams, Joseph entered into a great scheme of speculation; he used the gift of interpretation to become great in the eyes of the Egyptians. He obtained great political influence, came out with gold ornaments, and rode in the king's chariot in great splendor. He laid up corn in great abundance during the seven years of plenty, and when the famine came he got all their gold, silver, cattle, land, property, and finally their persons. No one but an Israelite or an Israelitish God would have thought of it; it was like an Israelite—it was like Noah, Lot, Christ, &c.; and it is a fair sample of our speculation.

There is more said in scripture about gold, silver, and land than any other subject.

God is the origin of power—the Sovereign; he made the people and the earth, and he has the right to reign. There will be good-times and good government, when the world will acknowledge the God of heaven as their law-giver, and not till then; and if I could live under his government I should be thankful, although I am a real republican in principle, and would rather live under the voice of the people than the voice of one man, but it will be for the good and happiness of man when that government is established, which we pray for when we say, 'Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; and until that time arrives, we must pray for it.

This Joseph in Egypt—the speculator—what a great and good man he was; I love him—I admire his course, and I believe a little of his blood is in my veins; but had Joseph been like the religious world at the present day—had he said he had got religion, and done with the world, he would not have rode the king's horse, worn his robe, or had to do with gold and silver; and he would have done no good, built no storehouses, and saved no corn for fear of speculation.

But he acted differently; and there is an ancient prediction respecting our modern Prophet Joseph, namely, that a prophet and seer should be raised up, and those who seek to destroy him shall be confounded. This has proved true; upwards of thirty law suits have been brought against the Lord's anointed, and his persecutors have as often been confounded. He has been raised and supported, according to the prophecy, to do a work on the earth, and the Lord has been with him; every weapon formed against him has been broken, he has overcome all the lawsuits which have been brought against him, and no accusation has been sustained against him; yet he will lay a

plan to speculate as large as ancient Joseph did; he will have power to buy up all the rest of the world.

What Elder Young said is good, we want all he spoke of, and a great deal more; we do not want it for ourselves, but for you. We want you to use it, and we have a prophet who tells how, when, and where to use it; take your means, and unite your exertions in this work. We want you to take that course which will save you; build up a city and temples, and enjoy them; and do as the Lord tells you; and hearken to counsel.

We have a prophet to tell us what to do, and we should get as much wisdom as the world; if they want a railroad built, all they have to do is to open books; the people subscribe stock, a railroad is soon built, and an income is realized. The Saints ought to be as well united as the world, and do the things that God has required, that a great nation may be saved from all nations.

The old gentleman that rules the nations has ruled long enough; and if I was an infidel, I would like to have the Lord raise up a Joseph, or a Daniel, or Mordecai, or an Esther, to obtain political, temporal, and spiritual power, and cause a change for the good of the world. Thank Heaven, he has begun to raise them up. He has raised up another Joseph, to do the great work of God, and it will continue on until the saying goes forth that the Lord has built up Zion.

The kingdom of God must be established, and it will be. I read that gold, silver, power, thrones, and dominions will be connected with the great work of God in the last days; then let us wake up to see what God says shall come to pass, and let us enlarge our hearts and prepare for the great and glorious work.

Do the Saints here in Boston know that they are identified with the laying of the foundation, and the establishing of a great and mighty kingdom, which is to include all the great and glorious work to be fulfilled in the last dispensation and fulness of times? And I prophecy in the name of the Lord, that whether the Saints in Boston or any other place, stand for it or rise against it, numberless millions will celebrate that day when the foundation of this work was laid.

Elder Geo. A. Smith said, 'I am pleased with the many remarks which have been made this day. You can easily see a similarity between the two Josephs and the revelations that are given, for the salvation of the present generation. Joseph in Egypt a savior of his father's house and the Egyptians; Joseph at this day holds the keys of salvation, not only to the gentiles, but also to the house of Israel.

I do not know but some may have reflections different from my own: I will, however, show how the Lord deals with mankind. Some may say, 'Who can believe that God who dwells in heaven will condescend to speak to the people about building him a house in this day of religion and science?'

This may be considered simple in the eyes of many; but the day was when the salvation or damnation of the whole world hung upon as small a circumstance. 'Noah by faith, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.'

Had the editors of this day lived then, I think they would have said and written more against it, than they have against Joseph Smith, and the revelations he has received and published.

We find God was in the habit of telling men to do many simple things, even to the giving of a law concerning the protection of bird's nests. You talk about God condescending to speak of small things in the last days, but it is only as it was in the days of Moses; for we read in the Bible how God commanded the children of Israel when they found a bird's nest, (Deut. 22 ch. 6 v.) not to take the dam with the young; 'but thou shalt in any wise let the dam go free, and take the young to thee; (Why?)' 7 v., 'That it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days.'

We see from this, that however small and simple the commandments of God appear to be, they are great in their results. Connecting this with the law of God to Israel concerning the eating of locusts, beetles, and grasshoppers, (Leviticus 11 ch. 22 v.) 'Even these of them ye may eat, the locust after his kind, and the bald locust after his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind.'

Is this as small business for the Lord to talk about, as it is for him to command the Saints to build a tavern or boarding house for visitors who constantly go to Nauvoo, which when done will do much good for the spreading of the work to all nations; what good could arise from a law of God permitting the eating of beetles and grasshoppers, I cannot say.

All the prophecies have aimed at the gathering of the people, and saving them in the last days. But it is better never to have known the Master's will, than to know it and not perform it; and my advice is, if you cannot take hold of the work, and go through the whole course, to stop, and go no further; if you have not courage to go on at the expense of all things, it is better to turn back.

We do not want to deceive you. Our traditions have taught us to be very religious, to wear long faces, never to tell an amusing story, nor to laugh, &c.: this was the case with the long-faced Christians in Missouri, and they were the first to strike a dagger to our hearts. It is better for a man to act out what he is, than to be a hypocrite. 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this,' says James, 'to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.'