

THE DESERET WEEKLY.

Truth and Liberty.

No. 1.

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, JUNE 20, 1896.

Vol. LIII.

REMARKS

Made at the Salt Lake Stake Conference
in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,
Sunday, June 7th, 1896, by
PREST. WILFORD WOODRUFF.

[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

I suppose it is expected that while I live and am able to meet with the Saints I shall do a little talking and take my turn with the rest. I feel disposed to speak a few moments on this occasion, if I can get the spirit of it.

I listened to two very interesting discourses here this forenoon by two of the Apostles. I was very much edified with both of them, because they were true. When the Lord called Joseph Smith as a prophet, seer and revelator to organize this church, he organized it for all time and for all purposes necessary to prepare the inhabitants of the earth for the coming of the Son of Man. I think sometimes that even the Saints of God almost forget their position, their calling, their responsibility, and what God requires at their hands. Brother Abraham H. Cannon referred this morning to the Mutual Improvement Associations and conveyed the idea that there was but a small percentage of our young men in this Stake of Zion who attended these associations. Now, I want to say a few words upon that subject. I want to have our young men open their ears, their eyes, their hearts, their spirits, and look about themselves and understand where they are and what their position is. The God of heaven has set His hand to build up Zion; has set His hand to purify the earth, and to establish a people on the earth to be prepared for the coming of the Son of Man. The Latter-day Saints who dwell in these mountains have this responsibility resting upon them; and no man who has had the privileges of this Gospel, and who has parents in the Church of God, can throw off this responsibility. It is the desire of the authorities of the Church and of the parents of these young men and maidens who dwell here, that they should rise up and magnify their calling and fulfill their position in the earth. There is no other people under heaven that enjoy the privileges that the Latter-day Saints have, and that our sons and daughters have in our organizations in the midst of Israel. I am anxious that all Latter-day Saints, from the Presidency of the Church down to the last member, should understand clearly in their minds that the God of heaven is not trifling with this people, is not trifling with this generation, nor with the inhabitants of the earth. All that He has said, all that He has inspired His prophets to prophesy, from

father Adam down to our day, concerning this generation and the inhabitants of the earth, will have its fulfillment in the earth. No power can stay the hand of God in this thing. Blessed is that man who has got a son that is ready and willing to go forth to the nations of the earth and warn the world, to prepare them for the judgments which await the world, and to save the souls of men. There is nothing more pleasing to me than to see our sons willing to go upon missions, either at home or abroad; to see them laying the foundation in their youth and early manhood to become useful in the kingdom of God and useful in the world at large. Our Heavenly Father requires this mission and this warning at the hands of these Apostles, and the Presidents of the Church, and the Elders of Israel, and the Latter-day Saints. We are all held responsible for the course we pursue in these things. I have a great anxiety myself that none of our sons will forsake the kingdom of God and turn to those things that are not profitable, sacrificing the Gospel and the privileges that lie before us for the sake of the pleasures of this world. Our sons should not do that. Our daughters should encourage their brothers to magnify their calling and to do their duty in their day and time. Our Sabbath schools and our Mutual Improvement associations should be attended by all the young men in Israel. The Sabbath schools have a very good attendance. I think there are nearly one hundred thousand enrolled in the Sabbath schools in these mountains of Israel. I hope that we may pursue that course ourselves wherein we may be justified before the Lord.

The hand of God has been manifest in this Church from its organization until today. Sixty-six years have past and gone since the Prophet Joseph organized the Church, and hundreds and thousands have been inspired by the spirit and power of God to embrace the Gospel. This spirit was upon me in my boyhood. The first sermon I heard an Elder in Israel preach I believed, and went forth and was baptized. And from that day to this, I will say before God, angels and men, in all that I have passed through in this Church, there never has been one moment that I have had any doubt in my mind with regard to the work of God. I have been in the midst of leading men, some of whom have apostatized and turned away; but I have never seen anything that ever tempted me to turn to the right or left from obeying the commandments of God or believing in the revelations of God.

We as Latter-day Saints believe the Bible; but are we looking for the fulfillment of the Bible? Read the revelations of St. John, and read what is com-

ing to pass in the last days before the coming of the Son of Man. These things are beginning to manifest themselves in the earth, and they will continue until the scene is wound up and prophecy is fulfilled. I will take the liberty of saying today that what you have seen going abroad of late in our own nation and among the inhabitants of the earth, there is a meaning to it. Does anybody understand it? Does anybody comprehend why all of a sudden, so to speak, these judgments are manifest, laying waste our cities and towns? This is only the beginning of these judgments that are going to awake the world; and they will continue until the rivers and the seas turn to blood and to gall, and many of the inhabitants of the earth will die because of these things. They have all been portrayed, and they will be fulfilled.

My brethren and sisters, this work is upon us. There is no getting away from it if we expect to gain salvation and exaltation. It was laid upon Joseph Smith and those who have followed him in the Priesthood. We as Elders of Israel have gone abroad to the nations in our day and time, and we know for ourselves, and not for another, that the gifts and graces follow the Elders of Israel in our day as they have in the days of Christ and the Apostles. You all know this. I do not suppose that there is a man among us who is not acquainted with these things. Those gifts and graces have always followed the Priesthood and the administration of the Elders. The sick have been healed, devils have been cast out, the blind have been made to see, the deaf have heard, the Gospel of Christ has been manifest in all its power from the beginning of the Church. If this were not the work of God, these things would not have been manifested as they have been. I am not telling you anything that is new to you. These things belong to the Gospel of Christ. They were with the Apostles of Christ in His day. There is one thing I have sometimes marvelled at—that Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, the Savior of the world, with the great and mighty work which rested upon His shoulders, only dwelt in the flesh three years and a half after he entered into the ministry. Joseph Smith, who was called to lay the foundation of this work, spent fourteen years in the flesh after the Church was organized. John the revelator, when speaking of the events that were to take place in the last days, says:

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come.