

# DESERET NEWS: WEEKLY.

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WEDNESDAY, - OCT. 12, 1881.

## FIFTY-FIRST SEMI-ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

The Fifty-first Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints convened in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, on Thursday, October 6th, 1881, at 10 o'clock a.m., as per adjournment.

Present on the stand: Of the First Presidency—John Taylor, George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith.

Of the Twelve—Wilford Woodruff, Lorenzo Snow, Franklin D. Richards, Francis M. Lyman and John Henry Smith; Counselor D. H. Wells.

Patriarch—John Smith.

Of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies.—Horace S. Eldredge, John Van Cott and W. W. Taylor.

Of the Presiding Bishopric.—Edward Hunter, Leonard W. Hardy and Robert T. Burton.

Besides Presidents of Stakes, Bishops and other leading men from all parts of Territory.

The remains of Apostle Orson Pratt were borne into the Tabernacle by several of the Apostles. The casket, beautifully adorned with flowers, was elevated above the Bishop's stand which was also decorated with bouquets and floral emblems in view of the congregation which was unusually large for the opening meeting. The stands were heavily draped in mourning.

Conference was called to order by President John Taylor.

Choir sang the hymn,

Come we that love the Lord

And let our joys be known.

Prayer was offered by Apostle Franklin D. Richards.

The Choir sang,

Behold the mountain of the Lord

In latter-days shall rise.

PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR

In opening the proceedings said: We have met this morning in accordance with our adjournment six months ago, to attend to the affairs of our Conference, and on these occasions, as we are assembled from the different Stakes throughout the land of Zion, for the purpose of attending to all matters in which we as a people are interested. It is proper that we should comprehend the position that we occupy, and be prepared with prayerful hearts and with our spirits and feelings drawn out unto our heavenly Father, to attend to all things that shall come before us, in a manner that shall be just and right and proper, that we may have the Spirit of the Lord to rest down upon us, that in our teachings, in our business, and in all affairs that shall come before us in a Conference capacity, we may be under the guidance and direction of the Lord, as we ought always to be in all of the assemblies of the Saints.

We are placed to-day under rather peculiar circumstances, while we attend to our Conference, we at the same time are called to perform the obsequies connected with the death of our beloved Brother and Apostle Orson Pratt. This is rather a peculiar phase to be entertained in a conference capacity, yet he though dead yet lives, and while he lives in the heavens, he lives also in the hearts of the Saints and of the Holy Priesthood, and we could not have a more fitting opportunity to attend to the obsequies of our beloved brother. And when we shall have finished paying the last tribute of respect to this our beloved Brother, there is also another occurrence which has taken place, and we wish to hold memorial services pertaining thereto—that is in connection with the death of Elder Feramorz L. Young, son of President Brigham Young, who in returning from a mission to Mexico, in company with Moses Thatcher, one of the Twelve, died at sea, between Havana and New York. We thought that while attending to the funeral services of Brother Orson Pratt it would be a fitting oc-

casional to hold memorial services also pertaining to him, for he is accounted a faithful, intelligent and an honorable young man and a good Latter-day Saint, and as he has died in the harness, although his body is

not present, we wish to show to him that respect that all honorable Elders of Israel ought to have. Therefore the ceremonies pertaining to his funeral will be attended to in connection with those of Brother Pratt this afternoon. And as the time seems to be progressing, and we wish to have everything done without confusion, that all may have an opportunity of viewing the corpse. We will not this morning prolong our remarks, for it would be irrelevant with so short a time, and under existing circumstances to introduce any other subject at present.

APOSTLE WILFORD WOODRUFF

Then arose and gave a few instructions about the order agreed upon in relation to the public viewing the remains.

PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR

Stated that after this service closed and the Presidency and Twelve had viewed the body, the public would have the privilege of passing by each side of the coffin and taking a glance at the features of the departed, and trusted there would be no confusion, but that all would observe order and decorum.

The Conference adjourned until 1 o'clock p.m.

The choir sang the anthem:

"The Lord will comfort Zion."

Benediction by President Joseph F. Smith.

The casket was then lowered, and the First Presidency, the Twelve Apostles, the Presidency of the Stake and other authorities took a farewell look at the countenance of their venerable fellow-laborer, and the vast assemblage filed past in double columns, the eyes of many being filled with tears as they gazed upon the face of the man whose voice has been lifted up both long and loud for so many years in Israel and among the nations, proclaiming the glad tidings of eternal salvation.

During the intermission some seven or eight thousand people viewed the remains, the whole time being taken up in this manner. At one o'clock the casket was again elevated and then, the Tabernacle being filled in every part, followed the

### OBSEQUIES OF APOSTLE ORSON PRATT.

Thursday, 2 p.m.

The choir sang—

Hark from afar a funeral knell

Moves on the breeze, its echoes swell.

Prayer by President Joseph F. Smith.

Choir sang—

Thou dost not weep, to weep alone,

The broad bereavement seems to fall.

PRESIDENT WILFORD WOODRUFF

Read a revelation through the Prophet Joseph Smith to Orson Pratt, given November 4th, 1830, as follows:

"1. My son Orson, hearken and hear and behold what I, the Lord God, shall say unto you, even Jesus Christ your Redeemer:

2. The light and the life of the world; a light which shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not;

3. Who so loved the world that he gave his own life, that as many as would believe might become the sons of God; wherefore you are my son,

4. And blessed are you because you have believed;

5. And more blessed are you because you are called of me to preach my gospel,

6. To lift up your voice as with the sound of a trumpet, both long and loud, and cry repentance unto a crooked and perverse generation, preparing the way of the Lord for his second coming;

7. For behold, verily, verily I say unto you, the time is soon at hand, that I shall come in a cloud with power and great glory;

8. And it shall be a great day at the time of my coming, for all nations shall tremble.

9. But before that great day shall come, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon be turned into blood, and the stars shall refuse their shining, and some shall fall, and great destruction await the wicked;

10. Wherefore lift up your voice and spare not, for the Lord God hath spoken; therefore prophesy, and it shall be given by the power of the Holy Ghost;

11. And if you are faithful, behold, I am with you until I come;

12. And verily, verily, I say unto you, I come quickly. I am your Lord, and your Redeemer. Even so. Amen."

Brother Woodruff said if he was to express his desires to the Lord it would be, O Lord, give us grace that we may be able to accomplish the work required of us. But O, the chains that bind this immortal spirit! Sometimes he felt, O that he could break the bands of mortality and open his eyes in the spirit world to receive that which Orson Pratt is now enjoying. But we must be patient and be willing to

abide our time. It would be impossible to give the history of that great man or to depict the glory that awaits him. It would take the trump of the sixth angel to do that.

He had been associated with Brother Pratt many years; the first testimony he ever heard from him was in a house in Kirtland, in April, 1834. He went with him to Missouri, in Zion's Camp. In traveling a thousand miles with the Prophet, those who were in that company received an experience that they can never forget. Men were reduced to mere skeletons with the cholera, and many died. Bro. Pratt, while suffering from its effects, manifested that indomitable will which has since been many times exhibited. He struggled with death and overcame by faith in God. Brother Pratt had lived longer in this Church, traveled more miles and preached more sermons than any man in it. He had baptized thousands, and fulfilled the revelation just read. His garments were clear from the blood of this generation. He had studied and written more upon the gospel and upon science than any man in the Church. He had now gone home. It was all right. This event the speaker had expected for some months. Before he left on his late visit to St. George he laid his hands upon Bro. Pratt and blessed him. This was recorded in his journal which the historians could read after the speaker's death. If Bro. Pratt could speak to this assembly, after meeting with the Prophet Joseph and his brethren in the spirit world, he would say to the Apostles, the Seventies, the High Priests, the Elders, the Lesser Priesthood, and the Saints, can you afford to spend one hour in neglect of this great work, upon the things of this world? The spirit of Bro. Pratt is alive to-day and will live as long as our heavenly Father lives. His testimony is closed, his voice is hushed in death, but it will not be a great while for some of us before we hear it in the spirit world. Let the living work while the day lasts. Bro. Pratt makes the ninth Apostle that had left us who came through Emigration Canyon in 1847. This enjoined us to be also ready; to be faithful to God and the responsibility resting upon us. The speaker thanked God for the Gospel and Priesthood revealed and exhorted all to be faithful as saviors on Mount Zion, "Sleep on Brother Orson, then with thy quorum thou shalt meet in bliss and spend eternal day. Amen."

APOSTLE LORENZO SNOW

Said his feelings were very similar to those expressed by Bro. Woodruff. There was not much occasion to mourn when those who had received the Gospel and magnified the Priesthood passed away as had Brother Pratt. The Gospel opened to view a hope, faith and satisfaction that was a comfort in occurrences like these. It was well for all wise Latter-day Saints to have before them a full view of the glory that awaits those who are faithful in this important cause. We ought to have a proper sense of the glory that had been promised and that resurrection for which we so fondly hoped. Could Bro. Pratt have the privilege to communicate with us he would say "Mourn not for me, I have passed through the fiery ordeal I have, through the blessing of God, obtained the victory and there is secured to me the privilege of receiving a body glorified. That body through which I have ministered shall be made glorious. I have been able to pass through affliction and temptation and obtained the victory!" The promise is that as we are now the sons of God, when the Lord appears we shall, if faithful be like Him and see Him as He is, Jesus, when He appeared to His disciples after His death, came in His glorified body. He also appeared to Joseph and Oliver in the Temple at Kirtland. He was glorious in appearance. And when He shall be revealed from heaven those who overcome and are worthy shall be like Him. It was necessary for us to endure the fiery ordeal of this life, to pass through this probation, that we might attain to an exaltation. We agreed to this in the spirit world before coming here. Bro. Pratt had endured and overcome. It was indeed a satisfaction when a man could pass through temptations for so many years and not lose his right to a crown. Bro. Pratt has sustained no loss. His exaltation was sure. And he believed that in the spirit world Bro. Pratt could do as much good for his family as here and also for this great work. It was now our duty to

imitate his faithfulness which he had maintained in traveling from land to land and from sea to sea. The spirit of inspiration had remained with him from the day he received the revelation that had been read, until he departed, and he would attain to the glory of a son of God. The speaker trusted that the family of the deceased would be comforted, and be able to take that course that they might meet him and enjoy that glory which he had secured. Also that all might be able to overcome and receive that reward which was prepared for those that are worthy.

APOSTLE F. D. RICHARDS.

Felt that we had assembled under very peculiar circumstances. We had not done with mourning for the loss of the President of the United States before we were called to mourn the loss of the presence and services of an Apostle of the Lord, and also that of a young and faithful brother who had been called to meet a circle of friends more intelligent and glorious than any on earth. Bro. Pratt's life had been distinguished by the labors of over half a century in this cause. He had received his Priesthood from the hands of those who obtained it direct from Peter, James and John, going forth preaching and writing under the spirit of inspiration in his youthful days. The speaker had labored much with him, and testified that if any man had a right to the title of "meek," it was Brother Orson Pratt, and while his nature was so firm that it amounted sometimes almost to obstinacy, yet he always yielded to that which was declared by authority. Brother Pratt was a studious, assiduous worker, preparing himself by acquiring a thorough education, to meet all that might rise up against him, seeking by inspiration to learn all that could be known. The speaker referred to the testimony of Prof. Proctor that Bro. Pratt's works on astronomy were entitled to the admiration and respect of the scientific world. When this Church was in poverty, in want, he labored and toiled continually in its interest, as well as when he was placed in a condition of greater comfort. In speaking of the life's labor of such a man it was difficult to tell where to begin and where to end. He had, however, finished his work, fought the fight and kept the faith, and secured his crown. He was now where his powers were extended, where doubtless he could see as he was seen and know as he was known. The speaker had sat at his feet, being pleased to learn of him. He was glad for him, for he was now resting from his labors, and his works would follow him in his generations. He had earned the power to bless all of his posterity who would be obedient. "O that God would help us all, that our last end might be like his, and may God comfort the bereaved and make them to feel that the Judge of all the earth has done right."

PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR

said, it would be impossible during the limited time allotted to this meeting to do justice to the life and labors of Brother Orson Pratt. That must be left to history. In paying respects to the departed we felt that though we had to do with death, we had also relations to life. We had an existence before we came here; God is our heavenly Father, Jesus is our elder brother, and they with the Priesthood in the heavens dictated our positions while in the flesh, and the conditions that await us in the future. We came here to fulfill a work that God designated before this world had an existence, before "the morning stars sang together, or the sons of God shouted for joy." From the time of the first promulgation of the gospel by holy angels to Joseph, until today, the affairs of this Church had been dictated by the heavens through the Priesthood upon the earth. And we were indebted to our heavenly Father for all things. We were all poor, fallible, erring creatures, and could do nothing without the sustaining hand of God. No one, Apostle or Prophet, could accomplish anything in this work except God be with him. To Him we are indebted for all blessings we enjoy. Do we feel sorrowful when a good man goes back to God who gave him life? No. Not if we understand the truth. The Scripture says, "He that hath eternal life is rich." (Pointing to the coffin.) There lies a rich man. He has fought the good fight and he is all right. Brother Pratt was fore-ordained from eternity to hold the

Priesthood which was given to him and he came at the right time. Would I wish to retain for a moment a man whose services were required behind the veil? No I would not. There is a work to be done there a thousand times as great as here, and what have I to say against his departure? Nothing whatever. The Priesthood ministers in time and in eternity. It was said in one of the revelations that Father Joseph Smith was with Abraham. Why? Because he was a patriarch as was Abraham, and he had gone to his own quorum. So with others who had departed. President Taylor related an incident on the plains, when a brother was supposed to have died, but when hands were laid upon him he spoke and said he had been in vision, had seen Joseph and Hyrum, had received a mission to the spirit world, and did not want the brethren to keep him back from his mission. The speaker felt that this was right. Bro. Pratt had gone to labor behind the veil. He had gone to join his quorum, and we should not be sorrowful. It is the Lord's will, let Him do as seemeth Him good. And if another and another is wanted, all right, and we should seek to know God and bow to His will in all things. Let us try to imitate the examples of Brother Orson wherein they were good. God is at the head of this kingdom. He will do as seemeth Him good, and we will say Amen to it.

Although it was painful to the friends of Bro. Feramorz L. Young to thing they should see him no more, yet there was this assurance that the time was coming when all that were in their graves should be called forth by the voice of the Son of God, and we should meet with those who had departed. President Taylor closed by invoking the blessing of God upon the friends of the deceased and upon all the faithful in Israel.

PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON

Said this week had been one of sadness. If it were not for the hopes of the gospel we might say these were days of gloom. But the consolations of the gospel dispelled the gloom and brought joy and comfort instead. Brother Cannon spoke of his feelings on hearing soon after the death of Brother Orson Pratt, of the demise of Brother Feramorz L. Young. While preparing on the same day for these services the tidings came of the death by accident of Bro. Pullen, who fell from the Temple to the ground. He felt sad indeed at the news, as his sympathies had been greatly exercised, in witnessing the grief of the mother and brothers and sisters of Bro. Young. The speaker expressed his regret that we had not the remains of Bro. Young with us. But it was right that we should mourn with the bereaved, and express our feelings of sorrow at this affliction and say words of comfort to them. There was probably no young man of his age who was better fitted to go hence than Feramorz L. Young, after living 23 years and 11 days. His mother had the satisfaction of saying that she had never known him to do wrong. He was a pure, obedient and loving boy, rejoicing in God's truth. His life was exemplary; mingling with the world since he was 16 years of age, he was yet a true Latter-day Saint. He kept the Word of Wisdom, while many of those older than him violated it. He was firm in that which he considered proper. At the age of 16, there being a vacancy for a cadet at Annapolis, he had a desire and an assurance that he would go, although obstacles seemed to interfere. He went, passed a good examination and entered as a cadet. The speaker met him at the Academy, and was gratified at the influence he exercised there. He stood well in his class. His father seemed to have a dread of his going on the sea as a naval officer, and, contrary to his own wish, he was released, he submitting, however, without complaint. He afterwards graduated at Troy, and when he came back and was sent on a mission to Mexico, he went gladly, being full of fidelity and desiring ardently to magnify the holy Priesthood in the labors of the ministry. The speaker related incidents, showing his unselfish character, and read extracts from some of his letters while in Mexico, showing his strong convictions of the truth of this work and his desires to be useful in it, some of them containing facts gleaned in Mexico, strongly corroborating the Book of Mormon, others showing that he had no fears of death and his bright hopes of the life to come. President Cannon said though his body sleeps in the sea yet