DISCOURSE

DELIVERED

At the General Conference, Sunday April 9, 1882.

REPORTED BY GEO. F. GIEBS.

Nearly all the brethren who have spoken at this Conference have referred to the circumstances in which we, as a people, are now placed; and it would seem unnecessary for me to make any further reference to this all-prevailing subject with which the prople generally are more or less familiar, and in you broken? What constitutional which we necessarily are consider. law have you not observed? ably interested. But while the I am bound not only by allegiance brethren who have spoken have to the government of the United merely referred to some of the say. States, but by the actual command ings of the Prophet Joseph and to of God Almighty to observe and items in the revelations through obey every constitutional law of the him, to the Church, I feel impress- land, and without hesitancy I deed, to read in the hearing of the clare to this congregation that I congregation one or two passages have never violated, nor transgressfrom the revelations previously re- ed any law, I am not amenable to ferred to. I will, therefore, call the any penalties of the law, because I attention of the congregation to a verse or two in the revelation given in 1831, which will be found on page 219 of the Doctrine and Covenants:

Let no man break the laws of the land, for he that keepeth the laws of God hath no need to break the laws of the land,

Wherefore, be subject to the powers that be, until He reigns whose right it is to reign, and subdues all enemies under His feet. Behold, the laws which ye have received from my hand are the laws of the Church, and in this light ye shall hold them forth. Behold here is wisdom.

The following: I quote from a revelation given December, 1833, page

According to the laws and the Constitution of the people which I have suffered to be established and should be maintained for the rights and protection of all flesh, according to children and Daniel. If lawjust and holy principles.

That every man, may act; in doctrine and principle pertaining to futurity, according to the moral agency which I have given unto and their faith with the people, and them, that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment. Therefore it is not right that any man

should be in bondage one to another. And for this purpose have I established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose, and redeemed the land by the shedding acts? of blood.

Again, in a revelation on page 342: And now, verly I say unto you concerning the laws of the land, it is my will that my people shall observe to do all things whatso- the illustrious examples we find in ever I comment the me iana ...

stitutional, supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges, be- of men who seek to bring us into longs to all mankind, and is justifiable before

brethren of my Church, in befriending that | us to do so; and at the same time He law which is the constitutional law of the has declared that in obeying the right and on the left, the feeling pect of the homeless widow and her deed inasmuch as

ever is more or less than these cometh of will not necessarily break the con-

I, the Lord God, make you free, therefore ye are free indeed; and the law also maketh you free;

Nevertheless, when the wicked rule, the people mourn; Wherefore, honest men and wise men should be sought for diligently, and good

men and wise men ye should observe to uphold; otherwise, whatsoever is less than these | peaceable, long-suffering cometh of evil. And I give unto you a commandment, that ye shall forsake all evil and cleave unto al

proceedeth out of the mouth of God; line, precept upon precept; and I will try you and prove you herewith;

good, that ye shall live by every word which

And whose layeth down his life in my cause, or my name's sake, shall find it again, even life eternal; Therefore, be not afraid of your enemies

for I have cecreed in my heart, saith the Lord, that I will prove you in all things, whether you will abide in my covenant, even unto death, that you may be found worthy; For if ye will not ablde in my covenant, ye are not worthy of me.

of God to the Church of Jesus Christ of the Doctrine and Covenants, from their homes, deprived them of liberty, and the pursuit of happiof Latter-day Saints in all the world. And the requirements here made of us must be obeyed, and practically carried out in our lives, in order that we may secure the fulfilment of the act in the discharge of your duties concern- (as these heartless wratches them- nor do we intend to be destroyed. promises which God has made to the ing the salvation and redemption of your people of Zion. And it is further written, that inasmuch as ye will do the things which I command you, thus saith the Lord then am I bound; can therefore only expect that the quities, that their cup might be full, promises are made and will apply to us when we do the things which we

are commanded, We are told here that no man need break the laws of the land who will keep the laws of God. But creed a decree which my people shall realize structure in the western states at help of God we intend to fill the hour, unto the counsel which I, the Lord that time; and they continued to measure of our creation. the land, which all have no need to break, is that law which is the Constitutional law of the land, and that is as God himself has defined it. And whatsoever is more or less speak unto them, they shall never cease to prevail until the kingdoms of the world are than this cometh of evil. Now subdued under my feet, and the earth is given cipies which they had expoused, for pared with our condition at any pefulfilled from this time henceful it seems to me that this unto the Saints, to possess it for ever and their faith in God and in His ser- riod of our existence as a church. until His purposes shall be accomnot possible for any man who pro-

to be in doubt as to the course he should pursue under the command of God in relation to the observance of the laws of the land. I maintain that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has ever and build up the waste places of Zion." been faithful to the constitutional laws of our country. I maintain also, that I have a right to this opinion, as an American citizen, as one who was not only born on American soil, but who descended from parents who for generations were born in America. I have a right to interpret the law in this towards nullifying those words. manner and to form my own conclusions and express my opinions thereon regardless of the opin-

ions of other men. I ask myself, What law have have endeavored from my youth up to be a law-abiding citizen, and not only so, but to be a peacemaker, a preacher of righteousness, and not only to preach righteousness by word, but by example. What therefore have I to fear? The Lord Almighty requires this people to observe the laws of the land, to be subject to "the powers that be," so far as they abide by the fundamental principles of good government, but He will hold them responsible if they will pass unconstitutional measures and frame unjust and proscriptive laws, as did Nebuchadnezzer and Darius, in relato the three Hebrew makers have a mind to violate their oath, break their covenants depart from the provisions of the Constitution where is the law human or divine which binds me, as an individual, to outwardly and openly proclaim my acceptance of their

I firmly believe that the only way in which we can be sustained in in regard to this matter by God our Heavenly Father is by following holy writ with sorrow upon the auto bondage and to oppress us, we must Therefore I, the Lord, justify you and your obey God for He has commanded And as pertaining to law of man, whatso- laws which He has given us we of hatred, animosity, bitterness family of little ones, helpless as not repent of their sins an stitutional laws of the land.

I wish to enter here my avowal that the people called Latter-day Saints, as has been often repeated from this stand, are the from whence we colonised Jackson selves more humane and Christlike most law-abiding, the patient people that can to-day well and Daviess counties, Mis- Saints. be found within the confines of this souri, where republic, and perhaps anywhere else new colonies. Like the snowball from Nauvoo, and from the State of upon the face of the earth; and we starting from the summit of the Illinois, our enemies thought surely For He will give unto the faithful, line upon intend to continue to be law abiding mountain which gathers not only the "Mormons" are now broken up, so far as the constitutional law of in bulk but in velocity, so did the and that this would be the last of the land is concerned; and we expect to meet the consequences of of the opposition, persecution and how hard we are to kill; it would our obedience to the laws and com- hatred of the world. In the midst seem that we obect to being killed: mandments of God like men. These of all the powers that were exerted there is something dreadful in the are my sentiments briefly expres- to stop it, it moved right on thought of being destroyed-annihised, upon this subject.

sage in a revelation given in 1834 and finally from the State of Mis- perpetuate our existence. The fact This, as I understand it, is the law which will be found on page 364 souri? Yes, they drove the Saints is, we think we have a right to "life,

> " Verily I say unto you, my friends, behold I will give unto you a revelation and commandment, that you may know how to dungeons feeding them on the flesh, being (demolished; we do not like brethren, who have been scattered on the

Being driven and smitten by the hands of they supposed, to the four winds of power, against our numerous and mine enemies, on whom I will pour out my wrath without measure in mine own time; For I have suffered them thus far, that otherwise there is no promise. We they might fill up the measure of their ini- destruction of the "Mormons." But the work in which we are en-

> my name might be chastened for a little season with a sore and grievous chastisement | they gathered like swarms of bees in | maintain that we were born to live. because they did not hearken altogether un- Illinois, founded a city, and built and to uphold truth, to defend vir-

which I read afterwards-the law of their God, shall give unto them.

gin to prevail against mine enomies from this very hour.

words which I, the Lord their God, shall

fessesses to be a member of the my words, the kingdoms of the world shall cute what they knew to be the work conditions fulfilled; and that is an ments, which, that they may do, is

day Saints to make any mistake, or world, and to be the saviors of men;

of men, they are as salt that has lost its savor day work. cast out and trodden under foot of men.

word of God that the enemies of the Did they break the Saints to pieces? Almighty in his heart who does not people of God can do nothing against. Did they destroy them? No; you know just as well as he knows that a few moments the history of the that our enemies themselves are that it will be triumphant. But I the enemies of this people have gone they thought they had torn up in God to show us all the vicissitude

the face of the Father and the Son the parching, blighting influence of to pass in order to reach this conin 1820, until the Book of Mormon hostile public sentiment, behold, summation, because if He did was translated and published to the they had only transplanted the tree we might get faint hearted world in 1829, his enemies did not into new and better watered soil. before we were prepared to enter cease their efforts to destroy him; Instead of destroying our confidence into that trial. We may have to be they sought his life continually; in the promises of God to us, it had driven again. I do not say we shall they blackened his character; they the tendency to strengthen our be driven; I do not believe we shall maligned and proscribed him, and faith, to increase our knowledge and but what has been done may be his name was cast out as evil among experience, thus fitting and prepar- done again. And supposing all men. But mark you, at the be- ing us for the future that lay before we were, driven again what would ginning of this period Joseph was a us. be the result? Is it not fair to pre accomplish? They tried and they Church." did their utmost. They not only They next drove us from our another people? Are we not assure made frequent attempts to imprison homes in Nauvoo. I remember the by the word of God ancient and mod in which he was engaged. They besieged the City of Nauvoo. My work are consummated? This seem the land. We wisholise

We

land of Zion.

And that those who call themselves after

to the precepts and commandments which I another Temple, which cost a mil- tue, to establish righteousness, and

For they were set to be a light unto the

And inasmuch as they are not the saviors | designs, concerning this great latter- | the conditions, although many may

But verily I say unto you, I have decreed that your brethren which have been scattered years which were as ceaseless And what of the future? So far as shall return to the land of their inheritances, against the Prophet Loganh as the libe ultimatum of this work is against the Prophet Joseph as the the ultimatum of this work is conforces of nature are endless, did they cerned there is no man in Israel who It is somewhere written as the diminish the numbers of Saints? has a spark of the inspiration of the but for Zion. Now let us review for know they did not, and it seems God lives or that he him elf lives Church and see how far the acts of fully aware of this fact. But when do not suppose it would be wisdom "Mormonism" by the roots and east and changes, the trials and persecu-When Joseph first looked upon it out to dry up and wither under tions through which we may have

lad of a little over 14 years of age; Finally they succeeded in taking sume-have we not good grounds to and during these nine years of per the life of the Prophet and that of believe from the experience of the secution he was but a boy; he had his brother; and they shed the blood past, that if we should be again no vast congregation as we see be- of our honored President who sits driven and despoiled of our homesfore us this morning to here to-day upon this stand. They we should rise up somewhere else sustain, encourage, or cheer him in thought then they had accomplish- many fold greater and more numer his ministry and labors. He stood ed their hellish work, they thought ous than we are now? The ene alone in the world, friendless and then the head and front, or root and mies of God can do nothing against despised, cast out, maligned and branch of "Mormonism" was des- but much for, the work of God. persecuted on every hand. mut did troyed. But was it? No; it only it not written that the God the work cease? Did his enemies made us stronger in faith and more heaven has set His hand for the las prevent him from performing the united in purpose. "The blood of time to establish His kingdom upo mission which he had been sent to the martyrs became the seed of the the earth, never more to be throw

him under the law, but they made circumstances although at the time ern that its destiny is onward an several attempts to take his life, and I was but a lad. I also remember upward until the purposes of Go thus stop the progress of the work my thoughts on the day the mob concerning this great latter-day spared neither pains nor means, nor | widowed mother had been compel- | to be a point difficult for many did they shrink from hypocrisy, led a day or two previously to take comprehend; but when compre falsehood and misrepresentation to her children and ferry them, in an hended it is a key to the who accomplish their purposes; but they open flat boat, across the Mississippi matter. What God has decree signally failed, and he continued to river into Iowa, where we camped cannot be annulled by the learning steadily pursue his course, and per- under the trees and listened to the | wisdom, wealth, power, numbers formed his work, translated the bombardment of the city. We had cunning of man! There is no power plates, published the Book of Mor- left our comfortable home with all beneath the celestial kingdom the mon, and in 1830 organized the the furniture remaining in the can stop or impede its progress on Church of Jesus Christ of Latter- house, together with all our earthly lota. Its destiny is onward and u day Saints, according to the law of possessions, with no hope or thought ward, man may fail, but the pu of ever seeing them again; and I poses of God will not. All His en When the Book of Mormon was well remember the feelings I had mies, combined with the cunnin published and the Church organiz- when we made our camp on the and perfidy of the infernal spirits ed, did they cease their endeavors? Iowa side of the river. They were which they are moved, to have did the hatred of the world diminish? not feelings of regret, sorrow or dis- hound, and pursue him unto death did the wicked stop their persecu- appointment, but of gratitude to failed, signally failed, even in the tions? did they refrain from slander- God that we had the shelter of even crime of murdering him, to preven ing, misrepresenting, and otherwise the trees and the broad bosom of Joseph Smith, from accomplishing attementing to obstract the progress the "father of waters" to protect us his mission; he filled his desting of this work? No; they did not, but from those who sought our lives; I and sealed his testimony with his on the contrary, as the work devel- felt to thank God that we still pos- blood. And bis blood is upon this oped, as the Church increased in sessed our lives and freedom, and nation and upon all the nation numbers and began to spread on the that there was at least some pros- that have consented to that terrib and persecution increased proper- they were, to hide themselves some- obey the Gospel of salvation which tionately, and as the Church be- where in the wilderness from the e is being preached unto them. came stronger, her enemies become who sought their destruction, even more numerous and gained strength. though it should be among the wild, But not withstanding, we moved on; so-called savage, native tribes of the built a Temple in Kirtland, Ohio, desert, but who have proved themmost County, Missouri. We were after- than the so-called Christian and and wards driven into Clay, Cald- more civilized persecutors of the

founded | After the expulsion of the Saints work of God increase in the midst "Mormonism." But it is strange But did they succeed in expelling lated. We naturally recoil from such Now I desire to read another pas- our people from Jackson County, a doom and seek to preserve and commencing at the first verse: their rights as citizens and freemen, ness," so long as we do not intermurdered many of them in cold fere with the rights of others; we blood, while others they confined in therefore most decidedly object to selves boasted) of their own brethren; Not that we presume to be able to and they dispersed the people, as defend ourselves unaided by divine heaven, rejoicing in the belief that unrelenting foes; but knowing in they had finally consummated the whom we trust, and the nature of like the phoenix rising from the engaged, we are not slow to believe, ashes of its supposed destruction, neither are we afraid to openly But verily I say unto you, that I have de- lion dollars - the most beautiful to stand by the right, and by the be, will gain eternal life, or

a city charter granted to them by to these mountain valleys, and look are. He has delivered His per And by hearkening to observe all the State government of Illinois, at our condition to-day compared thus far and blessed them from They soon became notable for their with our condition in Illinois, Mis- beginning. His word has been vant the Prophet, for their uncon- What do we see to day? We see the plished with regard to them, po But inasmuch as they keep not my com- vant the Prophet, for their uncon- mandments, and hearken not to observe an querable jers vocable will to prose. promises of God made on certain viding they keep his command. of God, and to accomplish, so far as evidence to me that the majority of my prayer, in the name of Jestis. in their power lay, His purposes and the people have complied with Amen.

not have done as they should have In all these vicissitudes and dur- done. We have prevailed thus far, down, and no more to be let

My childhood and youth wer spent in wandering with the people of God, in suffering with them an in rejoicing with them. My who life has been identified with the people, and in the name and by the help of God it will be to the end. have no other associations or plan of abode. I am in this respect like Peter when the Savior, on seeil the people turn away from His asked him, Will ye go also? Sa Peter, Lord, if I leave Thee whith can I go, Thou hast the words eternal life. We have nothing el to do save to keep in the narro path that leads back to God of Father. That is the channel He h marked out for us to pursue, and is our duty to press on; we cannot turn aside, we cannot switch o there is no side track, it is a "throug train" and its destiny is alread fixed and mapped out. We have got to meet opposition as it presen itself, battling against it with the weapons of truth which God h placed in our hands. And we mu make up our minds that this worl with all its pleasures is as dro compared with the excellency the knowledge of God. He intend to try us and prove us, and He has right to do it, even to the death need be, and only those who end to the end, who will not flinch, will maintain their integrity at risk and sacrifice of their all, if n

their God, shall give unto them.

The Lord that circulated their God, shall give unto them.

The Lord their God, shall give unto them.

The Lord that circulated the grant of the grant of