

FORTIETH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

THE Fortieth Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints convened, according to adjournment on April 6th, this morning, at ten o'clock, in the New Tabernacle.

The interesting nature of the times, the increased facilities for travel from the northern settlements and the beautiful weather having induced larger numbers of the Saints than usual from the country districts to flock to the city, the congregation was more numerous than is usual at the first meeting. For nearly an hour before the opening of the gates, and about two hours before the time announced for opening Conference, a living stream flowed towards the Temple Block and collected on First South street. Many faces could be observed among the throng, that had not been seen in this city for years. Capt. Beezly's Martial Band was on the ground and increased the interest and animation of the scene with its enlivening strains.

On the stand were:

Of the First Presidency:

Brigham Young, Geo. A. Smith and Daniel H. Wells.

Of the Twelve Apostles:

Orson Hyde, Orson Pratt, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, Charles C. Rich, Lorenzo Snow, Erastus Snow, Franklin D. Richards, Geo. Q. Cannon, Brigham Young, jun., and Joseph F. Smith.

Patriarch

John Smith.

Of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies:

Joseph Young, Albert P. Rockwood, Horace S. Eldredge and John Van Cott.

Of the Presidency of the High Priests' Quorum:

Edwin D. Woolley and Samuel W. Richards.

Of the Presidency of this Stake of Zion:

John W. Young and George B. Wallace.

Of the Presidency of the Bishopric:

Edward Hunter, Leonard W. Hardy and Jesse C. Little.

There were also Bishops, Elders and leading men from every settlement in the Territory.

Conference was called to order by President Brigham Young.

The choir sang the hymn commencing:

"The morning breaks, the shadows flee."

Prayer by President Geo. A. Smith.

The choir sang:

"The towers of Zion soon shall rise."

PRESIDENT GEO. A. SMITH

Addressed the Conference on the first principles of the gospel. The Latter-day Saints had never been permitted to stay long enough in one place to enable them to build a house large enough to accommodate all who wished to attend our conferences. By the blessing of God, however, we are now in a position that we will not be under the necessity of requesting any of our brethren and sisters of the city to stay away to make room for the Saints from the country.

Forty years since, on the 6th day of last April, the Church of Jesus Christ was organized with six members. At that time fragmentary portions of the gospel of Christ could be found in the various sectarian churches throughout the world; but when the gospel was restored by the Almighty through the instrumentality of the prophet Joseph, a complete system was introduced. Have we adhered to those ordinances and those glorious principles which were incorporated in that system? In the days of Joseph men were tried and tempted and many were led astray by false spirits. At one time Oliver Cowdery remarked that if he should apostatize the church would be broken up. The Prophet told him, however, that it was the work of the Lord and it would roll on without him. This work is not dependent upon any man or set of men. In the days of Joseph it was predicted by many that if he were destroyed the Church would fall to pieces, yet it exists to-day and is more powerful than it ever was. May the Lord of life and glory bless his servants and all Israel, is my prayer, Amen.

PRESIDENT DANIEL H. WELLS.

The Lord knew the right time to reveal His gospel to His children, and He

sent His messenger to the right Joseph. He knew that Joseph would receive it and could never be induced to deny it. The children of men have their agency to accept or reject the principles of the Holy Gospel, when those principles are unfolded to them. Those who reject the gospel take upon themselves an awful responsibility. The Lord will leave all of His children without excuse. Those who do not know the gospel in this life will have an opportunity in another sphere. The Latter-day Saints know in whom they have trusted. They have relied upon Him who is indeed their Father. The gospel should be sweeter to us now than it has ever been, and we should be willing, were it necessary, to place our all, even to our existence, on the altar, for the furtherance of the cause of God on the earth. When any new principle, or even a new idea respecting some old principle is advanced, many are ready to oppose it. How many, for instance, have raised a hue and cry because the people were counseled not to trade with their enemies. The kingdom and the greatness thereof will never be given to a people who would hand them over to the Devil as fast as the Lord bestowed them. The Lord tests and tries his people to see whether they have integrity, and those who fly the track the moment they are tired, show to Him that they have no integrity. It is the greatest calamity that can befall a person, to make shipwreck of his most Holy Faith. In all ages of the world the people of God have had to endure the hatred and persecution of the world. The tables, however, will finally be changed. The Saints will yet have power to erect a holy temple to the Lord, and the glory of God shall rest upon the Temple and the habitations of the Saints.

PRESIDENT BRIGHAM YOUNG

Said that the people would be required, during Conference, to pay strict attention and to keep good order. He thought it would be advisable for the sisters to make arrangements to leave their babies at home, as little children could not possibly understand anything that might be said, and by their noise, they prevent the congregation from hearing. As our congregations will be of necessity large, we will be compelled to be a little exacting on those points. Referring to the filthy practice indulged in by some, while at meeting, of chewing tobacco, President Young said:

On Sunday, after meeting, going through the gallery which had been occupied by those claiming, no doubt, to be gentlemen, and perhaps, brethren, you might have supposed that cattle had been standing around there and dropping their nuisances. Here and there were great quills of tobacco, and places a foot or two feet square smeared with tobacco juice. I wish the door-keepers, when, in the future, they observe any persons besmearing the seats and floor in this way to request them to leave the house; and, if they refuse and will not stop spitting about and besmearing their neighbors, just take them and lead them out carefully and kindly. It is an imposition for those claiming to be gentlemen to spit tobacco juice for ladies to draw their clothes through and besmear them, or to leave their dirt in the house. We request all addicted to this practice, to omit it while in this house. Elders of Israel, if you must chew tobacco, omit it while in meeting, and when you leave, you can take a double portion, if you wish to.

PRESIDENT YOUNG made some excellent practical remarks in relation to the necessity for the Saints being continually taught in the things of God.

The choir sang "Holy Lord God of Hosts."

Conference adjourned till 2 p.m.

Prayer by Elder Geo. Q. Cannon.

THURSDAY, 2 p.m.

Meeting was called to order by President Brigham Young.

The choir sang:

"Hosannah to the great Messiah."

Prayer by Elder Brigham Young, jr.

The choir sang:

"What wondrous things we now behold."

ELDER ORSON HYDE.

We are engaged in the cause of God. I know that Joseph Smith was a true Prophet, and although we cannot see him with the natural eye, yet he is moving in that cause we are engaged in. Not only can I bear my testimony that Joseph Smith was sent of God, but that Pres. Brigham Young is his legal successor. Although the enemies of President Young may vent their rage and

spleen against him, yet their machinations will have no more effect on him than the warring elements which gather around our mountain tops have upon the Twin Peaks, which have withstood the storms of ages. The man who has been appointed to lead Israel will still stand an immovable pillar of the Almighty.

The Latter-day Saints should be prompt in paying their debts. They should owe no man anything but love and good will. We may turn away those to whom we are indebted with some frivolous excuse, but we cannot in this way, turn aside the demands of justice. If we are slack in discharging our obligations and have no fixed determination to do so, will the Lord hear and answer our prayers? Some people run in to debt to gratify pride and fashion; this is not right. Some actually sell their crop of wheat as soon as it is sown. Such should deny themselves indulgencies that can be dispensed with. It would be well for the people to ask themselves whether they have settled their indebtedness to the Emigrating Fund, whether they have paid up their Tithing, their newspapers, &c. Joseph the Prophet once said that the majority of this people would never go astray. If we will walk uprightly and honestly the blessings of the Lord will rest upon us. I expect to see the day when those who have sought the injury of the Saints will feel ashamed in the presence of honorable men. God defend this people and their rights, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus, Amen.

ELDER ORSON PRATT.

Here in these wilds of North America is a great people whose views are one; who believe that God has commenced for the last time to establish His kingdom. No other consideration than the building up of Zion could have induced this great people to gather together in these valleys. Had they gathered to a rich country, other motives might have been assigned for their gathering. We came here because God commanded us to come. We were willing to forego the luxuries that abounded in the countries from which we have come. We believed before we came here that the Lord would, in this mountainous country, raise up a great and powerful people. We had faith in the prophecies contained in the Bible, some of which say that Zion should be commanded to get up into a high mountain, and that an ensign shall be lifted up to the nations and unto which many people shall flow. The kingdom of God will stand forever, whilst all earthly governments shall crumble to pieces. Jesus said if ye love me, keep my commandments. Before a people can obey these commandments it is necessary for them to know what they are. I remember when I was a boy, visiting the Prophet Joseph, in Seneca county, New York, on the 2nd day of January, 1831, a Conference of the church was held, and at the solicitation of the people for the Prophet to enquire of the Lord what was required of them, a revelation was given to the effect that they were to gather up to the State of Ohio. Under these circumstances the only way those people could have manifested their love for Jesus would be to obey this commandment. The people, at that time, with but few exceptions, rejoiced to have the privilege of obeying that command. Commandments and revelations are given according to the circumstances of the people unto whom they are given. Many commandments and revelations were given to the Saints, whilst in Kirtland, Ohio. He commanded that a Temple should then be built, and gave, by revelation, the pattern after which it should be erected, even to the minutest particular. The people manifested their love for the Lord by obeying His commandment. In that Temple, the Prophet Elijah visited the Prophet Joseph. This was in fulfillment of the prophecy of Malachi: that the hearts of the children might be turned to the fathers and the hearts of the fathers to the children. Previous to this we knew nothing of salvation and baptism for the dead who had died without the knowledge of the gospel. Elijah was not the only ancient prophet that came and ministered in that temple. Others came and delivered to the servants of God keys connected with the great and last dispensation. And here around me are men who hold those keys, which were delivered by heavenly messengers. And although apostates may arise and raise their heel against the Lord's anointed, yet those keys will never again be taken from the earth. The saints were told by the Lord that unless they obeyed strictly His commandments in relation to the purchase of lands they should be

scourged and driven by their enemies; and although the prophet Joseph, accompanied by a number of prominent Elders, traveled over one thousand miles among the Saints and warned them of the judgments of God that would visit them if they did not repent of their short comings, the Saints were driven from place to place, until finally they, being led by the servants of God, came to this country. In 1831 the Lord promised that the Saints would, before the generation had all passed away that was in existence then, build up the centre stake of Zion where a Temple should be reared and the glory of God would rest upon it.

I rejoice to see so great an improvement in the Latter-day Saints as has taken place since then. They are more united now than they have ever been at any former time. They will continue to improve until they shall be prepared to associate with heavenly beings.

Conference adjourned till to-morrow morning at 10 o'clock.

The choir sang:

"We thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet."

Prayer by Elder John Taylor.

FRIDAY, 10 a.m.

Meeting was called to order by President Brigham Young.

The choir sang:

"See how the morning sun."

Prayer by Elder John W. Young.

The choir sang:

"Hark! listen to the gentle breeze."

ELDER JOHN TAYLOR.

All mankind need the guidance of the Almighty; without it it is impossible for us to do right. The world, by wisdom, know not God. Yet they comprehend many things. Many entertain the idea that, by advancing in the knowledge of science and philosophy, God can be known. This is not the case. No man knoweth the things of God, but by the spirit of God. Scientific knowledge has wonderfully increased during the present age, and has been a great benefit to mankind, as instanced in the utilization of steam, electricity, etc. Because of the progress made in those things it has been supposed that the intellect of man is capable of grasping all things. Men get puffed up because of their discoveries, forgetting that they owe all to the Almighty, from whom proceeds every good gift, forgetting also that they are still grasping in the dark relating to God and His designs. There is a philosophy of the earth and there is a philosophy of the Heavens. The philosophy of the Heavens comprehends all things, but the philosophy of the earth cannot comprehend the nature and designs of God. Who among philosophers can tell how this earth was organized, by what power it moves, or what is the nature of the inhabitants of the worlds we behold above us? No man ever has or ever will comprehend those things by human philosophy or wisdom alone. They can only be understood as the knowledge of them is imparted by the Heavens. It is the greatest absurdity for man to boast of his superior intelligence. None of the principles that have been discovered by man were originated by human wisdom; they emanated from Nature's God. The boasting of men with regard to their intelligence reminds us of an infant who lifts its hand, and discovers for the first time that it has a hand, although the hand was there before it made the discovery. Notwithstanding the ignorance of mankind in relation to the knowledge of God, they would undertake to dictate what we shall and shall not believe in, and what shall be our code of morals, just as if they were immaculate. The gospel is everlasting; it brought an everlasting priesthood with it and has everlasting covenants connected with it. According to promise, when we obeyed, we received the Holy Ghost, which placed us in communication with the heavens. Things that, previous to our obedience to the gospel, we did not comprehend, were made plain to our minds. And although we were derided by the world, because of our acceptance of the plan of salvation, yet we knew that whereas we had been blind, to the things of God, we had been made to see. We care not for the opinions of men, but desire to be judged according to our works. We know that God has pointed out the path we should pursue and we will walk in it independent of all the powers of earth and hell. What did we know pertaining to the future before obeying the gospel? When we went to be married, the priests of the