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TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

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CHARLES W. PENROSE, EDITOR.

WEDNESDAY, - APRIL 11, 1893.

FIFTY-THIRD ANNUAL
CONFERENCE.

The Fifty-third Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints met in the Assembly Hall on Friday, April 8, 1893, 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 Apostles: Wilford Woodruff, Lorenzo Snow, Erastus Snow, F. D. Richards, Albert Carrington, F. M. Lyman, Moses Thatcher and George Teasdale; Counselors: Daniel H. Wells and John W. Young; Patriarch John Smith; of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies: Henry Herriman, Jacob Gates, W. W. Taylor, Seymour B. Young and Abraham H. Cannon; of the Presiding Bishopric: Edward Hunter, Leonard W. Hardy and Robert T. Burton.

Besides a large representation of the leading members of the Church from the distant States of Zion.

Conference was called to order by President John Taylor.

The choir sang:

The great and glorious Gospel light
Has ushered forth unto my sight.

Prayer by Elder F. M. Lyman,

The choir sang:

Come listen to a Prophet's voice
And bear the word of God.

PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR

Said that although we might be crowded in this Assembly Hall, owing to the dampness of the Tabernacle it was deemed advisable to hold the morning's meeting in this building.

PRESIDENT WILFORD WOODRUFF

Said we need the spirit of the Lord in every capacity we are called to act in, whether in preaching or administering in the ordinances of the Gospel. Governments which are a benefit to mankind, acknowledged and protected the rights of their citizens. Men are recognized in their lauded possessions. Why should not the rights of God who is the Creator of all be acknowledged? There have been some of His children who have been willing to acknowledge the rule of God, but such cases have been comparatively few. Many wars were fought prior to the supremacy of Rome, for the political power, but since that time rivers of blood have been shed in the name of religion. The Lord has raised up many men to accomplish His purposes, though they themselves might not have been aware of this. Even the warriors of the ages have been raised up by Him. When a people became wicked and corrupt, the Lord chastised them. This has been particularly illustrated in the people whom the Lord has chosen as His own, kingdoms having been raised up to chastise His people for their transgressions. Then the Lord smote those who had afflicted His people in their turn. There never have been as many important revelations given at any previous time as in our day; all the keys and blessings of every dispensation have been restored through the Prophet Joseph, who was a literal descendant of that Joseph who was sold into Egypt. Many of the Saints now living were personally acquainted with Joseph Smith, and can testify to the truth of his testimony and the validity of his calling. The setting up of this kingdom and its ultimate triumph were shown in a dream to Nebuchadnezzar, and the interpretation was given to Daniel. We are living in the time referred to, and there never was a kingdom of as great importance as the one we are now laboring to establish. Joseph Smith labored in the ministry fourteen years, and received during that time all the keys, ordinances and Priesthood that have ever been upon the earth, and then, after passing faithfully through a life of trial and per-

secution for the Gospel's sake, he sealed his testimony with his blood, but he left the Church, the Kingdom, the Zion of God, and the authority to continue the work he began. The principles of good and evil are placed before us that we may choose which we prefer. But we should realize that God and His power are greater than Satan and the power of evil. God will establish His kingdom and will accomplish all that has been predicted by the holy prophets. God did not create this earth and people it for the Devil to possess and rule over. He will build up His own kingdom and redeem Israel, the Jews, and His Saints. It requires a great deal of faith and labor on the part of those whom the Lord has raised up and gathered here to accomplish this, but God has raised up and will raise up men and people to accomplish His work. Men were known and called to positions of prominence. The Saints are of Ephraim and are called to build up the latter-day Zion. Though there seemed to be a scarcity of those who were on the Lord's side, yet when the Gospel was sent forth it attracted the honest from all nations. From the beginning this work has continued to grow and it becomes more and more difficult for the wicked to prevail as time passes. Brother Joseph F. Smith has remarked, the only time Satan had any chance to overturn this work was on the day it was organized. This kingdom had been set up never more to be thrown down, but will continue to progress until Zion shall be built up and become the glory and beauty of the whole earth. The Saints have been tried and proven even unto death, and if they are not willing to do this they will not be worthy to associate with those who made these sacrifices anciently. Jesus laid down His life for the truth, His Apostles with one exception died violent deaths. Many of this people have lost their lives in this cause. He is satisfied with their integrity in this regard. Nor do I believe that this people will be required to shed the blood of the wicked, but the Lord will fight our battles and cause the wicked to slay the wicked, that the hands of this people may not be stained with the blood of their fellowmen, but the saints will go forth and labor in the Temples. Ever since the principle of patriarchal marriage has been published to the world this people have continued to prevail, and if we will keep the commandments of God He will take care of us. All of the laws and ordinances of the Gospel are eternal in their nature and all the righteous acts of the Holy Priesthood are recognized in heaven. We should be careful how we use our positions. We should not complain of a man called to preside over us. While God sustains him I am willing to do so. I can assure the Saints of one thing—that the Lord will not allow any man who presides over this Church to lead this people astray. I know that God is with President Taylor and his Counselors, and is leading them right. I would sustain a man in any position no matter what his youth or age just as long as the Lord sustains him. There is more union among the leading authorities now than there was in our early history and this principle is spreading abroad. We should sustain those over us in every position, and all be careful to sustain each other. The powers of the Priesthood can only be exercised in righteousness and cannot be used to pull down or oppress our brethren. This has been illustrated among this people in times that are past. We must beware of jealousy and prejudice. We should be careful to observe the laws and commandments of God. Let us labor in the temples for the redemption of the living and dead, let us avoid bickerings and fault finding. Let us keep God's commandments, pay our tithing and perform all our duties. Let us remember our prayers, for they ascend into the ears of the Lord, and he will be with this people and they will accomplish all that has been prophesied concerning them. Those who were the pioneers in this cause are passing away, but others are being raised up to fill their places. I feel to warn all people to beware of the way they deal with this people; for those who rise up against them shall not prevail, but will be broken and scattered, while Zion will roll forth and fill the whole earth. It therefore behooves us to observe all the laws and ordinances of the Gospel, and the Lord will not forget His promises. We will build these temples and complete them and attend to the

work to be done therein, fill up these valleys of the mountains and attend to the duties required of us. We are making a record and will have to meet it, when we go to the other side of the veil. May God help us to be faithful and true to the end.

ELDER JACOB GATES.

It is a privilege and a blessing to attend assemblies of this kind. I have been in the Church for nearly fifty years, have been acquainted with the leading authorities of the Church, have passed through the many vicissitudes that they have endured, and I never have seen anything to change the testimony that I received when I embraced the Gospel. I desire to so live that I may be one with them in time and eternity. I ask nothing better. I have prayed that I might be preserved from shedding human blood, and I am glad that God has decreed that the wicked shall slay the wicked. I don't care how mean they are who do this, but it is not a work for Saints. The Priesthood is that power by which the Gods work, and by this power the purposes of our Father will be accomplished. The wicked will be removed just as fast as the righteous grow, as the Book of Mormon says, the bitter branches will be taken away as the good ones increase. According to the revelation we must become very numerous and very terrible, and the world will fear this people because of the power of God which will be with them, as was the case with Enoch and his city. What need have we to fear when we consider the promises that God has made concerning His Kingdom and coming. Many great and important events are crowding upon us. The Saints have passed through many privations, but God has been with us and has marvellously preserved and blessed us, overruling those things that have been designed for evil for our good. So it will be in the future, if we are faithful. Israel was always prospered when they served the Lord, but they have been scattered and smitten by their enemies when they forgot Him. But as Israel has been scattered so will Israel be gathered again, and as fast as the good grow the wicked will be removed. God has decreed that Zion shall be built up according to the prophecies of ancient and modern times. Elder Gates bore a strong testimony and exhorted all present to steadfastness and integrity in the Gospel.

PRESIDENT HENRY HERRIMAN

I was very anxious to come to this Conference, and feel to thank God for this privilege and opportunity. I know that the words which have been spoken during this Conference are the words of life, and I know by my natural senses and by the revelations of God to me that this is the work of God, and that it will spread and grow until it shall prevail over the whole earth, preparatory to the coming of our Lord. Let us seek then to enjoy the spirit of the Lord that we may understand the will of the Lord, and have strength to perform it. The Lord is pleased with the unity and faith of this people. I knew before I left my home in the south that through the faith and humility of this people the Lord was baffling their enemies, and I know that He will continue to do so if we will keep His commandments.

Meeting was adjourned till 2 p. m. in the Large Tabernacle.

The choir sang the anthem—

Sing ye Jehorab's praise.

Benediction by President Joseph F. Smith.

Friday, 2 p. m.

The Conference assembled in the Large Tabernacle as per adjournment.

The Choir sang:

O, Jesus, the giver of all we enjoy,
Our throes to thy honor we wish to employ.

Prayer by President George Q. Cannon.

The Choir sang:

Zion stands with bliss surrounded:
Zion, kept by power divine.

ELDER ERASTUS SNOW

Said, I desire to express my gratitude for the prayer offered up in my behalf that I may be able to continue my labors among the people of God. For some time my health has not been of the best and I realize the truth of the remarks of Elder Woodruff in reference to the passing away of the more aged of the Elders. From my youth upward I have witnessed the progress of this work and the fulfillment of the

word of the Lord to His servants. The Lord has had his eye upon this American continent as the place where He would perform His greatest work. On this land He established the city of Enoch; here Noah preached to his generation; and here the Lord will build again His Zion and appear in His glory. In His own marvellous manner He has been working among the nations to bring to pass His purposes, moving among the oppressed of many lands whose minds were reaching out after more light, truth and liberty, to gather upon this continent and struggle for human freedom. They suffered greatly until they learned to appreciate liberty and detest misrule and tyranny. They burst the shackles that bound the human soul and broke the yoke from their necks. The Lord guided them to a successful issue and directed the wise and patriotic fathers of our country, until they framed the grand system of Government under which we live, the best form existing or that ever has existed among men, save it may be that which God directly revealed to the patriarchs. It is best calculated to promote religious and political freedom and maintain the rights of men than any other on earth. But it contains its own imperfections and therefore cannot endure forever. In a revelation given to the whole people in the early days of the Church, they were instructed to maintain the Constitution and seek for wise men and good men to promote its principles (Read from Doctrine and Covenants page 342). I deem it of much importance that these principles should be impressed upon the minds of all the Latter-day Saints and especially those within the pale of this Government; to implant in the hearts of our children a veneration for human rights and a desire to become acquainted with the constitutional laws of the land that they may apply them for the benefit of all who come under their influence. Also for the putting down of oppression and the evils that afflict mankind. God has designed this government to aid in the establishment of His Church and Kingdom on the earth and the furtherance of His great purposes. As long as the people maintain virtue and integrity He will sustain it, and at no time will the Latter-day Saints stand justified before God in opposing these principles or ceasing to defend them. Whatever some may have thought of the evils of maladministration and the endeavors to war against us by factions in this country, we must never charge any of these things to the system of government embodied in the Constitution. We must attribute it to the ignorance or corruption of vile politicians. God has promised to defend our cause, and that the wicked shall not have power over us. Last October we had the blessing of the word of the Lord to this effect through President John Taylor; at a time, too, when the demagogues and political quacks were forging fetters for our feet, making yokes for our necks, and seizing the whip to lash us, while they rejoiced over our expected discomfiture. We have waited calmly and prayerfully for the fulfillment of this word and how signally has it come to pass? The means devised for our enslavement have become as a broken yoke to build the fire to warm the cause of liberty. Statesmen have been urged to violate the foundation principles of human liberty, and some of those who have hearkened to these temptings, have lost the sceptre of power, while all of them will go down, for the Lord has decreed it. Our young people—our daughters as well as our sons—by this means have been induced to study the principles of human liberty and determine to sustain them. I rejoice that our Legislature has been led to extend the franchise to women and those political rights which of right belong to all. This is in consonance with the spirit and custom of the Church, placing before the people at Conference for their approval or condemnation the policy of the leaders, for all things are to be done "by common consent." We have received the light of truth by which we know that every soul, male and female, has come from God and are entitled to their agency, which is not trammelled by the Lord nor permitted to be trammelled by any of His creatures by His permission. Intelligent, independent use of this agency is decreed, so that all may be justly judged for their acts done in the body. Kings and Emperors, Presidents, Judges and Officers of every kind, will be held responsible before God for the exercise of the authori-

ty vested in them; and if guilty of any kind of maladministration, or trespass upon the rights of their fellows, they will be held accountable before God and should be held accountable to the people who placed them in power. The constitutional laws of the land are to be sustained by the people of the Church, and if any transgress them they are to be delivered up to be dealt with thereby. The laws of the government of the Church are to be treated as such, and those who violate them are to be dealt with according to the discipline of the Church, though they take a course to satisfy the law of the land, if they have broken the law of the land they must suffer the penalty thereof; then they may again venture to serve God and prove their brethren that their repentance is genuine. We are required of the Lord, as Saints, to forgive all their trespasses, but we cannot afford to override the laws of God or wink at those who venture to do so. We must observe correct principles ourselves and seek to extend them to others, and as servants of God, our respective callings, to see that no iniquity prevails in the Church and that all the various officers and members of the Church performing their several duties, which none can be justified in neglecting. "Blessed are they," saith the Lord, "who hearken my sayings to do them all, for they shall be great in the kingdom of heaven; but whose breaketh the least of them and shall teach man so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven." God cannot be upon sin "with the least degree of allowance." As a whole, this is the best people the Lord can find in the earth, who have been moved upon by the Holy Ghost and the preaching of the Gospel to gather from all lands. They have not come here for worldly considerations—those who have are exceptions, and cannot stand unless they repent—but for the light of truth and the blessings of the Kingdom. And the servants of God must be wise in helping to separate the sheep from the goats, the wheat from the tares, that in plucking up a tare no blade of wheat shall be destroyed. I testify to all the world that this is the work of God and not of man, and the institutions of our country are the institutions of heaven, established by the hands of wise men whom He raised up, and are as much a part of His work as the revelation to Joseph the Prophet of the keys of the Priesthood and it is His will that all men should protect each other in their liberties but not in wickedness. The doctrine announced by the Supreme Court of the United States that freedom of religion only extends to thought and not to action was a wonderful strain of liberty. Who can chain a thought or restrain faith? When they stop the music from rising or the rains from descending, they may seek to imprison thought and bind belief. The fathers who framed the Constitution were not so foolish as to intimate that this could be done, but formulated a restriction against prohibiting the free exercise of religion. Faith in anything can only be determined by action. If God commands men to "increase and multiply and replenish the earth," it is their right to obey. And those who enter into unholy wedlock for the mere gratification of fleshly lust, refusing to bear fruit, are not worthy of marriage nor to be numbered among the worthy of the earth. And if God reveals that the parable of the talents shall be carried out in reference to this it will be done, and who can prevent it? That God may help us to sustain civil and religious freedom, obey every law and fulfill every duty is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Choir sang the anthem:

Great and glorious is thy name, O, Lord.
Conference was adjourned till tomorrow (Saturday) at 10 o'clock a. m.

Benediction by Apostle Franklin D. Richards.

SECOND DAY.

Saturday, April 7.

Conference met in the Tabernacle.

The Choir sang:

Let Zion in her beauty rise,
Her light begin to shine.

Prayer by Apostle Moses Thatcher.

The Choir sang:

Ever long the veil will rend in twain,
The King descend with all his train.

President George Q. Cannon read reports of the Relief Societies.