

SEMI-ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

FIRST DAY.

Wednesday, Oct. 6, 10 a.m.

The Forty-Sixth Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints convened this morning, in the New Tabernacle, October 6th, 1875, at 10 o'clock.

Present on the stand.—*Of the First Presidency.*—Pres. B. Young.

Of the Twelve Apostles.—John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, Orson Pratt, sen., Geo. Q. Cannon, C. C. Rich, Brigham Young, jr., Joseph F. Smith.

Patriarch.—John Smith.

Of the first Seven Presidents of Seventies.—Joseph Young, Albert P. Rockwood, John Van Cott, and Horace S. Eldredge.

Of the Presidency of the High Priests' Quorum.—Elias Smith and Elias Morris.

Of the Presidency of this Stake of Zion.—Geo. B. Wallace, W. H. Folsom, and John T. Caine.

Of the Presidency of the Bishoprick.—Edward Hunter, and Leonard W. Hardy.

Besides the above authorities, there was a large representation of bishops and other leading men from all parts of the Territory.

Conference was called to order by PREST. B. YOUNG.

The Choir sang—

My God, the spring of all my joys,
The life of my delights.

Prayer by PREST. JOSEPH YOUNG.
The Choir sang—

Praise ye the Lord, my heart shall join,
In work so pleasant, so divine.

PRESIDENT B. YOUNG.

We purpose at this Conference to dedicate this Tabernacle; the dedication prayer will be read on Saturday morning. We shall occupy the time throughout this Conference in talking to the Latter-day Saints, giving them such instructions and advice as we have for them, trusting that each and every heart may possess a due portion of the Spirit of God, so that the Saints may be strengthened, and that the truth may be taught in simplicity and may commend itself to those who are as yet unacquainted with it.

As far as my experience has gone and as far as I have learned, I consider that we, as Latter-day Saints, treat our callings lightly, do not appreciate them as we should; their importance does not sink into our hearts. If the eyes of the people were open to see things as they are, and to understand what the Lord is doing, what he requires of his Saints, and the blessings that await and will attend the labors of those who are faithful in the discharge of their duties; if the people could understand these things, or I will rather say, if the people would put themselves in a condition to understand them, for this is their privilege, and they can by their faithfulness understand the things of God, they would act very differently. Many search after the things of eternity and the wisdom of God and godliness by their earthly wisdom and knowledge; but no one can find out God by the wisdom that they get here in this world. They may have all the understanding that books can give, and they may read the history of the creations and the sustaining of those creations, and the object of the earth and the peopling of it; but without the Spirit of the Lord they do not understand it, it is like a mere matter of history of a country which they never saw, and they have but little or any conception of it. So it is with the things of God, and I hope and trust that our hearts will be right, so that we may receive the teachings of the elders and be able to profit thereby, and treasure up truth in our hearts, that, when our conference comes to a close, we can go from this place better prepared to fill the missions that God has appointed and called us to than we were before we came here.

ELDER C. C. RICH

felt pleased for the privilege of speaking on the principles of salvation, for nothing should be of so much importance to us as the subject of salvation. We were preparing for the coming of the Son of Man, when peace should reign on the earth, and the Saints were raising a posterity to assist in the great work preparatory to that

event. God had revealed great and glorious principles in the age of the world in which we lived. This was a great privilege, and to carry them out in our lives should be a constant source of joy and satisfaction. If we loved the truth we should live it; we should not partake of that which was evil. Herein was our trial, but we should try to overcome. Good and evil were before us all the time, and it behooved us to resist the evil; when we resisted and had an eye to the glory of God, we were doing what we ought to do as his servants. We were proud to say that we were the Saints of the Most High. God himself must be the dictator as to how his kingdom should be built up. This he had done from the beginning to the present time, and if we were willing as a people to be dictated by him through his servants it would be unto us as a labor of love. Wherein we had come short of this in the past, we were now called upon to repent and do better. If we indulged in the thought that we were abundantly able to guide our own affairs, we should be woefully mistaken and fall short of the blessings we set out to obtain. He rejoiced in coming to Conference, for it was here where the duties and requirements of the Saints were made known. The blessings of the gospel were offered to us free, without money and without price, and unless we embraced them on the terms proposed, we should be left without excuse, and the fault would be our own. He hoped to live long enough to receive every principle, and practically carry them out in his life, that God intended to reveal for our salvation.

ELDER JOSEPH F. SMITH said it was a source of pleasure for him to respond to the call from the servants of God, whether in speaking or otherwise. He referred with thankfulness to the many deliverances that God had wrought out for us, as a people, from the machinations of our enemies. He could now discern the hand of God that was over us as conspicuously as at any previous time. He had revealed his will through a holy angel, and sent forth messengers to proclaim his gospel to the nations and warn them of the judgments that were to be poured out among the nations of the earth.

He then rehearsed the dealings of God towards us as a people, in preserving and rescuing us from the hands of the wicked and the ungodly. The hate of the wicked and their desire to persecute the Saints was as great to-day as it ever existed in any age of the world. He did not fear, however, an open and avowed enemy, as the lurking, deceptive, and apostate spirit in our own ranks, the weaknesses and imperfections of our own nature, that were calculated to lead us astray from the truth, were far more to be dreaded than the outside enemy. Unless we were living in the line of our duties, and enjoying the Spirit of God, we were altogether incapacitated to receive and appreciate the instructions of the servants of God, no matter with how much power those instructions might be enforced. We had received the truth, we had embraced the gospel, and received the Holy Ghost, but if we turned away and denied the light that we once enjoyed, there was no forgiveness in this life or the life to come. This was a doctrine taught by the Saviour himself. The antediluvians, who rejected the testimony of Noah and others and who on account of their wickedness were destroyed by the flood, after suffering in the spirit in prison for many ages, until the law of God was satisfied, Jesus, after he was crucified, went and preached to, and unfolded to them the plan of salvation, that they might have an opportunity of embracing the gospel and receiving an exaltation. This doctrine, though not understood in the world, was clearly taught in the Bible.

After a few words of earnest exhortation to the Elders of Israel, he concluded by reference to one, who had recently left us, but whose example would live for ever, meaning Pres. Geo. A. Smith.

The Conference was adjourned till 2 o'clock.

The Choir sang an anthem—

Open Thou Mine Eyes.

Benediction by Bp. L. D. YOUNG.

Thursday, Oct. 6, 2 p.m.

The Choir sang—

Great God, attend while Zion sings
The joy that from thy presence springs.

Prayer by ELDER BRIGHAM YOUNG.

The choir sang—
All hail, the glorious day
By prophets long foretold.

ELDER F. M. LYMAN

loved the country and the people who lived here, for this was the place where God would have us to be. God had bestowed his priesthood upon his servants for the purpose of preaching and proclaiming the gospel to the people, and this gospel had not only to be taught, but to be practised and lived up to in our lives. We had partaken of the fruits of the gospel and we could not deny it. Theory alone would not do, but we must practise it. We must learn to love the kingdom of God, more than all things else. We must love it more than our lives, our property, our appetite and all things else. Then we should take pleasure in building up the kingdom of God acceptably. We must make it an individual work, and it required every man to become what he ought to be. Then union would grow and increase in our midst. We need not fear, any outside influences. Our only fear was from our own selves, in not keeping the commandments of God. We must be honest, sober, and attend to every other duty, so that we could work out our own salvation. It was not enough for the twelve apostles to live their religion. They were only working out their own salvation. He felt more particularly anxious to save himself, for that was the most important business he had to attend to. This therefore was an individual work, and if each one would begin to reform himself the work of reformation would be general.

He then bore testimony to Joseph Smith being a prophet of God, and President Brigham Young his lawful successor, &c.

ELDER R. V. MORRIS said he had been absent on a mission to England nearly two years, during which time he had labored mostly in the midland counties. He had baptized nearly thirty persons during his stay there. Some of them were here to-day, and he hoped they would live their religion, and endeavor to become acquainted with God and his ways.

He believed there was ample room for the faithful labors of the Elders of Israel in that country. In many places where he had visited, of several thousand inhabitants, the gospel had not been preached for ten years.

He returned here yesterday with a company of emigrants from the old countries, and he hoped they would not expect to find perfection in Zion, for every Elder had his own weaknesses here, as in other countries, but if we sought for the Spirit of God to guide us, and were true and faithful in our duties, there was no danger of our going astray. It did not matter what kind of labor, or in what country we might be sent to, if we enjoyed the spirit of our calling we should be happy, and enabled to do good.

ELDER JOHN SQUIRES

felt truly thankful to have the privilege of again returning to his home and friends in these valleys of the mountains. He also felt thankful to his brethren and to his Heavenly Father for sending him on a mission. He had been made happy many times while away from here, by realizing the hand of God being continually over him. He desired to continue to be an humble instrument in the hands of God in devoting the residue of his days to the building up of the kingdom of God, and to be a blessing to his family and friends.

He exhorted the Saints to be one in all things, for it was the work of God, and to lay aside selfishness and do what we could to build up the kingdom of God.

ELDER GEORGE Q. CANNON

said it was very interesting to listen to the testimony of the Elders who had just returned from their missions. It was easy to judge of their usefulness abroad by the spirit they made manifest on their return. There was no labor under the sun that was at all comparable with that of the labor of an Elder in Israel, while preaching the gospel without purse or scrip. If faithful to God and his priesthood, there was a joy and satisfaction attending him that the world knew not.

ing about. Even should he meet with persecution and perchance be cast into prison, it did not diminish his joy. This feeling was also experienced by all those who have made a covenant with God, and lived according to the requirements of the gospel.

He then portrayed the gradual straying into by and forbidden paths, which if indulged in would inevitably result in total apostasy. No man could stand in the church if he were a hypocrite, or indulged in iniquity, for his sins would sooner or later find him out, hence the necessity for pruning the church occasionally, by cutting off the dead branches. The adversary seemed to have brought to bear against this people every conceivable bait that was possible to lead the people astray, but none of which was half so much to be dreaded, as the dullness and stupidity and darkness that had settled down upon the Elders of Israel. He then spoke of the rapid development of Utah Territory. What it was to-day was due to the industry and labor of the Saints, accompanied by the blessing of God. If God had not raised up Joseph Smith, no such office would have been created as the Governor of Utah. The object we had in settling these valleys was to secure lasting homes for ourselves, and also lay a foundation for the homes of others who might come here from every nation under heaven.

After speaking of the attempts frequently made upon us by our enemies, to deprive us of our rights and constitutional liberties, he said our position therefore was one of preservation and defence, not of aggression. We must plainly see the necessity of looking well after our own interest by carrying out a self-sustaining policy, though many, through their selfishness, had thrown every obstacle in the way to prevent a union of interests among the Saints. There was only one way for us to insure the blessing of God upon us, and that was for us to be willing to do whatever the servants of God might dictate to us, let it be what it might. God had led his servant Brigham for many years, and he would continue to do so, and if we would follow his counsels we would prosper.

PRESIDENT B. YOUNG

made a few remarks.

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

The choir sang an anthem—

"Rejoice in the Lord."

Benediction by ELDER W. WOODRUFF.

SECOND DAY.

Thursday, Oct. 7, 10 a.m.

The following additional authorities were also present this morning—

Of the First Presidency.—D. H. Wells.

Of the Twelve.—Orson Hyde, Erastus Snow, Lorenzo Snow and Franklin D. Richards.

The choir sang—

Come, all ye Saints, who dwell on earth,
Your cheerful voices raise.

Prayer by ELDER ORSON PRATT.
The choir sang—

Mortals, awake, with angels join,
And chant the solemn lay.

PRESIDENT D. H. WELLS

made a comparison between the past and present condition and number of the Saints and the country they inhabit. The Lord made no mistake when he commenced this work. There were but very few at the start, and now the Saints number a great many thousands, occupying hundreds of settlements. The Temple of the Lord in St. George was progressing very favorably. It seemed to have sprung into existence with great rapidity. The Saints of God are increasing and multiplying very fast, and we should stand shoulder to shoulder for the rule of peace and righteousness. All we had to do was to render obedience to the voice of the Lord. The word of the Lord some time ago to the United States through Joseph Smith the Prophet was for them to abolish slavery, and their owners to receive compensation for them out of the U. S. treasury. This would not have cost the government near so much as the war, and would have saved the shedding of rivers of blood. The word of the Lord always came

through the channel of the Holy Priesthood. It was the duty and privilege of all presiding men in this kingdom to have the mind and will of God pertaining to those over whom they presided. God had spoken from the heavens, and sent his servants to warn the people to flee from the wrath to come. We as a people had got the faith of the holy gospel, and yet many of us had gone astray, and were now called upon to reform our lives, repent of all our past errors and sins, be rebaptized for the remission of them, and get a renewal of the Holy Ghost. Wherein we had injured our neighbors, we should make restitution, and remove every obstacle out of the way, so that we could partake of the Sacrament worthily. Unless our repentance were true and genuine, we should never offer ourselves for rebaptism, for it would be solemn mockery before God, and would sink us deeper under condemnation. We could not stand still in this work. We must either go backward or progress. We had to be united and resist the encroachments of the enemy. It was a gratifying fact, of which he wished to bear testimony, that the majority of this people were for God and his Kingdom. A constant stream of revelation was continually flowing, and had been for many years past, and it was for us to observe it as it came along, so that we might not be left behind. We must not swerve to the right hand nor the left, but pursue a straight and onward course, that we might finally be saved in the kingdom of God. We must not trifle with the covenants we had made with the Lord, but be united as the heart of one man.

PRESIDENT B. YOUNG

addressed the congregation for half an hour and at the close gave "A Word to Employers," as follows—

Let your men come to Conference. I have always said to my men, and I have a great many around me, "Don't you let any business keep you from these meetings." Carpenters, joiners, masons, and every other trade, merchants among the rest, take your turn, and at meeting time in the morning part of you come here, and then in the afternoon change, and try and attend these meetings. And those who are building houses and making roads, or working in the cañons, you can leave your work and attend Conference, and it is our counsel that you do so.

Conference was adjourned till 2 o'clock p.m.

The choir sang an anthem—

"I will praise Thee."

Benediction by ELDER ORSON HYDE.

SECOND DAY.

Thursday, Oct. 7th, 2 p.m.

The choir sang—

Praise ye the Lord, 'tis good to raise
Your hearts and voices in his praise.

Prayer by ELDER LORENZO SNOW.
The choir sang—

With joy, we own thy servants, Lord,
Thy ministers below.

ELDER ROBERT BURTON

said since his return from a foreign mission he had mingled with and spoken to a great many Latter-day Saints, from Idaho in the north to St. George in the south. We, who had the privilege of receiving the great and glorious principles of salvation, should be willing, under all and every circumstance, to make all things else secondary. Until God through his servant Joseph revealed the plan of life, we were, one and all, both priest and people, entirely ignorant of the Gospel. When we first received this message we embraced it cheerfully, and the war commenced, for we were mostly cast out by our friends, who turned their backs upon us. Every other religion could be enjoyed without molestation, but the moment we embraced the great truths of God, our Father in heaven, the war commenced, and, no matter how unimpeachable our characters, our names were cast out as evil. This result was by no means remarkable, for it had been so in all ages when God had inspired servants upon the earth to carry out his great plan. When the Saints of God began to be slack in their duties and to neglect the things of the kingdom, the Lord had a way to wake them up. He was feeling after us by the preached word, through his servants, and calling