

2 p. m.

The choir sang:

O, God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal home.

Prayer by Elder. Ellas H. Blackburn.  
Singing by the choir:

Behold, the mountain of the Lord  
In latter days shall rise,  
On mountain tops, above the hills,  
And draw the wond'ring eyes.

The following abstracts of reports were read by President Joseph F. Smith:

Synopsis of Primary association reports for year ending December 31st, 1897.

This report lacks those of four Stakes of Zion.

No. of associations .....	459
No. of officers.....	2,893
No. of members.....	33,449

Total....	36,342
Showing an increase of.....	2,190

No. of regular and other meetings held .....	14,738
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No. of testimonies, readings and other exercises .....	149,953
Louie B. Felt, President.	
Lillie T. Freeze, First Counselor.	
Josephine R. West, Second Counselor.	
May Anderson, Secretary and Treasurer.	

Synopsis of Sunday school statistical report for 1897:

Number of Sunday schools—	
In the organized Stakes of Zion.	630
In the foreign missions of the Church .....	361

Total .....	991
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Number of schools held during the year .....	39,470
Total number of pupils—males.	43,454
Females .....	49,578
Total number of officers, teachers and missionaries .....	12,596

Total .....	110,728
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Considerably more than one-third of the children attending these schools are in the primary department (including the kindergarten).

In the Stakes of Zion the average number of times school has been held during the year is 45½.

The most noticeable feature of the report is the great increase in schools and attendance in the foreign missions of the Church. There are 150 in the

Southern States mission alone, and more than 130 on the isles of the Pacific.

#### ELDER GEORGE TEASDALE.

Restoration of the Gospel—Its promises to the obedient—Joseph Smith sent of God—The Word of the Lord unto all people—We must give our hearts to God.

“There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

“The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto Him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

“Nicodemus saith unto Him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

“That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.

“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

“Nicodemus answered and said unto Him, How can these things be?

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.”

‘It has been demonstrated at this Conference that the same Spirit that existed in the primitive Church exists in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints today. The testimonies that have been borne by those who have addressed us have all given witness of the same thing, that we are living in the dispensation of the fullness of times. We are bearing our

testimony to the world that the angel that John saw on the Isle of Patmos, when he received that wonderful revelation, showing things that should happen hereafter, has come. In that revelation was given a description of the Church of Christ going into the wilderness, the Priesthood being taken from the earth, Rev. XII, the establishment of false systems that would made all nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. Rev. XVII. John also saw a mighty angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to those who dwell upon the earth, crying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come. Rev. XIV. We testify that this angel has come, that this everlasting Gospel has been restored, and that the Gospel of the kingdom is being preached by the Latter-day Saints in all the world for a witness. We take unto them the glad tidings of great joy. We call upon mankind everywhere, no matter what their profession may be, to worship the living and true God, who hath spoken in these last days. We cry unto them repentance, reformation, to cease from their evil ways, and to worship the living and true God, and to obey His Gospel. We entreat them to be baptized by immersion for the remission of sins, that they may enjoy the blessings resulting therefrom, and that they may be sanctified by the precious blood of Christ, which follows the water, and be prepared for the reception of the Holy Ghost. We promise unto them if they will obey this form of doctrine; if they will humble themselves before the Lord, and seek wisdom at His hands; if they will give unto the Lord the broken heart and the contrite spirit, they shall know, as we know, that these principles are true.

We are sending our missionaries all the time, and when they return they can testify that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, that Joseph Smith was a true Prophet sent of God. If they did not know it when they started out to preach the Gospel, they obtained this information before they came back, simply because our Father in heaven is doing His own work. It does not require an artificial education

to prepare a man to declare the word of the Lord unto the people. It is not by wisdom, it is not by might, it is not by oratory, it is not by logic; but it is "by my Spirit, saith the Lord." Our message unto the people is one: that every individual is interested in, no matter what his profession may be. The word of the Lord is to every individual. As the Lord Jesus Christ said to His ancient Apostles, so He hath said in these last days:

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

You may ask why this condemnation should come unto the people. Simply because it is not our message; it is the message of God Almighty. Whoso receiveth us receiveth Him; whoso rejecteth us rejecteth Him.

The great problem before the world is, was Joseph Smith sent of God, or was he not? No matter how much you may vilify him, no matter how much evil may be said concerning him, it is a solemn fact that he was sent of God, and we bear testimony that we know it. We have been gathered out of the world. We were Catholics, we were Protestants of various denominations, and when the word of the Lord came to us we obeyed it. A great many of our friends rejected it; but those of us who have obeyed it have this living testimony that we know that God lives, we know that Jesus is the Christ, we know that Joseph Smith was a true Prophet of God, and we know that the Church of Christ, in its present organized state upon the earth, is the Church of the Redeemer, and that the signs follow the believer. Test our principles. As far as we are concerned as a people, we are a variety. The wheat and tares are growing together, are they not? The wise and the foolish virgins are living together, are they not? But the Lord's own love Him and keep His commandments. They do not rob Him in tithes and offerings. They are consistent in their profession and in their faith. They hear the word of God and do it. Although none of us pretend to be good (for our Royal Master said that no one was good save God), still by

way of comparison we say we have the good, the King's own, those who love Him and keep His commandments. You may know them when you take them by the hand. They are filled with thanksgiving and praise to God for the redemption that He has wrought out; and we say with the Psalmist of old:

"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for His mercy endureth for ever.

"Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;

"And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south.

"Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"  
Ps. CVII.

We are the redeemed of the Lord. We have accepted of the principles of redemption, and consequently have been sanctified in the precious blood of Christ. Those who love God and keep His commandments represent Him and the Lord Jesus Christ. They love one another, and they are known by their works. Their faith is manifested by their works. Then we have a class that are not so good, that are not so faithful. They have not the faith of the Gospel so much as this first class, who represent the celestial kingdom. But they are those who rob the Lord in tithes and offerings. They are those who are not valiant for the testimony of Jesus. They are those who do not magnify their calling. Consequently we say they are not so good. Then we have another class, I presume, representing the terrestrial. They are good for nothing. But we call them all good. These are the simple facts in the case. We manifest our position by our works. This immense congregation here; I suppose we represent the different degrees of glory. It is to be hoped not. It is to be hoped that we represent the celestial kingdom. But according to the testimony of the Spirit that was manifested here by some of the brethren who spoke, there are quite a number who profess to be Latter-day Saints, but are not of the celestial

kingdom, simply because they do not love God and are lukewarm.

I do not know how far we may be justified in going into debt; but we were admonished years ago by President John Taylor to keep out of debt. We are too generous. We are too thoughtless. There has been an immense amount of means spent for educational purposes. It is a good thing, if we do not get an artificial education. I regard the education of the world as an artificial education. You do not see faith manifested; you do not see the power of God manifested. You have a people that are lifted up because of their scholastic attainments, like men are lifted up when they acquire the riches of this world. They are lifted up in pride, and think themselves better than those who have not been so fortunate as themselves to obtain that class of an education. I say it is an artificial education. If we are going to redeem Zion, we will have to redeem it by faith. And Zion could be redeemed today if we would live the principles of the Gospel. But as long as we are hearers of the word and we do not do the will of the Lord, Zion will never be redeemed by us. It will be redeemed by the laws of the celestial kingdom. If we cannot live the laws of the terrestrial kingdom, how is it possible we can attain to celestial glory? If we cannot live the condition that lead to the celestial glory, we cannot obtain it. If we cannot live the principles that lead to the terrestrial glory, we cannot attain to it.

This Gospel of the kingdom is to every individual, whether they are Jew or Gentile, bond or free, Catholic or Protestant. It is the word of the Lord to them to cease from all their evil ways; and all their false worship, and from teaching for commandments the doctrines of men; for the Lord has stretched forth His hand again. As He declared by the Prophet Isaiah:

"For as much as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men;

"Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work and a wonder,

for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." [Isa. XXIX, 13, 14.]

Here is an object lesson—the gathering of this people today at this Conference, under the shadow of a Temple of God, pointing to the nations that God has restored His Priesthood and given authority to men to officiate in the ordinances of the House of the Lord. Here is the fulfillment of the prophecy:

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths." [Isa. II, 2, 3.]

That is what I came here for. That is what my fellow laborers came here for. We came to this country to learn the ways of God and to walk in His paths. We had a testimony given unto us in the lands where we were born; God revealed himself unto us by the power of His Spirit, and bore testimony to us that Joseph Smith was sent of God. We testified of this forty-five years ago, and have been testifying of it ever since. We do not beguile the people. We are their friends. We do not teach them incorrect principles. We do not distribute in various counties anti-Catholic tracts or anti-Protestant tracts. We have respect for every man's opinion. We show him the better way. If he has something good, we show him there is something better. We have the truth, the light and the way, and we invite all mankind to come and assist us in the establishment of the righteousness of God upon the earth.

My beloved brethren and sisters, the Lord requires our appreciation. He wants us to appreciate Him and His loving kindness. He wants us to acknowledge His hand in all things. He wants our hearts. He wants us to love Him and keep His commandments. This is the word of the Lord, will we do

it? Will we cease from our contention? Will we cease from our backbiting, our evil speaking? Will we cease from all evil and learn to do right, and walk in the light as He is in the light, that we may have sweet fellowship with each other, and that the blood of Christ may cleanse us from all sin? This is the question that comes to every individual. The word of the Lord is to us individually. Will we love Him and keep His commandments, and seek to establish His Zion? It is no use coming to Conference and hearing the word of the Lord unless we do it. There have been powerful testimonies borne here from the commencement, when President Cannon referred to the fulfillment of prophecy. It is common amongst us. We have the testimony of Jesus and it is the spirit of prophecy. We do not say this boastingly; we say it because it is true. We understand our own nothingness, our own insignificance, and that we are entirely dependent upon God our Eternal Father. We do not profess to any particular virtues; but we are striving to love God and keep His commandments, and to glorify Him in our good works. We preach the Gospel of righteousness; and we are just as much responsible to carry out these principles as those unto whom the word is given through us. The Lord will have our hearts, and He will not allow us to put our affections upon anything that would overshadow our affection for Him.

Let me say, in conclusion, that the principle of tithing is a correct principle. The Lord requires one-tenth of everything that He gives to us. I never heard this principle more simply explained than by one of our good sisters in teaching a Primary class in the Sabbath school. She said to the children, "Supposing your father was to give you ten apples, and he asked you to give one of them back again, and you would not do it, would you not be considered very covetous?" Why, they smiled to think that the father should give them ten apples and they should be unwilling to give him one back again. That is just the position we are in when we are not willing to obey this law. The Lord requires one-tenth of everything that

in the dispensation of His providence He gives unto us. That is all He asks, and that we should have our ears open to the cry of the widow and the fatherless, that we should be generous and large-hearted, that we should not be covetous. Can you not understand this principle? We want to give Him half, or a quarter, or we want to bite a piece off the apple and give it to Him. Anything but what is due Him! Do not, for our own sake, make this record. As we value our happiness and our own advancement, let us be true and faithful in the discharge of our duties, and not rob the Lord our God; for everything that we have is given unto us by Him. And He has declared that if we will love Him and keep His commandments, we shall prosper in the land. "Do you believe it? I bear testimony that the law of tithing is true. "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." [Mal. III, 10.]

I can bear testimony to the truth of the remarks of Brother Merrill, that if a man will love God and keep His commandments, He will deliver him from all evil and from all his financial troubles. We exhort the world to do this; but here are a number of people, gathered from the north and the south, the east and the west, and they demonstrate that they do not appreciate it. How do they demonstrate it? By robbing Him in tithes and offerings; by being slothful in their duties; by being indifferent to the magnifying of the Aaronic and Melchisedek Priesthoods. And Zion can never be redeemed under such a condition. I say to all, especially to myself, repent, and let us turn over a new leaf; let us cease our slothfulness, our indifference, and let it be manifest to Almighty God that we appreciate His loving kindness, that we appreciate His redemption, that we appreciate the glorious hope of everlasting lives, in a glorious resurrection, by our works being coupled with our faith to the glory of the Father, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### ELDER JOHN HENRY SMITH.

Impetus to mutual improvement—Organization of home beneficent societies—The crisis in our National affairs.

I do not remember having heard a single word, either read or spoken, by our brethren during this Conference that I did not endorse. It seems to me that each one of the brethren has presented some item that should cause us to reflect seriously upon the goodness and mercy extended unto us by our Heavenly Father. The aged who heard the cry in the land from whence they came, "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues," should rejoice, and their children and their children's children should continue in that rejoicing. One suggestion contained in the remarks of Elder Merrill this forenoon, of the brother who would have been pleased to have taken from his swill barrel the food that was applied in the direction of providing for domestic animals, is one, probably, that hosts of young people whose homes have been in this mountain region, cannot as yet fully appreciate. Fathers and mothers of mature years may appreciate this suggestion; some of our brothers and sisters who have been unsuccessful in securing proper labor, within recent years, may have been made to taste in some limited degree these conditions, as did the early Pioneers in their experiences—the blessing that a well-stocked swill barrel would present to the hungry man or woman. Each suggestion presented for our consideration during this Conference has been of a practical character, whether applied directly to the temporal conditions that surround us in life or to those conditions that we speak of as spiritual. The labors and ministrations of the past few months by quite an army of young men, under the direction of President Woodruff and his aids, who made a tour of the various Stakes in Zion, and visited the homes of the people, interviewed their sons and their daughters, and awakened an interest in the minds of those sons in those associations established in connection with the work of God, and the calling in, as suggested