

people called Latter-day Saints should be required to go to defend their country and its institutions, their homes and their religion, and the rights of their fellow-men, there would be an almost universal response in favor of that. Therefore, that which I say upon these points is not in favor of shrinking from the defense of everything that is right, or of doing anything that would be craven and unworthy of honorable people. I would not like to see our government put itself in a position that it would not stand fair before all the nations of the earth; and every effort that we make for peace will make us stand fair, because there is a feeling throughout the world that the American people are strong enough to be magnanimous, and that when they are magnanimous, it is not prompted by any craven or unworthy feeling.

Brethren and sisters, I have endeavored to lay before you some of the promises that God has made to us. I say "us," because we are inhabitants of this land and possessors in common with our fellow citizens. I have read this to you so that if you need comfort it may be imparted unto you. There need be no trepidation in our hearts concerning the threatening aspect of affairs. If war should come, it will no doubt come because of the determination of Spain to force it upon us. I feel confident that there is no disposition on the part of our own government, whatever may be the feeling of the masses of the people, to create war. The freedom of Cuba has nothing particularly to do with us, only this far: They are on our borders, and the atrocities which have been committed have been of so awful a character that we would be less than human if we did not sympathize with them. Our government is amply justified in demanding that these atrocities shall cease. We would be less than human if we could sit quietly by and see people massacred and starved to death as they have been and are being on the island of Cuba. It is not the newspaper correspondents alone who have brought these tidings to us; but men of the highest repute have told of the conditions there. I have myself had communications upon the subject from one of the leading

men in this nation, who visited Cuba personally. Of course, we all have seen what the newspapers have said. Under these circumstances, men and women who have the least feeling for their fellow creatures must cry out against the continued perpetration of such horrors, and the word should go forth that they must cease. We cannot allow a continuation of these scenes while we have the power as a nation to put an end to them. Then if Spain is determined, because of this position that we have assumed, to make war upon us, let us do the best we can under the circumstances. But I hope that Spain will see the folly of continuing this, and will give those poor, wretched people the liberty they are contending for.

I pray God the Eternal Father to be with us as a people, to fill us with sentiments of justice and mercy, with comprehensive views concerning our relationship to mankind in general, and the duties that devolve upon us because of our position. For I say to you this day that the Latter-day Saints, in some respects, occupy the most influential position of any people upon the face of the earth, according to our numbers. And our influence will be felt more and more, especially if we will only be united. It is our union that gives us power. Take that away from us and we are weak as water. But united, bound together in holiness, in purity, and in the love of liberty and of truth, we are the strongest people upon the face of the earth. God grant that this may continue, and increase, until all shall be fulfilled that has been spoken concerning Zion and this glorious land of ours. I ask it in the name of Jesus. Amen.

PRESIDENT WILFORD WOODRUFF

Historical incidents—Keys of power from Joseph to the Twelve—Founders of our nation inspired—Afflictions awaiting the world—Importance of redeeming the dead.

At the close of this Conference I have a desire to bear my testimony before you upon a few principles. I have rejoiced very much during this Conference in listening to the testimony of the Apostles and Elders who have spoken. It has brought to my remembrance a little of my history.

In April, 1838, while in the town of Kirtland, in walking across the street I met two men who held the Apostleship. They said to me, "Brother Woodruff, we have something that we want you to join us in." Said I, "What is it?" "We want another Prophet to lead us." "Whom do you want?" "We want Oliver Cowdery. Joseph Smith has apostatized." After listening to them, I said to them: "Unless you repent of your sins you will be damned and go to hell, and you will go through the fulness of eternal damnation, and all your hopes in this life will pass before you like the frost before the rising sun. You are false. Joseph Smith has not apostatized. He holds the keys of the kingdom of God on earth, and will hold them until the coming of the Son of Man, whether in this world or in the world to come." I am happy to say that those men did repent pretty soon, turned to the Church, and died in it.

I feel thankful today that Joseph F. Smith is with us as a son of Hyrum Smith. He bears a true and faithful testimony of his father. I would to God that Joseph Smith had a son in the flesh who would do as Joseph F. Smith does here—bear testimony to the truth of his father. The Prophet Joseph Smith has no son that stands in the midst of the Church of God and bears record of his father. He never has had; possibly never will have.

I will give you a testimony here that will show you where I stand with regard to this matter. Joseph Smith never ordained his son Joseph, never blessed him, never set him apart, to lead this Church and kingdom on the face of the earth. When he or any other man says he did, they state that which is false before high heaven.

The last speech that Joseph Smith ever made to the quorum of the Apostles was in a building in Nauvoo, and it was such a speech as I never heard from mortal man before or since. He was clothed upon with the Spirit and power of God. His face was clear as amber. The room was filled as with consuming fire. He stood three hours upon his feet. Said he: "You Apostles of the Lamb of God have been chosen to carry out the purposes of the Lord on the earth. Now, I have received, as the Prophet, seer and

revelator, standing at the head of this dispensation, every key, every ordinance, every principle and every Priesthood that belongs to the last dispensation and fulness of times. And I have sealed all these things upon your heads. Now, you Apostles, if you do not rise up and bear off this kingdom, as I have given it to you, you will be damned."

I am the only witness left on earth that can bear record of this, and I am thankful that I have lived to see the day in which I stand. I am thankful to see the sons of these Prophets and Apostles holding the Holy Priesthood in our day and generation. I do not believe the day will ever come—it is too late in the day, in my opinion—when any Elder in this Church will be called to stand before any two of the Apostles with us today and give unto them the declaration that I gave unto the two Apostles I have referred to. I do not think any of the Apostles will occupy that position. I have faith to believe that these men who bear the Apostleship will hold it and live their religion. They have been called and ordained of God for this purpose. I do not think that one of them will apostatize. I believe they will be with you and with this Church while they stand in the flesh, true and faithful to God.

Brother Cannon has been laying before you something with regard to the nation in which we live and what has been said concerning it. I am going to bear my testimony to this assembly, if I never do it again in my life, that those men who laid the foundation of this American government and signed the Declaration of Independence were the best spirits the God of heaven could find on the face of the earth. They were choice spirits, not wicked men. General Washington and all the men that labored for the purpose were inspired of the Lord.

Another thing I am going to say here, because I have a right to say it. Every one of those men that signed the Declaration of Independence, with General Washington, called upon me, as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the Temple at St. George, two consecutive nights, and demanded at my hands that I should go forth and attend to the ordinances of the House of

God for them. Men are here, I believe, that know of this, Brothers J. D. T. McAllister, David H. Cannon and James G. Bleak. Brother McAllister baptized me for all those men, and then I told those brethren that it was their duty to go into the Temple and labor until they had got endowments for all of them. They did it. Would those spirits have called upon me, as an Elder in Israel, to perform that work if they had not been noble spirits before God? They would not.

I bear this testimony, because it is true. The Spirit of God bore record to myself and the brethren while we were laboring in that way.

What has been said with regard to this nation and to our position is coming to pass. All the powers of earth and hell will not stay the hand of Almighty God in the fulfillment of those great prophecies that have to come to pass to prepare the way for the coming of the Son of Man. You who have gathered here are my witnesses of this. I feel as though the day has come when every Elder and every Latter-day Saint ought to stop and consider the position he is in and the covenants he has entered into. Is there anything on the face of the earth that will pay you to depart from the oracles of God and from the Gospel of Christ? Is there anything that will pay you to lose the principles of salvation, to lose a part in the first resurrection with the privilege of standing in the morning of the resurrection clothed with glory, immortality and eternal life at the head of your father's house? No, there is nothing. I feel sorry many times when I see men who have the Priesthood forget almost that they have any interest in the work of God.

I feel to thank God that I have lived as long as I have, and to see as much as I have in fulfillment of the words of the Prophet of God. His days were few. The lives of great men have been strange. The idea of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, only laboring three years and a half in the ministry and then He was put to death! His apostles, too, were put to death, excepting John the Revelator, and they would have killed him if they could have done so. He lived because God wanted him to live. We live in the

last dispensation and in the midst of the great work that all the Patriarchs and Prophets since God made the world have spoken of. Afflictions and tribulations await the world. The destroying angels have got their sharp sickles in their hands, and they are going to reap the earth. Everything that has been spoken by the prophets under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost will come to pass in the generation in which we live. Do not forget it. I thank God we are as well as we are; that we have as many as we have who are united together in the Priesthood. Let us try to live our religion, do our duty, and magnify our calling while we are here. The eyes of all heaven are over us. The eyes of the world are over us. The eyes of the angels are over us. The Lord has looked upon us and upon the house of Israel to be saviors of the nations. We are here to fulfill these principles.

I pray God my Heavenly Father that as Elders of Israel and as Latter-day Saints we may prize these principles, and that we may do our duty what time we spend here in the flesh. These Apostles and all the quorums of the Priesthood have a great work upon them. Every father and mother has a great responsibility resting upon them, to redeem their dead. Do not neglect it. You will have sorrow if you do. Any man will who neglects the redemption of his dead that he has power to officiate for here. When you get to the other side of the veil, if you have entered into these Temples and redeemed you progenitors by the ordinances of the House of God, you will hold the keys of their redemption from eternity to eternity. Do not neglect this! God bless you. Amen.

The anthem,

God of Israel, hear our prayer,
was sung by the choir.

Benediction by Elder C. W. Penrose.

Conference adjourned for six months.

The stenographic work in taking the account of the proceedings was done by Arthur Winter.

JOHN NICHOLSON,
Clerk of Conference.