

# GENERAL CONFERENCE

OF

## THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

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### FIRST DAY

The Sixty-ninth Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints convened, in the Tabernacle, at 10 a. m. today, Thursday, April 6, 1899, President Lorenzo Snow presiding.

Of the general authorities present there were, of the First Presidency: Lorenzo Snow, George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith; of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles—Franklin D. Richards, Brigham Young, Francis M. Lyman, John Henry Smith, George Teasdale, Heber J. Grant, John W. Taylor, Mariner W. Merrill, Anthon H. Lund, Matthias F. Cowley, Abraham Owen Woodruff and Rudger Clawson; Patriarch John Smith; of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies—Seymour B. Young, C. D. Fjelsted, B. H. Roberts, George Reynolds, Jonathan G. Kimball, Rulon S. Wells and Joseph W. McMurrin; of the Presiding Bishopric, William B. Preston, Robert T. Burton and John R. Winder.

Considering the fact that this was the first meeting, the attendance was quite large.

Conference was called to order by President George Q. Cannon.

Singing by the choir and congregation:

Come let us anew our journey pursue,  
Roll round with the year,  
And never stand still till the Master  
appear.

Opening prayer by Elder Seymour B. Young.

The choir sang:

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

### PRESIDENT LORENZO SNOW.

#### OPENING ADDRESS.

Brethren and sisters and friends: There are many reflections that arise in my mind as I behold the faces of so many Latter-day Saints here this morning. Sixty-nine years ago the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized. How many strange scenes have been witnessed and what wonderful things have been accomplished by the Latter-day Saints since the organization! Prophets and Elders have been martyred while defending the great cause which God established in the interests of the salvation, exaltation and glory of His children whom He has sent upon the earth.

This is a lovely morning. All nature seems to smile upon us. I would like to ask my brethren and sisters, how do you feel? Do we all feel to rejoice in our hearts and to be happy? In view of what has been accomplished, do we feel grateful to our Heavenly Father? Think of the persecutions through which the Saints have passed

and the sacrifices we have made from time to time, and yet we are here this morning surrounded by pleasant conditions. Then, what are the glorious prospects before us? After a few years, whatever may have been our experience, we shall stand in the presence of our Father in the future life, having accomplished His purposes while in the world, having made sacrifices in fulfilling that which the Lord has required at our hands from time to time, and we shall look back upon the past with joy and satisfaction. How happy we ought to be under present circumstances, in view of what we have done since we received the Gospel, and how we have been sustained, while some upon our right hand and upon our left have fallen into a state of apostasy. Contemplating the past and glorious prospects of the future, our hearts ought to be filled with joy and thanksgiving to our God this day.

We wish to have a good Conference, and we will. Just in proportion as we exercise our faith during the progress of this Conference, so will the blessings of the Almighty rest upon us; and as the speakers address us from day to day we will secure that which will be of vast importance to us. It is not always the lengthy discourse that affords to the Latter-day Saints that which is the most profitable; but in the various discourses delivered we may gather some idea, or some principle may flash upon our understanding which will prove valuable to us afterwards. Our blessings and our success in the past have been in proportion to our efforts and the exercise of our faith. When we contemplate what the Lord has done for us in the past, our present surroundings, and our future prospects, what a blest people we are! I have thought sometimes that one of the greatest virtues the Latter-day Saints could possess is gratitude to our Heavenly Father for that which He has bestowed upon us and the path over which He has led us. It may be that walking along in that path has not always been of the most pleasant character; but we have afterwards discovered that those circumstances which have been very unpleasant have often proved of the highest advantage to us. We

should always be pleased with the circumstances that surround us and that which the Lord requires at our hands.

Brethren and sisters, in the name of the Lord I bless you this morning. Let us be faithful and keep the commandments of God. Let us never allow our prospects to become dimmed; let them be fresh before us by day and by night, and I will assure you that if we will do this our growth from day to day and from year to year will be marvelous. We can look back now and we can see that we have advanced. We have not stood still, but we have been moving along and gradually increasing our growth. The child grows from childhood to boyhood, and from boyhood to manhood, with a constant and steady growth; but he cannot tell how or when the growth occurs. He does not realize that he is growing; but by observing the laws of health and being prudent in his course he eventually arrives at manhood. So in reference to ourselves as Latter-day Saints. We grow and increase. We are not aware of it at the moment; but after a year or so we discover that we are, so to speak, away up the hill, nearing the mountain top. We feel that we have faith in the Lord; that His providences are always beneficial; that we are connected with Him; that He is actually our Father, and that He leads us along in life.

We should have before us a strong desire to do good to others. Never mind so much about ourselves. Good will come to us all right if we keep our minds outside of ourselves to a certain extent, and try to make others happier and draw them a little nearer to the Lord. We have been sent into the world to do good to others; and in doing good to others we do good to ourselves. We should always keep this in view, the husband in reference to his wife, the wife in reference to her husband, the children in reference to their parents, and the parents in reference to their children. There is always opportunity to do good to one another. When you find yourselves a little gloomy, look around you and find somebody that is in a worse plight than yourself; go to him and find out what the trouble is, then try to remove it with the wisdom which the Lord bestows upon you; and the first thing you know, your gloom is

## ELDER RUDGER CLAWSON.

gone, you feel light, the Spirit of the Lord is upon you, and everything seems illuminated.

Brethren and sisters, God bless you. Let us have a good Conference; and in order that we may have, let us have a prayerful spirit all the time, and especially when Elders arise here to address you. Amen.

### ELDER RUDGER CLAWSON.

Pride and class distinctions displeasing to God—  
Duty of supporting the poor—Tithe-paying is educational.

I will read a few words from the 2nd chapter of Jacob in the Book of Mormon:

"Think of your brethren, like unto yourselves, and be familiar with all, and free with your substance, that they may be rich like unto you.

"But before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God.

"And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ, ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; and ye will seek them, for the intent to do good; to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick, and the afflicted.

"And now, my brethren, I have spoken unto you concerning pride; and those of you which have afflicted your neighbor, and persecuted him because ye were proud in your hearts, of the things which God hath given you, what say ye of it?

"Do ye not suppose that such things are abominable unto him who created all flesh? And the one being is as precious in his sight as the other. And all flesh is of the dust; and for the self-same end hath he created them, that they should keep his commandments, and glorify him for ever."

My brethren and sisters: I have selected a text this morning, but I do not know that I shall be able to speak to it as I desire at all times to leave my mind open to the impressions of the Holy Spirit, and not place myself in a position to resist that influence. I am reminded of a circumstance that occurred with one of the home missionaries in the Boxelder Stake, which shows that it is not always safe to rely upon a text. This brother was called to go out and visit one of the wards, and before going he selected a text. He pondered upon the text, and perhaps considered in a measure what he should say. When he came to the meeting he opened the Bible and turned to the page where he expected

to find his text. He searched and searched, but could not find it. He must have been five minutes before that congregation hunting for his text, and he stood as one who was dazed. After a few moments, however, the Spirit of the Lord came to his assistance, and he made a pretty good talk, doubtless better than if he had followed the text. It transpired that the particular leaf containing the words he expected to read had been lost from that Bible, and that was the reason he could not find his text.

I believe that it is the purpose of the Lord to make this people rich. See what a vast multitude inhabit these valleys of the mountains. Go out among them; study their characteristics—industry, temperance, thrift—and they are such as will make any people wealthy in the course of time. But there is danger in riches. Jacob was aware of this, and he called the attention of his people to it. The possession of wealth generally brings class distinctions; class distinctions bring pride; and pride, we are told, is an abomination in the sight of heaven. These class distinctions are very apparent in the world, more particularly in the large cities. We read the other day of a wedding in high life, and we were told that millions of money were married to millions of money, and that it was a very auspicious affair. Everything connected with that wedding was of the most magnificent order. Costly presents were made, including diamonds of rare value, and golden dishes. Think of people eating out of golden dishes, and at the same time being surrounded by many who are not in a condition to purchase even the simple necessities of life, some perhaps actually starving to death for the want of food. Now, the children of the rich, surrounded by the condition that I have mentioned, with superior opportunities of education and culture, in time, get to think that they are better than the children of the poor. They can wear better clothing, they can eat better food, they have better conditions in every way, and so seem to think they are better. Let us imagine for a moment a poor man, albeit an honest, intelligent man, and one who may stand high in the estimation of heaven, coming into a gathering of the