

CLOSING SESSION.

2 p. m.

Singing by the choir, the hymn commencing,

Ye simple souls who stray,
Far from the path of peace,
That lonely, unfrequented way
To life and happiness.

Prayer by Elder Heber J. Grant.

The choir sang the anthem :

O come all ye faithful.

THE GENERAL AUTHORITIES

were presented, for the vote of the conference, by President George Q. Cannon, as follows:

Lorenzo Snow, as Prophet, seer and Revelator, and President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in all the world.

George Q. Cannon as First Counselor in the First Presidency.

Joseph F. Smith as Second Counselor in the First Presidency.

Franklin D. Richards as President of the Twelve Apostles.

As members of the Council of the Twelve Apostles—Franklin D. Richards, Brigham Young, Francis M. Lyman, John Henry Smith, George Teasdale, Heber J. Grant, John W. Taylor, Marriner W. Merrill, Anthon H. Lund, Matthias F. Cowley, Abraham O. Woodruff and Rudger Clawson.

The counselors in the First Presidency and the Twelve Apostles as Prophets, Seers and Revelators.

Patriarch to the Church—John Smith.

First Seven Presidents of the Seventies—Seymour B. Young, C. D. Fjeldsted, B. H. Roberts, George Reynolds, Jonathan G. Kimball, Rulon S. Wells and Joseph W. McMurrin.

William B. Preston as presiding Bishop, with Robert T. Burton as his first and John R. Winder as his second counselor.

Franklin D. Richards as Church historian and general Church recorder, and John Jaques and Andrew Jenson as his assistants.

As the general Church Board of Education—Lorenzo Snow, George Q. Cannon, Karl G. Maeser, Willard Young, Anthon H. Lund, James Sharp, Joseph F. Smith, John Nicholson and George H. Brimhall.

As Trustee-in-Trust for the body of religious worshippers known as the

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—Lorenzo Snow.

John Nicholson as clerk of the General Conference.

All of the voting was unanimous.

PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON.

Individual responsibility of the Saints—Their aims and hopes—Self-sacrifice a basis of exaltation

To stand up before this congregation and attempt to speak with the hope of instructing them, requires, it seems to me, some faith. I do not think that any man who understands the responsibility of a position of this character would attempt to do it, unless he could hope to have the assistance of the Spirit of God.

The servants of God have spoken with great plainness and a large amount of instruction has been given in this conference, and no doubt all of us feel that it is one of the best conferences we have ever attended. I think we always look upon the present conference as the best conference, and I hope we will be justified in this feeling by the spirit we shall enjoy during the remainder of the time.

There are so many subjects that are intimately connected with our lives and with the growth and development of the work, that a man cannot be at a loss for something to say, if he has the Spirit of the Lord; in fact, at times the abundance of subjects makes it rather embarrassing, and it requires the dictation of the Holy Ghost to enable us to say those things that are suited to the people and their circumstances. I earnestly desire, in the remarks that I shall make, to be dictated entirely by the Spirit of the Lord. I have looked at this large assembly, and I have thought what a vast variety of thought there must be in the breasts of those present; what hopes, what desires, what fears, what anticipations each one indulges in. Life to the Latter-day Saints possesses a seriousness that I do not think other people feel, because of our knowledge concerning our existence here, why we have come here, and what lies before us. There is an individuality about the members of this Church that I do not think can be found elsewhere. We feel our individual responsibility. We are not taught to rely upon priests, or

teachers, or apostles, or prophets; but each one is taught to be responsible himself. In our Church the wife is not taught to feel that she is divested of responsibility, and that it rests solely upon her husband. Sons and daughters, as soon as they are capable of comprehending the truth, are taught their responsibility also. In our Sunday schools, in our associations, and in all the gatherings of our young people, as far as my knowledge extends, this feature is kept constantly in view. Of course, they are taught to look for guidance, but not to rely upon anyone to do that which properly devolves upon them as living souls in the sight of God. They are impressed with their individual responsibility. In this respect I think we are a peculiar people, different from every other people upon the face of the earth. This makes us a serious and thoughtful people. We ponder carefully upon our lives, and we consider well our course of action. And I think this characteristic will grow among us. I hear of little children bearing testimony in the Sunday schools, and doing so by the Spirit of God; and by that they are made to feel their individual responsibility before the Lord. In my opinion, this is a good thing. I believe our future will be greatly enhanced by this kind of training, and we shall have a class of people grow up among us different from all others. It may be gradual—so gradual that we will scarcely notice its growth; but the growth will take place.

In connection with this, the question arises, What are the aims and the hopes of the Latter-day Saints? Why is it, it may be asked, that the "Mormon" people are willing to undergo such privations, such persecutions and such banishments as they have endured in the past, and such obloquy, hatred and animosity as they do at present? It is a serious question for the world to answer, and it possesses some gravity for us as members of the Church of Christ. What are our hopes? If I were to ask this congregation, What has caused you to leave your homes and your friends, notwithstanding their persuasions or their threats, and cast your lot among a people with such a bad name as the Latter-day Saints have? how different would be the an-

swers in some respects, and yet how similar in other respects. The Latter-day Saints have been animated by hopes that no other people possess. Allusion was made the other day to the kind of heaven we anticipate. There are no people upon the earth who have such ambitious hopes and aims as the Latter-day Saints have. Some would call them irreverent. But the Lord has made promises to this people, and the Latter-day Saints believe in them. On that account they put their trust in the Lord, and are willing to endure all things for His sake.

I will read a little from one of the revelations of the Lord. Speaking of those who receive the testimony of Jesus, and who overcome by faith the Lord says:

"They are they which are the Church of the firstborn.

"They are they into whose hands the Father has given all things."

Now, these are not idle words, given merely to round out a sentence; but they are full of meaning.

"They are they who are Priests and Kings, who have received of His fulness, and of His glory,

"And are Priests of the Most High, after the order of Melchisedek, which was after the order of Enoch, which was after the order of the Only Begotten Son;

"Wherefore, as it is written, they are Gods, even the sons of God.

"Wherefore, all things are theirs, whether life or death, or things present, or things to come, all are theirs, and they are Christ's, and Christ is God's."—Section 76: pars. 54-59.

Yesterday Brother Teasdale quoted something from section 84, which I wish to emphasize. These are the words:

"And also all they who receive this Priesthood, receiveth me, saith the Lord;

"For he that receiveth my servants, receiveth me;

"And he that receiveth me receiveth my Father;

"And he that receiveth my Father, receiveth my Father's kingdom; therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him."

Notice the last clause, "All that my Father hath"—not a part, but "all that my Father hath shall be given unto him." That language admits of no mistake. It corresponds with the other language that I have read in your hearing. It also corresponds with what the Lord says in section 93:

"I give unto you these sayings that ye may understand and know how to worship; and know what you worship; that you may come unto the Father in my name, and in due time receive of His fulness;

"For if you keep my commandments you shall receive of His fulness, and be glorified in me as I am in the Father; therefore, I say unto you, you shall receive grace for grace."

This same revelation goes on to say:

"The Spirit of truth is of God. I am the Spirit of truth, and John bore record of me, saying, He receiveth a fullness of truth, yea, even of all truth,

"And no man receiveth a fullness unless he keepeth his commandments.

"He that keepeth his commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things."

Time will not admit of my reading any more passages, but these are sufficiently plain to reveal to us that which God has in contemplation for His faithful children. The Latter-day Saints are promised, if they are faithful, that they shall receive the fullness, as Jesus received it; and Jesus received it as the Father received it. In the words of Paul, they become heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. There is nothing that the Savior has attained unto that God's faithful children are not promised. They are promised the same blessings, the same power, the same authority, the same gifts, the same graces. I know that we are apt to think that heaven is a sort of spiritual place. It is spiritual; but God our Eternal Father is a being of power. He controls the earth and the inhabitants thereof; He controls the elements of the earth; and we are promised that we shall be sharers with Him. He will give us an equal interest in all this power and authority. What is more desirable to man, generally speaking, than to wield power? Mankind aim for it. To what lengths will ambitious men go to wield power, to sit upon thrones and to wield a sceptre of authority! History tells us that men have been willing to wade through seas of blood to gratify this ambition. Now, this ambition can be gratified righteously by keeping the commandments of God; and a righteous man will exercise righteous authority. That is the object God had in view in sending us here. Through faithfully keeping His commandments we may at-

tain unto power—not illegitimate power, but lawful power—and wield it for our own exaltation and for the exaltation of other human beings. It is God's design to make us priests and kings; not to have an empty title, not to sit upon thrones without power, but to be actually and really priests and kings. The promise is that all things that He hath shall be given unto us. We will be His heirs; we will be (if I may use the term without irreverence) co-partners with Him in all this power and authority. I do not know whether all the Latter-day Saints grasp this idea. It is important that we should.

We heard some talk this morning upon the principle of tithing. People wonder how it is that the Latter-day Saints pay their tithing. Some think it must swell the coffers of the Church and fatten the leaders. But they would not wonder if they understood the principle. Brother Brigham Young told us this morning that the law of tithing was an inferior law. It is. The law of consecration is a higher law, and it was revealed to us, but we were not prepared to receive and act upon it. The result is, we are not doing what we ought to in this respect. The Lord requires from us consecration. Why does He ask you and me to consecrate all we have and hold it subject to His will? If He is going to take us into partnership He wants to know in the first place whether we will be willing to do as He wants us and to share all that we have with Him. I was pleased with a little incident that occurred in my own family the other day. I gave two of my little children some money, and after a while something arose that caused me to need some money, and their mother said to these children, "Your father needs some money." The children went and got their banks, and said, "Here, father, you can have all I have in this bank." I was greatly delighted with the spirit of the children. I did not say anything, but I thought to myself, "That illustrates the principles that Father in heaven is trying to teach us, His children. He gives us something, and when He asks for anything He wants us to be just as liberal as He has been in giving it." Those who have faith and who rise to the comprehension of the digni-

ty and exaltation that God intends to bestow upon us, will not hesitate to give everything they have to the Lord, but it requires faith. The Lord might require us to lay down our lives. That would require faith, would it not? Yes. But what is the promise? That we shall have eternal life and be exalted in His presence. Therefore, those who wish to attain to this exaltation must cherish sublimity of feeling, sublimity of self-sacrifice. They must not only be willing to pay their tithing, but be willing to give everything they have got on the earth—wives and children, and everything else. If I cannot give up my wife and all my children, if required,—if I cannot lay down my life, if necessary, God help me! I do not know what I might do, but God help me to do it if the test ever comes. But if I am not willing to do this, I cannot hope to attain to that exaltation and receive that fullness which the Lord has promised unto us, if we are faithful.

Therefore, shall we hesitate about tithing? Shall we hesitate about anything else, with such objects in view and with such righteous ambition as God has implanted in our hearts? No, we cannot hesitate if we have faith. The world say: "Oh, you are led by priests, who are dominating you and tyrannizing over you, and using you for their own purposes." But what has God said? what has He promised to us? That is the question for us to ask. We must not look at what the world says; it is what God says that we must act upon. And I say to you this day, in the presence of God and the holy angels and of this assembly, if we expect to attain the fulfillment of the promises God has made to us, we must be self-sacrificing. There is no sacrifice that God can ask of us, or His servants whom He has chosen to lead us, that we should hesitate about making. In one sense of the word, it is no sacrifice. We may call it so, because it comes in contact with our selfishness and our unbelief; but it ought not to come in contact with our faith. The infidel says, "What a monster God was to ask Abraham to offer up his only son as a sacrifice—to ask him to break a law which He Himself had given to man, wherein He said, Thou shalt not kill." That law was embodied in the ten commandments, but it dated back to the early

days of man upon the earth. Human life was sacred; God had made it so. He had made murder the worst crime that could be committed by man against his fellow man. The curse that He pronounced upon Cain is felt by his descendants to this day, so grievous was his sin in the sight of God. But that God who gave this command to His children on earth required His servant Abraham to take his son, go into a high mountain, and there offer him up as a sacrifice. At the same time it was contrary to the law of God to offer human sacrifice. God had prohibited it. It was a grievous sin among the idolatrous nations. Abraham's own kindred indulged in that wicked practice. He tells in his record that virgins were sacrificed on altars in the land of his nativity, and he himself was bound on an altar to be sacrificed, his kindred doubtless submitting to it, but an angel of God delivered him. But here comes the command of God to this man who has been taught so scrupulously about the sinfulness of murder and human sacrifice, to do these very things. Now, why did the Lord ask such things of Abraham? Because, knowing what his future would be and that he would be the father of an innumerable posterity, he was determined to test him. God did not do this for His own sake; for He knew by His foreknowledge what Abraham would do; but the purpose was to impress upon Abraham a lesson, and to enable him to attain unto knowledge that he could not obtain in any other way. That is why God tries all of us. It is not for His own knowledge; for He knows all things beforehand. He knows all your lives and everything you will do. But He tries us for our own good, that we may know ourselves; for it is most important that a man should know himself. He required Abraham to submit to this trial because He intended to give him glory, exaltation and honor; He intended to make him a king and a priest, to share with Himself the glory, power and dominion which He exercised. And was this trial any more than God Himself had passed through? God the Eternal Father gave His Only Begotten Son to die for us; and He wanted to see whether Abraham was as willing to sacrifice his son of promise as He Himself

was to sacrifice His well beloved, His first born, Jesus Christ. And what of Isaac? Josephus tells us that Isaac was old enough to carry the wood for the sacrifice; and after his father had told him what the Lord wanted, Isaac, in the spirit of submission that such a son had for such a father, said to him, "If the Lord had not commanded you to do this, father, I would have been willing to have done whatever you required of me." In this Isaac exhibited a spirit akin to that manifested by the Lord Jesus; and Abraham showed a willingness akin to that exhibited by the Father in offering up His Only Begotten Son for the rest of His brethren and sisters.

Now, brethren and sisters, do you see why God requires these things at our hands? Can you comprehend why we are asked to love our neighbor as we do ourselves? Is there any sacrifice that we should not be willing to make? Think of the unselfishness of our Lord and Savior! He came and died for all of us. He loved His neighbor as He did himself. He loved the offspring of His Father as He did himself. We must be like Him, or we cannot sit down with Him in the kingdom of our Father. We must be willing to make every sacrifice necessary for the work of God. But in the first place we must get faith; for without faith it is impossible to please God and to make these sacrifices. Without faith our courage fails and we are filled with doubt; but with unflinching faith in God and in His willingness and power to save us, we can accomplish all the Lord requires at our hands. God bless you, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

The aggregate of individual contributions to the Church accomplishes great good—Tithing a test of obedience—The Lord requires the willing mind.

It is with a feeling of great dependence upon the Spirit that I arise to speak. I feel extremely grateful for the outpouring of the good Spirit which has accompanied all the speaking that we have had throughout this Conference; and I regret that all the congregation did not hear the most excellent

discourse of President Franklin D. Richards this morning; I remarked to him when he sat down that I thought I never heard him speak better, but I was sure that half the congregation had not heard what he had said. It is a difficult thing to make so vast an assembly hear, and especially is this the case when there is a feeling of uneasiness among the people and more or less moving about. Brother C. J. Thomas can be seen here frequently with a company of people up in the other end of the gallery, and he will rub his coat sleeve and ask them at the other end if they can hear the sound, and they say yes. Then he will take a pin and drop it upon a table, and ask if they can hear that, and they say yes. It is the wonderful acoustic properties of this house that actually makes it so difficult, in one respect, to make the people hear when there are so many together as are here today, because every little sound tends to confuse the voice of the speaker.

I thank the Lord for the wonderful attendance on the part of the people during this Conference. It shows they are awake, and interested in the cause of Zion. I am sure that all the people who have heard the instructions which have been given must be well pleased and satisfied.

I do not expect to advance a single thought in relation to the principle of tithing that has not already been covered, but I desire to call your attention to one thing which seems to me to be a prominent feature in tithing. It is not so much the means that we give into the storehouse of the Lord; for the Lord has plenty for Himself. The earth is His, and the fulness thereof. But it is a very important thing that we look at the necessities of the poor and consider the duty of carrying on the work of the Lord in all its branches. Every little that we contribute toward this end helps the cause just that little; and so the little that each does is of great importance to the cause of Zion. When all the people do a little, it aggregates a great deal, and there is abundance in the storehouse for the feeding of the poor, and for helping out in the proclamation of the Gospel to the nations of the earth. For many of