

who are living strictly to the law and paying an honest tithing unto the Lord.

I thought of the song that is recorded in the 84th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, and I felt that when we as a people are willing, and not only willing but anxious, to live the law of consecration, this new song will be a good thing for every soul to sing. It says:

"The Lord hath brought again Zion.
The Lord hath redeemed His people,
Israel.

According to the election of grace,
Which was brought to pass by the
faith
And covenant of their fathers.

The Lord hath redeemed His people,
And Satan is bound, and time is no
longer

The Lord hath gathered all things in
one;

The Lord hath brought down Zion from
above,

The Lord hath brought up Zion from
beneath.

The earth hath travailed and brought
forth her strength;

And truth is established in her bowels;
And the heavens have smiled upon her;

And she is clothed with the glory of
her God;

For He stands in the midst of His
people.

Glory, and honor, and power, and
might,

Be ascribed to our God; for He is full
of mercy,

Justice, grace and truth, and peace,
For ever and ever. Amen."

ELDER RUDGER CLAWSON.

A marvelous work of the Lord—Its wonderful growth—Greatness of the responsibility resting upon the Saints.

My brethren and sisters, it is very impressive to look down upon this vast congregation of people, and I realize that if my voice shall be heard by you it will be necessary for me to speak straight ahead, without turning to the right or to the left, because of the immensity of this Tabernacle. We have present with us this morning authorities of the Church and Saints from all parts of Zion—from Canada, from Mexico, from the adjoining states and territories, and from some of the missions. We have come together to wait upon the Lord, to receive a blessing at His hands, and to see what He has in store

for us. I believe that the Lord will meet with us during the conference. I believe that His Spirit will be upon the Presidency of the Church, and upon the Elders who may be called upon to speak from this stand. I believe that we shall be fed upon the bread of life and I greatly rejoice in this belief.

I have wondered sometimes, while traveling in the midst of this people, whether we really understand what the Lord is doing, whether we comprehend His great purposes, and can recognize His hand. I am sure of one thing—that there are many who are numbered with the Church, particularly among the young, who are passing through life without a serious thought. I have seen it in families, in wards and in stakes, that their minds seemed to rest more particularly upon the pleasures of life and the things of the world. And yet the Lord said in the very beginning of this dispensation that He was about to commence a marvelous work and a wonder; that it should be something out of the ordinary; that it should be of such a character as to attract attention in the world, so much so that men would be led to exclaim "Truly it is a marvelous work." I am reminded now of a revelation that was given to the Prophet Joseph Smith upon the very day that the Church was organized—the 6th day of April, 1830—at Fayette, New York, and I will read the words of the Lord to Joseph Smith upon that occasion:

"Behold there shall be a record kept among you, and in it thou shalt be called a seer, a translator, a prophet, an apostle of Jesus Christ, an elder of the church through the will of God the Father, and the grace of your Lord Jesus Christ,

Being inspired of the Holy Ghost to lay the foundation thereof, and to build it up unto the most holy faith,

Which church was organized and established in the year of your Lord eighteen hundred and thirty, in the fourth month, and on the sixth day of the month, which is called April.

Wherefore, meaning the church, thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me;

For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith;

For by doing these things the gates

of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name's glory.

For thus saith the Lord God, him have I inspired to move the cause of Zion in mighty power for good, and his diligence I know, and his prayers I have heard.

Yea his weeping for Zion I have seen and I will cause that he shall mourn for her no longer, for his days of rejoicing are come unto the remission of his sins, and the manifestations of my blessings upon his works.

For, behold, I will bless all those who labor in my vineyard with a mighty blessing, and they shall believe on his words, which are given him through me by the Comforter, which manifesteth that Jesus was crucified by sinful men for the sins of the world, yea, for the remission of sins unto the contrite heart.

Wherefore it behoveth me that he should be ordained by you, Oliver Cowdery, mine apostle;

This being an ordinance unto you, that you are an elder under his hand, he being the first unto you, that you might be an elder unto this church of Christ, bearing my name,

And the first preacher of this church unto the church, and before the world, yea, before the Gentiles; yea, and thus saith the Lord God, lo, lo! to the Jews also. Amen."

These words, brethren and sisters and friends, were the words of Jehovah, delivered to the Prophet Joseph Smith upon the day that the Church was organized. The Church was very weak in numbers then, but strong in spirit. In this revelation the Lord intimates that He was about to move the cause of Zion in mighty power, and talked to the Prophet as if it were an accomplished fact. He desired, it seems, that His people, though few in number, should be impressed with the fact that a Prophet, Seer, and Revelator stood at the head; for He instructed that a record to this effect should be kept. He also desired to impress the people with the great truth that this Church should be built up, not by the power of man, but by the power of the Holy Ghost; that no man, though he might be a Prophet or an Apostle, should take the honor unto himself of building up the Church of Christ, but that the honor and the glory must be given to God. Did not the Lord say to the Prophet

Daniel that in the latter days the God of heaven would set up His kingdom, and it should be as a stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which should roll until it filled the whole earth. The God of heaven was to do this, but He would use men as His instruments.

After the Church was organized it spread in all the regions, round about and finally the Gospel was taken over into Great Britain. Satan was angered, and persecution raged. He moved the very powers of earth and air (for the scriptures declare that he is the prince and power of the air) in his determination to overthrow this work. But the Church grew and multiplied in numbers, and was greatly strengthened by the accessions that came from Great Britain. It increased in power and influence, and cities of the Saints were established in the land. The city of Kirtland was built, the city of Nauvoo was founded. The Saints spread over the land. They went into Missouri and located the city of Zion, of which we heard this morning, where the great temple of the Lord is to be built in this generation. However, persecution still raged. The Saints were driven from one place to another until we behold a very remarkable thing—that which has not occurred in the history of the world, so far as I am aware, since the days when Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt. In these latter times, we behold a whole people migrating to the West, leaving their homes and their substance, and everything that God had prospered them with, and launching forth into the wilderness. The mighty plains were dotted with wagons and with people moving to the West. After a time they disappeared from view, as if the earth had opened up and swallowed them, and their fate excited but little interest in the country where they had lately resided. It was hoped by many of their enemies that "Mormonism" had ceased to be a factor in the world, and that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had disappeared forever.

If it be proper to draw a comparison, let us suppose that one of the enemies of this people at that time had been

permitted to look upon this great westward movement. We will take, for instance, Governor Boggs, of Missouri, who was one of the chief persecutors of the Church, who was bitter against the truth, who was determined to overthrow this people, and who used the authority of his high office to persecute and vex the Latter-day Saints. Let us suppose that he had been standing there when the exiles disappeared from view in 1847; then as by a miracle a deep sleep had come upon him, and he had continued, like Rip Van Winkle, in that condition for fifty-four years. Let him be awakened suddenly, and what would meet his gaze? His astonished eyes would behold a great and mighty people established in the Rocky Mountains, and doubtless he would be led to ask, "What great commonwealth is this?" After having been asleep fifty-four years, he might well ask such a question. Who are these that have established themselves so firmly in the chambers of the mountains? If he should look a little closer, he would find that this great people had sprung from that band of pilgrims who were driven out from the nation, partly by his influence. From the small beginning of six members at its organization in 1830, he would find that the Church had increased until there were fifty Stakes—one in Canada, one in Oregon, three in Wyoming, eight in Idaho, one in Colorado, four in Arizona, one in Mexico, and thirty-one in Utah. Then if he turned his eyes from the mountains and looked abroad, he would discover fourteen great missions of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—one in the Eastern States, one in the Northern States, one in the Southern States, one in the Northwestern States, one in the Southwestern States, one in Colorado, one in California, one in Australia, one in New Zealand, one in the Hawaiian Islands, one in the Samoan Islands, one in the Society Islands, and one great mission in Europe, comprehending several missions and a mission just now opened up in Japan. Then, if he had any desire to know the numerical strength of the people whom he had sought to destroy, (and in saying this I do not

malign or misrepresent, for it is so recorded in the annals of the nation) he would find that the membership of the Church amounted to 260,000 souls in the Stakes of Zion, and 50,000 souls in the Missions, making in all 310,000 souls. These figures that I am giving you come well within the facts. They were taken from last year's statistical reports. Of course, by this time there would necessarily be some changes, but nevertheless they are conservative and probably do not reach the actual number at the present time. Included in the total of three hundred and ten thousand there are eighty-five thousand children under eight years of age—a mighty host that will soon become members of the Church of Christ. Then, if he desired to know the strength of that great body of men alluded to by President Smith this morning—the Priesthood—he would find that there are two of the First Presidency, 12 Apostles, 200 Patriarchs, 6,800 High Priests, 9,730 Seventies, 20,000 Elders, making a total of those who bear the higher Priesthood, 36,744; 4,800 Priests, 4,900 Teachers, 16,000 Deacons, making 25,700 as constituting the lesser Priesthood, and a grand total of 62,444 bearing the Priesthood of God. He would find also, connected with the auxiliary associations of the Church, 30,150 members of the Relief Society; 10,000 officers and teachers and 115,000 members of the Sunday schools; 28,000 members of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association; 25,000 members of the Young Ladies' Mutual Mutual Improvement Association; 4,066 officers and 31,988 members of the Primary association; and about 20,000 belonging to the Religion Classes—making a grand total of 264,204 belonging to these auxiliary associations. Then if he cared to go any farther, he would find that there were about 20,000 farms owned by the Latter-day Saints, and that 18,000 of these farms are actually free from all incumbrance. Still further, he would find that ninety per cent of the Latter-day Saints own and occupy their own homes, while the average throughout the United States is something like 5 per cent. Then he would

find, if he cared to know, that in the year 1897, when the Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists numbered four millions in the United States, and their total increase for one year was fifty thousand souls, the Latter-day Saints numbered in the same years a little over a quarter of a million, and their increase for the year was twenty thousand souls. Twenty thousand increase with a total of a quarter of a million as against fifty thousand increase for four millions!

After obtaining all this information, would not he be compelled to acknowledge that surely this is a marvelous work and a wonder? The Lord said to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon, on one occasion that "there is no weapon that is formed against you shall prosper; and if any man lift his voice against you, he shall be confounded in mine own due time." I fancy that this man, if he had received a change of heart, would be led to exclaim, Surely the prediction of God has been fulfilled at least in reference to myself.

Now, brethren and sisters, let me call your attention to the fact that whereas the Lord placed a Prophet, Seer, and Revelator at the head of His Church when it was organized in 1830, with six souls. He still has a Prophet, Seer and Revelator standing at the head of His people at the present time, who is endowed with the keys of power and authority to bind on earth and it is bound in heaven, to loose on earth and it is loosed in heaven. That wonderful power and authority is in the Church today, and those impressive words that were delivered to the Prophet Joseph Smith, which I will read again, are binding upon the Church today:

"Wherefore, (meaning the Church), thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me;

"For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith."

Oh! how great the responsibility that comes to us with these words. How great is the responsibility resting down upon the presidents of these fifty Stakes

of Zion, for they have been called with a solemn calling and a great appointment to preside over all the general interests of the Saints. What manner of men ought they to be? Quick to manifest the spirit of obedience that was so beautifully alluded to by Apostle Smoot. They should be humble, prayerful men, quick to hear the word of counsel, and to impart that word to their people. And Oh, how great is the responsibility upon the Bishops in the wards of Zion! There are 562 wards in the Church, and each ward is presided over by a Bishop and two counselors. Five hundred and sixty-two Bishops, with counselors, who have been called to look after the precious souls in their wards, to watch over them, to give counsel, to direct their labors, and to be interested in everything that interests the people; that no evil shall grow up in these wards, but the Bishop shall be first to see it and shall be swift against the wrongdoer, albeit in the spirit of the Gospel, that evil may be rooted out from among the Saints; that not one of these 562 Bishops shall be asleep at his post for a moment, but that all shall be watchful day and night, that they may know what is transpiring in their wards. Then, think of the great army of laborers in the Priesthood throughout the Church—62,000; and 264,000 belonging to these auxiliary associations, to be on hand to assist in laboring for the salvation of souls!

I will conclude, brethren and sisters, by saying that we heard this morning the voice of the Presidency of the Church— that voice which the Lord says we must listen to as though it proceeded from Jehovah Himself. We have received counsel. Certain evils exist among us. As presidents of Stakes, as Bishops of wards, as counselors, as High Councilors, as men of the Priesthood, we must give our attention to these evils. That is the word of the Lord to us. We know our duty; we know that the evils referred to must be reached and must be corrected and driven from among the Latter-day Saints, else God will be angry with us. Amen.