

SPECIAL CONFERENCE.

Held in the Tabernacle Sunday, Nov. 10, 1901, in Response to a Call
Made by the First Presidency.

MORNING SESSION.

In response to the following announcement, a special conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, assembled in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, at 10 a. m. on Sunday, November 10, 1901.

Dear Brethren and Sisters—Agreeable with the decision of the Council of Apostles at their regular meeting, Thursday, October 17, we hereby call a general conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to be held in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, on Sunday, the 10th of November, next, at 10 o'clock a. m., for the purpose of voting upon the Church authorities.

JOSEPH F. SMITH,
JOHN R. WINDER,
ANTHON H. LUND,
First Presidency.

There were present, of the general authorities: Of the First Presidency, Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder and Anthon H. Lund.

Of the quorum of the Twelve Apostles, there were: Brigham Young, John Henry Smith, George Teasdale, Mariner W. Merrill, Matthias F. Cowley, Abraham O. Woodruff, Rudger Clawson, Reed Smoot and Hyrum M. Smith; Patriarch John Smith; of the First Seven Presidents of Seventies; Seymour B. Young, C. D. Fjeldsted, 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 Orrin P. Miller.

The choir and congregation sang:

Our God, we raise to Thee
Thanks for Thy blessings free,
We here enjoy.

The opening prayer was offered by Elder Matthias F. Cowley.

Singing by the choir:

All hail the glorious day,
By Prophets long foretold.

PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

The course the Saints should pursue—Necessity of Complete organization—The order and authority and functions of the Priesthood.

My brethren and sisters, I do not expect to occupy very much time this morning, but I feel that it would be proper for me to make a few remarks, as we are gathered here in the capacity of a special general conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for the purpose of acting upon matters that may be presented to us, in the regular order of the Church and of the Priesthood. It is only recently that we held our semi-annual general conference, which was largely attended, and at which, on the last day, we were privileged to hear the voice of President Lorenzo Snow, who spoke to us for the last time in the flesh, and left with us his instruction and counsel in relation to some of the most important matters that pertain to the continuance of the ministry and the labor of the Apostles of Jesus Christ throughout the world. We little supposed then that it would be the last time he would appear before us, or that we would be favored with his presence, his counsel and wisdom; but the Lord has taken him from our midst. He has finished his mission here, and the labor now devolves upon us who survive. It is our duty to take hold of the work vigorously, with full determination and purpose of heart to carry it on, with the help of the Lord, and in accordance with the inspiration of His Spirit, as it has been done in the past. It is our privilege to live nearer to the Lord, if we will, than we have ever done, that

we may enjoy a greater outpouring of His Spirit than we have ever enjoyed, and that we may advance faster, grow in the knowledge of the truth more rapidly, and become more thoroughly established in the faith. All this, however, will depend upon the increased faithfulness of the people—of those who have made covenant with God by sacrifice, who have come before the Lord with broken hearts and contrite spirits, and with unshaken determination in their souls that they will fight the good fight, that they will keep the faith, that they will work righteousness and that they will defend the cause of Zion by their example as well as by their professions.

We can make no advancement only upon the principles of eternal truth. In proportion as we become established upon the foundation of these principles, which have been revealed from the heavens in the latter days, and determine to accomplish the purposes of the Lord, will we progress, and the Lord will all the more exalt and magnify us before the world and make us to assume our real position and standing in the midst of the earth. We have been looked upon as interlopers, as fanatics, as believers in a false religion; we have been regarded with contempt, and treated despicably; we have been driven from our homes, maligned and spoken evil of everywhere, until the people of the world have come to believe that we are the offscourings of the earth and scarcely fit to live. There are thousands and thousands of innocent people in the world whose minds have become so darkened by the slanderous reports that have gone forth concerning us that they would feel they were doing God's service to deprive a member of this Church of life, or of liberty, or the pursuit of happiness, if they could do it.

The Lord designs to change this condition of things, and to make us known to the world in our true light—as true worshipers of God, as those who have become the children of God by repentance, and by the law of adoption have become heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; and that our mission in this world is to do good, to put down iniquity under our feet, to exalt right-

eousness, purity and holiness in the hearts of the people, and to establish in the minds of our children, above all other things, a love for God and His word, that shall be in them as a fountain of light, strength, faith and power, leading them on from childhood to old age, and making them firm believers in the word of the Lord, in the restored Gospel and Priesthood, and in the establishment of Zion, no more to be thrown down nor given to another people. If there is anything that I desire above another in this world, it is that my children shall become established in this knowledge and faith, so that they can never be turned aside from it.

We have met on this occasion to confirm or reject, as we feel disposed or as the Spirit of the Lord in us may direct, the action that has been taken by the leading councils of the Priesthood since our last conference and since the death of our beloved President Lorenzo Snow. I desire to state to this congregation one or two things that may be proper to mention, in order that you may understand why we have acted as promptly as we have done in these matters.

After the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Twelve Apostles continued as the presiding quorum of the Church for a number of years; but finally they were moved upon by the Holy Spirit to reorganize the First Presidency of the Church, with Brigham Young as President, and Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards as his counselors. In reality this organization might have been effected within twenty-four hours after the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, but their action was delayed, until they found by experience that the exercise of the functions of Presidency and the government of the Church by twelve men at the head was not only cumbersome, but was not fully perfect in the order of the Holy Priesthood as established by the Lord.

On the death of President Brigham Young, President John Taylor followed in some measure the example of his predecessor, and it was some time before the Presidency of the

Church was organized. The Presidency was finally organized, however, with John Taylor as President and George Q. Cannon and myself as counselors.

At the death of President Taylor, President Woodruff hesitated, and he allowed a little time to pass before the Presidency was again organized. When at last he became convinced that it was his duty, and necessary in order to carry out the purposes of the Lord, he reorganized the Presidency of the Church. At that time he gave a solemn injunction to his fellow servants in relation to this. He desired it understood that in all future time, when the President of the Church should die and thereby the First Presidency become disorganized, it would be the duty of the proper authorities of the Church to proceed at once, without any unnecessary delay, to reorganize the First Presidency.

As soon as the news reached us of the death of President Woodruff, who was in California at the time, President Lorenzo Snow said to me, "it will be our duty to proceed as soon as possible to reorganize the Presidency of the Church." As you are aware, after the burial of the remains of President Woodruff, he proceeded at once to do this. In this connection I may tell you another thing. President Snow said to me, "you will live to be the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and when that time comes you should proceed at once and reorganize the Presidency of the Church." This was his counsel to me, and the same was given to the Twelve Apostles. In accordance with this principle and with the injunction of President Snow, within one week after his death the Apostles proceeded to designate the new Presidency of the Church, and we did it strictly in accordance with the pattern that the Lord has established in His Church, unanimously.

I desire to read a little from the revelation in relation to the order of the Holy Priesthood, that you may understand our views concerning adhering as nearly as we can to the holy order of government that has been established by revelation through the Prophet Joseph Smith in the dispensation of the fulness of times. We cannot deny the

fact that the Lord has effected one of the most perfect organizations in this Church that ever existed upon the earth. I do not know of any more perfect organization than exists in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints today. We have not always carried out strictly the order of the Priesthood; we have varied from it to some extent; but we hope in due time that, by the promptings of the Holy Spirit, we will be led up into the exact channel and course that the Lord has marked out for us to pursue, and adhere strictly to the order that He has established. I will read from a revelation that was given to the Prophet Joseph Smith, at Nauvoo, Hancock Co., Illinois, January 19, 1841, which stands as the law of the Church in relation to the presentation of the authorities of the Holy Priesthood as they were established in the Church, and from which I feel that we have no right to depart. The Lord says:

"First, I give unto you Hyrum Smith, to be a Patriarch unto you, to hold the sealing blessings of my Church, even the Holy Spirit of promise, whereby ye are sealed up unto the day of redemption, that ye may not fall, notwithstanding the hour of temptation that may come upon you."

It may be considered strange that the Lord should give first of all the Patriarch; yet I do not know any law, any revelation or any commandment from God to the contrary, that has ever been given through any of the Prophets or Presidents of the Church. At the same time we well know that this order has not been strictly followed from the day we came into these valleys until now—and we will not make any change at present. But we will first take it into consideration; we will pray over it, we will get the mind of the Spirit of God upon it, as upon other subjects, and be united before we take any action different to that which has been done.

The revelation continues:

"I give unto you my servant Joseph, to be a presiding Elder over all my Church, to be a Translator, a Revelator, a Seer, and Prophet.

"I give unto him for counselors my servant Sidney Rigdon and my servant William Law, that these may constitute a quorum and First Presidency,

to receive the oracles for the whole Church.

"I give unto you my servant Brigham Young, to be a President over the Twelve traveling Council,

"Which Twelve hold the keys to open up the authority of my kingdom upon the four corners of the earth, and after that to send my word to every creature;

"They are—Heber C. Kimball, Parley P. Pratt, Orson Pratt, Orson Hyde, William Smith, John Taylor, John E. Page, Wilford Woodruff, Willard Richards, George A. Smith;

"David Patten I have taken unto myself; behold his Priesthood no man taketh from him; but, verily I say unto you, another may be appointed unto the same calling.

"And again, I say unto you, I give unto you a High Council, for the corner stone of Zion;

"Viz., Samuel Bent, H. G. Sherwood, George W. Harris, Charles C. Rich, Thomas Grover, Newel Knight, David Dort, Dunbar Wilson; (Seymour Brunson I have taken unto myself, no man taketh his Priesthood, but another may be appointed unto the same Priesthood in his stead, and verily I say unto you, let my servant Aaron Johnson be ordained unto this calling in his stead), David Fullmer, Alpheus Cutler, William Huntington.

"And again, I give unto you Don C. Smith, to be a president over a quorum of High Priests;

"Which ordinance is instituted for the purpose of qualifying those who shall be appointed standing presidents or servants over different Stakes scattered abroad.

"And they may travel also if they choose, but rather be ordained for standing presidents, this is the office of their calling, saith the Lord your God.

"I give unto him Amasa Lyman, and Noah Packard, for counselors, that they may preside over the quorum of High Priests of my Church, saith the Lord.

"And again, I say unto you, I give unto you John A. Hicks, Samuel Williams, and Jesse Baker, which Priesthood is to preside over the quorum of Elders, which quorum is instituted for standing ministers, nevertheless they may travel, yet they are ordained to be standing ministers to my Church, saith the Lord.

"And again, I give unto you Joseph Young, Josiah Butterfield, Daniel Miles, Henry Herriman, Zera Pulsipher, Levi Hancock, James Foster, to preside over the quorum of Seventies,

"Which quorum is instituted for traveling Elders to bear record of my name in all the world, wherever the traveling High Council, my Apostles, shall send them to prepare a way before my face.

"The difference between this quorum

and the quorum of Elders is, that one is to travel continually, and the other is to preside over the churches from time to time; the one has the responsibility of presiding from time to time, and the other has no responsibility of presiding, saith the Lord your God."

The Seventies have no responsibility of presiding. It is not the calling or duty of their office to preside. They are traveling Elders, and they are to preach the Gospel to the world, under the direction of the Twelve Apostles, who constitute the traveling High Council of the Church, and who are special witnesses of Jesus Christ to all the world.

"And again, I say unto you I give unto you Vinson Knight, Samuel H. Smith, and Shadrach Roundy, if he will receive it, to preside over the bishopric; a knowledge of said bishopric is given unto you in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants.

"And again, I say unto you, Samuel Rolfe and his counselors for Priests, and the president of the Teachers and his counselors, and also the president of the Deacons and his counselors, and also the president of the Stake and his counselors;

"The above offices I have given unto you, and the keys thereof, for helps and for governments, for the work of the ministry, and the perfecting of my Saints;

"And a commandment I give unto you that you should fill all these offices and approve of those names which I have mentioned, or else disapprove of them at my general conference."

These are the offices of the Priesthood as the Lord has given it, and we propose to follow it as near as we know how in the future; but we will take such other measures as may be deemed proper and right in due time. These things shall be presented from time to time to the general annual and semi-annual conferences of the Church, that all the business of the Church may be done in accordance with the law of God. that the people may have the privilege of sanctioning or disapproving that which is suggested to them by the mind of the Spirit through those who are placed to preside, and that all things may be done by common consent.

This afternoon it is intended to present before this conference the necessary changes that have been made within the last few days. All the au-

thorities of the Church will not be presented to you at this conference, for the simple reason that they have already been sustained at the regular semi-annual conference of the Church. We shall present, in the main, only those who have been called to fill vacancies, and put before you that which has been done in order to perfect the organization of the Priesthood. These matters, and as little as possible that is unnecessary, will be presented before this conference for your action. We intend that the Priesthood shall vote upon these questions by quorums. The Presidency of the Church will first express their mind, thus indicating, at least in some degree, the mind of the Spirit and the suggestions from the head. Then the proposition will be submitted to the Apostles, for them to show their willingness or otherwise to sustain the action of the First Presidency. It will then go to the Patriarchs, and they will have the privilege of showing whether they will sustain the action that has been taken; then to the Presidents of Stakes and counselors and the High Councilors; then to the High Priests (that office in the Melchisedek Priesthood which holds the keys of presidency); next, the traveling Elders—the Seventies—will be called to express their feelings, and then the Bishops of the Church and the Lesser Priesthood, and after them the whole congregation. All the members of the Church present will have the privilege of expressing their view in relation to the matters which shall be proposed, by a rising vote and by the uplifted hand.

We propose to follow this order of the Priesthood this afternoon. We would like the people to be punctual in coming together, and for all to observe the regulations that shall be made. If each one will do his or her duty, there will be no confusion, but there will be order in the house of God. The house of God is a house of order, and we expect that this house, which is a house of God, will be a house of order, and we will have things done in their proper order if we can.

God bless the Latter-day Saints. The

Lord Almighty bless His servants the Apostles, and His servants the Presidency of the Church, and all those who labor for the welfare of Zion and for the establishment of righteousness in the hearts of the people. God bless the poor and the needy, the fatherless and the widow, and those that sorrow and are bowed down because of affliction and the loss of loved ones. May the Lord bless and comfort them, buoy up their spirits, and give them hope, joy and consolation in anticipation of the glorious future that awaits them, both in time and in eternity; for no man can foretell or foresee the glorious things that await the people of God, if only they are faithful. It hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive, neither has eye seen nor ear heard, the magnitude and fullness of the glory of God that awaits the faithful beyond the veil. God bless you, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

PRESIDENT ANTON H. LUND.

A Perfect Organization—Permanent and Indispensable.

I will read a few words from the 4th chapter of Ephesians:

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

"For the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

I have been very much interested in the remarks of our President this morning. In contemplating the organization of the Priesthood which God has placed in His Church, it seems to me that it is a perfect institution. It is not an organization that has been devised by man, or evolved for the first time in our system of Church government: but it is like the one which Christ gave to His people formerly. It is necessary that apostles