

GENERAL CONFERENCE

OF

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

FIRST DAY.

HISTORIAN'S SOCIETY
Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints.

The Seventy-third Semi-annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints convened in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, at 10 a. m., on Saturday, Oct. 4, 1902, President Joseph F. Smith presiding.

There were present of the General Authorities: Of the First Presidency, Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder and Anthon H. Lund. Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles there were: John Henry Smith, George Teasdale, Marriner W. Merrill, Matthias F. Cowley, Abraham O. Woodruff, Rudger Clawson, Reed Smoot and Hyrum M. Smith; Presiding Patriarch of the Church, John Smith; first seven presidents of Seventies, Seymour B. Young, Brigham 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. There were likewise a large number of presidents of Stakes, their counselors and other leading men of the Priesthood.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn, which begins:

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

Prayer was offered by Elder Collins R. Hakes.

Singing by the choir and congregation:

Redeemer of Israel,
Our only delight,
On whom for a blessing we call;
Our shadow by day,
And our pillar by night,
Our King, our Deliverer, our all.

OPENING ADDRESS.

PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

Greeting—Causes for thanksgiving—God's blessings increase through faithfulness—More Temples to be built—Great responsibility resting upon the Saints.

My beloved brethren and sisters, I greet you heartily this morning in your attendance at this the 73rd Semi-annual Conference of the Church. I am pleased to see such a good representation here this morning. Especially am I pleased to see so many of the presiding authorities of the Church—the Apostles and the presidents of stakes, and also many of the presidents of the various missions of the Church. It is indeed gratifying to see these our brethren assembled here, on whom rests so great a responsibility, they having been entrusted with the proclamation of the Gospel to the nations of the earth and with the care of the flock of Christ in the various Stakes of Zion.

During this conference we desire, as far as the time will permit, to give an opportunity to as many as possible of the Elders who are presiding abroad, and of the presidents of the stakes o'

Zion, to express themselves; and in order that we may reach as many as possible, we desire that the brethren who speak shall have that portion of the Spirit of God that will enable them to speak clearly, pointedly and briefly upon those subjects that may come to their minds.

We have here the Apostles, the Presidents of the Seventies, and the Presiding Bishopric, who are practically traveling Elders in the Church, visiting the stakes of Zion and the various mission fields, from time to time, and they are especially posted in relation to the condition of the work of the Lord in the various fields that they have visited and will be able to speak to us in relation to those subjects and matters that will be most interesting and necessary for the general enlightenment of those who have come to the conference, and to the edification of the whole people.

We desire to say to the people that we feel very grateful to the Lord for His continued mercy unto us, and, notwithstanding the drouth of the past season, which has been almost unprecedented in many parts of the country, we feel that the Saints have been greatly blessed, and that there will be no necessity for any great lack or want among the people in consequence of the drouth, but we feel that all will be blessed with sufficient for their needs. In many parts of the country we have been exceedingly blessed. There has been an abundance of water, and in some sections our people have been visited by unprecedented rains, resulting in great floods, which have done more or less damage to the people; but this, of course, is not to a very great extent.

We feel in our hearts that Zion is prospering, and that all is well with the people of God at large; still, we realize that there is great room for us to improve, and that the opportunities for advancement are very extensive. We hope that all the Latter-day Saints will continue their diligence and faithfulness before the Lord in the work in which they are engaged, that Zion may continue to flourish in the tops of the mountains, and that the purposes of

God Almighty concerning His people and His work in the latter days may be consummated and fully realized. We feel that the Lord will bless His people, and the earth, for their sake, in the future more abundantly than in the past. In proportion as we renew and redouble our diligence and faithfulness before the Lord in keeping His commandments and walking in all righteousness and acceptableness before Him, so will His blessings be increased upon the people, and upon all their substance, and upon the earth which they inhabit.

We congratulate you, brethren and sisters, on your appearance here this morning, and we pray God to pour out upon you and upon all of us His Holy Spirit during this Conference, that we may have a time of rejoicing, and that we may be able to act intelligently and wisely on all matters of business that may be presented before us; that we may have the spirit of union, love and devotion to the cause of Zion abiding in our hearts; that we may have no feelings of dissension, but that we may be one, that we may be indeed the people of God.

It is not my purpose to prolong my remarks this morning, but I desired to express my gratitude to my Father in heaven for all His mercies and blessings unto us.

We will say to the people that we have no reason to complain of the diligence of the Saints, so far as we are able to judge, in keeping the law of tithing. We believe that the Latter-day Saints are observing that law as faithfully as they have ever done, and we beseech of you that you will continue to do this until our hands shall be freed from all obligations, and until we shall have means in the storehouse of the Lord with which to accomplish greater works, which may be necessary to be done. We feel there is much that can be done and much that ought to be done in the interests of Zion and for the benefit of the people of God.

We feel that an effort should be made to preserve the Temples of God, those houses that have been erected for the purpose of administering the ordinances of the Gospel therein for the

living and the dead. We desire that these buildings shall be preserved and kept in repair and in a wholesome condition, so that the Spirit of the Lord may dwell in them, and that those who minister therein, may feel the presence and influence of His Spirit. We also feel that when the time shall come and our hands shall be free from the obligations that now rest upon us, other places should be prepared for the convenience of the Latter-day Saints in more distant stakes, in order that those who are living at great distances from the center may have the privilege of receiving the ordinances of the Gospel without being put to the great expense and loss of time that is necessary now in journeying from 500 to 1,000 miles in order to reach the houses of God. We hope to see the day when we shall have temples built in the various parts of the land where they are needed for the convenience of the people: for we realize that one of the greatest responsibilities that rest upon the people of God today is that their hearts shall be turned unto their fathers, and that they shall do the work that is necessary to be done for them in order that they may be joined together fitly in the bond of the New and Everlasting covenant from generation to generation. For the Lord has said, through the Prophet Joseph, that this is one of the greatest responsibilities devolving upon us in this latter day.

God help us to do this work and help us to be faithful, one and all, that we may have means with which to accomplish it, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

ELDER JOSEPH E. ROBINSON,
(President of the California Mission.)

My very beloved brothers and sisters, when I heard the voice of the Prophet of God say that all is well in Zion, the words of one of the Prophets of old came to my mind:

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

In the California Mission we are not always blessed by the presence of those who bring good tidings of good; we often hear the people of Zion villified and spoken of evilly. It fills my heart with joy to know that those whose interests are our interests, and who have done so much for our common weal in fostering our industries, can say that all is well, and they have no complaints in regard to the law of tithing and other matters relating to the Saints of God.

In our mission we have the same spirit that characterizes the saints of God in all the world. The hearts of the Saints there turn to you in these valleys, and deep in their souls they have a desire to come to the Temple of the Lord and receive their blessings, and some few have been so privileged. They feel a pride in all your successes. When they hear of any great thing you do or any good thing that is said of you, they rejoice, and feel that they are entitled to do so, because they are of you, though not with you. When the Tabernacle choir visited us it feasted our souls. We sensed again that the prophecy was being fulfilled wherein it was said that in Zion there should be the voice of thanksgiving and melody. When we lifted up our voices together this morning and sang in unison, it brought to my mind this saying of old:

"Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."

The Saints of the California Mission have been valiant and earnest in the payment of their tithes. They feel that they are adding to the glory of Zion and to the wealth of their own souls by the practice of self-abnegation and self-sacrifice. Though we number but about six hundred souls, and quite a percentage of them, I am sorry to say, are not the most faithful, yet to date we have paid something over \$3,000 in tithes, besides liberal offerings. The Elders are valiant, earnest, and God-fearing; many of them are boys, several being under twenty years of age. Among them are some most promising speakers, humble, childlike,