

when I heard the gospel of baptism for the dead set forth by one of the Elders, in my native state, my heart was touched, and I could have bowed down and kissed his feet, because he opened to me a new life, a new world, and I was caught in the gospel net. I can testify too," said he, "from that very moment, the intelligence of the Holy Spirit illuminated my mind, and I learned that Jesus is the Christ and that Joseph was His chosen prophet."

All these glorious principles, my brethren and sisters, are before us, and we are striving to live by them; and although the world does not endorse us, or love us, we must do our whole duty.

May the Lord bless you, and give you power to be faithful and true unto the end of your days, for He has said truly, "Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life." Amen.

The Temple choir sang, "Go ye messengers of glory."

Benediction by Elder Rodney C. Badger.

CLOSING SESSION.

In the Tabernacle, at 2 p. m.

The choir sang the anthem:

The Overthrow of Gog and Magog.

Prayer was offered by Elder Charles Kelly, president of Boxelder stake.

The choir sang the anthem:

How Beautiful Upon the Mountains.

The solo parts were sung by John Robinson and Mrs. Lizzie Thomas Edward, with admirable skill.

ELDER HYRUM M. SMITH.

The Youthful not ashamed of the Gospel—
The people progressing—Devotion of the
Leaders of the Church.

The sensation that one feels in standing before such hosts of Israel for the purpose of addressing them cannot be described—it can only be felt. It is quite overwhelming, I can assure you. I would like to impress upon those present the fact that the acoustic properties of this Tabernacle are wonderful. The building is of renown the world over

for these properties. Therefore, you must remember that each whisper, each movement of the body, or the shuffling of the feet of any person in the congregation will be reverberated and echoed throughout the building; and when these sounds are multiplied, then there is noise and confusion in the whole house. In order for any speaker's voice to carry into all parts of this Tabernacle and penetrate the ears of the congregation, all present must remain as quiet as they possibly can. There are probably between ten or twelve thousand people here this afternoon, and I presume all have come for the purpose of worshiping God in spirit and in truth, and with a desire to hear all that may be said by those who shall address you. This is my condition, and I rejoice greatly that so many of the Saints evidently have the same spirit and the same desire to hear the word of the Lord from His servants. It causes me to praise God when I see the Saints so anxious to hear that they willingly stand through a long meeting, if unable to find seats, for the purpose of enjoying the spirit of the conference.

The statement has been repeated here which was made by some of our friends (?) that there are many of the younger Latter-day Saints who are becoming ashamed of the Gospel. Now, I venture to say that there is not one individual here today who is a member of the Church of all the ten or twelve thousand present, who is ashamed of the Gospel. And if there are any such anywhere, then, of course, we know that they themselves are at fault, that their lives do not conform with the principles of the Gospel, that the Spirit of the Lord has reprov'd them, and that they are so weak in character that they are unable to repent and reform and place themselves in harmony with the spirit of the Gospel.

My labors have been among the Latter-day Saints, and during the last six months I have visited quite a number of the Stakes of Zion, being in attendance at a Stake conference upon each Sabbath day, consequently I have

visited in that time nearly half of the Stakes of Zion. I can testify to these friends of ours, and to all the Saints, that I found in each of the Stakes I have visited the same anxiety among the members of the Church to attend their Stake conferences as we see manifest here today at the semi-annual conference of the Church. It has been our experience to see all the meeting houses crowded to the doors, and every available space occupied by young and old who were desirous to hear what might be said. I am convinced that there is a general improvement all along the line among the people. We are not at a standstill, neither at home nor abroad. It is quite impossible that the Church of Jesus Christ should ever come to a stand still. The fact that one of our mission presidents may from time to time report fewer baptisms than usual is no evidence whatever that the Church is at a standstill. Many are called, but few are chosen. While the baptisms in one mission-field or another may be few, nevertheless the Elders laboring there are actively engaged in bearing their testimonies to thousands and tens of thousands of people, and this is by far the greater part of the mission of the Elders who are in the world declaring the truth. This Gospel shall be preached in all the world as a witness before the end shall come, and if these servants of God are standing on the street corners in the various cities, and traveling along the highways and byways of the villages and towns, raising their voices in proclamation of the truth, as well as bearing testimony in the homes of the people. I say to you that the work of God is going on rapidly in the earth, and we are speeding toward the ultimate consummation of all God's purposes concerning this great work of the latter-day. The Saints have every reason to be wonderfully encouraged. Faith is increasing. Faithfulness to duty and in keeping the commandments of God and in listening to the counsels of the authorities of the Church is becoming

more and more apparent, and rapid advancement and progress on the path of righteousness is certainly manifest to any individual who will pause for a moment and acquaint himself with the conditions that exist among the Latter-day Saints.

We have in our midst as leaders, men of God, men of tried integrity, men of pure devotion, who live among us wholly that they may do the will of the Lord, and that they may bear the burden which has been laid upon them of being preachers of righteousness and exemplars among the people. They are performing their duty as the Lord gives them light. The saints are becoming better and stronger day by day. The power of God is being manifest among us more and more as time rolls on. We ought to be encouraged in these men whom the Lord hath called to lead us in these days, as we have been encouraged in the men who have held these leading positions since the restoration of the Gospel in our age. If you will take the trouble to read their history and to study their lives, and then compare their lives and conduct with the lives and conduct of the ancient Prophets and Apostles, you will find that the comparison will be to the disadvantage of the Prophets and Apostles who lived in former days, if disadvantage may be found at all. The idea that the Prophets of old were anything more than men is a mistake. Many people look upon them as being something supernatural, nevertheless they were men—men, as Paul expresses it, of like passions unto ourselves. The Lord took them, and clothed them with His Spirit and power, and while in the main they served God and performed the mission that He gave them, yet they sometimes made mistakes. I presume it would be considered blasphemy by those who are not of us, to compare the latter-day leaders of the Church with the former-day leaders of the Church. But I look upon the Prophet Joseph Smith as the equal of any Prophet that has ever lived. I look upon him as being as highly favored

of God as any man ever was. I look upon him as a man who accomplished as successfully the great mission the Lord gave him to perform, as any other man ever accomplished a mission in the world. I look upon President Brigham Young, the successor of the Prophet Joseph Smith, as being as great a leader among men as ever led men in the history of the world. He was as great as was Moses, and performed as great a work; for he performed successfully all that God called upon him to do. Furthermore, in all his life, he never showed the weaknesses that Moses showed while leading the children of Israel. We might go on, if time would permit, and consider the patriarchs. Some of the patriarchs were mentioned this morning, and I want to say to you that I look upon the Patriarch Joseph Smith, father of the Prophet Joseph, as being as great a patriarch, as highly favored of God, as sincere, as devoted, and as pure in his life as either of the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and besides, he never resorted to the sharp practice in his dealings with his fellow men that characterized some of these other patriarchs in their dealings. Let us consider the missionary work that has been done by this Church. Paul the Apostle is looked upon as being the greatest missionary of primitive times. While he traveled a great deal in the world as it was then known,—which, when compared with the world as known today, was small indeed,—compared with his labors the labors of many of the servants of God of latter-days who have carried the Gospel to Great Britain and to Scandinavia, and in the United States and the isles of the sea who have traversed many more miles than Paul ever did, have preached the Gospel to many thousands more people than Paul ever did, have led the way to the conversion of tens of thousands more people than Paul ever did, and who laid their lives down for the cause as Paul did. I would not disparage his work, but merely draw your attention to the

fact that these men of latter-days have worked as hard, as sincerely, and have accomplished as much as did they of old, and the power of God has been made manifest with them to just as great an extent as was ever manifest to Paul or any of his fellow apostles. I look upon the Presidencies of the Church who have succeeded the Prophet Joseph Smith as being the equal of Peter, James and John. While Peter, James and John were as good perhaps as men could be, nevertheless men who have lived in this day and who do live are as good as they were. I believe, however, our men of today have had a little advantage over those men of old, as they live in a dispensation of greater fullness of the Gospel. They ought to be good men, and they are good men. They are what they ought to be; and you, my brethren and sisters, will only do right in sustaining and upholding them, in praying for them in your homes, and in doing all in your power to raise them in the eyes of the Latter-day Saints and in the eyes of all the world, as men of God, endowed by Him to perform the work of the Gospel in the latter days.

The Lord bless you, my brethren and sisters. I testify to you that the words of testimony which have been borne by the servants of God here during this conference have been inspired of the Lord, and they are true. Like them, I am thankful to say that I know this is the work of the Lord, and that it will go on and triumph; that it cannot be stopped, neither will it ever stand still, until the righteousness of God shall prevail and the Kingdom of God be established in its fullness. God grant that you may have the same testimony, as I am convinced the great majority of those present have. And is it not a grand thing? Is it not a light to our feet? Will it not ever guide us onward and upward until we merit and receive salvation in the Kingdom of God? May the Lord bless the Latter-day Saints in all the world, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.