

Blessed to open the last dispensation;
Kings shall extol him and nations revere.

Benediction by Bishop William B. Preston.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Singing by the choir and congregation:

Now let us rejoice in the day of salvation,

No longer as strangers on earth need we roam;

Good tidings are sounding to us and each nation.

And shortly the hour of redemption will come.

Prayer was offered by Patriarch Angus M. Cannon.

The choir sang the hymn:

High on the mountain top a banner is unfurled,

Ye nations now look up, it waves to all the world;

In Deseret's sweet, peaceful land,

On Zion's mount behold it stand!

ELDER CHARLES W. PENROSE.

Permanence and perpetuity of the Church.—Its growth and development.—No hiatus in its history.—Keys given to Joseph Smith not to be taken away.—Organization of First Presidency.—It is not hereditary.—The work of God will continue and abide forever.

It is a great pleasure to me to look upon this congregation. We have come here from different parts of this state and of the surrounding states and territories that we might associate as members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in general conference. I feel for one that we have been well repaid for such journeyings, as we have had to undertake in order to come here. The Spirit that has prevailed in this conference from the very beginning has been such as to give comfort and joy and confidence to the Latter-day Saints assembled, and to increase in our souls a determination that we will serve the Lord, that we will keep His commandments, that we will sustain His servants whom He has appointed to guide and direct the affairs of His Church on earth, and that we will place ourselves in such a condition that the Lord may use us for the accomplishment of His purposes, for

the upbuilding of His kingdom, for the spread of truth and righteousness, and to help prepare the way for the coming of Him whose right it is to reign over all the earth. I am sure that every person present who knows anything about the operations of the Spirit of the Lord has had a testimony in his or her heart that the Lord is with His servants, that His power attends their ministrations, and that they are really and truly engaged in the Lord's work, and 'not in the work of man alone.

A remark made by Elder John Henry Smith, I am sure was thoroughly appreciated by those who heard him, and recommended itself to my soul, and that was, that the Lord in the latter days was to establish a kingdom that should "not be given to another people," that should not be overcome of the world but should stand forever, and it was to be given "to the people of the Saints of the Most High," and they should possess it for an everlasting kingdom. Now, we understood in the beginning, when we obeyed the Gospel of Christ and became members of this Church, that this promise was in relation to the work in which we became engaged. That it was to be different from former dispensations. That while the establishment of the Church and kingdom of God in former times was such that it was temporary and was overcome by the powers of evil—the world, the flesh and the devil, this latter-day work was to continue and abide. That it should not cease, but that it was established here permanently. We applied to ourselves the remark of the Prophet Isaiah concerning the great latter-day work, that the truth which the Lord revealed to us should "not depart from us nor from our seed, nor from our seed's seed, from henceforth, even forever." We understood that while those former dispensations only lasted for a time, and then wickedness came in like a flood and spread over the earth, that the dispensation of the fulness of times which the Lord ushered in through His servant Joseph Smith, was to continue and prevail over

every power beneath the eternal heavens, to establish truth and righteousness in the earth, to overcome the powers of evil, and bring to pass the purposes of God in the establishment of His kingdom and the coming of Jesus Christ, our Lord, to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. That while in former times the powers of the world had overcome the saints, in the latter days, in the last dispensation, the people and kingdom of God were to prevail over the kingdoms of this world and the powers of darkness, until Satan and his hosts should be bound and evil should be exterminated from the earth, and righteousness should come in, and "a king should reign in righteousness and princes should rule in judgment."

Was not this the understanding that we had in the very beginning of our career in the Church? And has not the Lord strengthened that faith in our souls by the manner in which He has caused this work to prevail and progress in the earth? When we look upon the congregations of the saints in this conference and realize the fact, repeatedly stated here, that we are only representatives of the great body of the Church located in different parts of the world, we may exclaim as one did when the telegraph line --- completed, "What hath God wrought!" He has brought us from afar; He has congregated us here in the mountains, in fulfillment of that which He predicted through the Prophet Joseph, that before the Lord should come "Zion should rejoice on the hills and should flourish in the mountains." Zion, that has brought good tidings, as the Prophet Isaiah predicted, has come up into the high mountain, and as he and Micah both predicted, the people of God have come from the nations afar off. They have gathered up into the heights of the mountains. They have come here "to learn the ways of the Lord and to walk in His paths." They are building the house of the Lord, as he foresaw it, "in the tops of the mountains."

An effort has been made for some

time past to make some of the Latter-day Saints believe that at a certain period of the Church's history there was a great hiatus, that the Church became disorganized, as it were, because Joseph the Prophet died, martyred with his brother Hyrum for the word of the Lord and the testimony of Jesus, and that because the quorum of the First Presidency was disorganized the Church was disorganized and rejected. Now, my dear brethren and sisters and friends, if that were the case, then the hopes planted in our bosoms by the power of the Spirit of God in the beginning were vain, the promises made to the Church in the start were not true. God declared that He had set up His Church upon the earth "in the last days for the last time," and that it should prevail and should not be prevailed against. The idea that the disorganization of one quorum of the holy priesthood disorganized the Church is in itself an absurdity, and might be rejected by every sensible Saint. But you know there are evil influences abroad in the earth, and different spirits have gone forth to deceive the children of men, and we who are the servants of the Lord ought to be well posted on these matters, so that we may be able to dissipate doubt and uncertainty, and explain that which may seem a little mysterious to some people who are not fully in the light, because we do not all have the same degree of faith. Certainly, I believe that the congregations that have assembled here have not the least dubiety in their minds. The spirit that has prevailed here has testified of this. The unanimity with which the servants of God who have been appointed and called to lead the people in the latter days were accepted and endorsed by the congregation, without any dissenting voice, testifies to this. But there are others who are not up to the mark, not up to the standard, and they need encouraging, and need to have things explained to them, and we should be ready to expound, explain and exhort with all long-suffering, that the faith of the saints may be confirmed, and that

they may understand things as they are.

Now, when the Lord established the Church, as you know, it was but a little thing. As one of the writers of the Book of Mormon said, "out of small things proceedeth that which is great." That has been fulfilled, so far, in the history of this Church. Yet this is only the beginning of the magnitude of the great latter-day work, which shall prevail over everything that is evil and establish the kingdom of God in all the world. When the Church was organized, only six members were present at its organization; at any rate that number took part in the legal organization of the Church, and if all those who had been baptized at that time were counted they would make a very small number. The Church gradually grew and increased. It illustrated what the Savior said in regard to the work of God. It came forth, "first the blade, and then the ear, and after that, the full corn in the ear." It is a growth, as all the works of God are, so far as we can understand. Even the worlds commenced with a nucleus, and they gradually accumulated and grew, as God ordained, until they filled the place that God had appointed. The kingdom of the latter days was to be like "the stone cut out of the mountain without hands," which was to grow and increase until it became a "great mountain and filled the whole earth." So on the 6th day of April, 1830, when the Church was formally organized, and the Prophet Joseph was accepted as the first Elder in the Church, and as a prophet, a seer and a revelator, and the people were commanded to observe all things that he brought forth by the power and Spirit of God—on that day there were not enough persons in the Church to organize it in its fulness. It was like the little blade that comes out of the ground after the seed is planted; but as the years rolled on the Church increased in numbers, and the Lord brought into use the different men and women who came into the Church, that they might be utilized for the purpose of spreading the Gospel and building

up His kingdom in the latter days. The Lord foreshadowed that at a certain time there were to be Twelve that should be ordained to hold the keys of carrying the Gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth. And so various quorums and organizations were added. They grew out of that organization that the Lord established in the beginning. The germ, the form, the potency of it was right there, but it was not developed. It took time and circumstances and people to bring it into a condition that it might be fully organized according to the mind and will of the Lord.

In the first place, the Lord gave the Prophet Joseph Smith the presidency of the Church and the keys of this latter-day work. The Lord tested and tried him, to see whether he would stand, before he conferred upon him the fulness of the power of the Holy Priesthood to build up His kingdom in its fulness. I will read a verse or two from the 28th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, which shows how the Lord led along His servant in the beginning, and that this work was to come forth by degrees. The Lord gave a commandment to Oliver Cowdery as early as September, 1830, that he was to speak by the Holy Ghost, and that he should have the revelations of the Lord for himself and to aid him in his teachings; but although he had been ordained an Apostle when the Prophet Joseph was ordained by Peter, James and John, he was not to command the man who stood at the head. The Lord said:

"And thou shalt not command him who is at thy head, and at the head of the church;

"For I have given him the keys of the mysteries, and the revelations which are sealed, until I shall appoint unto them another in his stead."

Here is the possibility set forth that if Joseph was not true and faithful in all things, another might be appointed in his stead; and Oliver was commanded not to counsel him or to attempt to command him, but to receive the word of the Lord as it came from him.

In the 35th section of the Doctrine

and Covenants—a revelation given to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon—the Lord said:

“And I have given unto him the keys of the mystery of those things which have been sealed, even things which were from the foundation of the world, and the things which shall come from this time until the time of my coming, if he abide in me, and if not, another will I plant in his stead.”

This revelation was given in December, 1830, and there are two or three more of the same kind, given in the very beginning of the Church, while the Prophet Joseph was, as it were, on probation before the Lord. The Lord gave him authority and put him into positions where he could be tried and tested, and He said, “If he abide not in me, another will I plant in his stead.”

I will read the 2nd verse of Section 65:

“The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth until it has filled the whole earth.”

Now I will read from the 43rd Section, verses 3 to 7:

“And this ye shall know assuredly that there is none other appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations until he be taken, if he abide in me.

“But verily, verily, I say unto you, that none else shall be appointed unto this gift except it be through him, for if it be taken from him, he shall not have power except to appoint another in his stead;

“And this shall be a law unto you, that ye receive not the teachings of any that shall come before you as revelations or commandments;

“And this I give unto you that you may not be deceived, that you may know they are not of me.

“For verily I say unto you, that he that is ordained of me shall come in at the gate and be ordained as I have told you before, to teach those revelations which you have received and shall receive through him whom I have appointed.”

There is still, you will see, the opening left that if Joseph was not true and faithful and worthy of his calling, another might be appointed in his stead. But I want you to mark this point: There was not to be another appointed in his stead if he abided in the Lord.

It was only if he transgressed and became unworthy of his calling that he should have power to appoint another. Just put that down in your minds. So if dividers declare that somebody else was appointed to take the place of the Prophet Joseph, then they announce that the Prophet did not abide in the Lord, that he transgressed, and therefore another had to be appointed in his stead.

In a revelation given to the Church September 11th, 1831, the Lord said:

“I will be merciful unto you, for I have given unto you the kingdom.

“And the keys of the mysteries of the kingdom shall not be taken from my servant Joseph Smith, Jr., through the means I have appointed, while he liveth, inasmuch as he obeyeth mine ordinances.—Doc. and Cov. Section 64, verses 4, 5.

Here the promise was made to the Prophet Joseph Smith that he should have those keys as long as he lived, if he obeyed the commandments and ordinances of the Lord.

Our testimony is that he lived and died a prophet of God, and that he sealed his testimony with his blood. The Lord promised that the keys should not be taken from him while he lived, inasmuch as he obeyed His ordinances, so when the Prophet Joseph was taken away, the keys were with him, as the Lord promised they should be, both in this world and in the world to come. I will read a verse from the 112th Section. The Lord says:

“Now, I say unto you, and what I say unto you I say unto all the Twelve, Arise and gird up your loins, take up your cross, follow me, and feed my sheep.

“Exalt not yourselves; rebel not against my servant Joseph, for verily I say unto you, I am with him and my hand shall be over him; and the keys which I have given unto him, and also to youward, shall not be taken from him till I come.”

Here is the promise of the Lord, not only to the Prophet Joseph Smith, but also to the Twelve, that the keys should not be taken from the Prophet until the Lord should come; for by this time he had been tested, proved, and found worthy. As he himself said, he had been swimming in deep waters and

up stream, and he had struggled against false friends and those surrounding him who professed to be his disciples, but who spoke against him and had risen up against him. Now the Lord said to him and to the Twelve, that the keys, which had been given first of all temporarily, as if were, until he should be tested and proved, should abide with him until the Lord should come, and with the Twelve whom He had called and appointed. Therefore, rest your souls easy in this security, that the kingdom, as the Lord says, is given to His people. I might read to you a dozen passages from the Doctrine and Covenants showing that the kingdom was given to the Church, and it was to abide and continue. The Lord said "I have sent my servants out to prune my vineyard for the last time, for behold this is the eleventh hour." His servants whom he had called into the vineyard were called for the last dispensation, and, He said, the keys should not be taken from the Prophet Joseph, for he had been tested and proved and found worthy before the Lord, before the angels and before the Church. They should not be taken from him and from the Twelve (that is the promise) "until I shall come, saith the Lord." So the keys were to abide with the Church from that time henceforth, until the Lord Himself should come and reign "in Zion and Jerusalem and before His ancients gloriously." As further evidence that this work was established for the last time, the Lord says in the thirtieth verse of the same section:

"For unto you (the Twelve), and those (the First Presidency) who are appointed with you, to be your counselors and your leaders, is the power of this Priesthood given, for the last days and for the last time, in the which is the dispensation of the fulness of times."

Here is the promise of the Lord to His servant Joseph and the Twelve that were with him, that the keys were given unto them, and they were to hold them and exercise them, and they were given in the power of this Priesthood for the last time, in the last days, and

for the dispensation of the fulness of times.

Now, as the Church progressed, the Lord, as I before remarked, added organizations and quorums, until the Church became perfectly established. The ear came forth in its beauty and glory. The little blade had measurably disappeared. "Mormonism," as I have said, is a growth. It is not the same today as it was yesterday; for it is growing, just like the flower that puts forth its leaves and its buds, and then its blossoms. It is the same plant, but it is continually changing, according to conditions and its environment and the necessity to develop itself in its beauty and glory. So also it is in the Church. Why, we have hardly attained the full corn in the ear yet. Every man read the 107th and the 124th Sections of the Doctrine and Covenants from beginning to end. If you do not have the book, buy one; and if you cannot buy one, borrow one. In the 107th Section the Lord reveals to the Church His Holy Priesthood—two Priesthoods, the Melchisedek and the Aaronic, which are one in reality, but divided into two branches. He says:

"Of necessity there are presidents, or presiding offices growing out of, or appointed of or from among those who are ordained to the several offices in these two priesthoods.

"Of the Melchisedek Priesthood three Presiding High Priests, chosen by the body, appointed and ordained to that office, and upheld by the confidence, faith and prayer of the church, form a quorum of the Presidency of the church."

Does the Lord say there that some man is to appoint his brother, or his uncle, or his son, to preside over the Church? No. "Three presiding High Priests, chosen by the body," upheld and sustained by the vote and faith and fellowship of the Church, form the First Presidency. That is how the Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ was established, by the revelation and commandment of God. That is how it has continued from that time until the present. When the Prophet Joseph was taken he had remained faithful and true, and he had

the keys of the latter-day dispensation, and he has them today. And if you think that he has departed from this people, if you think that his influence and power are withdrawn from the brethren here whom God has appointed to preside over us in the Church, you are sadly mistaken. The spirit and power of Joseph are in this Church and with this Presidency. Joseph the Prophet, although he has gone from our midst, holds the keys of the last dispensation, and will hold them till the Lord comes. But there were others appointed to act in his stead, in the place he occupied in the flesh, and he still holds his priesthood and power and authority and the keys of the dispensation behind the veil. He is doing a far greater work there than he could accomplish in the flesh. He has a wider sphere of labor, and more power and influence, now that the infirmities of the flesh are gone. He is clothed with the power of the holy priesthood, and the keys thereof abide with him. And he is with this people, for "the powers of this priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers behind the veil;" and they, united together, will prevail over every power and influence that may be brought against them.

When the Prophet Joseph was taken, and the quorum of the First Presidency was thus dissolved, it devolved upon the Twelve. Read this Section and you will find that the Lord gave to the Twelve authority to hold the keys, equal with the First Presidency—that is, when the First Presidency was dissolved. The quorum of the Twelve came next, and they had power to set in order all the other offices in the Church. That is part of their duty, as the Lord has commanded in this section. Therefore, the Twelve came up, with Brigham Young at their head, the Lord having designated him by revelation to be the President of the Twelve, as you has commanded in this section. There-Doctrine and Covenants. God gave Hyrum to be the man to hold the keys of the patriarchal blessings over the whole Church; but He gave Joseph Smith to preside over the Church, the whole Church—over Hyrum as well as

the rest. He also gave him his counselors. Then He gave the Twelve, and He put Brigham Young at the head of the Twelve. God knew what was coming, and He so ordered things that Brigham stood at the head of the Twelve; and when the Prophet Joseph, and the Prophet Hyrum, the Patriarch, were taken, the Twelve came up in their place, as the Lord had ordained. Satan then had twelve to overcome instead of three. Furthermore, you will find in the same revelation, in Section 107, that even if the Twelve should all be taken away, then there are Seventy to come up. It puts one in mind of the Irishman's wall. He built it five feet high and eight feet thick, and when they asked him the reason, he said that if the wind came and blowed it over it would be higher than it was before.

Now, as to this Church—the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—the Lord laid its foundations broad and deep and high. He made it impregnable. Why? Because He had ordained in the beginning that it should be perpetual, that it should not be overcome, that it should not be left to another people, that the keys of the priesthood should continue and abide until Christ should come and reign over the earth. So the Lord ordained, in the order of the priesthood, that when the First Presidency was dissolved, the Twelve should succeed, having all the keys, power and authority to regulate the Church and to organize the quorums. Thus it was that President Young and the Twelve conducted the affairs of the Church for some time. There was a majority of the Twelve who stood faithful, who were ready to do their duty, and the Lord says that "a majority may form a quorum" when it is impossible to have them all together. The vacant places were filled up in the quorum; and when the proper time came, President Young, who was a Presiding High Priest (so are all the Twelve—God's High Priests—a presiding traveling High Council), and his two counselors, were upheld and sustained by the vote and faith and fellowship of the Church, and formed the

Presidency of the Church, in the way God had appointed.

So it has been from that time to the present, my brethren and sisters. Whenever a vacancy has occurred, it has been filled. For the power of growth is in the Church. The power to regulate all its affairs is in the Church. The power to purge out all that is evil is in the Church. We need no outside pressure, or counsel, or instruction. All that is necessary is right within the Church. As we were told by Brother Lyman, it is a living thing, a living organism, quickened by the power of the Holy Spirit, and it is the word of the Lord that is proclaimed through its leaders. And so we have had the quorum of the First Presidency organized according to the will and commandment of God from that day to the present. I testify to you, before the Lord, that the truth which God has given to this Church shall continue and abide, that the keys of the holy priesthood sent down out of heaven in the last days for the last time, "will not be taken away again from the earth; that as the priesthood of Aaron will remain "until the sons of Levi do offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness," so the keys of the Melchisedek Priesthood shall remain and abide until Christ, who is the great High Priest shall come and stand at our head, and be our King.

I know that this truth abides in the hearts of the people; but we ought not to allow any of our friends who are not strong in the testimony to be led astray by anything that may come along to lessen their faith and to weaken them. Let us be one. We have been one in these valleys. There never was a better spirit in the Church since I have known it, and I have been a minister in it for nearly 55 years. I know that the Spirit of God is with this people, and I have never enjoyed it better than I have during this conference. The Spirit of the living God has been present and inspired the utterances of those who have spoken, and they have found a place in the hearts of the people. The Saints have rejoiced. Why? Because the Lord is

with us. My brethren and sisters, this is His work, not the work of man, and He will cause it to prevail. How absurd it would be for the Lord, after He had established His Church on foundations of perpetuity, to allow it to lapse, to remain dormant for a number of years, when the very keys that He had given that the Church might be perpetuated were still held by the Twelve and the brethren associated with them. The idea that the Lord would allow the Church to go to sleep and into darkness when He had declared it should stand forever, would be folly. But the Lord has been with His people and with His servants. Do we not know that the Lord was with Brother Brigham when he led the Saints out of trouble and bondage in the east, across the great plains, and planted the Church in these mountain valleys, and prepared the way for the building up of the great community and the Zion which the Prophet Joseph foresaw, for he talked about it and appointed men to go and prospect the land, that "the Saints might become a great people in the midst of the Rocky Mountains," that Zion might flourish upon the hills.

The Church is still growing. The ear is still growing, and the full corn in the ear will be seen when Christ shall come. We have all the keys and powers necessary for that, right in the Church. Its organization is complete, with a Presidency, with Apostles, Seventies, High Priests, Elders, Priests, Teachers and Deacons, with the auxiliary societies which the Lord has inspired His servants to establish, both for the brethren and the sisters, that the women as well as the men might have something to do in building up this great latter day work. It is beautiful, it is glorious, it is perfect: for it has come from the hands of the Almighty. We are imperfect, we are feeble, we are not all fully carrying out that which God has placed upon us; but we will try, will we not? to do our duty. Let every man learn his duty in the Priesthood. Let every woman learn her duty in the organiza-

tions of the Church. Let us all perform our duties as members of the Church, meet together often, partake of the sacrament, remember our prayers, teach our children the principles of the Gospel of Christ and plant in their hearts that faith which has given us so much joy, satisfaction and contentment, and the work of the Lord shall go onward and shall prevail; the truth shall be carried to every nation, kindred, tongue and people, the honest in heart shall rejoice among the nations, the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel, the Lord will bring to shame the mocker and the scornful, the wisdom of this world shall come to naught and the understanding of the prudent shall be hid, but the honest and upright of heart shall rejoice in the Lord, the truth shall prevail, and the kingdom of our God shall come and His will be done on the earth as it is done in heaven, when "the meek inherit the earth and the wicked are cut off forever." God help us to be faithful and true, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

"One Hundred Years," a quartet composed by Prof. Stephens, to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of the Prophet's birth, was rendered by Lottie Owen, Mabel Cooper, George D. Pyper and Horace S. Ensign.

ELDER BRIGHAM H. ROBERTS.

Of necessity the subjects that are considered at our conferences are varied and numerous, in consequence of the work of the Lord being so extensive and consisting of both temporal and spiritual things. The Spirit of the Lord moves upon His servants to address themselves to the various interests in which the Church is concerned; and I have taken pleasure in noting that all the interests and all the departments of work in the Church generally receive that word that is seasonable to each before the conference is concluded.

Much has been said during this conference concerning the opposition that is waged against the work of God, and by the remarks made I have been reminded of a saying current in France to the effect that for a man guilty of

crime two courses only lie before him: one is confession, the other is suicide; and they add, "suicide is confession." So with those who feel disposed to attack this work. They may attack the administration of it, or they may attack its fundamental doctrines and seek to disprove it altogether; and in either event the attempt will end in failure as surely as confession or suicide ends in one result. To attack the administration of the work of the Lord under our present circumstances, in this year of grace 1905, is vain; for the testimony of all who have spoken and the testimony in the hearts of the Saints of God bear witness that there never was a time in the history of the church when individual liberty was more respected than now, and when the necessarily great administrative power in the presiding officer was exercised in more moderation. So that to my mind those who assail the administration of this work proclaim their own unwisdom and fret out only their own folly. To attack the Church in its fundamental doctrines is useless; for they are invulnerable, and not to be overthrown by the efforts of the ungodly to disprove their truth. Therefore, if these people who interest themselves in our concerns will take a word of advice, I would suggest, in the language of one of old, that they would best let this work alone; for if it be of man, it will come to naught of itself; and if it be of God, they cannot do aught against it, and possibly they may find themselves fighting against God.

The Apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Ephesians, told them that the Lord had revealed to him that in the dispensation of the fulness of times God would gather together in one all things in Christ, both things which are in heaven and things which are in earth, even in Him. I do not know that I quote this scripture for the purpose of having it foreshadow at all the line of thought that I would like to follow; but I believe it is profitable to remember in these great assemblies of the Church that we are living in that dispensation of the fulness of times, in which God