

ed as a people. He bore a strong testimony that the Gospel has been restored in its originality with all its gifts and blessings. That the mission of the people of God is to declare the Gospel to all the world, to bring peace and love in place of strife and hatred, and to bless humanity both in temporal and spiritual ways.

John W. Rigdon, son of Sidney Rigdon, was the closing speaker. He told of being baptized in 1839 by the Patriarch Hyrum Smith, while the Prophet Joseph and his father stood on the banks of the Mississippi river, and beheld the ceremony. On account of his father going to Washington with the Prophet to present their grievances to the president of the United States, and not returning for a year, his confirmation had never taken place, and he did not become a member of the Church until one year ago, when he was baptized in New York.

He said it had been claimed that Joseph Smith being an unlearned man, could not have written the Book of Mormon, but that his father was the real author of that book. Elder Rigdon denied most emphatically that his father had written that sacred volume.

After many years of practice as an attorney and without the slightest idea of ever becoming a "Mormon" he questioned his aged father, who was then nigh unto death concerning the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. His father was emphatic in his claim that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God, that an angel had delivered to the boy Prophet the Book of Mormon plates, and that, notwithstanding he felt he had been ill-treated by some Church leaders, he knew, nevertheless, that the work they represented was in very deed the Gospel of Christ.

The speaker said that his father was present at the meeting held immediately after the death of the Prophet, and that Brigham Young was the chosen successor of the martyred president.

The congregation sang, "Our God, we raise to Thee, Thanks for Thy Blessings Free," after which the meeting adjourned with benediction by Elder J. H. Felt.

CLOSING SESSION.

In the Tabernacle, at 2 p. m.

The choir sang the hymn:
 O my Father, Thou that dwellest
 In the high and glorious place!
 When shall I regain Thy presence,
 And again behold Thy face?

Prayer was offered by Elder Charles D. Evans.

A new hymn by Prof. Evan Stephens, entitled "True to the Faith," was rendered by the choir.

ELDER JOSEPH W. M'MURRIN.

I esteem it a very great privilege, my brethren and sisters, to be with you in this gathering this afternoon, and I also feel it a privilege to speak a few words here by way of testimony in behalf of the wonderful work in which we are engaged. I have felt during the meetings of this conference much as the brethren who have addressed you have felt. All seem to have had a spirit of joy and thanksgiving for the light of the glorious Gospel, and all have been filled with a desire to bear testimony to the truth of the great work which the Lord has established. I believe that the Latter-day Saints who have assembled together during this conference have felt in very deed, as suggested in the words of the opening prayer this afternoon, to glorify the Lord of heaven. There has been no spirit manifested that would indicate in the slightest degree that there was any lack of faith in the hearts of the brethren, or any lack of confidence as to the outcome of the work that our Father has established upon the earth. I do not suppose that any of those who have spoken understand in detail how God's work is to be wrought out, or how it is to be made victorious, and overcome the opposition with which it will have to contend. We only know that the Lord of heaven has spoken; that He has revealed the authority of the Holy Priesthood; that He has made promises in connection with the powers of the Priesthood, and decreed the ultimate triumph of the work which He has introduced. It certainly is a very great thing to be blessed with this spirit of confidence, and to

feel in one's soul that the work will be successful. As one of the speakers closed his remarks this morning, a brother patted the knee of his associate and said, "We are going to win out." He felt so impressed by the remarks that were made by Brother Ellsworth regarding the spirit manifested by the people of the city of Nauvoo—people who had once looked with contempt upon the Latter-day Saints and entirely misunderstood their motives, now were beginning to change their opinion, and to feel that there was a something about them that was most commendable and desirable.

When we look back over the history of the people for the past 75 years we discover there has been a steady and wonderful growth. We realize that the promises that have been made, through the voice of inspiration and revelation, concerning the growth and development of the work of the Lord, have all been verified as far as we have advanced in our history. If some of the aged men and women who had part in this great work in the early days were to give their testimony, I imagine that that testimony would be to the effect that the condition of the Latter-day Saints at the present time was beyond what they anticipated in the inception of the work. In those days the lives of the leaders of the people were constantly sought. They were hounded from place to place, their homes were broken up time after time, and they were compelled to be almost constantly upon the move, seeking new locations where they might establish themselves. I very much doubt if those heroes and heroines of the past ever saw, while looking into the future, the mighty growth and strength of the people as we see it today. Surely the promises of the Lord have been marvelously fulfilled, and the efforts of those who have so strenuously sought the destruction of the Latter-day Saints have been brought to naught in a most wonderful way. Our course has been an upward course. We have been constantly advancing. In spite of the

misrepresentations so widely circulated regarding us, there are many thousands of people who are beginning to be acquainted with the Latter-day Saints. Many of those who journey through our country, and who come in contact with the people in their homes, go away impressed with the feeling that there is a power, a strength, a goodness, and a virtue, connected with the work of the Latter-day Saints that they little dreamed of. It is my faith that this growth will still continue, and that the promises made by our Father in heaven will be accomplished. I take a great deal of comfort in reading some of these promises, and I would like to read to this great congregation a few words of revelation given in the early days of the Church. It has been written in the Old Scriptures that where there is no vision the people perish. When the Lord does not reveal His will to the inhabitants of the earth they are in a perishing condition.

Our Father in heaven, because of the love He has for His creatures, has manifested His will in all ages of the world, and has spoken to the prophets. The testimony of the Holy Scriptures is, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secrets to His servants the prophets." When we have a promise of this character, that has been given by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, we can understand and know that the great and marvelous work, spoken of by all the prophets, will not be accomplished without the Lord revealing to the prophets of the latter times, what He intends to do. Our Father has always raised up men and filled them with the power of the Holy Ghost, that they might communicate His will to the people. As God in times past has looked in compassion upon mankind, and has raised up men who were filled with the Holy Ghost to deliver His words, so in these latter times He has manifested the same manner of love for His children here below, and He has declared:

"Wherefore I the Lord, knowing the calamity which should come upon the

inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jr., and spoke unto him from heaven and gave him commandments;

"And also gave commandments to others, that they should proclaim these things unto the world, and all this that it might be fulfilled, which was written by the prophets.

"The weak things of the world shall come forth and break down the mighty and strong ones, that man should not counsel his fellow man, neither trust in the arm of flesh.

"But that every man might speak in the name of God the Lord, even the Savior of the world;

"That faith also might increase in the earth;

"That mine everlasting covenant might be established;

"That the fullness of my gospel might be proclaimed by the weak and the simple unto the ends of the world, and before kings and rulers."

The reason the Lord called upon Joseph Smith was that all the children of men, the great and mighty as well as the humble, might have the truth of the everlasting Gospel proclaimed unto them, that through hearing the Gospel, through repenting of their sins and turning to the Lord of heaven, they might escape the judgments and calamities that are coming upon the inhabitants of the earth. The mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his fellow laborers is a mission of peace, glad tidings of good things, the preaching of the Gospel of the Redeemer of the world. There is no spirit in connection with the preaching of this gospel that will do injury to any man that lives. The Lord has said:

"And again, the Elders, priests and teachers of this Church shall teach the principles of my gospel, which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, in the which is the fulness of the gospel;

"And they shall observe the covenants and church articles to do them, and these shall be their teachings, as they shall be directed by the Spirit;

"And the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith, and if ye receive not the Spirit, ye shall not teach."

The commandment that was given in the very beginning was that the Gospel should be preached by those who

were called and authorized, as it is contained in the Bible and in the Book of Mormon; and the men who were authorized to preach the Gospel and to call men to repentance have been commanded by the Lord that if they do not have the Spirit they shall not preach. It is evident from this great concourse of people, and the great gathering in the Assembly Hall, and the hundreds of thousands of Latter-day Saints who are not able to come unto this conference, that the Spirit of the living God has been upon those who have been crying repentance among the nations of the earth. It is also apparent that that same spirit has taken possession of the men and women who have hearkened to the testimonies of those who have been chosen and commissioned of the Lord to cry repentance. A more stupenduous testimony concerning the power given to the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the Spirit of the Lord resting upon him and upon those who have been commissioned from that day to the present, could not be imagined than is witnessed in this great Tabernacle this afternoon, and witnessed still more wonderfully in these mountain valleys from Canada to Mexico. God has taken possession of the hearts of the people in every land. He has drawn them together by the power of the Holy Ghost, and He has revealed unto them the truth of the everlasting gospel. Men in the world imagine that we are not free, that we are priest-ridden; but the truth is that by the power of the Holy Spirit men have been drawn from the east and from the west, from the north, and from the south, to this land of Zion. They have come here thirsting for the word of God, thirsting for information concerning the purposes of the Almighty, and their souls have been filled, they have been established in the truth, and they cannot be moved. This is impressed upon us by this gathering. It is still more evident from the mighty gathering of the Saints from the nations of the world. The predictions made by the prophets are surely be-

ing fulfilled when they declared that it should come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house should be established in the top of the mountains and many people should say: "Let us go up to the house of the God of Jacob, that we may learn more fully of His ways and walk more perfectly in His paths." If the prophets have written by the power of the Holy Ghost and their words are to be fulfilled, then there must transpire in the latter times just what has taken place since the commencement of the preaching of the Gospel introduced in this dispensation by the Prophet Joseph Smith. Who is there in all the religious world today who believes in the fulfillment of these predictions of the prophets? Who is there calling the attention of the people to these great prophecies pertaining to the latter times? As far as I know, we are the only people who seem to understand these predictions, and the only ones who are laboring to accomplish them. We are the only people who are possessed of that power and spirit that was to characterize God's work in the last dispensation. It was to be a marvelous work and a wonder. Surely this work has been a marvel; in the eyes of the world it is a marvel today. We can rejoice when we look into the future and read of God's promise relating thereto. This is the promise:

"And the warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples whom I have chosen in these last days; and they shall go forth, and none shall stay them; for I, the Lord, have commanded them."

If this be a revelation from the Almighty, there is no power that can stay the preaching of the everlasting gospel, or that can prevent God's servants from delivering the message that has been committed to the earth; not because of the might of the preachers of "Mormonism," not because of the strength of the Latter-day Saints, but because the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has decreed that this warning voice shall be carried to all the inhabitants of the earth, and that none shall have

the power to stay it. We believe in the power of our Father in heaven. We believe His arm is not shortened. We believe that He can accomplish His decrees. And while we do not know what means He will use in the accomplishment of His purposes, we do know within our souls that this promise will be verified, that this Gospel will be preached in all the world, and that the hearts of honest men and women, and the hearts of wicked men and women as well, will be pricked by the power of God, their feelings softened, and they will be turned from darkness and error to the Lord of heaven, and from all the points of the compass, as has been the case in the past, so in the future, the Israel of God will be gathered, and His mighty purposes will be accomplished. Well may our great choir sing, and well may the preachers cry out. "Rouse, O ye mortals, and hearken to the message of truth." May God help us to bear our responsibility well and faithfully, is my prayer through Jesus Christ. Amen.

The choir sang the anthem, "The Restoration," sister Judith Anderson rendering the solo part.

Patriarch S. W. Richards.

My brethren, sisters and friends, quite unexpected to me prior to coming into this meeting, I have been requested to say a few words to you on some matters touching my history and experience with the Prophet Joseph Smith. I am thankful that I can say I was quite intimate with him while he was living upon the earth. There is a little experience I had with him that perhaps no other person living today could relate. In the winter of 1843-4, about six months prior to the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, a messenger was sent to me from Nauvoo to ask me if I would be one of a company of pioneers to explore the Rocky Mountains and to find a place for the Church to go to. That request came from the Prophet Joseph Smith. At the time I thought it a little strange that I should be called upon for a mission of this kind, as I