

# GENERAL CONFERENCE

OF

## THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

### FIRST DAY.

The Seventy-Seventh 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 Friday, October 5th, 1906, President Joseph F. Smith presiding.

#### AUTHORITIES PRESENT.

There were present of the First Presidency, Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund; of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, Francis M. Lyman, John Henry Smith, George Teasdale, Rudger Clawson, Reed Smoot, Hyrum M. Smith, George Albert Smith, Charles W. Penrose, George F. Richards, Orson F. Whitney and David O. McKay; Presiding Patriarch, John Smith; of the First Council of Seventies, Seymour B. Young, George Reynolds, J. Golden Kimball, Rulon S. Wells, Joseph W. McMurrin and Charles H. Hart; of the Presiding Bishopric, William B. Preston, Robert T. Burton and Orrin P. Miller. There were also a large number of presidents of stakes and missions, with their counselors, bishops of wards,

and numerous other prominent men and women representing various organizations of the Church.

President Joseph F. Smith called the assembly to order, and the services were commenced by the choir and congregation singing the hymn:

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;

The opening prayer was offered by Elder William McLachlan.

The choir sang the hymn beginning:

Though deep'ning trials throng your way,  
Press on, press on, ye Saints of God!  
Ere long the resurrection day  
Will spread its life and light abroad.

#### **PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.**

##### OPENING ADDRESS.

The Saints increasing in faith and good works.—Futile efforts of enemies of the Church.—Interesting account of recent trip to European countries.—

Historic places in U. S., and reminiscences concerning same.—Be true to the faith, and unite in defense and up-building of Zion.

I feel very grateful this morning for the privilege I have of beholding the faces of my brethren and sisters assembled here at the opening of our Seventy-seventh Semi-annual Conference, and as on all past occasions when we have met in our conferences I sincerely hope that the spirit of peace, the love of truth, and the desire for good may be paramount in all that may be said or done during this conference. It is gratifying also to see the number assembled at this first meeting. It shows an interest in our work and in the cause of Zion which speaks well for those who are present; and I sincerely believe that the faith of the Latter-day Saints is increasing, together with their knowledge and their love for the truth, and the people are becoming more and more established in their convictions of the truth of the Gospel which has been restored in these latter days.

Everything seems to point to the continued advancement of the cause of Zion. The earth has been blessed to a very great extent by the favor of the Lord during the last season, and the most of our people have reaped bountiful harvests and have been prospered not only spiritually but also temporally. I think we possess the evidence that the good works of the Latter-day Saints are not diminishing, but that they are indeed increasing and we—with but very few exceptions—are as determined today as we ever were, or as ever any members of the Church were, to continue to fight the good fight and keep the faith.

I desire to express my feelings of

welcome to the Latter-day Saints who are here today, and to those who shall attend this conference, and say to you, my brethren and sisters, that we love the truth and the work of the Lord today even more than ever before. We are not disheartened, we are not discouraged, we are not fainthearted. We believe in the Lord, and we know that He is mighty to save that He has guided the destinies of this people from the first moment until the present, and that it is not in consequence of the wisdom of men that we have escaped the plots, schemes and machinations of our enemies, and that we have been permitted to live and grow in the land, to become what we are, but it is through the wisdom, mercy and blessing of Him who rules the destinies not only of men but of nations. We owe all to God; we extend our thankfulness and gratitude to Him for the manifestations of His love and care and protection.

I was going to say that we did not owe anything to our enemies; that was the first thought that sprang up in my mind, but I will hold that back. I think we owe something to our enemies too for the advancement of the cause of Zion; for up to date everything that has been done or attempted to be done to thwart the purposes of God and to frustrate His designs has been overruled for the good of Zion and for the spread of truth. And that will continue to be the case until the end, for they are fighting God's work, and not mine nor that of any man.

Very recently, with the approval of some of my brethren who were present when the thought occurred to me—and it did not occur to me until just a few hours before I

came to the conclusion—I started with a friend to visit in the eastern countries a little. The thought first arose in my mind on Saturday evening, and was matured, so far as my determination to leave home for a little while was concerned, on the following day. I left home for a rest—not that I expected to obtain physical rest, but a change sometimes is rest to men who are constantly engaged in duties that are strenuous and at times very burdensome. As it may be interesting to some of my brethren and sisters I would like to briefly outline my visit. When we left here we first stopped at Omaha, and as I traveled the plains in the days of my childhood, again in the days of my youth, with ox teams, mule teams and so forth, I concluded it would be interesting to make a visit to the old camp ground of Israel at Winter Quarters on the bank of the Missouri river, which we did on the 24th of July, Pioneer day.

We had the privilege of meeting with some of the Elders engaged in the mission work there, and the few saints who are living about Omaha and vicinity, and had a royal good celebration of Pioneer day. We met under the old historic tree said to have been planted by the hand of President Brigham Young, and which now is one of the largest trees in the vicinity, and there our friends spread their feast, which we partook of with them. We associated with them with great pleasure, answering inquiries made of us.

We next made a little halt at Chicago and had a very pleasant visit with some of our children who are going to school there, although our stay was very brief. We were not long in New York, as we reached there only a few hours before the

sailing of the vessel. Our voyage across the Atlantic was never so pleasant before—not a ripple on the ocean nor anything to make the voyage more unpleasant than sailing upon a lake—a placid, calm sea.

We landed in Antwerp on the 7th day of August, and from there visited the city of Rotterdam, and the next day the city of Amsterdam, in Holland. In Amsterdam we attended a conference of Latter-day Saints, and found there a lively branch of the Church. We had the pleasure of meeting with the young men who have gone out from Zion to proclaim the Gospel to that people, and as some of their parents may be present here today, I desire to say to them that they have great reason to be proud of their boys. I do not think—speaking now of the meeting that we had with all the Elders in the missionary fields that we visited—I do not think there can be found in all the world a like number of equally noble, excellent-spirited young men, as are your boys who are at present out in the missionary field, and I think this can be said of them almost as a whole—extremely few exceptions at the most.

From Amsterdam we returned to Rotterdam and held another conference with the Latter-day Saints, and some strangers and friends who were invited in, and who availed themselves of the opportunity. We had a most excellent time with them there. Here we found another flourishing branch of the Church, and the Elders, (all of them young men, active, energetic, faithful, virtuous and noble,) are doing all in their power by example as well as by precept, to spread the word of truth among that people. From here we visited Germany, stopping a few days at the city of Berlin.

Here again we met with the Latter-day Saints and with the Elders, as many as could get together in that mission, and we had another very enjoyable time. Here we found some excellent conditions existing, but some conditions that were not favorable, which I regretted to find. I will briefly say: Some of our young people who have gone to Berlin to study music or to follow other pursuits, by their negligence to perform their duties, by their neglect to go to the meetings of the Saints, by their holding themselves apart from the Latter-day Saints, they are not wielding a wholesome or good influence upon the people of that country. I want to tell you that, and I say it with regret. They make the excuse that they have to study and practice every day and when Sunday comes, if they do not have to continue their practice, they are so fatigued that they cannot go to meeting. Now if any of you have children in that condition I would advise you to stimulate them to do their whole duty and set a good example before the people of the world in this direction. I really think that the sending of our children to Berlin to study for years is considerably overdone, and I do not believe that as a rule very much good will ever accrue to our children who go there.

From Berlin we went to Zurich in Switzerland and held a conference. From there we went to Lucerne, and from there to Berne, where we again met with the Saints in conference and had a most excellent and interesting visit, not only with our people in general, but with strangers who visited us. We also held meetings with the Elders, in some instances having as many as 50 or 75 present with us at one

time. From there we returned to England, landing at Dover on the return, by way of Paris, France, where we remained a couple of days. In London we again met with our people in conference. We also met with many of the Elders of that mission, all of whom, so far as I could judge, seemed to be in excellent spirits and faith, willing, ready and active in the performance of their missionary labors. We had a good conference in London, and we afterwards had a most excellent meeting with the Elders of the mission. From London we visited Scotland and attended conference in Edinburgh and Glasgow, where we also had an enjoyable time with the people and with the Elders of that portion of the British mission. Returning south from Scotland we called at Liverpool, and attended another conference of our people at Blackburn, in Lancashire, and also held a priesthood meeting there. Here we found the same conditions as far as our Elders were concerned—a noble lot of young men, bright, intelligent, active, honorable, upright, clean, pure, and sweet as were ever found in any part of the world.

After a short visit at Liverpool we returned to London. We spent a few days visiting in that great city the places of interest. From there we returned to Dover and took steamer again for our native land.

On reaching New York, the 18th of September, we made arrangements as hastily as possible and visited Vermont, the birthplace of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and spent a couple of days there. We found that great improvement had been made under the direction of Brother Junius F. Wells. The grounds have been laid off beautifully, the memorial cottage completed and

made ready for occupancy, and everything is looking beautiful and attractive there. Quite a large number of our neighbors who attended the dedication services on the 23rd of December last, hearing that I was there, did me the honor to call upon me and shake hands. They made us a very pleasant little visit. The burden of their conversation was: "Don't take Mr. Wells away from us." They want Mr. Wells to remain with them.

From here we visited the historic Hill Cumorah, and the old homestead of the Patriarch Joseph Smith and his family. We also visited the grove where the first childhood prayer of the Prophet Joseph Smith was offered up, and where the first manifestations of the approval of Heaven were made to man in these latter days, with reference to the opening of the dispensation in which the fulness of the Gospel of Jesus should be restored to the world, and the authority of the Holy Priesthood again conferred upon man. To say that the visiting of such places as these does not inspire serious thought and peculiar feelings, at least in my breast, would not be true.

There is something hallowed about those places, to me and to all, I think, who have accepted the divine mission of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, and who are imbued with the spirit of the Gospel that he was instrumental, in the hands of the Lord, in restoring to the earth. To me it is pleasing and inspiring to visit the haunts of that great and good man, and his associates in the early days of the Church, and even before the Church was organized. We visited Palmyra, near the hill where the plates of the Book of Mormon were found and shown to the Prophet Joseph by the angel

Moroni, and where they were given to Joseph by him; which is a truth that all Latter-day Saints will have to accept in order to acknowledge the divine authority of the man who has borne this testimony to the world, and who was instrumental in revealing the fulness of the Gospel to the children of men.

From Palmyra we visited Kirtland, Ohio, and looked again over the ground once occupied as a dwelling place of the Latter-day Saints. Where many years ago a prosperous, thrifty people dwelt in somewhat large numbers, today we find a little scattered village. The country is almost deserted. The population at present approximates about 400, or 500 people. The temple still stands as a monument of the sacrifice of this once poor but faithful people, who in that early day sacrificed not only their means and their time, but their comfort and the comfort of their families, for the purpose of building that house in obedience to the command of God. Those who possess it now comprehend little of the objects and purposes for which the temples of God are built. They little understand the main principle, main doctrine, or main reason and cause making it necessary to erect temples unto God. Those principles are rejected by those who are today in possession of the building. It is simply used by them as an ordinary meetinghouse and a place for Sunday school. So long as it is used for even this purpose, we have no reason to complain, and we do not complain. We have gone beyond it; we have outgrown that building. Today we have no use for it, as the Lord has shown us even a better and a greater way, and so far as I am concerned, those who possess it are perfectly welcome to it, al-

though the manner in which they came in possession of it, to my mind, is exceedingly questionable.

From Ohio we did not follow down the course of the Church into Missouri and from Missouri into the state of Illinois. We passed over that part of the migrations of the Saints, going direct to Carthage, the scene of the martyrdom. I had a desire to see that place, as I had never seen it before; and I felt that I would like to see the spot where the blood of those innocent men was shed for the testimony they bore to the world of the divine mission to which they were called—a command from God to restore the fulness of the Gospel and the way of life and salvation to the world. I will not attempt to express to you in the least degree how I felt on that ground. We did not remain there long, but came to Nauvoo, the last resting place of the Latter-day Saints in the eastern part of our land, at the time near the western frontier of the United States.

It was a source of great delight and pleasure to visit the scenes of my childhood, and to go around the deserted city and see the various houses which I remembered from my childhood. We visited the place that was once called the "Mansion," the home of the Prophet Joseph Smith, so altered and changed today, internally at least, and so old and dilapidated outside, that one familiar with it in the early days could scarcely recognize it as the same place. The old homestead that was first built on the bank of the river, occupied by the Patriarch Joseph (the father of the Prophet Joseph) and his family in the early days, still stands, but in a most neglected condition, almost ready to crumble to the earth.

We visited the spot where the

bodies of the Prophet Joseph and his brother were buried, after their martyrdom, and also their brothers, Don Carlos and Samuel. We recognized as nearly as might be the spot in which their sacred remains were deposited after their death, the bodies of the Prophet and the Patriarch having been removed two or three times in order to satisfy a fancy of somebody, in order to prevent their whereabouts being known—the history of which I am thankful to have, as I received it from an eye-witness.

We also visited the Nauvoo House, the place where the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon was placed by the hand of the Prophet Joseph Smith, together with a bound copy of the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants and other Church publications extant at that time; and with petitions to the governors of the various states, on the part of the Latter-day Saints, for redress for the wrongs they had sustained at the hand of Missouri. These and other relics were deposited there and in after years exhumed and removed by Mr. Bidamon, who was then in possession of the property.

We likewise visited the spot where once stood the house in which the revelation on plural marriage was first written by Wm. Clayton, by dictation of the Prophet Joseph Smith; and also where the Endowments were first revealed and given by him. We also visited the place where the revelation on plural marriage, given through the Prophet Joseph Smith, was first read to the high council of the stake of Zion, at Nauvoo, by Hyrum Smith, and recalled some of the historical facts that occurred within those walls. I pointed out to my

friends the spot on the shore of the Mississippi river where the Prophet landed with his brother, from a skiff, when they gave themselves up into the hands of the mob to go to their martyrdom at Carthage. We visited other places of interest, but it would be too much for me to attempt to express my feelings in visiting these ancient, now almost obliterated places of interest. We found in Nauvoo a very kindly feeling existing on the part of the people whom we met. They all seemed to be friendly to us, pleased to meet us, and we felt very much delighted with the spirit that we found in that once favored and flourishing place. After our visit there we returned by rail home.

I want to say to my brethren and sisters that I have returned home physically very much improved over what I was when I went away. Now, I realize of course, this is a very trivial affair and of but very little interest to you. At the same time, it has been a voyage and a trip that has been fraught with very great interest to myself, and has been I think profitable to me, not only physically but spiritually. I return to you, to my home, to my duties and to my labors with the people of the Latter-day Saints, determined as ever I was to be true to the people of God, to my covenants and to all men; to honor the Holy Priesthood that has been conferred upon me; and I do not care for and don't want to pay any heed to the ridiculous nonsense, the foolish twaddle, and the impious slurs that are being cast at me and my people, by wicked hearts and perverted minds. Let God deal with them as seemeth Him good. Don't you allow yourselves to be troubled over these things in the least.

Now, my brethren and sisters, I

did not anticipate occupying so much time, when I arose, and I hope you will pardon me for trespassing so long upon your patience. I rejoice in the testimony that I have received and in the assurance I feel in my soul that God is pleased with the most of His people. There may be some who are foolish amongst us, shallow persons who look only to the surface, who do not go down into the truth—into the facts. There may be those who are swayed for a little while by the popular clamor, who may give way to some extent, to the things that seem to pervade certain quarters, but when they wake up to their condition and to the real truth, many of the few that are thus influenced and swayed against the truth and against reason and righteousness, will be willing to repent in sackcloth and ashes. It is not my purpose to stand here and try to make any apology or to offer any defense of my own course, of my own life and labors. I am willing to leave myself and my labors and my life in the hands of God, and to the judgment of my friends and the people of God. If I have wronged any man spiritually or temporally, in any sense or in any form, I pray him to come to me and let me know wherein I have wronged him or done him any harm, and I will go more than half way—I will go the whole distance if necessary to make it right with him.

I am for the kingdom of God. My brethren and I, I trust, are united in this, and if need be I think we can put aside any difference that may exist between us, and unite in that which is good and right and proper for the defense of the people of Zion and for the continuance of the upbuilding thereof. I do not think that there is any serious

breach or any serious difficulty existing among the Latter-day Saints anywhere. I think that all that is necessary is for us to see the light and we will walk in the light; to understand our duties and we will do them, no matter what our private feelings may be. The Lord bless you, peace be unto you.

I want to say to these presidents of stakes who are present: you have my confidence; you have my love. I pray for you every day of my life, and I trust that you remember me and my brethren in your prayers. We understand the responsibilities that rest upon you in the discharge of your duties. You are fathers to the people; that great responsibility rests upon you; your labors are manifold and sometimes very difficult. We realize the burdens that you have to bear, the patience that you have to exercise and exhibit in the discharge of your duty, in order that you may avoid giving offense, and that you may reconcile the people, over whom you preside, to that which is right without using drastic measures. We understand this, and you have our sympathy, our fellowship, our love, and what strength you may derive from our faith and prayers, that you may preside in righteousness over your different stakes of Zion, and that your brethren associated with you may be united with you, and that you may pull together in that which is right and proper for the upbuilding of Zion and the defense of the people of God.

I see before me a number of young men who have been entrusted with the presidency of missions abroad, and I want to say to you that so far as I have been acquainted with these men, they are men after my own heart, true men, faithful, diligent in the performance of

their duties, acceptable and honorable in the sight of God and man. We love them and we admire their courage in absenting themselves from their homes for years at a time, making sacrifices of their personal interests and enjoyment, for the good of the people abroad in the world and for Zion. We admire them and say to them as to the presidents of stakes on whom so much depends, God bless you one and all and strengthen you in the performance of your duties. We look upon the counselors of these men in the same way and we would say to them, one and all, stand together with your presiding officers, be united in whatever will tend to build up Zion and defeat the purpose of her enemies, whatever that purpose may be.

Above all things let me say to the counselors of the presidents of stakes and of missions and to the Bishops and their counselors,—let me say to you all, live exemplary lives, so that you can each say to the people: "Come and follow me; follow my example; obey my precepts; be in union with me, and follow me as I am appointed to lead, advise and counsel, as I follow Christ."

Let every man live so that his character will bear the closest inspection, and that it may be seen as an open book, so that he will have nothing to shrink from or be ashamed of. Let all men who are elevated to positions of trust in the Church live so that no man can point to their faults, because they will have no faults; so that no man can justly accuse them of wrongdoing, because they do no wrong; that no man can point out their defects as "human" and as "weak mortals," because they are living up to the principles of the Gospel,



and are not merely "weak human creatures" devoid of the Spirit of God and the power to live above sin. That is the way for all men to live in the kingdom of God.

We should set an example; we should be true to the faith, as Brother Stephens sings to us; true to the faith! We should be true to our covenants, true to our God, and true to one another and to the interests of Zion, no matter what the consequences may be, no matter what may result. I can tell you that the man who is not true to Zion and to the interests of the people will be the man who will be found bye and bye, left out and in a pitiable spiritual condition. The man who stays with the kingdom of God, the man that is true to this people, the man that keeps himself pure and unspotted from the world, is the man that God will accept, that God will uphold, that He will sustain and that will prosper in the land, whether he be in the enjoyment of his liberty or be confined in prison cells; it makes no difference where he is, he will come out all right.

May the Lord bless my brethren and my sisters who are engaged in the work of the ministry. Here are our sisters engaged in the Relief Society work, with whom I had the pleasure of meeting last evening. Here are sisters who are connected with the Mutual Improvement associations, and those also connected with the Primary work and our Sunday school interests, as well as the brethren associated with these organizations. They all have our blessings, because we have confidence in them. We believe that they know the truth themselves and do not have to borrow light from somebody else. We know that their integrity is unimpeachable;

we know they love God and the truth and that they love the work more than their own personal interest. We know many of them and we know these are their feelings. We love them; they have our respect, our full confidence; the blessings of the Lord will attend them. He has done so in the past and He will continue to bless them so long as they continue to sustain the Priesthood of God that has been placed in the earth to guide the Church and to counsel in the affairs of the kingdom of God.

What I mean by the Kingdom of God is the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, over which the Son of God presides, and not man. That is what I mean. I mean the Kingdom of which Christ is the King and not man. If any men object to Christ, the Son of God, being King of Israel, let them object and go to hell just as quick as they please.

Let us sustain Christ, His people, and His cause of righteousness and redemption; let us sustain one another in the right, and kindly admonish one another in regard to wrong-doing, that we may be friends and saviors on Mount Zion, one for another, and that we may help the weak and strengthen them, encourage the doubtful and bring light to their right understandings as far as it is possible, that we may be instrumental in the hands of God of being saviors among men. Not that we have power to save men. We have not; but we have power to show them how they can obtain salvation through obedience to the laws of God. We can show them how to walk in order to be saved, for we have the right to do that, we have knowledge and understanding as to how to do it, and it is our privilege to teach it and to enforce

it by example as well as by precept among our associates wherever we are in the world.

I want to say of my Counselors in the Presidency, there are no better men in the world today; and they are loyal to you; they are loyal to the people of God; they are loyal to their covenants and to the interests of Zion, and they are laboring faithfully for the accomplishment of all the good that it is possible to accomplish through their influence and through their agency and faithful labors. I can say the same of my brethren the Twelve, and others associated with us in the Holy Priesthood. The Lord bless them and sustain them in right doing and in upholding and sustaining God's work and the authority that He has revealed and restored to His children in the world. Now, may the Lord bless you, and may peace abound in your hearts and homes; may the blessing of prosperity attend you in your outgoings and incomings and all you put your hands to in righteousness, is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

The choir sang the anthem, "Song of the Redeemed."

#### **PRESIDENT JOHN R. WINDER.**

Good results of President Smith's recent extensive journey.—Assurance of the triumph of the Lord's work.—Gratifying unity of the Church authorities and the Saints.

My heart is filled with gratitude, praise and thanksgiving to my Heavenly Father that He has extended my days until the present time, and that I have one more opportunity of meeting with you, my brethren and sisters, in conference. I have been delighted in listening

to the remarks that have been made by our beloved President. We rejoice to see him back again. We missed him while he was absent, but we are glad to know that it has been beneficial to his health, and pleased to hear of the good he has accomplished while he has been visiting various missions of our Church in the nations of the earth.

I assure you, my brethren and sisters, that his brethren are one with him in all matters that pertain to the best interests and building up of the kingdom of God upon the earth. We are united in every effort that is put forth for the welfare of the Church and people of the Lord, and I am grateful to be enabled to bear testimony to what He has said in relation to this matter. I realize also that if we live near to the Lord, this testimony will continue to abide with us. This is the Lord's work that we are engaged in. The nearer I live to the Lord the more strength He gives me, and my faith in His promises is increased. The work is growing and spreading. It is upward and onward, at home and abroad.

We are glad to be able to bear this testimony. Rest assured, my brethren and sisters, there is no need to be alarmed. There is nothing that will transpire that can hinder the progress of the work of the Lord. We put our trust in Him. It is His work, and we are endeavoring to carry it forward here upon the earth. Although we may be feeble in our efforts, yet we know that when we are sustained by Him the work will progress.

I am thankful, my brethren and sisters, for the health and strength the Lord has blessed me with, and that He has extended my life until the present time. I am fifteen years past what is termed the allotted age—