

Our dead are waiting, anxiously waiting for this people to go into the house of God and officiate for them that they may be liberated from the prison house in the spirit world. During the time these four temples have been in operation, there have been over three million ordinances performed in behalf of the dead and over 240,000 ordinances in behalf of the living, or in other words, between three and four million ordinances performed for the living and for the dead. So I maintain and wish to strongly emphasize, if I could, that probably the most striking feature of the latter-day work, in which we are engaged, is the building of temples. We are a temple-building people, and ever will be, for this is one of our duties, it is one of the obligations resting upon us and made binding upon the Latter-day Saints, and made binding upon every people who are blessed and accepted by the Lord. May God bless us and help us to appreciate His goodness, His power and His authority, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

"He leadeth me," a tenor solo, was sung by Elder Wm. D. Phillips.

ELDER REED SMOOT.

Necessity for prayer, and its efficacy.—The Saints admonished to pray in their homes.—Marvelous results of prayers of faith.—The praying Saint will not apostatize.—Prayer a reliable source of peace and happiness.—Prayer needful under all conditions and circumstances.

We have been blessed, my brethren and sisters, with sweet music during this conference, but above

this, we have been extremely blessed with the word of the Lord, through His servants, by way of admonition to this people.

Yesterday, while President Smith was speaking upon the Word of Wisdom, my soul responded "Amen" to every word uttered by him, and I said to myself: I would that the "Mormon" people were united in their observance of this great law, that every member of the Church would accept the counsel given at this conference respecting temperance as the will of the Father and live strictly according to the revelation of God in this particular. Is it possible for us to place ourselves in a position to accept and adhere to this requirement of the Lord? I am convinced that it is. Then what can I recommend to this people, or what advice can I give to this congregation, and to the Saints in general, that would help them to live this law strictly? I have decided that the best thing I can say is to recommend to the people that they pray to God for help and assistance, and continue to pray in earnest until the desired end has been attained. Let those who have already obeyed the law pray that power may be given them to assist those who are still struggling to overcome their shortcomings in this regard.

During this conference I have felt like calling the attention of the Saints to the necessity of prayer, for I know what prayer has done for God's people in the past, and what it has done for them in this age. I feel in my soul to thank the Lord that I had a mother who taught me to pray, from the time I was old enough to understand anything. She not only taught me by word and example to pray, but she taught me

in the same way observance of the Word of Wisdom. My home was a home of prayer and temperance, and I sincerely thank God for it.

Here let me quote the words of one of our hymns, that I always love to hear sung:

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,

Unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,

The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech

That infant lips can try;
Prayer, the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

I trust and hope that all the Latter-day Saints attend to their prayers. I have been surprised many times, when traveling in the stakes of Zion, to hear presidents of stakes say that, in some homes of members of the Church, prayer is almost forgotten. I say to every Latter-day Saint that this is wrong and dangerous. Have family prayers; they should be simple and sincere, a supplication to God from the heart, asking for His blessings and mercies. I know that He will bless the people if they will ask Him. Christ taught simplicity of prayer; and gave as an example that simple yet sublime form now known as the Lord's Prayer. I often wish that it was repeated in our congregations more than it is. In the Senate of the United States, the Reverend Edward Everett Hale, the chaplain of that law-making body, never offers a prayer but what he brings it to a close by repeating the Lord's Prayer.

Prayer is the proper way of com-

munication between God's children and Himself; when that communication ceases, then spiritual decay begins. I can testify to that, my brethren and sisters, and I know that almost every one of you can testify similarly—not from experience, but from observation. We have seen men enjoying the Spirit of God, thankful recipients of His blessings, enjoying peace and contentment in their homes, and thanking God night and morning for these blessings; but, for some reason or other, they ceased to acknowledge God as the Giver of all good, and prayer became a thing of the past with them; in almost every case the Spirit of God has been withdrawn from such homes and such men, and spiritual decay began. Therefore, let me ask you to pray with your families; and I advise you to see that every one of your children is taught how and when to pray.

A famous preacher, Christmas Evans, says of prayer: "It is the rope in the belfrey; we pull it, and the bell rings in heaven."

To him, my brethren and sisters, prayer was real. He believed in God, had faith in Jesus Christ, and was convinced that through prayer blessings were obtained by the children of this world. I believe that it has been by prayer alone that modern Christian organizations have retained as many truths pertaining to Christ's teachings as they have. I know that the prayer of a child is pleasing to God, and that the prayers of all righteous people availeth much. I ask that God will put it into the hearts of our children to pray to Him. I know, as the hymn says, that "prayer is the soul's sincere desire," and that it

will either be to God or to Mammon—one or the other. If an honest person offers a prayer, if it is in his heart to ask of God those things that will be best for him, and that will tend toward the uplifting of mankind in this world, the betterment of God's children here, then that petition is a prayer that will ascend to the throne of the Father; but if it comes from the heart of a wicked person, and it is a mere selfish request, not intended for any righteous purpose, it is a prayer to mammon.

Many people say: What does prayer do? What good does it accomplish? Let us reflect; let us refer to the Bible, and see what prayer did for God's people in the past. As I recall it now, prayer has divided seas, and has rolled back flowing rivers; it has caused living streams of water to burst forth from solid rock; it has muzzled lions and has rendered vipers and poisons harmless; it has arrested the sun in its rapid race, and has stopped the course of the moon; it has burst open iron gates, and has recalled souls from eternity; it has called legions of angels down from the heavens. Prayer has bridled the vicious passions of men; it has routed and destroyed armies of proud, daring atheists. Prayer has brought one man from the bottom of the ocean, and carried another, in a chariot of fire, to heaven. I can imagine the scoffer and unbeliever saying: "Oh, this is ancient history. These are Bible stories; tell us what prayer has done modern individuals; tell us what prayer has done touching the things of this life; something that prayer has done in this age of the world, and let the dark ages take care of

themselves." Well, I know a people who can say that through the power of prayer there have been accomplished as great things in this day as were ever done in former ages. It was through prayer that the Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith; through prayer that the great plan of salvation was revealed unto him. It is through prayer that this people have been directed from the foundation of this Church to the present time. It was through prayer that the pioneers were protected and guided across the trackless plains of the western wilderness, and brought safely to the tops of these mountains. It has been through prayer that God has blessed the earth in these valleys and made it produce abundantly, of fruits, vegetables grains and nearly every other requisite for the sustaining of His people in comfort. It seems to me that if we look into our own lives, and see what prayer has done for each and every one of us, we will find countless blessings that have come to us through prayer.

But we must so live that we are worthy of the blessings asked for. I do not believe that a people steeped in sin, or a man corrupt in heart, can receive the full blessings of the eternal Father, for they do not place themselves in a position to receive them. A man must repent of his sins; he must have faith that God is the Giver of all good; he must believe that God actually exists before he can feel that his prayer will be answered.

As far as I am concerned, and I believe as far as each and every Latter-day Saint is concerned, we can say it is through prayer that we have received a testimony that

this Gospel is true, that God lives, and that Jesus is the Christ. I remember when I was a boy, my mother would talk to me by the hour, and often testify to me that she knew that this was Christ's Church. I had my doubts, and frankly stated to her that I had no such testimony. She was never discouraged, and would always say, "Reed, attend to your prayers; keep yourself unspotted from the sins of this world; have faith in God, and you shall know that this is God's work, that this is His Church, and you will be able to testify to the world that you know that God lives." The Prophet Joseph Smith told President John Taylor that if he would pray earnestly every day of his life, he would never apostatize from the Church. I say also to all members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, that if they will attend to their prayers, make the hearthstone of the home an altar for prayer, where the words from sincere hearts appeal to our Father in Heaven, pray honestly, morning and evening, with the family and in secret; I promise them that they will never apostatize from this Church.

When I was one of the presidencies of the Utah Stake of Zion; I had a number of people come to me with their troubles, in a few instances, wives complaining of their husbands, the husband, in one or two cases, complaining against the wife—and to such a degree that they actually thought separation was necessary. I desire to say to you, that in not one instance did a woman or man come to me under such conditions but, upon inquiry, I found that family prayers had entirely ceased in such homes, the

Spirit of God had left them, darkness had come in place of light, and the influence that made the home happy before, that made the husband love the wife and the wife the husband, had been removed, and they were drifting farther apart every day.

I know that God will bless His people if they will attend to their prayers honestly and sincerely. Prayer is a duty. Why? Because God says that He desires His people to pray. And far greater than a duty, prayer is a privilege to every Latter-day Saint, and that privilege should be exercised by every member of the Church. No matter whether it be child, man, or woman, we should value our souls; and, as we value our soul's eternal happiness, as we value the salvation of mankind, the fulfilment of the decrees of God, the extension of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the eradication of all vices in our midst, as we value the great principles of temperance, virtue, truth, and charity, so let us pray. Let us pray early and late, and let the prayer not only be by the lips but from the heart. Let us pray in secret and in public. The sick and afflicted of this people need our prayers. The poor and needy need our prayers. The President of this Church needs our prayers. The President of this Nation needs our prayers. The wicked need our prayers; and I wish to say to you that Salt Lake City needs our prayers. All the peoples of the world need our prayers, and God will give answer, in His own due time, if they come from the hearts of an honest people. May we realize the importance of prayer and what it means. It is a weapon that God has

placed in the hands of His people, a weapon He has given us with which to fight sin; and remember this, that when we use it, we have God on our side to uphold our hands in any battle against sin.

My brethren and sisters, I pray that the blessings of God may be with you, and that you will take to your homes, from this conference, the spirit of prayer. Teach it to your children, and let one people—the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—be known all over the world as a people who believe in prayer. During my visits in the East, I have had people testify, many times, that they have been in the homes of Latter-day Saints, and know that the “Mormons” are a prayerful people. I remember one Senator, living in an adjacent State, whom I have heard testify, time and time again, that there was one class of people in his State that honestly believed in prayer; they even opened their amusements with prayer. He also testified that he had been in the home of a president of a stake, and that he had seen every member of the family, night and morning, kneel in prayer, after having sung a hymn, and join in calling upon God, in all earnestness, for His aid; and that no one could witness such a sight without testifying that such people must be sincere and honest in their attitude and belief respecting God and their religion. My brethren and sisters, let our lives be such that we can have all men testify the same of us; and may God’s blessings be with you and with this people forever, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER HYRUM M. SMITH.

Deserved reproof should be humbly accepted.—“There is no such thing as *necessary* evil.”—Intelligent obedience most desirable.—Leaders should themselves walk the path they want flock to follow.

I would like to read a portion of a revelation given to Joseph Smith, the Seer, at Kirtland, in May, 1831, in which the Lord said:

Hearken, O ye elders of my Church, and give ear to the voice of the living God, and attend to the words of wisdom which shall be given unto you, according as ye have asked and are agreed as touching the Church, and the spirits which have gone abroad in the earth.

Behold, verily I say unto you, that there are many spirits which are false spirits, which have gone forth in the earth, deceiving the world;

And also Satan hath sought to deceive you, that he might overthrow you.

Behold, I the Lord have looked upon you, and have seen abominations in the Church that profess my name;

But blessed are they who are faithful and endure, whether in life or in death, for they shall inherit eternal life.

But wo unto them that are deceivers and hypocrites, for, thus saith the Lord, I will bring them to judgment.

Behold, verily I say unto you, there are hypocrites among you, who have deceived some, which has given the adversary power, but behold such [that is, those who are deceived] shall be reclaimed;

But the hypocrites shall be detected and shall be cut off, either in life or in death, even as I will; and wo unto them who are cut off from my Church, for the same are overcome of the world.

Wherefore, let every man beware lest he do that which is not in truth and righteousness before me.

And now come, saith the Lord, by the Spirit, unto the elders of His Church, and let us reason together, that ye may understand.

Let us reason even as a man reasoneth one with another, face to face.

Now when a man reasoneth he is un-