

Sister Esther Davis sang a soprano solo entitled, "Forever with the Lord."

ELDER JOSEPH W. M'MURRIN.

My brethren and sisters, I feel the same as other brethren who have occupied this position, that is I am very dependent upon the help of the Lord to enable me to say something that will be of advantage to those who have gathered in this great building to worship before the Lord. My heart has been made to rejoice in listening to the words that have been spoken by the brethren who have been called upon to speak in the meetings of the conference. I thank God, with all my heart, that I am numbered with the people of the Latter-day Saints. My experiences as a member of the Church have brought joy, and peace, and very great contentment to my soul. This joy has been particularly strong when I have carried out the counsels that have been given to me, and have most energetically endeavored to live in harmony with the principles of life and salvation, as revealed in these latter times. I feel, when joy is produced in the soul of man by the doing of things claimed to be revealed from the Lord, it is an evidence that the thing is right. I do not suppose that any one has found any pleasure in the doing of things that were not right, things that they knew to be wrong. Wrong doing produces sorrow and not joy; therefore, I say I find joy and satisfaction in doing the things that are taught in the Gospel as presented to the world by the Latter-day Saints. This joy comes with such power and force to me, as to be a strong evidence of the

truth of the Gospel as taught to this people.

I, also, have been impressed very frequently, my brethren and sisters, with the Scripture referred to by one of the brethren in relation to the promises made by our Father in heaven in regard to this work, even before it was organized, that it should be a work of a marvelous character. So far as I have become familiar with the principles revealed of God to the Prophet Joseph Smith, I am convinced that they are indeed marvelous. This work, in its organization and in many of its principles, is very different from the churches found in the world. We are a distinct people, different from all other peoples, who profess to be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. One of these differences is that we take the position the Scriptures teach; that there is but one means of salvation given of God to the human family, and but one church that is His Church.

I will read in support of this proposition a word or two from the Scriptures, from the writings of the Apostle Paul, a man who was filled with the Spirit of the Lord, and who wrote many very precious things in relation to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus. He had been convinced of the mission of the Redeemer of the world in a marvelous manner, and he labored ever after with very great zeal for the spreading of a knowledge of the Redeemer's name among the children of men. But he discovered, during his ministry, that some men were very unstable, and inclined to turn away from the faith of the Gospel. To such men who had received the Gospel and had been numbered with the people of the Lord, but were making ship-

wreck of their faith, he wrote, as we find in the epistle to the Galatians as follows:

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

"Which is not another: but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed"

Mormonism, as I understand it, is distinct and peculiar in this regard, it stands for this one doctrine, we do not believe that man can find salvation in any way that he may elect to find it. We believe the Lord of glory has pointed out the way, and that He came for that purpose. He volunteered to accomplish the work that was necessary in order that mankind might be saved. He laid down His life, gave His blood, to open up the way of salvation, that every soul who would believe in His mission and in His power to save—a power that was in Him by and through the accomplishment of the work that was given Him of the Father,—might be saved. We believe that He had the power and authority to direct men in the way of salvation, and that there is no other being in the world who can so direct. We declare that there never can be found, in all the future history of the world any other means of salvation than has already been found and pointed out by the Redeemer of the world. He has taught the doctrine that if any man climb up in any other way than the way appointed, he shall be counted as a thief and a robber; and so teaches Mormonism. We declare to the inhabitants of the earth

that the plan of salvation has been revealed anew by the opening of the heavens, and by the appearing of the Father and the Son to this man spoken of so frequently, Joseph Smith. It is a very startling announcement that we make when we declare that the heavens have been opened, and that authority has been given to man by the sending of angels from the heavenly courts, who have conferred upon men in these latter times that authority which they, the angels, received, and exercised when they tabernacled here as mortal beings,—as we have heard from the speakers in this conference.

As a people, we believe that we are living in the latter days, in the day spoken of by the prophets—a time that seemed to be of very great interest to them, for all the prophets, we may say, have spoken of the latter days, and of the wonderful things that would be accomplished among the children of men in the last dispensation of the Gospel. As I have said, we believe that power and authority have been given again to man—the authority of the holy priesthood, that authority by which man ministers in the name of the eternal Father, and his ministry is recognized, sanctioned, and approved by the Lord of heaven. It is wonderful in the ears of those who know nothing of authority, who do not believe in the necessity of being called of God as was Aaron; but there isn't anything very wonderful about it when we come to read the Scriptures, for men who operated in ancient times as the servants of the Lord, did so by appointment from God. We do not read that any of the apostles, whose words should be so precious to the Christian peoples of the earth

today, ever commenced to preach or minister in the name of the Master, or assumed to perform any of the ordinances looking to the salvation of the children of men, until they had first been selected by the Master. They were called from their various occupations; they received the laying on of the hands of the Redeemer, who taught them the doctrine that they had not chosen Him but He had chosen them, and he had ordained them, and He sent them that they might bring forth fruit. We believe that there never could have been any fruit such as the Master had in mind, when He spoke these words to His apostles, if they had not thus been called by His voice, and if they had not received this ordination that clothed them with power and with authority to speak and act in His name. The Scriptures are full of evidences that all of these men were brought into the ministry in this very manner. They did not call themselves; they were not called by the people, in any other way than has been taught here in this conference, God first indicating, through the proper channel, the men He would have acting in His name, and the people accepting of the men so called.

I say we are a distinct people in relation to these matters. We believe that there is an absolute necessity for men who speak and administer Gospel ordinances, in the name of our Father in Heaven, to have conferred upon them the same authority, and to be called unto that authority in the very same manner that men were called anciently. Before the opening of this dispensation men were attempting to act in the name of God without being called by Him. Because of this there ex-

isted the necessity of a revelation, and of the opening of the heavens anew; for men through unbelief had lost all divine authority. They did not know anything about it. Joseph Smith, himself, did not know anything concerning authority when he went out to plead with our Father in heaven, that he might be directed in the right channel. He expected, I suppose, that if answer was given to his prayer, that he would be directed to some religious denomination. He supposed, no doubt, that the Gospel of Salvation could be found in some of the churches; but the Lord revealed that men had strayed away from the plan that He had instituted, that they had broken the everlasting covenant, and that the time had come for the revelation again of the Gospel, and another bestowal of that precious authority. That authority came to the Prophet Joseph Smith by the ministrations of holy angels sent for that especial purpose. Men may ask the question, why should it come to the Prophet Joseph? Did not men before his time ask God, with devout and pure hearts, to know the truth? I would say, yes, undoubtedly; there have always been many good men who have shown a disposition to seek God for information. Some one may wonder why they were not answered in the way Joseph Smith claims to have been answered, the reason is simply that the appointed time had not come. We learn in the Scriptures that Jesus of Nazareth was chosen long before He came to minister to mortal man. We also learn from the Scriptures that this was the case with some of the prophets; God speaks particularly of one of the prophets with

whom He was acquainted. He said to the Prophet Jeremiah, "I knew thee before thou wast born into the world, and I had chosen thee and ordained thee to be a prophet." No man, no matter how devout, could prevent the call of Jeremiah. The time had come for Joseph Smith in his childhood and innocence, to go out into the woods and in prayer seek our Father in heaven. When that prayer was uttered it was from the lips of the one who had been chosen to usher in a gospel dispensation, chosen like Jeremiah, before he was born naturally into the world. The answer was given, because the instrument that had been selected of God in the spirit world, had now cried unto Him. God heard and answered the prayer of His servant, and gave revelations through this great prophet, portraying the marvelous character of the work of the latter days.

We might well ask today, of the stranger within our gates, Where else in all the world can there be found anything like this great gathering of the people of the Latter-day Saints, who have come here from the east, the west, the north, and from the south, to serve our Father in heaven? It is wonderful. It is marvelous. I feel in my soul that when men gaze upon this great people in their general conferences, that there comes to them the feeling spoken of in the revelations: and within themselves they say there is something wonderful about this people. This great gathering is of a marvelous character, when you think of how these masses have come from all the nations of the earth; and, yet, how

united they are; how they see eye to eye; how they labor together for the accomplishment of the Lord's purposes! My brethren and sisters, and friends who may be present, what is it? It is the fulfillment of the Scriptures. It is the day of God's power. It is the day spoken of by the prophets, when the Lord God of heaven should set His hand to recover His people Israel again, when they should be hunted from the mountains and from the caves, from the dens of the earth, and all the earth should yield up, according to the decree of our Father in heaven, the honest in heart. Oh, friends let us understand; let us believe, when we see this wonderful accomplishment of the great work of the latter days as spoken of in the prophecies. Let us know assuredly that the Lord God lives, that He remembers His promises, and that He has planted His people here according to those promises, and He will be with them for evermore. May the peace of God be upon His people, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn:

How firm a foundation, ye Saints of the
Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent
word!
What more can He say than to you He
hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have
fled?

Benediction was pronounced by
Bishop David A. Smith.

Conference adjourned until 10 a.
m., Tuesday, April 6th.