

unsullied happiness, to the Latter-day Saints. Let us seek after these things.

May the Lord bless His people. May He prosper and sustain them. May He bring to them the riches of eternity, and may He bring to them the riches of the earth, if they can only have wisdom to employ these riches for the building up of His Church and Kingdom. May the Lord God of Heaven bless His Prophet and His people, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

President Melvin J. Ballard sang the hymn, "I know that my Redeemer lives," as a baritone solo.

#### **ELDER HYRUM M. SMITH.**

How Joseph Smith became a Prophet.—The Gospel and Priesthood restored.—Continuation of authority after the Prophet's martyrdom.—God's inspiration manifest in character of successive leaders.—Futile efforts of enemies to create dissension in the Church or retard its growth.

Almost ninety years have passed away since the opening of the dispensation of the fulness of times, in the which the Father, in person, accompanied by His Son, Jesus Christ, came from heaven to the earth in answer to the prayer offered them by Joseph Smith, a boy of fourteen years of age. These divine personages made themselves known to this lad, answered his questions and told him that the time had come for the introduction among men, once more, and for the last time, of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ which is the power of God unto salvation. This was a most glorious and effulgent day. We are told it was a beautiful day in the spring time, a day in every way

befitting such a condescension on the part of the Father and the Son, to come from their celestial abode into consultation with Joseph Smith in this state of life. But almost immediately after that glorious vision, the clouds of darkness began to encircle this young man,—who was now a prophet of God,—for the moment that he declared he had seen the Father and the Son, nearly all who heard the declaration rose up in opposition to him, and in great objection to his message, declaring it to be false and from the evil one, and they tried to their utmost to persuade the prophet himself that he had been deceived. Nevertheless, he knew he had not been deceived; and, obedient to the instructions imparted to him by the Savior, he continued to do, as nearly as was possible, what he thought and understood to be right and according to the will of the Lord. In due time, the Lord sent from His presence other messages to Joseph, with further instructions and with proper interpretation of many of the prophecies that had been made, concerning the latter times, by the ancient prophets, with other prophecies and promises to him that the Church of Christ should be organized, and that he should become the instrument, in the hands of God, in building up the Church of Jesus Christ in the latter days. These promises and prophecies were, in due time, fulfilled. The Aaronic Priesthood was conferred upon Joseph Smith by John the Baptist, who had been the forerunner of the Savior in primitive times, and some time later the Melchizedek was conferred upon him by Peter, James and John. These were men who had lived, and who had been valiant in the testimony of Jesus Christ.

They had been preachers of the Gospel, and had held the Holy Priesthood. They, with the exception of John, had been put to death for the testimony which they had borne. They had been resurrected, had come forth from the grave, and had been sent by the Father and the Son to Joseph Smith to restore the Priesthood which was the authority of God, by which these great prophecies should be fulfilled, namely, the building up of the kingdom of God in the earth, the establishment of the Church, and the opening of the doors of all nations for the preaching of the Gospel, that the light of truth should be spread into every nation and among every people, to every kindred and tongue, and that the cry of repentance should go forth, that all men should have the privilege of hearing it and the opportunity of accepting the Gospel, repenting of their sins and becoming members of the Church, thus putting themselves in the way, by their obedience, to inherit eternal life in the Celestial kingdom of our Father in heaven.

All this was accomplished, and in the midst of persecution, and all manner of evil and slander and opposition that were brought to bear against the Prophet and those who believed in him. In spite of it all, the Prophet was able to accomplish his great mission; and during his brief life—his presidency over the Church was but fourteen years—he laid the foundations of this great and glorious kingdom; he effected the organization of the Church, an organization which is, at the same time, the pride of the Saints, the glory of the Lord, and the wonder of the world. He was martyred for the truth's sake,—put to death for bearing witness and testimony of

Jesus. At his death, the Church experienced possibly the darkest moment of its career. For but a moment, however, were the Saints bewildered despite their intense sorrow. They were, I imagine, a good deal like the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, when they had seen their teacher, their guide and their God crucified upon the cross. They went away in sorrow, and they declared that they had hoped that this man "had been He which should have redeemed Israel." They were enthralled, for the time being, in doubt, in darkness, and in very great disappointment. So were the Latter-day Saints at the martyrdom of the Prophet and his brother the patriarch of this dispensation. They were troubled for a little while. They were not in doubt, however, as to the man having been a prophet of the Lord, and the restorer of the Gospel. In order that they should not fall into doubt, the Lord did not leave them even in this anxious state for long. He raised up him who was to receive the authority and the mantle of the Prophet. President Brigham Young, of the quorum of the Twelve Apostles, was transfigured before the people; in their conference. They knew that the Prophet Joseph was dead, yet when President Young arose to address them, they saw in the speaker the Prophet, in stature and in feature, and they heard the voice of the Prophet of God speak unto them. This renewed their faith and gave them courage; it convinced them that God had chosen him, and he was accepted by them as their leader, and in due time was sustained by the people as the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to succeed the Prophet Joseph Smith.

During the dark days of persecution and mob violence immediately following the martyrdom, the Saints were driven from their homes, and their houses were burned and their property destroyed. They were driven out in the winter time, even beyond the borders of civilization, into the wilderness. The Lord was mindful of His own, however, and revealed His purpose and will to President Young, and the inspiration of His Spirit rested mightily upon the Saints, giving them hope and encouragement and consolation even in this hour of deepest distress. Guided by the revelation of God, President Young led the people across the plains, and the Lord established them in the valleys of the mountains. President Young, in his wisdom and greatness, taught the Saints, he guided them, he instructed them, he sent them into the north and into the south; he advised them in the manner and matter of establishing colonies throughout the length and breadth of this land. He built up cities, towns and villages, and the Saints under his wise presidency grew daily in the work of the Lord, becoming stronger and more numerous as time passed on. President Young presided over the Church for upwards of thirty years; and in all his experience there was never a time when the Saints, for one moment, ever lost faith in him as the prophet, seer, and revelator of the Church, and the representative and mouthpiece of God upon the earth. Nor for one moment did President Brigham Young ever prove recreant to his great trust, or prove himself incapable of the wonderful responsibility that had descended to him from the Prophet Joseph Smith who was the founder,

under the Lord, of His Church in this day. He also endured persecution, as did the people during his presidency. The world was arrayed against him, as it had been against the Prophet before him. Nevertheless, through these dark days of its sad experience, the Lord was sustaining His Church; and after the darkness the sun always shone more brightly. When any particular warfare made against the people, was over, the Church rebounded with greater force, gathered greater strength, greater faith, greater inspiration, and greater power in the carrying on of the work of the Lord towards the accomplishment of the redemption and the salvation of the children of men, and the spread of truth among the people of the world.

When the Lord gathered President Young to Himself, He had already prepared another mighty and good man to take his place—President John Taylor, one of the greatest and noblest men of this dispensation, was sustained by the people as their president. He also received the mantle of the prophet of God. He received the revelations of the Lord, and was in constant communication with Him in all things connected with the building up of the kingdom and the spread of the Gospel. He was an inspirational preacher of the Gospel, an able writer upon the principles and doctrines of salvation, and a valiant champion of the cause. The people rallied to him, supported and sustained him. They received the same witness that he had been chosen of God and had been exalted of the Father, as they had received concerning President Brigham Young and the Prophet Joseph Smith. Very dark days were ex-

perienced during his presidency, days of exile, days of sorrow, days of persecution, when he with many of the general authorities of the Church were hunted and hounded, by officers of the law, for conscience sake, because they were determined to keep the commandments of the Lord, because they believed in the principles that they were living and practicing, because they were honest and conscientious in their belief, and would not yield that which God had commanded them to do, even though it necessitated their going into exile or prison, or, perhaps, suffering even martyrdom for the truth's sake. In the end, that was the fate of President John Taylor, for he died during the time of his exile, when he had been driven from home, and when many of the Saints were hunted and had to flee to save themselves from undeserved punishment, and many others had been sent to prison. But before his death, the Lord had been preparing his successor, as the Lord always does have in preparation those who shall be called to carry on the work of His servants who have finished their work.

When President Taylor had completed his mission, President Wilford Woodruff was raised up, and he, also, became a wonderful man, a mighty man, a man of faith and humility, a man of power, of wisdom, of judgment, a man of great inspiration, who, like the others, lived in the hearts of the people. All the people recognized in him the prophet of the Lord, the president of the Church, the man who held the keys of authority and who stood at the head of the Church, having been raised to that exalted position by the Lord Himself, and sustained

by the Saints. During his lifetime he was upheld and sustained in all his acts, and the wisdom of the Lord was manifest in his appointment. He lived to a great age, filled his mission and accomplished the work the Lord had assigned for him to do, and he departed this life mourned by all the people of the Latter-day Saints and by very many who were not members of the Church, but who were acquainted with him, and knew his worth. President Lorenzo Snow succeeded him, and like all the rest, he demonstrated by his life that he labored, advised, counseled, and preached under the inspiration and direction of God the heavenly Father. The people loved him. Under his administration the Church made splendid progress. After his death the Lord placed at the head of the Church another of His servants, who magnifies nobly that great authority of Presidency and in whom the power and might and wisdom that characterized the lives of all the other presidents of the Church are embodied. He, like them, has the confidence of the Saints of God and enjoys, also, the approbation of the Lord and the Lord's blessings and inspiration poured out upon him.

Now, during this conference, the 80th annual conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we witness that the Church has grown larger than ever, that the people assemble in greater numbers, as each succeeding conference comes annually and semi-annually. It seems a pity that many who come find it impossible to be accommodated under the sound of the voices of the servants of the Lord who are called to speak and

minister unto them. It appears that the Church will have to build, sometime, another tabernacle, for there is no doubt that another building such as this could be filled to overflowing during the conferences. Thus has the Lord blest the Saints; He has gathered them in the valleys of the mountains; He has made them mighty. They have been obedient; they love the truth; they understand the word of God; the scriptures are plain unto them. They comprehend the purposes of the Lord in this dispensation, and as a general thing they are prepared to do whatsoever the Lord requires of them, to go and to come, to accept and put into actual practice the will of God as it is made known unto them through the Presidency of the Church.

We have had some dark days in our experience. It was but a few years ago that an especially bitter and cruel warfare was made upon the Church, and every effort within the power of evil designing men, and every effort that could be brought to bear upon men by the power of the adversary was used to discredit the President of the Church among the people. The people were warned against him. Some of the descendants of the Prophet Joseph Smith took it upon themselves to write letters of warning to the President of the Church, in which he was accused of deceiving the Saints, and warnings to the people to beware of the general authorities and the Priesthood. The people were told that they were being led astray. The people—it was said—were innocent; the people were pure and good; but their leaders were impure and bad. The grandson of the Prophet Joseph

Smith came here and made a great effort with these warnings, to create discord and dissatisfaction among the Saints of God. He joined himself with those avowed and determined enemies of the people who for years had made war upon the Saints; he was in constant association and communication with them, assisted them in their tirade against the Priesthood, and in their efforts to discredit the Presidency before the people. There were a few—just a few foolish and unstable ones among the Latter-day Saints who had not been very faithful, who had not enjoyed the Spirit of the Lord, and they were tinctured with this folly, and they rose up against the brethren. They called themselves prophets, claiming to be one or another of the ancient prophets come again; and because of this the enemy actually imagined that they were making great inroads among the people. So sanguine and sure were some of these men that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was about to be disrupted and broken to pieces, and that there would be a great harvest for these pretenders, that even the president of the so-called Re-organized church came to Utah with the full intention and hope of gathering up the fragments and establishing again the Church under his leadership. I remember so well: he made a few speeches in this city, as did his son. They came to the conference, and sat here among the presidents of stakes. They fully expected to see the Presidency of the Church repudiated and voted down. The Latter-day Saints were assembled, as usual, in great numbers. But, do you know, there were none of the general authorities that had

any fears; they did not expect to see the kingdom of God destroyed and the Church thrown down and given to another people. They knew better; the Lord had promised otherwise; and so, when the President's name was presented before the great congregation for their support, the people responded almost to a man, and just like it might have been one man, so united were they. I remember the president of the Re-organized church and his son,—how they looked back over the congregation, to see how the people would reject the authorities of the Church; but they turned to see a sight that they had never and that few of us had ever seen before, for it seemed to me every hand was raised just a little higher than I had ever seen them raised before, and they remained uplifted just a little longer than usual. They were raised with a determination, with a will, with a faith that conveyed unto all present the knowledge that these men were indeed living in the hearts of the people, and that the people knew for themselves that they were God's divinely called servants, and that God was at the head of this Church, and not men alone, but that the men whom the Lord had chosen to preside among the people were in close touch with the Spirit of God, in communication with the Lord constantly.

What a disappointment it must have been to our Re-organite friends, and what a defeat it was to the adversary, a defeat so decisive that from that time to this the enemy has scarcely recovered. Those dark clouds which, according to the opinion of some, threatened the very foundation of the Church, have been dispelled and

the sun has shone forth with greater glory and light upon the people than ever, and the Gospel has made greater progress in the world. It has made greater advancement in the various mission fields. Missionaries have had greater power, and the people of the world themselves, have come to understand more thoroughly and fully the purposes of the Elders of the Church who are preaching this Gospel. The hundreds of thousands of people who come to this city annually, and are entertained at the Bureau of Information, and are kindly received by the Elders of the Church, and are courteously conducted about these grounds, and through these buildings, have the Gospel preached unto them. Good literature is given to them. They go away with a much better understanding of Mormonism with a better impression of the people, with more light concerning them. They go away with a more friendly disposition and feeling toward us, and this feeling they carry with them into the world, and it is having its effect. As a result of it, the principles of the Gospel are being better understood and more people are investigating the truths of it. People are being baptized constantly, by the hundreds, out in the various mission fields, and at home the Latter-day Saints are strong and full of faith.

We often bear our testimony to the divinity of the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we all have that testimony. We bear testimony, also, to the divinity of the mission of Joseph Smith the prophet; and that those who have succeeded the Prophet are divinely called and have a divine mission to perform in the

earth. As we bear this testimony, so I this morning, would like to bear my testimony concerning the people of God who are the fruits of this restoration and of the preaching of the Gospel in this dispensation, that they are men and women who love the Lord with all their hearts, minds and strength, who love the truth, and uphold it, who love that which is right and good and pure, that which is noble and godlike, and they are living for these principles and sustaining them in the midst of the earth. I bear testimony to their intelligence, to their wisdom, their greatness, their humility, their faith—that they are a god-fearing people, that they do love the Lord, and love their fellow-men. That they honor the Priesthood and desire to magnify their callings. May God bless us and continue to increase us, that we may gather strength and power to further persuade the world of the fact that God has spoken, that He has raised up a people, that He has established His Church and is building His kingdom.

May the Lord ever keep us true and faithful to these things. May we uphold the work of God and ever magnify ourselves and the authority of the Priesthood, and preach to the world the Gospel of Christ, that all may be saved. Let our prayers still ascend to the Lord in behalf of those who are clothed upon with such great authority and who are under such great responsibility, in presiding over the people and directing the work of God in all the world. I know for myself, by the power of the Spirit of God, that spirit spoken of by Brother Ballard yesterday, the Holy Ghost; that the Lord has indeed established this work and has set His hand for the last time to gather in one all things

in the Lord Jesus Christ. May we do our part in assisting Him in the accomplishment of His great and glorious purposes for the salvation of the living and the redemption of the dead,—in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn:

Our God, we raise to Thee  
Thanks for Thy blessings free  
We here enjoy;  
In this far western land,  
A true and chosen band,  
Led hither by Thy hand,  
We sing for joy.

Benediction was pronounced by Patriarch John Smith.

Conference adjourned until 2 p.m.

## AFTERNOON SESSION.

Conference was resumed at 2 p.m.

President Joseph F. Smith called the meeting to order.

The choir and congregation sang 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 Deliv'rer, our all!

Prayer was offered by Elder Hugh J. Cannon.

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?