

may go through the form of it in this life, but it will be of non effect except it be done and sanctioned by divine authority, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

It is my pleasure to read to the congregation a message that I have received today from Washington, D. C.:

"April 5th, 1913.

"President Joseph F. Smith:

"I have been thinking all day of home and our general conference. I am with you all in spirit, if not in person. May the spirit of unity, of prayer, of charity, of toleration and loyalty prevail. I ask God's blessings upon our nation, upon our state, and our Church, upon you and the brethren, and upon every honest man.

"REED SMOOT."

This is from New York. April 5th, also:

"President Joseph F. Smith, Salt Lake, Utah: Please accept my most friendly greetings, loyal regards, and faith and prayers for yourself, the brethren, and all the Saints.

"JOHN W. YOUNG."

This is his semi-annual message; and I am glad to receive that much from John W. Young, for he is a son of President Brigham Young; I wish he had the humility, and wisdom, and disposition to come home and live with the Saints.

"Be thou faithful unto death," a tenor solo, was rendered by Prof. Elihu Call.

#### **Patriarch Hyrum G. Smith.**

Declaration that the Lord is pleased with His people.—Prayer for continued success of the Lord's work.

I declare unto this great gathering here that the Spirit of the Lord has been with us in this conference, with those who have spoken, and with those who have listened. The Lord is pleased with those whom He has called to direct His work

in the earth in this day. He is pleased with their fidelity, and with their fearlessness to declare His truth that has been revealed, and restored to the earth again. The Lord is pleased with those whom He has called to teach the youth of Zion the principles of righteousness, the principles of truth and education. The Lord is pleased with those who sing His praises, not only here in our choir, that we have heard today, but in the choirs throughout the stakes of Zion. The Lord is pleased with all who are serving Him, who strive to honor His name and perform His work in the earth.

May the Lord continue to be pleased with us. May we so live that He will continue to bless us, and look down upon us in love and mercy. May we take home with us the counsels, admonitions and teachings that we have received in this conference, both young and old; that we may honor the Lord and His servants in the earth. May He bless you in your homes and in your endeavors to serve Him and keep His commandments, to live clean and unspotted from the sins of the world. May we so live that He will be pleased with us in all of our endeavors to serve Him, is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### **Elder Brigham H. Roberts.**

(Of the First Council of Seventy.)

Several times during this conference, while listening to the brethren and contemplating the doctrines which they have presented, I have made this mental comment: How excellent is the wisdom of the Lord. And in the few moments that I am to address you, if I could, I would like

to point out, by demonstration, the truth of my comment.

The people in some parts of the United States have recently been passing through wonderful experiences, experiences I may say that have been foreshadowed by the inspired utterances of the great prophet of the new dispensation of the gospel; for as early as 1831 the Lord, both by vision and word of mouth, decreed that there should be great destruction upon the waters of the Missouri, the Mississippi and the Ohio valleys; and no one in recent years has noted the annual recurrence of destruction, in various forms, upon those waters, but what has been convinced that the warning word of the Lord, through the Prophet, was being fulfilled. Great distress has come upon the people of the land by reason of storm and tempest and by dangers that have been developed in those regions of country to which reference has been made. The country has been appealed to and is now appealed to for help to relieve the distress that has come upon the people. In this connection I want to say to you that there has been no single act that has so completely met with the approval of my spirit than the fact that the President of the Church, in his capacity as Trustee-in-trust, has stretched forth a helping hand to the distressed people of Ohio, and in a small way, has helped those who are in distress.

Now, what I want to call your attention to is a little of the wisdom of God, which, if followed out by the inhabitants of the earth, would provide a means for meeting emergencies of this kind, a means which we ourselves, it seems to me, do not properly appreciate. It was a way found out in the midst of our own distresses, an institution of the

Church, born to the Church, out of the midst of the things which our community was called upon to suffer. During the year 1855, the community of Latter-day Saints in these valleys, was sore distressed by a double calamity of drought and grasshoppers. The crops were well nigh destroyed, and the people had to be put again upon rations, as in the earliest years of their experience in these valleys. Those who had been provident and careful of their means, and were blest with means, had to share with those who had not. This calamity of drought and grasshoppers was followed by a severe winter in which much of the stock of the people was destroyed; and then, while they were distressed in this way, the responsibilities of the people increased by an unusually large immigration, into these valleys, both of our own people and the passing immigrant companies on their way to California, with whom the Latter-day Saints always shared their pittance. To meet the very great demands of charity upon the Latter-day Saints in those trying years, our fast day came into existence; the servants of the Lord instituted the first Thursday in every month as fast day, with a view of taking what was saved by this sacrifice and minister unto those who otherwise would be in want. This plan of meeting that emergency became an established institution; and in course of time the servants of the Lord changed the fast day from the first Thursday of the month to the first Sunday of the month.

I want to call your attention to some very pretty sentiments and some very substantial wisdom connected with that thing. The regulations of the Church were to the effect—and are to the effect:

“That a fast meeting should be

held in every ward on the first Sunday of each month, at which time the Saints should remember the poor and donate for their benefit, which should at least equal the amount saved by the person or family so fasting. All such funds shall be applied exclusively for the purpose of assisting the worthy poor, as in the judgment of the bishopric may be necessary. The Latter-day Saints should liberally observe the payment of their donations for the worthy poor, so that the bishop may have funds to assist the destitute and needy." Now, mark you this: "who should always have our sympathy and aid; but whenever a person drawing assistance is able to do something toward his or her support, however small, the bishopric should endeavor to provide such with employment suited to their capacity and their condition."

I call your attention to the fact, in passing, that the institution of this means for providing for those who may be in want is limited to the worthy poor; because there is no intention, on the part of the Lord, so far as His will is revealed to the Church—there is no intention to create a permanent pauper class, or to permit the vicious and idle to prey upon the industrious and the provident; and hence this wise counsel that these charities 'are to be extended to the worthy poor. Counsel is given, also, that even these, wherever and whenever it is possible, should have the glorious means or opportunity afforded them to preserve their personal independence by giving something in return, in labor, in service, for the help that is given them.

The subject, of course, is capable of great expansion. All I can do

here and now, and all I desire to do now, is to show by reference to this little thing, how excellent is the wisdom of God! Suppose the Christian people of New York, with her between five and six millions of people, largely of at least nominal Christian profession, suppose that Christian city were to adopt God's method of providing a permanent means of charity for the worthy poor; if they would but take this one little fragment of "Mormonism" and apply it in their charity economics, they would establish a permanent revenue for the charities of that city that would stop the cry of hunger rising up to greet the ears of the God of Sabbaoth. They would have sufficient to feed, to clothe, and to lodge the worthy poor, and what is more, if you mathematicians will take the pains to work it out, and suppose that only one-half of the Christian people of that city were to faithfully observe this little principle, you would have means not only to clothe and feed and lodge the worthy poor, but when emergencies of calamity arose in the city there would be ample means to meet those emergencies. And if a state were to adopt that bit of charity economy, if the nation were to adopt it, if the Christian world were to adopt it, out of that one fragment of God's inspired truth given to His people, there would be ample means to meet all the demands of charity at the hands of the people. How great, how excellent is the wisdom of God, even in small matters. The Lord bless you. Amen.

[The speaker would also add to the thoughts above expressed, that in the above described fast system established in the Church, all—the

rich and the poor, the wealthy man of business and the common laborer—would contribute equally to this proposed charity. Not that what would be saved from the fast of the common laborer's family for the fast fund would equal in dollars and cents the amount that would be saved from the fast of the rich man's family; but it would cost one as much as the other, *viz.*, the sacrifice in each case of the meals that would otherwise be eaten; and that which costs the same to each, ought to be equal, and in the sight of God would be equal, in contribution to such a cause.

Again, another beauty of this charity proposed for universal Christian acceptance, is the fact that it would place those who live always in the enjoyment of an abundance, in sympathetic relations with those who frequently feel the pangs of hunger, and sense the weakness that comes of insufficient food. When the children of the rich feel the lassitude and perhaps the faintness that arises from their voluntary fasting, they can better understand the meaning of insufficient food, and days of enforced fasting that must be endured by the poor, and make them more ready and willing, not only to deal kindly, but justly, with those who toil for rewards less than sufficient to meet their daily needs. It is for the Latter-day Saints to magnify this regulation of the Church, vindicate its wisdom, and demonstrate for the instruction of the world its wonderful possibilities.]

#### ELDER ORSON F. WHITNEY.

What "Mormonism" Stands For.—Gathering and Unity.—Things of God only to be Comprehended by the Spirit of God.—How to Obtain and Retain that

Spirit.—Obedience the Key to all Blessings.

This great gathering of God's people reminds me of a remark dropped by a reverend gentleman in a conversation between him and myself. It had devolved upon me to correct a public statement made by him, to the effect that the "Mormon" people advocate a social system destructive of the purity of the home. After I had, from this stand, corrected that statement, the gentleman called upon me and explained very courteously that he had not intended to impugn the morality of the "Mormon home." He had meant to say merely that "Mormonism," as he viewed it, destroyed the oneness or integrity of the home. He had used the word purity, he said, in the sense of oneness, and he added: "It seems to me that your system has a tendency to disunite and scatter things."

I did what I could on that occasion, and have subsequently taken pains, to correct this mistaken notion. If "Mormonism" stands for anything, it stands for the gathering, not the scattering, of things, It is for the unification of all that is good and virtuous and pure and praiseworthy. This vast congregation is a testimony to the character and results of our religion. These are the days of the gathering of Israel from their long dispersion. This is the dispensation of the fullness of times, when God has set his hand to gather in one all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth. For this purpose the Gospel was instituted, and for this purpose it was restored in these latter days. Gathering is the great distinctive feature of the dispensation of the fullness of times.