

clares that he was unable to audibly utter his prayer, and continue his supplications, but he said, "I lifted my heart to God, I prayed earnestly in the silence of my soul, and very soon I saw a bright light shining upon the leaves of the trees above my head, and it was so bright I thought at first that the leaves of the forest were on fire, and yet though the light was so vivid, it did not consume the trees nor the foliage." Soon that light settled down upon the youthful supplicant and filled his soul, filled his being, every fiber thereof with its effugence, and as soon as this occurred the evil power fled and left him free to the enjoyment of the Holy Spirit that was sent down from God, even the Holy Ghost.

President Smith informs me that my time is about up. I will close by saying that Joseph Smith, the occupant of that sacred grove, was ministered to by the power of God, and thus prepared by the ministration of the Holy Spirit to receive the presence of the Father and the Son and to be commissioned by Them to do a great work for the redemption of our Father's children. The Prophet Joseph maintained his position as a chosen servant of God from that time through all the days of persecution and trials that he was called to pass, until the day of his martyrdom, sealing his testimony with his blood. I know that he was a prophet of God, and he fulfilled the measure of his creation, and the destiny that God had assigned unto him. Amen.

ELDER BRIGHAM H. ROBERTS.

(Of the First Council of Seventy.)

The word of the Lord to Moses:

"But only an account of this earth, and the inhabitants thereof, give I

unto you. For behold, there are many worlds that have passed away by the word of my power. And there are many that now stand, and innumerable are they unto man, but all things are numbered unto me, for they are mine and I know them.

"And it came to pass that Moses spake unto the Lord, saying: Be merciful unto thy servant, O God, and tell me concerning this earth, and the inhabitants thereof, and also the heavens, and thy servant will be content.

"And the Lord God spake unto Moses, saying: The heavens they are many, and they cannot be numbered unto man; but they are numbered unto me, for they are mine.

"And as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof, even so shall another come; and there is no end to my works, neither to my words."

I read this passage of scripture because there is in it the representation of a great program of the creations of God, the integration of worlds and the disintegration of worlds, and it presents on a grander scale than any other scripture that I am acquainted with, the great governing and controlling power of God, both in the integration or creation of things, and also in the disintegration of things; but whether worlds are being formed from chaos and brought into orderly systems, or whether systems themselves be disintegrated, it affords me unspeakable pleasure and confidence in the stability and in the preservation of orderly creations, that God presides over all. I believe, too, from the manifestation of God's wisdom that wherever disintegration is going on, where destruction apparently takes place, it will only be for the purpose of making room for more excellent things; and so this scripture ministers to me very comforting thoughts, and though I sometimes read in the works of men who give attention to

the extent and greatness of the universe, and the laws that govern therein, so far as they can understand them, that they, too, as well as this inspired man, become acquainted with the fact that here and there in spots throughout God's universe, disintegrating forces are going on and worlds are sometimes blotted out—yet the cosmos is preserved and order prevails instead of chaos.

That is rather a lofty conception of things that God gives us then of His masterfulness in the midst of His creations, and now I am a little sorry to draw your minds out of this great conception of things to make application of that principle in our earthly affairs, and yet I must do it if I would teach the lesson I have in mind.

Several times in this conference, when the fear came to me that I might be called upon to occupy this position for a few minutes, the thought came to me several times, if that happens I will not speak a word in relation to the great war now going on in Europe; so much has been said, and well said, that there is no need for me to say a word upon that subject, and anyhow I am a man of peace. I love peace and I pursue it. If you will pardon the personal note of it for just one moment, I may say to you that I really never had, in my boyhood days, a fight in my life but what it was forced on me. (Laughter.) Personally I was just in the same condition that the nations of Europe are now in, I was forced to fight; and generally, in fact so far as I can remember always, I entered every engagement that fell in my way with a good deal of anxiety, even fear, but there was this peculiarity about it—I don't know that it is peculiar, however; per-

haps it is a common inheritance to all men—but the first blow struck, I was always very comfortable after that. (Laughter.) But I believe in peace, and most heartily have I joined in the prayer for peace for those distracted nations now engaged in the dreadful arbitrament of their differences in war. This principle that is here described in regard to God's control of disintegrating forces in the universe as well as integrating forces, leads me to feel, in spite of all the horror of this great modern war, that God will control it just as He controls the wrath of men, which He makes to praise Him, and the rest of man's wrath He restrains. So my confidence is that the dreadful forces of war will not go beyond those limits that are necessary to bring to pass the purposes of the Almighty; and while I join in sorrow for those who will be brought to misery and poverty and death in this awful war, I nevertheless cannot help but believe that as God causes worlds and systems of worlds to pass away, that have doubtless reached the climax of their possibilities in their present form, and hence He destroys those forms so that there shall be better ones created, so now in this awful struggle I believe that it will finally end in the higher planes of civilization being reached, rather than that the present glories of our civilization shall pass away.

I say I join with you in the splendid services we have held in this conference in praying for peace, but deeper than that prayer for peace, more earnestly than for that prayer of peace, do I pray that justice, national justice shall prevail; and I hope the present war will not halt until justice, as God sees justice, shall be established. If it were halted

before that great achievement, the hecatombs of the slain up to now, the misery that will come in consequence of the war, will all be in vain; and so, though it may seem harsh and cruel, yet I sincerely trust that now the inevitable war has started, it shall go on to the end for the establishment of justice, and as God presides over the disintegrating forces in His universe, yet out of that destruction re-creates still better, so do I believe that the very forces of war are sometimes but instruments in His hand for the accomplishment of His purposes. I can conceive nothing of weakness in the attributes of Deity, and some of the things necessary sometimes to make progress are physical forces as well as moral and spiritual forces, and when used by him, of course, they are used in righteousness, and sometimes God is in the battle as well as in the still small voice and the wonderful invisible spirit that overspreads nations of people and changes their mental and moral attitude towards the great things that are going on in the world; God moves upon the minds of the people to bring them to the accomplishment of things even as He will. In evidence that God is sometimes in war, I have in an old note here, a statement about an occurrence in Israel, to the effect that the tribe of Reuben and Gad and one-half of the tribe of Manasseh were at war with the Hagarites, and they were successful in their contest, "for there fell down many slain (of the enemy), because the war was of God." On another occasion when Joshua was taking possession of the heritage which God had given to Israel, and Israel was sore beset by the enemy, suddenly there appeared a magnificent

warrior clothed cap-a-pie in shining armor, and Joshua approached him, apparently with some temerity and said, "Are you on our side or on the side of the enemy?" "No," replied this personage, "But as captain of the Lord's hosts come I now." And Joshua fell down before the personage and worshiped at his feet, without reproach. We read that there was war in heaven. I think God was in that war, for Satan was overthrown and forced from heaven. I cannot help but think that when the patriot fathers who founded our nation drew the sword against the great empire of England, in the maintenance of their avowed rights, and for the establishment of free government in this world, God sustained their feeble arms and crowned them with glory, though to do it He brought to their assistance the old-time monarchies of Spain and France, one of the most wonderful lessons in history—the use by the Lord of these representatives of arbitrary power in the old world to establish free institutions in the new, a remarkable incident in the history of men.

So, my brethren and sisters, I feel very comfortable even in the midst of these war times, knowing that God stands in the background of things and that He will have His way.

Speaking now of our own nation, just for a moment, and the pride I feel in it. I think we have a right to be a bit optimistic in relation to our own nation, I believe it is fulfilling the high destiny that God has marked out for it in these modern times. He founded it by wise men whom He raised up to frame the Constitution, which outlines the true principles of civil government, a law that I feel has gone forth

from Zion to permeate the whole world, to break up monarchical institutions, to break militarism, and to exhibit to the nations that there are other forces of government that should prevail rather than those policies of "blood and iron," in which men have so prided themselves. I believe our country will fulfill that kind of a mission. God not only founded this great government by the wisdom which He gave to wise men, the men upon which He caused His inspiration to rest; not only did He found it, but He preserved it. He tells us here in one of these revelations where He declares that He founded this government by wise men whom He raised up for that purpose, that He sanctified the land by the shedding of blood, and made it holy to us, because we can see what our freedom cost in the best blood of the human race in our great Revolutionary War. And God not only founded our nation, but He preserved it in one of the most awful conflicts that had existed in the world up to that time, now, however, rendered well-nigh insignificant in comparison with the terrible war now raging in Europe. The war in Europe is on a scale in keeping with our modern life, and reveals to us the great progress that the world has been making, since it would have been impossible a hundred years ago, when Napoleon Bonaparte was fighting over practically the same area of country that is now strewn with drawn battle lines, in France and Belgium,—it would have been impossible then, and I say this, in a way, is a revelation of the greatness of our modern life; our very wars are more stupendous than those of former ages.

Well, I say the Lord has pre-

served this nation; and it is possible for this nation to hold to the sacred heritage that God has given it. Brother Ivins, in his remarks yesterday, and other brethren who have spoken here, have called attention to the conditions upon which our nation may preserve its heritage, and its power in the world, and especially in this new world. It is remarkable to me that all the messages of scripture—or nearly so, that pertain to this western hemisphere—we find those messages, those warnings, those conditions upon which the safety of our national life depends, are in this record, the Book of Mormon. I say it is remarkable to me, and yet it is not so upon second thought, because that is where you would naturally look for them; but perhaps the idea laboring in my mind is the importance of this American record revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the things that are found in it concerning our America. To those splendid passages read by Brother Ivins here yesterday, I want to add one more, because it constitutes a message which the Latter-day Saints must deliver to this nation, we must make it known; and consequently in this official conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, where what is said has something of an official character to it; where we speak, in a way, with collective voice, I am taking the liberty of reading this scripture. They are the words of Moroni, when he was translating the records of Ether and giving an account of the colony of the brother of Jared coming to this land of America, and the covenants of the Lord upon the land. The comments are by Moroni in this record of Ether, from which I now read:

"And the Lord would not suffer that they [the Jaredites] should stop beyond the sea in the wilderness, but he would that they should come forth even unto the land of promise, which was choice above all other lands, which the Lord God had preserved for a righteous people;

"And he had sworn in his wrath unto the brother of Jared, that whose should possess this land of promise, from that time, henceforth and forever, should serve him, the true and only God, or they should be swept off when the fullness of his wrath should come upon them.

"And now we can behold the decrees of God concerning this land, that it is a land of promise, and whatsoever nation shall possess it, shall serve God, or they shall be swept off when the fullness of his wrath shall come upon them. And the fullness of his wrath cometh upon them when they are ripened in iniquity;

"For behold, this is a land which is choice above all other lands; wherefore, he that doth possess it shall serve God, or shall be swept off; for it is the everlasting decree of God. And it is not until the fullness of iniquity among the children of the land, that they are swept off.

"And this cometh unto you, O ye Gentiles, that ye may know the decrees of God, that ye may repent, and not continue in your iniquities until the fulness come, that ye may not bring down the fulness of the wrath of God upon you, as the inhabitants of the land have hitherto done.

"Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it, shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ."

This scripture does not leave the Gentile nations in doubt as to whom it is that must be worshiped as God. He is—

"The God of the land, who is Jesus Christ, who hath been manifested by the things which we have written." (Book of Ether, ch. ii.)

How valuable to the Gentile nations and to Israel, too, so far as he occupies the land, is this knowledge! What a great message is in this revealed American Scripture—the very conditions upon which the nations who occupy the land may hold an inheritance, is here written down and proclaimed in this great Nephite record. How precious it is unto the inhabitants of this land! How honored we ought to feel that we can, through the blessings of the Lord, make proclamation of these conditions and deliver the very word of the Lord unto the inhabitants of this land, and especially to our own nation, which exercises the dominating political power in the land—that we can give them the conditions upon which they may perpetuate their inheritance and their power. And I say, notwithstanding a terrible arraignment might be made of the wickedness and of the corruption that is in our own nation, yet I believe the people *en masse* are yet sound, and have enough of virtue to build upon, and which may be caused to grow in strength and in volume until the favor of the Lord may be perpetuated upon our nation.

I think it is a good omen, a splendid omen, that the executive of the nation in this hour of the world's trial can call all the inhabitants of the land to come to the throne of God and pray for peace, thus recognizing God and His influence upon the affairs of men. If we can only perpetuate that kind of spirit in the land, I believe that having had our chastisement as a nation for our national sins—including the shedding of the blood of our prophets—having had our chastisement in the ter-

rible Civil War that swept the land, that filled it with mourning and sorrow for a generation—I hope that the correction will be enough, and that from now on we shall have power to preach the Gospel in such plainness and manifest power of the spirit of the Lord, that we shall keep the nation in the favor of the Lord, and go on from righteousness to righteousness, from peace to peace, until we shall develop more completely than we have yet developed those great underlying principles of civil government that God gave to our nation, and that finally will become the inheritance of the world—God's law that shall go forth from Zion. I pray so, in the name of Jesus, Amen.

The congregation sang the hymn:

Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing;
Fill our hearts with joy and peace;
Let us each, Thy love possessing,
Triumph in redeeming grace.

Elder John L. Herrick pronounced the benediction.

Conference adjourned until 2 p. m.

CLOSING SESSION.

In the Tabernacle, at 2 p. m. President Joseph F. Smith called the meeting to order.

The congregation sang the hymn:

Now let us rejoice in the day of salvation;
No longer as strangers on earth need we roam,
Good tidings are sounding to us and each nation,
And shortly the hour of redemption will come.

The invocation was offered by Elder Samuel E. Woolley.

The congregation sang the hymn:

O, say, what is Truth? 'Tis the fairest gem
That the riches of worlds can produce;
And priceless the value of truth will be, when
The proud monarch's costliest diadem
Is counted but dross and refuse.

ELDER J. GOLDEN KIMBALL.

(Of the First Council of Seventy.)

The short time that I occupy I very much desire to have the Spirit of the Lord. I think possibly it would not be amiss if I occupied the time in talking about the Seventies. I claim to be good authority on that subject, and the information that I shall use comes from the Presiding Bishop's office, and they will vouch for its accuracy.

My object and purpose in speaking of the Seventies is to enlighten the Church as to that great body of Priesthood, who have a special calling as witness of the Lord to the nations of the earth. They are preachers of righteousness and our great effort has been not only to keep up with the organization, but where it has been deemed wise, the quorums have been increased in order to get the benefit that comes out of the class work. For we find where quorums are scattered throughout a stake, one quorum in a stake or one quorum in five or six or eight wards, it is very difficult to hold class meetings. It is understood that in all such cases that they hold a general Seventies' meeting, once each month. Last Sunday, at four p. m., we called a special conference of the Seventies, and we were very happy in finding four hundred and four Seventies in that gathering in the Bishop's building. By a show of hands, I think we could safely