

heavenly Father be upon us all. May we be worthy of the opportunity that has come to us. May we see the magnitude of the work we have set our hands to do and remember the commandment that we shall do it with all our might, mind and strength; that we may stand blameless before the Lord at the last day.

With all my heart, I sustain the men whom we have sustained today—President Grant and his counselors—to preside over us. They have been called by divine power; they have been sustained by this great people, and the Lord will sustain them in their ministry. They are unselfish and they are untiring in going about doing good and blessing those who live upon the earth. I honor them and I love them. I pray that our Father will bless them that they may have joy in their ministry. I pray that these, my brethren of the Council of the Twelve, whom I soon shall leave, may have joy in their ministry wherever they may go. Brethren and sisters, welcome them into your homes and into the organized stakes as they go among you. They bring to you a message of love, as also do the First Council of Seventy, the Patriarch and the presiding Bishopric, all those who, as general authorities of the Church go to visit you from time to time. These all are our Father's servants. Honor them, sustain them, and bless them, and our Father will honor and sustain and bless you. I pray that our Father may grant unto you the peace that passeth all understanding.

May the joy of the memory of that devoted man, President Joseph F. Smith, in whose honor, in part at least, we have met here today,

remain with us. Let us try, so far as may be, to measure up to his splendid virtue and, by and by—it may not be long for any of us—when the Father of us all shall summon us home, that we may find awaiting us on the other shore these splendid men and women who have honored God and kept his commandments, who have earned celestial glory in our Father's kingdom. That we may rejoice with them and they with us throughout the ages of eternity, is my desire! O may the Lord bless us all; may he help us to appreciate the opportunity that is placed in our way and give us a burning desire to bless our kind. May we honor him and keep his commandments, and in the end obtain eternal life and celestial glory with our Father's children wherever they may be in the world, who are worthy, is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

ELDER ORSON F. WHITNEY

Tribute to President Joseph F. Smith—The elements of greatness—The machinery and the power—Anecdote of Bishop Newel K. Whitney—Jeremiah's call—Joseph and Sidney's vision—Church leaders past and present.

President Joseph F. Smith was not only a Prophet; he was also a Patriarch—a fatherly man in every sense of the term. Second only to his loyalty and devotion to the work of God, was his warm and tender love for his family—his wives and children. Their welfare and happiness in time and for all eternity were his constant care.

And how rich was his recompense! In all that numerous flock of sons and daughters, not one "black sheep" is to be found, not

one wanderer from the fold of the Good Shepherd. This reflection must have been to him an unfailing source of comfort and consolation. The divinest work of Divinity, the most Godlike of all achievements, is in "bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." Next to that, and indeed a very part thereof, is the rearing of a family as President Smith reared his. He fully realized that it represented the nucleus and foundation of his eternal glory.

His paternal affection, though it began at home, did not end there. It went out far beyond the boundaries of his domestic domain. It embraced God's people as a whole, rich and poor, high and low. All who served the Lord were sharers in his sympathy and esteem.

Few things pleased the President more than to welcome to his hospitable home, or to public halls owned by the Church, his friends and fellow-laborers, for purposes of entertainment. A marked feature of his administration was an extended series of receptions, given at Conference time, in honor of the veterans who drove ox teams or pulled hand carts over the plains in pre-railroad days, or were occupying posts of hardship, if not of danger, in out of the way sections.

His kind thoughtfulness for the aged, and his tender concern for little children, were among his most pronounced characteristics. He held that children as well as men and women have rights, and that these rights should always be respected. I was present on one occasion when he expressed himself indignantly over the conduct of a woman who, coming late into

a public assembly, drew a child out of a seat that she wished to occupy. I have known him to leave his place on a railroad train to speak a word of comfort to a poor old lady, whose feelings had been hurt by an ill-mannered conductor. Once I saw him, when an excursion was about to start, walk the full length of the crowded train, with no apparent object but to satisfy himself that everyone else was comfortably seated; and not until every chick and child was provided for, did the President of the Church take his seat.

"Safety first" was his business motto. He never plunged recklessly into an enterprise, however inviting, and always looked before he leaped. Like Longfellow's Blacksmith, he "owed not any man," and this was ever his counsel to the people. Nor would he allow the Church to become indebted for a single dollar that it could not pay on demand. As Trustee-in-Trust, he permitted no needless expenditure of the funds entrusted to his care, and he kept and rendered strict account of all monies or other properties that came into his hands as custodian. He was determined that the credit of the Church, which he had helped to make "gilt-edged," should so remain.

A complete list of the public works connected with President Smith's career would form a lengthy catalogue. Never before in the history of the Latter-day Saints was there such a building administration. Those who criticized him for what they deemed a too active participation in commercial affairs, and thought that he should have been engrossed in spiritual things to the exclusion of the temporal,

overlooked the fact that from the "Mormon" point of view, the spiritual includes the temporal.

Every one who truly knew Joseph F. Smith recognized in him a man of mighty faith and religious power—a spiritual giant. A wonderfully impressive public speaker, he was deliberate and slow of utterance until aroused, when his words came like a torrent, with the roar of the cataract or the thunder peal. In forceful and vehement oratory, or what might be termed emotional eloquence, he had no equal in the Church.

President Smith's dominant traits were his unflinching courage and his unflagging devotion to duty. A man more diligent, more industrious, more zealous in the practice of the principles he professed, it would be impossible to find. Honest, fearless, and determined, he did not court martyrdom, but neither would he have shrunk from it, had the choice been between death and dishonor. He was an example of moral rectitude, of clean conduct, of right living. His noble qualities, his illustrious lineage, and his exalted station gave him a prestige all but unrivaled in the annals of the Church over which he presided. From his youth up, throughout his entire career, he stood a stalwart in the land, a man of unblemished integrity, a rock against which the billows of temptation beat and dashed in vain.

What made Joseph F. Smith such a character? Two things: In the first place, he was a big man—big by nature, and developed by experience. In the next place, God was with him. The machinery is one thing, and the power that moves the machinery is another.

The two combined constitute greatness.

Presiding Bishop Edward Hunter—he it was, if I remember aright—once related to me an anecdote about his predecessor, my grandfather, Newel K. Whitney, the second man called to the Bishopric in this dispensation. It was at Kirtland, Ohio, in December, 1831. The law of consecration had been revealed and was about to be put into operation. The properties of the Saints had to be consecrated for the building up of Zion, and Bishops were needed to handle these properties and administer the temporalities of the Church. Edward Partridge was the first Bishop called, but he had been sent down into Missouri, where the foundations of Zion were laid, and another Bishop was needed for Kirtland,—a Stake of Zion. The Lord said: "My servant Newel K. Whitney is the man who shall be appointed and ordained unto this power." (Doctrine & Covenants 72:8.) Newel K. Whitney, staggering under the weight of the responsibility that was about to be placed upon him, said to the Prophet: "Brother Joseph, I can't see a Bishop in myself."

No; but God could see it in him. He was a natural Bishop—a first class man of affairs. Probably no other incumbent of that important office, the Presiding Bishopric, to which he eventually attained, has been better qualified for it than Newel K. Whitney. But he could not see it, and he shrank from the responsibility. The Prophet answered: "Go and ask the Lord about it." And Newel did ask the Lord, and he heard a voice from heaven say: "*Thy strength is in me.*" That was enough. He accepted the

office, and served in it faithfully to the end of his days—a period of eighteen years.

When I heard this anecdote, it reminded me of the Prophet Jeremiah, to whom the word of the Lord came, saying in effect: "Before I formed thee in the body I knew thee, and I sanctified thee and ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." But Jeremiah, overwhelmed by the call to such a responsible station, exclaimed: "Ah, Lord God, behold I cannot speak; for I am a child." But the Lord said: "Say not, I am a child, for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak. * * Be not dismayed at their faces * * for behold I have made thee this day a defended city, and an iron pillar and brazen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee saith the Lord, to deliver thee." (Jer. 1:4-7; 17-19.)

God was with his servant, Joseph Smith, a man of great gifts, a mighty soul, sent into the world to be a prophet, a seer and a revelator. But what could he have done if God had not been with him? When Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon saw that wonderful vision of the celestial, terrestrial, and celestial glories, they said concerning it: "Being in the Spirit, on the sixteenth day of February, in the year of our Lord, 1832, by the power of the Spirit our eyes were opened," etc. There is the key. It was because God was with them, that they were able to see the Son of God and converse with him "in

the heavenly vision." They had eyes—spiritual eyes; they were seers. But what could they see until the Spirit of God came upon them and gave them the use of the seeric gift? The machinery was there, but the power had to be turned on.

So it was with Brigham Young, with John Taylor, with Wilford Woodruff, with Lorenzo Snow, with Joseph F. Smith; and so it is with Heber J. Grant, our beloved President of today. He has great gifts, a big heart, a kind soul, and because God is with him he will do a great and glorious work. But without God, neither he nor any other man could accomplish anything worth while.

This is my testimony regarding the First Presidency of the Church. They are the right men in the right place—the men for the time and the hour; and it is for us to stand by them, to hold up their hands, to rally round them and follow them; and God's work will triumph, his Kingdom will come in power and glory, and his holy will be done on earth even as it is done in heaven. Amen,

The choir and congregation sang one verse of: "The Spirit of God like a fire is burning."

A number of notices were read among them a statement that the choir would hold a concert in the Tabernacle, Friday, June 6, 5 p. m., when they would present Mendelssohn's oratorio, "St. Paul;" the Sunday School Union meeting would be held this evening in the Tabernacle; and a special Priesthood meeting in the Assembly Hall, Wednesday, June 4, 10 a. m.

The choir sang the anthem: "Praise."