

PRAYER FOR THE PRESIDENT.

In regard to the President of the United States, the eloquent prayer for his recovery that was offered by Brother Whitney, found an echo in my soul. My heart went with it. I met the gentleman here, and I have pleasure in bearing witness to what President Grant said this morning concerning him, personally, and I do hope that now he is lying possibly on his death-bed, the wicked slanders that have been sent abroad, reported here in Utah, in Zion, concerning him will cease, if for no other reason than the condition that he is in. I have the greatest assurances that can be given that those stories which have been circulated concerning his personal morality are not true. I believe that he is a good man; I believe that the Lord has been with him; that he has accomplished a mighty work among the European nations; and I believe that he is sincere and that his heart beats for the good of the whole world, and for the good of the United States in particular, because he is the President thereof.

Now, everybody is at perfect liberty to dissent from that idea if they have any reason for it, but that is my conviction. I have had interviews, associations, with men and women in different lands all over the continent of Europe, and throughout the United States, and I know a little something about discernment, and my discernment is to the effect that what Brother Grant said about Woodrow Wilson this morning is eminently true and right. May the Lord bless him and heal him, and may the Holy Spirit, which comes from above, to bring about peace and harmony and good will, enter into our souls, unite us together for every effort that will be for the welfare of humanity, and the glory be to God, through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

PRESIDENT RUDGER CLAWSON

My brethren and sisters, I have greatly rejoiced in the spirit and power of this meeting, and also of our first session that was held this morning. Surely the Lord is with his people and with his servants, and the inspiration of his Spirit is upon them. Gathered here in this house is a great host of people, mostly adult members of the Church. In the Church there are also another great host, the host that I refer to are the children of the Latter-day Saints. We have them among us in great numbers. They have been committed to our care and keeping by the Lord. We are the children of the Father, and our little ones are also his children. He is the Father of their spirits, and we are the fathers and the mothers of their bodies. And thus is the relationship between us and our heavenly Father clearly defined, as also between us and our children—a relationship that is indeed very intimate.

MAN'S DUTIES TO MULTIPLY AND REPLENISH THE EARTH.

When the Lord placed Adam in the Garden of Eden, it was found that he was alone. God saw that it was not good for man to be alone; therefore, he brought the woman to him to be a companion and a helpmeet, and he joined them together in marriage. Thus, marriage received divine sanction in the very beginning of the race. The Lord said unto our first parents: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over * * * every living thing." This great commandment had reference to the posterity of Adam and Eve, which should follow. The law was made binding upon them; and I do not believe, that it was contemplated by this great commandment that conditions such as we find in the world at the present time should exist; wherein many parents restrict their offspring to one or two children. This seems especially deplorable in view of the fact that parents are endowed with a God-given power of procreation, and that it is within their province and ability to have numerous children.

God said, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." And so this law is made binding upon men and women in the world through the marriage relation. Whenever this sacred covenant has been guarded properly and observed among men, they have been blessed and prospered.

It was so in ancient Israel. The law respecting marriage was introduced by Moses, the great law giver, and was very strict. Those who violated it were subject to extreme penalties. You will remember, that when the children of Jacob, or Israel, as he is called, went down into Egypt, they numbered something like seventy souls and when they came out of Egypt, out of bondage their number exceeded six hundred thousand souls. Thus during a period of four hundred years the children of Israel, while in Egypt, were greatly blessed and multiplied, and this blessing continued with them during their journeys in the wilderness. When they came into the land of Palestine they were a highly favored people. They were blessed, however, only so long as they observed to keep the commandments of God, so long as they held sacred the great and glorious covenant of marriage, but when they departed from it, as they sometimes did, and drifted into evil ways, and sometimes into immorality, the anger of the Lord was kindled against them and his judgments fell upon them. It was so in that time; it has been so, in all ages of the world, and with all the nations of the earth. Great and mighty kingdoms have gone down to destruction and to oblivion because they broke the everlasting covenant of marriage and departed from the way of virtue. This is a solemn thing, indeed.

We can learn many lessons from history. You will remember what David, the Psalmist, the sweet singer of Israel, said in respect to children. The words will be found in the one hundred twenty-seventh Psalm:

CHILDREN A PRIZED GIFT OF THE LORD.

"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

"As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.

"Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate."

So, I think we may regard children as a great and precious gift from the Lord, a gift that is much to be prized. The Savior in his day clearly defined the status of children. People brought their little ones, so that they might see the Savior, and that he might touch them. When this aroused the anger of the disciples, and they rebuked those who brought the children forward, the Savior, who was much annoyed, said:

"Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Then he uttered this solemn warning:

"Except ye become as little children ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

His language signified that little children were innocent before the Lord, and worthy of consideration, worthy of attention and notice; and that they must not be passed by and ignored. This was, certainly, a beautiful example. So, my brethren and sisters, in these latter times, Israel is under that great law, the first great commandment which was given to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

A REMARKABLE PICTURE.

It is expected of us that we should be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth; and, so far as the Latter-day Saints have observed this great and important law, they have been blessed of God, and they have been multiplied, greatly multiplied, in all the stakes of Zion. In every ward we have many large families. It is not an uncommon thing to meet a woman who has had ten or twelve or fourteen children; and sometimes you will meet women in the Church who have had as high as eighteen children. I met one such woman, and I asked her casually how many children she had in her family. She said:

"Brother Clawson, I have had eighteen children, and most of them are living."

I said to her:

"All honor to you. Surely you are blest of the Lord; and I look upon you as a veritable queen among women."

Just the other day, in attendance at one of the quarterly conferences—the conference of the Montpelier stake—I was speaking

on the subject of marriage and I saw in the congregation, before me, a woman with eleven children, all sitting together and occupying an entire bench in that congregation. There was a nursing child upon her lap, and ten other children. She had twelve children, but one was dead. Her entire family of children were with her there in that meeting, and I presume her husband would have been with her also, but, being a railroad man, he could not be excused from his duties. It was a remarkable picture, and I felt in my heart to praise the Lord that we have such women among us—women and men, too, of course, who are willing to honor the law of marriage, who believe in it, who believe in large families.

THE SAINTS BELIEVE IN LARGE FAMILIES.

Our leaders, in the Church, believe in large families, and that is generally the example that they have set to the people. President Brigham Young was the father of many children, very many; I know not how many, but a host of children. John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, Lorenzo Snow, and the late Joseph F. Smith, all had large families. My own father, the late Bishop Hiram B. Clawson, was the father of forty-two children. President Joseph F. Smith was the father of some forty-three or forty-four beautiful children. I have seen them all in a single group picture. It was fascinating. I could hardly take my eyes from that picture. I marveled at it, to see this man, the leader of the Church, the Prophet of God, sitting in the midst of his own family, composed of a great host of children. Surely in a time to come his seed will be as the sands upon the sea-shore, and as the stars in heaven for number. Blessed was he, and blessed were these great men of the Church, with the large families that God gave them. They were indeed blessed. They honored the law of marriage, and they preached it to the people all the days of their lives.

And so we also preach it. We preach it today to this people and we say to them: be careful and guard this glorious principle, and honor it in your lives. Exercise these God-given powers of procreation, as far as you reasonably can; and Latter-day Saints, do not interfere with the fountains of life, and do not cut off your posterity and restrict them. Do not limit them to that extent that your only hope is hanging by a thread. For this is not pleasing to the Lord.

THE RESPONSIBILITY IN LARGE FAMILIES.

Then, oh, how great is the responsibility that goes with these children, when they come into our homes! Do you not know, brethren and sisters, that the pure spirits of these little children who are among us were sent down from heaven to take upon themselves mortality? It takes the body and the spirit to constitute the soul of man. That was the blessing that you received at your birth. That is the blessing that I received. I came down upon this great mission, to secure my

body; and oh, how thankful I am, how I rejoice and praise the Lord for this precious gift! So we are blessed and so our children are blessed.

There is another grave responsibility, that should not be lost sight of, and it is the obligation resting upon us to teach and train our children in the principles of eternal truth, to teach them everything pertaining to the everlasting gospel, and to train them up in the way they should go; because, as with us, so with our children. They must learn to subdue and bring into subjection the evil appetites of the body, the unrighteous desires of the heart, and the sinful inclinations that spring out of the heart through the body. These things must be controlled in order that our children may grow up without sin, if possible, unto salvation; and that in the future they may take up these bodies from the grave and go on to exaltation and glory.

RESPONSIBILITY RESTS IN THE HOME.

Now, let me say briefly that the first great obligation, with reference to the children, rests with the parents themselves in the home. It is upon you, fathers in Israel, and it is upon you, mothers. The Church has done much, the Church is doing much, to assist you in the work, of training your children. God has so ordered it that we have organizations in the Church which are intended to give help to parents in the training of their children; but that does not relieve the parents of their obligations. We have the Sunday Schools with at least one hundred twenty-five thousand children; and we have the young people's organizations. We have the Primaries with twenty-five or thirty thousand children; and we have the Religion Classes with about an equal number. We have the quorums of the Lesser Priesthood, enrolling great hosts of boys, in the deacons' quorums, in the teachers' quorums and in the priests' quorums. Of course, these boys, many of them, belong also to the Sunday Schools and other auxiliary organizations. They are a great army, these boys and girls, and they must have training and education, they must be instructed, and trained in the principles of eternal truth. A great work is being done in these splendid societies that were inspired of the Lord. Teachers in these organizations are giving their time without money and without price, freely, for the instruction of the children.

What are you doing, brethren and sisters? Are you sending your children to these places of instruction? Do you support them? Are you fostering the Religion Class? Are you giving good support to the Primary organization, to the young peoples' societies, and to the Sunday Schools? Above all, I repeat it, above all, are you giving proper instruction yourselves to your children in the home, by precept and by example? If parents want their children to be good children, they will have to be good themselves. If they want their children to keep the Word of Wisdom, they must keep the word of wisdom themselves. If they want their children to be prayerful, they must also lead out

and pray. If they want their children to pay tithing, then the parents must pay tithing. It is not sufficient to say to a child, "Go thou and do so and so," because more than likely the child will not go. But if the parents say, "Come now, with me, and do so and so," the child will go with the parent.

So, my brethren and sisters, I have felt in these few words today to emphasize the grave responsibility which is resting upon us with reference to our children; and, let me say, in addition, we should guard our children against evil companionship and evil doing, against the immoralities of the world today, which are very great.

Do you always know, parents, where your children are? If you are at home in the evening, and they are away, do you know where they are? That is the question. Do you know what company they keep? Do you know what hours they keep? If you would bring them up properly you must know these things; you must be posted; you must keep your eye upon the children, because many of them are weak, and all of them are inexperienced. They are beset by temptations, and they need your counsel and your aid.

Woe unto that man, or woe unto that woman who despises little children, who passes them coldly by, who ignores them, and who has no thought or love for them, because these little ones are the gift of God unto man, precious immortal souls. Let us remember this, brethren and sisters, and let us give the children that care and attention that are essential to their welfare and salvation, which is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

ELDER GEORGE F. RICHARDS

It is three and one-half years since I last had the opportunity of attending a general conference of the Church, and I assure you, my brethren and sisters, that this opportunity affords me much genuine pleasure. I have been delighted with the privilege of meeting so many of the brethren and sisters with whom I have had a personal acquaintance, and I regret that I am unable to entertain in my own home, at conference time, those of whose hospitality I have partaken while visiting the stakes in Zion.

THE SITUATION IN THE BRITISH MISSION

As most of you are aware, I have but recently returned from England, Liverpool being the headquarters of the European mission over which I had the honor of presiding while there. Since my return, many people native of Great Britain, and elders who have labored there, have enquired of me as to the conditions of the people and of the work in that mission. No doubt but there are others to whom a brief recital of conditions over there will be of interest. Before the war there were from three to four hundred missionaries from Zion