

SECOND DAY

Conference continued in the Tabernacle, Monday April 5, at 10 a. m.

Congregation was called to order by President Heber J. Grant, who presided.

The choir and congregation sang, "We thank Thee, O God, for a prophet."

Elder Peter G. Johnston, member of the general auditing committee, offered prayer.

The choir and congregation sang, "How firm a foundation, ye Saints of the Lord."

ELDER STEPHEN L. RICHARDS

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation. Salvation so designated means temporal as well as eternal salvation.

THE GOSPEL COMPREHENDS OUR WHOLE COURSE OF LIVING.

I believe that within the plan of the gospel are laid down all of the laws and principles that underlie our lives, here and hereafter. It sets forth a rule of action for our conduct that leads us to happiness and joy in this life, as well as to exaltation in the life to come. An interpretation of the gospel is desirable, in order that men may know what is held out to them by it and in it. Its fundamental laws and principles comprehend completely our whole course of living.

HEALTH.

The gospel lays down the rules that will bring to us one of the first essentials, that of health. There is contained within that simple and understandable law of the Church, the Word of Wisdom, principles, commandments, exhortations which, if lived up to and obeyed, insure health. That health is desirable goes without saying. I know of no other people who take quite the same view of the human body as do we. We regard the body as something more than an organization of the materials of this earth. The body to us has a religious as well as a temporal significance. The body is the tabernacle wherein is housed our spirit, which is a child of God and which is our greatest possession. We cannot desecrate these bodies that have been given to us without offering affront to him who gave them. They are sacred to us. It is our obligation to preserve them in purity and in wholesomeness. We are taught that we cannot live proper and righteous lives without caring for our bodies in a proper and righteous way. We cannot take into our bodies those things forbidden without desecrating them, without militating against the efficiency of the body, and without bringing upon us the effects which follow the infraction of natural

and just laws concerning health. So that if one would have health, he should live the laws of the gospel with reference to health.

WEALTH.

The gospel teaches the fundamental laws of wealth—its acquisition and proper use. It teaches industry, thrift and economy; honesty in business and unselfishness. It points out that all means and substances are gifts from God, committed to the care of men as stewards or trustees, to be used for the benefit and advancement of the people of the world. It tells us the real meaning of proprietorship. It attaches to wealth, as it does to every other material thing, a religious significance and makes plain its proper relation to our lives.

It bids us return a portion of our interest to the Lord for the immediate use of his Church and Kingdom, thereby ever reminding and impressing us with the true source of our riches. If the gospel conception of wealth were prevalent in the world there would be no such estrangement between rich and poor, between so-called capital and labor, as we see today. The perplexing problem of its just distribution would be solved and a large portion of the difficulties of human society would be eliminated.

SOCIAL ORDER.

The gospel of Jesus Christ lays down also the laws which provide for the proper maintenance of our social order. By adherence to its principles man learns, in the first place, his relationship to society; and, in the second place, to act in such manner as to properly discharge his obligations to his fellowman. Every problem that confronts society today has its solution in the application of the simple principles of the gospel to human life and living. The gospel points out that the foundation of society is the home, and the marital relation. We are advised in the gospel what that relationship should be, what it should produce, and how it should stand at the basis of all social order. So far as I know, there are no other people who subscribe to the same doctrines in which we believe, concerning the institution of marriage, the perpetuity of that relationship, and the relationship of children to parents. The application of the principles of the gospel to this relationship means good homes. Good homes mean good communities. Good communities cannot mean anything other than a great, good nation, a good country, a good people.

Not only are we taught that our homes are at the very foundation of our social order and relations, but we are taught in the gospel the proper relationship of man to man. Charity, kindness, benevolence, long-suffering one with another, brotherly help are all principles embraced within the gospel of Jesus Christ and all of them are necessary to build and maintain a society that shall be fit for people to live in, and to be advanced in. We are given the institutions of the Church, in part, at least, to sustain the proper social intercourse among the people. There are provided within the Church agencies and facilities,

which meet every requirement of social life. Our wards, to my thinking, constitute the most advantageous social units that have ever been devised or suggested in the history of society. There are presented within the organizations of the wards opportunities for every person to receive legitimate training in society, proper social intercourse and the cultivation of all the desirable traits of character that go to make up good men and good women.

GOVERNMENT.

Not only does the gospel provide the laws, the rules and the regulations that govern health, wealth, and society, but the principles of the gospel lie at the very foundation of just government.

The teaching of reverence, of obedience, of respect for law, order and authority is indispensable to the maintenance of proper and just government. Men who have not been taught to respect authority, whether that authority be superimposed upon them, or from whatever source it comes, will not respect the authority that they themselves set up. I believe firmly that men who believe in God, men who believe in his power to rule, to lay down laws for their guidance and direction, are trained by virtue of that belief to be the proper subjects of government. I believe that such training is indispensable to good citizenship. Obedience is not only the first law of heaven, but obedience is the fundamental requirement of all good government, and until men can come to realize that they must yield obedience to the law and the authority which has been established, there can never be any proper legitimate and adequate government.

HAPPINESS.

Not only does the gospel lay down the laws and rules which provide for health and wealth for the maintenance of society, for government, but it lays down the foundation for that which is indispensable in human life, real, genuine happiness. There can be no true happiness and no true joy, in my judgment, without righteousness. When I say happiness and joy, I do not mean the superficial pleasure that comes to one in the gratification of personal appetite and desire. I refer to that inner feeling of satisfaction, contentment, love and genuine joy, that come to the man with a clear conscience, a life devoid of offense, with love for God and his fellowmen in his heart. That supreme happiness and joy, so far as our experience goes, can be obtained only in one way. That is by willingly-given service in the cause of our Father in Heaven, for the benefit of his children. The gospel provides the ways and means in which that service can be most efficiently done. The organizations of the Church are established in such manner that service may be rendered by everyone within its membership to the ultimate benefit of every other member. It is a mutual plan whereby each may help every other and the common good may be promoted.

UNDERSTANDING THE ALL-COMPREHENDING NATURE OF THE GOSPEL,
WHAT IS OUR DUTY?

So that, in brief, the gospel fulfils every requirement of a human life. It satisfies every need. It is so comprehensive that it embraces all the good that we desire to be brought into our lives and it helps us to work out our salvation here and hereafter. What is our duty? Our duty, in my judgment, is to so interpret this great gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ that men and women everywhere shall know what it means, that they shall know its great significance in the development of their lives and in their salvation. It is our first duty to so interpret it for our children and for our people at home that they will see it and understand it; for I cannot but think that if they can be brought to realize what it means in their lives, the security that it gives them against the incursion of evil and danger, the happiness and joy that it insures to them by obedience to its teachings and commandments, they will not fail to lay hold of it. Our second duty is to present it to the world in like manner. I cannot bring myself to think that we discharge our full obligation when we merely issue the challenge to the world and set forth that here is the everlasting gospel, the authority of God, the power to save, without explaining, persuading and inviting the men and the women of the world to join in this great life-saving plan. I believe it to be our obligation to present these great truths in such manner, both to ourselves at home and our fellow men in the world, that their real significance shall be felt, that men shall be acquainted with their great need, and that they shall know that in no other way than by compliance with the laws, the rules and regulations of the gospel can they achieve the great purpose of life and be brought back into the presence of God from whom they came. Our Church is a great institution. Favorable attention to many of our principles has come from various parts of the world. Many there are who have come to look upon us as a great people. Let me say to you, my brethren and sisters, that we shall not discharge the full obligation that our Father has given to us unless we bear out in our lives the reputation for good that we enjoy and vitalize in our living the eternal principles of truth revealed to us through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

OUR MESSAGE TO THE WORLD.

Therefore we say to all the world, if you want health, live the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ; if you want wealth, if you want that which is necessary to sustain life and to secure the necessary comforts of life, obey the laws of the gospel, pay tithing to the Lord. If you would solve the great problems of society, apply the gospel of Jesus Christ. If you would understand government, if you would create and train citizens who will make a great government, live the gospel of Jesus Christ, for a good citizen in the Church of God is a good citizen in any good government on the face of the earth. If you

want happiness, if you want that great joy that comes into the hearts of those who know the truth, if you want contentment, peace of mind, opportunity for service, live the gospel of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Master.

God help us, my brethren and sisters, to appreciate what this great gift, the gospel, means to us. God help us to be worthy of the honorable names we bear: Latter-day Saints in the Church of Christ, I humbly ask, in his name. Amen.

ELDER JAMES E. TALMAGE

The meetings of our conference have been notable, as have been the meetings of earlier conferences. It is indeed an impressive fact that our people come up from the stakes and in from the missions at conference time in such large numbers, and assemble to receive instruction, admonition, advice, encouragement and such good gifts as the Lord holds in store for them. I have sometimes heard men try to describe great gatherings to which people have come for some definite purpose, and when all other comparisons seemed to be inadequate, they have said the movement was almost like the "Mormons" coming to conference. No matter what the weather may be, or the seasonal conditions, a very great number of the Latter-day Saints are willing to lay aside their material affairs to gather here in the appointed place, at the time selected and announced, for the conferences of the Church. In a measure this is comparable to the assembling of the tribes in ancient Israel at the time of the Passover, though we come not as distinct tribes but as members of one body, all upon one footing, everyone representing a unit in the great Church of Jesus Christ.

THE CHURCH A UNIQUE ORGANIZATION. NOT SECTARIAN.

In this respect we are unique, and in many other respects is the Church unique. How could it be otherwise when the conditions of its organization and the occurrences immediately preceding are considered? The Church of Jesus Christ stands, in a particular sense, alone. Not even a hostile commentator or an unfavorable critic has ever yet ventured to put forth the assertion that this Church has any relationship of origin and development with any other church or denomination on the face of the earth. We are not regarded as an offshoot of any mother church. * Churches generally treat us for what we are, a body of religionists standing alone in the world.

That does not mean that we shall refuse to lend our ready cooperation with other religionists or religious bodies in any movement for the general good, in any civic or patriotic duty; but it does mean that, so far as the essential characteristics of our organization are concerned, this Church has no counterpart amongst the sects and denominations of the day.