

nion, Central States; Charles A. Callis, Southern States; John M. Knight, Western States; Joseph W. McMurrin, California; Brigham S. Young, Northwestern States; Rey L. Pratt, Mexico; Joseph Quinney, Jr., Canada; and Benjamin Goddard, Bureau of Information, Temple Block, Salt Lake City.

The Tabernacle was filled to capacity with people from all parts of the Church.

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

The invocation was offered by Elder Thomas N. Taylor, president of the Utah stake of Zion.

The choir and congregation sang, "Guide us, O thou great Jehovah."

### PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

It certainly is a very inspiring sight to see this house full and people standing at this our first session of the conference.

#### THE CHURCH IN EXCELLENT CONDITION

I rejoice in the growth of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at home and abroad. I rejoice in feeling that we have every cause to be grateful to the Lord for the blessings that have come to us during the past year. I believe that I am within the bounds of truth when I say that the Church was never in a better condition than at the present time, that there was never greater unity existing among the general authorities of the Church, more anxiety and determination to serve the Lord, than today; that we never had more energetic and faithful men presiding over the stakes of Zion and in the wards and missions of the Church than today; neither have we had more energetic, faithful men and women, than have been presiding and are presiding at the present time, as general, stake and ward officers in our various auxiliary organizations.

#### GOOD WORK BY THE AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

It fell to my lot, yesterday afternoon, to address the conference of the Relief Society for a few minutes. The Assembly Hall was filled to overflowing, and many people were standing. I am convinced that such a gathering as that of active, wide-awake, energetic women-members could not be witnessed among any other people, who are no more numerous than are the Latter-day Saints. Our Relief Societies are doing a very remarkable and wonderful work in looking after the sick and the afflicted. I remember one very good friend of mine, a non-member of the Church, said to his wife just before he passed away, so she told me, that no other people, in his estimation—and he had traveled nearly all over the world—took as good care of their sick and looked after their poor as well as do the Latter-day Saints. They are really one great family of brothers and sisters,

united with a common bond of love and respect. Our young people, and those who look after the children of the Primary Association are also doing a splendid work.

#### SATISFACTORY REPORTS FROM THE MISSIONS

The reports from our Missions from all over the world are very satisfactory; and the one call, claim, or plea that is made is, "Send us more missionaries." There is only one real exception to this, and that is in Japan. There is no exception in the call for more missionaries in that field, but, after twenty-odd years of labor in that country, we are convinced that not a dozen people have been thoroughly converted to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have seriously considered the question of closing that mission, but have not yet arrived at any conclusion.

#### ENLIGHTENING STATISTICS

It has been customary, at April conferences, to give some statistics to the people regarding the expenditure of their tithing. Nearly the entire tithing paid during the past year has been returned, in various appropriations, to the different stakes of Zion.

General—The amount returned to the stakes from the tithes, for stake and ward purposes, during the past year and for maintenance and operation of the same, has been (I shall not read the odd figures) .....	\$ 993,000
The amount expended for the maintenance and operation of Church schools has been .....	835,000
The amount expended for the construction, maintenance and operation of temples has been .....	449,000
Expended for hospital construction .....	146,000
Since our last General Conference our hospital in Idaho Falls, costing in the neighborhood of \$400,000 has been dedicated, and is open for the care of the afflicted.	
<b>For Charity</b> —For the care of the worthy poor and other charitable purposes, including hospital treatment.....	171,000
<b>Missions</b> —For the maintenance and operation of all the missions, and for the erection of places of worship and other buildings in the missions .....	586,000
<b>The grand total</b> —Taken from the tithes, and returned by the Trustee-in-Trust to the Saints for the maintenance and operation of the stakes and wards, for the maintenance and operation of Church schools, temples, charities, and for mission activities is .....	\$3,182,207.22
<b>Other Charities</b> —In addition to charities paid out of the tithes, as before stated, there have also been distributed the fast offerings and Relief Society and other charities, amounting to \$471,000 which, added to the \$171,000 paid from the tithes, makes a total of Church charities of \$643,060.47.	
Following statistics and other reports are compiled from the Church records for the year 1923:	
<b>Church growth</b> —Children blessed and entered upon the records of the Church, in the stakes and missions.....	19,199
Children baptized in the stakes and missions.....	13,020
Converts baptized and entered on the records of the stakes and missions .....	7,492

The organized stakes of Zion now number 90.

Wards and independent branches 972.

There are 24 mission of the Church.

There are branches in the missions, 635.

The birth-rate in the Church is 35 per 1000.

The marriage-rate is 14 per 1000. I think that ought to be increased.

The death-rate is 7.2, which is certainly very satisfactory indeed.

There are 157,990 persons in the Church who are married.

There were 241 persons divorced in the year 1923.

Families owning their own homes, 75%.

<b>Temple Statistics—In 1918 and 1923—A comparison for the past five years—</b> Baptisms, five years ago.....	175,000; last year	393,000
Ordinances, five years ago.....	154,000; last year	442,000

Total ordinances in 1918.....	329,529; in 1923	836,053
or an increase of more than 150%—over 500,000 more ordinances performed last year than five years ago.		

<b>Missionary statistics—</b> On Foreign missions, from Stakes of Zion, there are .....		1,798
Local elders laboring in foreign missions.....		83
Special missionaries laboring in the stakes of Zion.....		2,137

Total missionaries .....		4,018
--------------------------	--	-------

**Stake Presidents**—There have been appointed since last October the following Stake Presidents: Wayne H. Redd, San Juan stake. Henry M. Mickelsen, Lost River stake. M. Howard Randall, Morgan stake. James Berkley Larsen, Shelley stake. Winslow Farr Smith, Ensign stake. William H. Callahan, Wayne stake.

There have been new wards organized: In the Roosevelt Stake, Mountwel; in the Liberty stake, Yale; in the Los Angeles stake, Belvedere and Glendale.

#### TEXT FOR AN IMPORTANT SUBJECT

I am requested to read this announcement.

"Mendelssohn's oratorio entitled, **Elijah**, will be given this evening, Friday, in the Tabernacle, commencing at 8:15. In addition to the choir of two hundred and fifty voices selected from the Tabernacle Choir, ten talented soloists, and an orchestra of forty men, will take part. The committee announce popular prices of 25c and 50c. Tickets may be obtained at the box office and at the Bureau of Information. The choir and musicians have been preparing this splendid oratorio for many months, and a musical treat is promised to all who attend. Will you kindly emphasize the above, and oblige,

"Sincerely, **The Committee.**"

I have decided to emphasize it by devoting my talk, entirely, or practically so, to that subject. I had not made up my mind until this morning what I would talk about.

On the 21st day of September, 1823, nearly seven years before the organization of the Church, Moroni, an angel, made the following statement to Joseph Smith the Prophet:

"Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.  
"And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers.

"If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming."

In the revelation known as the Preface to the Doctrine and Covenants we are told:

"Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled.

"What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same.

"For behold, and lo, the Lord is God, and the Spirit beareth record, and the record is true, and the truth abideth forever and ever. Amen."

#### THE APPEARANCE OF ELIJAH

In 1836, about thirteen years after the angel Moroni declared that Elijah should restore again the Priesthood, Elijah appeared to Oliver Cowdery and the Prophet Joseph Smith, in the Kirtland temple. The record of this appearance is to be found in the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 110. Not only did Elijah appear, upon that occasion, in the Kirtland temple, to the Prophet and to Oliver Cowdery, but the Savior and others appeared, and I will read not only regarding Elijah's appearance, but also that of the Savior. The Savior stated:

"I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father."

#### OUR SAVIOR, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST LIVES

I know of nothing for which we, as Latter-day Saints, should be more grateful than the absolute knowledge that every Latter-day Saint has, that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the world, the Son of the living God. All over the world today, even among professed Christians, there is a lack of faith in the divinity of the Savior. Even some ministers of the gospel go far enough to declare from their pulpits that they do not believe that Jesus was the Son of God. There is no doubt in the mind of any Latter-day Saint living regarding the fact that Jesus is the Son of God, because when the boy Joseph Smith, not yet fifteen years of age, went into the woods to pray in the Sacred Grove, he saw God the Father and God introduced to him his well-beloved Son, and told this boy to hear Him. Every Latter-day Saint believes absolutely in the revelations contained in the Doctrine and Covenants, that they are true; and in one of these revelations we have this recorded by Sidney Rigdon and the Prophet:

"And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!

"For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father—

"That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God."

We have an account of the actual appearance of the Savior in the first temple erected in this dispensation which was at Kirtland.

"I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father.

"Behold, your sins are forgiven you; you are clean before me; therefore, lift up your heads and rejoice.

"Let the hearts of your brethren rejoice, and let the hearts of all my people rejoice, who have, with their might, built this house to my name.

"For behold, I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here; and I will manifest myself to my people in mercy in this house."

Then after the appearance of the Savior we have the following:

#### KEYS TO GATHERING OF ISRAEL RESTORED

"After this vision closed, the heavens were again opened unto us; and Moses appeared before us, and committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north."

One of the Articles of Faith of the Latter-day Saints is:

"We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion shall be built upon this [the American] continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory."

"After this, Elias appeared, and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying that in us and our seed all generations after us should be blessed.

#### VISITATION OF ELIJAH IN FULFILMENT OF MALACHI'S PREDICTION

"After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us; for Elijah the prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death, stood before us, and said:

"Behold the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi—testifying that he [Elijah] should be sent, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come—

"To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse—

"Therefore, the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors."

This visitation of Elijah to the Kirtland temple was on April 3, 1836, the 88th anniversary being yesterday.

#### THE FAITH OF THE SAINTS VERIFIED BY TEMPLES AND WORKS THEREIN

I rejoice in the fact that the Latter-day Saints believe absolutely beyond the peradventure of a doubt, that Elijah did come, that he did commit the keys to Oliver Cowdery and to Joseph Smith, and the temple erected in Kirtland, the temple erected in Nauvoo, and the temples that have been erected here in this state of Utah, and those in Hawaii and in Canada, and the one that is now being erected in Mesa City, Arizona, bear testimony, to the extent of millions of dollars of money, of the faith of the Latter-day Saints that the keys have been

given, whereby we can, in very deed, be saviors upon Mount Zion for those who have died without a knowledge of the gospel.

#### AN AWAKENING ON THIS SUBJECT IN ALL THE WORLD

And simultaneously, almost, with the declaration way back in 1823 by the Angel Moroni, (Section 2, Doctrine and Covenants that I have read to you,) all over the world there came into the hearts of people, not of our faith, a desire to organize genealogical societies, to compile records of names by the thousands, and tens of thousands. I have met in many lands and in many climes, men who have spent years, and a large amount of treasure, and almost their entire time, in compiling records of their ancestors. I have asked them why they did it. They said they did not know, they were seized with a great desire to compile records of their ancestors; and, as we know, these records are worth their weight in gold to the Latter-day Saints.

#### INTEREST IN WORK FOR THE DEAD INCREASING

It fell to my lot last night to make a brief address to the representatives of the Genealogical societies and organizations of the Church, on the top floor of the Bishop's Building. The auditorium there was crowded to overflowing. We have had a great many gatherings there at one time and another, but I have never attended a gathering in that building when the room was as well filled as it was last night. It was a meeting of enthusiastic laborers, whose works testify to the coming of Elijah, to the turning of the hearts of the fathers to the children, and of the children to the fathers. This work is being carried on, and as I have read to you in the statistics here this morning, over five-hundred thousand more ordinances were performed in our temples this past year than were performed during a like period five years ago. I rejoice in the splendid work that is being accomplished, and in the wonderful loyalty of those who are working in the temples, and those who are gathering information for genealogical work of different kinds.

I believe that the Committee will be reasonably well satisfied with my emphasis of the great oratorio here tonight, of *Elijah*. I hope the house will be crowded to overflowing.

#### WE ARE ENGAGED IN THE MARVELOUS WORK OF THE LORD

I rejoice in the blessings of the Lord, I rejoice in a knowledge that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the world, and that Joseph Smith was a prophet of the true and the living God. We are engaged in the work of the Lord, and I wish to read the words of the Lord given to the grandfather of our late beloved President Joseph F. Smith, the father of the Prophet Joseph and the Patriarch Hyrum Smith. These words were given, remember, before the Church was organized:

"Now behold, a marvelous work is about to come forth among the children of men.

"Therefore, O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day.

"Therefore, if ye have desire to serve God, ye are called to the work; "For behold the field is white already to harvest; and lo, he that thrusteth in his sickle with his might, the same layeth up in store that he perisheth not, but bringeth salvation to his soul;

"And faith, hope, charity and love, with an eye single to the glory of God, qualify him for the work.

"Remember faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, godliness, charity, humility, diligence.

"Ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Amen.

#### THE GREAT PURPOSE OF OUR LABORS DECLARED

And before the Church was organized a revelation was given to the father of our beloved President Joseph F. Smith. I will not read it all, but it is Section II, given in May, 1829, nearly a year before the organizing of the Church. Hyrum Smith desired that his brother, the Prophet, should inquire of the Lord as to what labor he should perform. He said:

"Now, as you have asked, behold, I say unto you, keep my commandments," I desire with all the power that God has given me to emphasize that. That applies to every man, woman and child in all the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. "Keep my commandments, and seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion.

"Seek not for riches but for wisdom; and, behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you, and then shall you be made rich. Behold, he that hath eternal life is rich.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, even as you desire of me so it shall be done unto you; and, if you desire, you shall be the means of doing much good in this generation.

"Say nothing but repentance unto this generation."

Remember that, O all ye people: Say nothing but repentance. Teach and live the first principles of the gospel, and let the mysteries of heaven wait until you get to heaven.

"Keep my commandments, and assist to bring forth my work, according to my commandments, and you shall be blessed.

"Behold, thou hast a gift or thou shalt have a gift if thou wilt desire of me in faith, with an honest heart, believing in the power of Jesus Christ or in my power which speaketh unto thee:

"For, behold, it is I that speak; behold, I am the light which shineth in darkness, and by my power I give these words unto thee.

"And now, verily, verily, I say unto thee, put your trust in that Spirit which leadeth to do good—yea, to do justly, to walk humbly, to judge righteously; and this is my Spirit \* \* \*

"Build upon my rock, which is my gospel;

"Deny not the spirit of revelation, nor the spirit of prophecy, for wo unto him that denieth these things;

"Therefore, treasure up in your heart until the time which is in my wisdom that you shall go forth.

"Behold, I speak unto all who have good desires, and have thrust in their sickle to reap.

"Behold, I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I am the life and the light of the world."

"I am the same, who came unto mine own and mine own received me not;

"But verily, I say unto you, that as many as receive me, to them will I give power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on my name. Amen.

Please remember, Latter-day Saints, that this revelation declares that the Lord speaks unto all of us who have a desire to labor—to seek not for riches, but to bring forth the work of God, and to labor for the accomplishment of that purpose.

#### THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS

Now I see the time that I desired to occupy has expired, but I want to speak just a little more and read a few words that I have been studying occasionally, now for forty long years, since it fell to my lot to be one of the apostles:

"And again, inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized, that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the Living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, when eight years old, the sin be upon the heads of the parents.

"For this shall be a law"—not an exhortation remember, but a law—"unto the inhabitants of Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized.

"And their children shall be baptized for the remission of their sins when eight years old, and receive the laying on of the hands.

"And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord."

#### THE SACRED DUTY OF COMMUNION WITH GOD THROUGH PRAYER

And the way to teach our children to pray is to pray ourselves in secret and in our families. There is too much neglect in having communion with God on the part of many of the Latter-day Saints. I feel a joy and a happiness every day of my life in communicating with my Maker, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, my Redeemer. And those who do not have a radio communication, so to speak, with our Heavenly Father and our Redeemer, are losing the inspiration that comes from the Lord.

"And the inhabitants of Zion shall also observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

"And the inhabitants of Zion also shall remember their labors, inasmuch as they are appointed to labor, in all faithfulness; for the idler shall be had in remembrance before the Lord.

"Now, I, the Lord, am not well pleased with the inhabitants of Zion, for there are idlers among them; and their children are also growing up in wickedness; they also seek not earnestly the riches of eternity, but their eyes are full of greediness.

"These things ought not to be, and must be done away from among them; wherefore, let my servant Oliver Cowdery carry these sayings unto the land of Zion.

"And a commandment I give unto them—that he that observeth not his prayers before the Lord in the season thereof, let him be had in remembrance before the judge of my people.



"These sayings are true and faithful; wherefore, transgress them not, neither take therefrom.

"Behold, I am Alpha and Omega, and I come quickly. Amen."

TAKE TO HEART THE DUTY OF TEACHING FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST

I pray that the parents who are within the sound of my voice, and those who may read in the conference reports, or in our papers, what I say, may take to heart the duty that devolves upon them under a commandment from the Lord Almighty to teach faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, to their children, that they shall pray and walk uprightly. That the Lord may help us to rear our beloved children in the nurture and admonition of the gospel, and in a love of God and of our Redeemer, and that each and every soul who has a testimony of the divinity of this work may live the gospel in uprightness, in virtue, and in truth, that their lives may preach the truth to those with whom they come in contact, is my prayer, and I ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

PRESIDENT CHARLES W. PENROSE

This is not the first time in my life that I have been taken by surprise. I felt quite content to sit on the stand here this morning and listen to the words of inspiration that have fallen from the lips of President Heber J. Grant, feeling that he would occupy most, if not all, of the time. I take great pleasure in bearing testimony to the truth of the things that he has uttered. Perhaps there is no need for that. I believe that that testimony is in the hearts of this vast congregation this morning. I enjoyed every word the President has uttered. I know that what he has said and read and testified of is true, and it came to us this morning in the life and power and spirit of the gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed to us in these last days. I enjoy meetings of this kind and teachings of this kind. They are more to my heart and soul than learned disquisitions of any kind.

THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL TO THE NATIONS

I rejoice in this gospel which the Lord has revealed for the salvation of the human family. I have labored in this Church for a good many years, and feel very thankful in my soul this morning that the Lord has preserved me to the extent that I have been able to labor up to the present time, notwithstanding the weaknesses and frailties of human nature, and the burdens, so to speak, of old age. God be praised for all his goodness to me, and to this people who are gathered here from many lands. What a great thing it is to look upon this congregation this morning and consider what God has already wrought; then to lift up the curtain and look to that which is coming and see something of that which will be in the future. This congregation is representative of the Church which is now occupying many lands.