

## THIRD DAY

### MORNING MEETING

Sunday Morning, 10 o'clock, October 9, 1927.

The great tabernacle which had been comfortably filled by an ever-increasing number of people during the past meetings of this session of conference, was this morning filled in every space both in the galleries and main hall, and hundreds were standing in the doors and aisles. The Assembly Hall, where an overflow meeting was held, was filled to capacity, and many were unable to gain admission to either building, and remained on the grounds or in their homes listening to the services by radio.

President Heber J. Grant announced that the choir and congregation would sing the hymn, "We thank thee, O God, for a prophet."

Following this song, which was sung with enthusiastic spirit, the opening prayer was offered by Elder Edward J. Wood, President of the Alberta stake of Zion.

A duet and chorus by members of the Tabernacle Choir sang, "An angel from on high."

#### PRESIDENT CHARLES W. NIBLEY

This is a glorious day for the Latter-day Saints. We live in a glorious land; for in spite of all the crime that is committed—and it is shameful that there is so much of it—this is the land of Zion spoken of by the prophets; and this country, especially this intermountain country, this western country, is the place for Latter-day Saints. We are a God-blessed people. If you don't think this is a goodly land, and a blessed country, go down into Mexico, our neighbor on the south, or over to Europe; go to Russia, to China or Japan, and you will return here and say this land, which the Lord in his mercy has given to us, is the best in all the world.

#### PROGRESS OF THE WORK OF THE LORD

We have heard during the sessions of this conference concerning the progress of the work of the Lord. I have been much encouraged and thrilled in my soul by the remarks that have been made, showing the evidences of the growth and development of this great latter-day work. We are commissioned to preach the gospel. Every elder of this Church has that mission. He should feel, as St. Paul expressed it, that "a dispensation of the gospel has been committed unto me, and woe unto me if I preach not the gospel."

#### WE ARE ALL MISSIONARIES

We are all missionaries in that sense, by the power and authority of the holy priesthood, and we ought to be filled with the spirit and

determination to extend this work and to build it up. From almost every part of the earth come calls for more and still more missionaries. We can't get enough to meet the demand. Then along with the spiritual side, the necessity for more preachers of righteousness, there is a growing demand also on the material side for more meeting houses, for means to extend the work.

We say—and we prove it, too, by our works—that we do love this great latter-day work of the Lord. But do we do all that we should for it? The test of love, after all, is what will you do for the thing you love, the person you love, the institution you love, the country you love? How much will you do for it? Will you give your life for it? Will you give up your means for it? To what extent will you help to build it up in a material way? This tabernacle, for example, was not built simply by preaching and praying. It was built by hard labor. It took material, it took work, it took means.

#### BUILDING MEETING HOUSES

We have heard from the president of the Church down through the presidents of stakes and presidents of missions, of the wonderful development that has occurred in the building of meeting houses in the Church. Let me just give you some figures. I will read first the expenditure for meeting house purposes in all the Church for the year 1917. That is ten years ago and the people were doing well then, according to the means they had. The entire appropriation for meeting houses for that year, 1917, was one hundred sixty-eight thousand dollars. Now, in nine months of this year, just to the end of September, the trustee-in-trust has paid out in appropriations for stake and ward meeting houses, seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars. For the same period last year, 1926, it was four hundred thousand dollars. So you see the amount appropriated for that activity alone, the building of meeting houses, has been enormous.

I hope the time will never come when there will not be a call for more meeting houses, because if such a time should come, there would be no more growth. Since we expect to grow and expand and to keep on growing and expanding, there will necessarily be additional calls for more meeting houses and more elders to preach the gospel.

#### ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT IN PAYMENT OF TITHING

One other item: Comparing the tithing of 1926 with that of 1917, it shows an increase in nine years of about forty per cent only, whereas the appropriation for meeting houses increased in the same period between four and five hundred per cent. I have not included the appropriations that have been made for meeting houses built in the missions. That is additional. I will not take the time to go into the details of the figures, nor in the increase of Church population, etc; it would take too long. But the point is that all this requires means, and I am under covenant, and you are under covenant, to furnish the means to build up this Church. How? By tithes and offerings.

In the observance of this principle nearly every member of the Church can improve, can't we? How many hundreds are there, not thousands, but how many hundreds are there in the whole Church who pay strictly and exactly one-tenth of all their interest? The revelation says one-tenth of all your interest annually. How many of us do it? There are some, of course, but there are not many who cannot improve and perform more fully this duty in respect to this matter.

The Lord commanded the law of tithing in ancient times. He has revealed it to us in this dispensation. You may read in Genesis that first of all, Abraham, Jacob's grandfather, paid tithes of all that he had to Melchizedek; and then Jacob, the father of the twelve tribes of Israel, made this covenant with the Lord: "Of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee." In Leviticus 27:32, the Lord says this concerning the tithe of the herd and of the flock, "the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord." Solomon, in Proverbs, 3rd chapter, 9th verse, says:

"Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of thine increase. So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

In the last book of the Old Testament the Lord, speaking through the Prophet Malachi, reproved the Saints in that day. I don't think we need such a stern rebuke as he gave them, but these were his words:

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. \* \* \* Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

#### THE LORD'S REQUIREMENT

Here was a challenge to them to prove the Lord. That same challenge is open to every Latter-day Saint today.

"And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts.

"And all nations shall call you blessed, for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts."

You can read the revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith with respect to this principle of tithing, and that same thought occurs in it, namely, that if you will pay your tithing the very land shall be sanctified and shall be made holy. Let me take occasion to read a little of this revelation to the Prophet Joseph, given in July, 1838:

"Verily, thus saith the Lord, I require all their surplus property to be put into the hands of the bishop of my Church in Zion.

"And this shall be the beginning of the tithing of my people.

"And after that, those who have thus been tithed shall pay one-tenth of all their interest annually; and this shall be a standing law unto them forever for my holy priesthood, saith the Lord.

"Verily I say unto you, it shall come to pass that all those who gather unto

the land of Zion shall be tithed of their surplus properties, and shall observe this law, or they shall not be found worthy to abide among you.

"And I say unto you, If my people observe not this law, to keep it holy and by this law sanctify the land of Zion unto me, that my statutes and my judgments may be kept thereon, that it may be most holy, behold, verily I say unto you, it shall not be a land of Zion unto you.

"And this shall be an ensample unto all the stakes of Zion."

#### THE SAVIOR'S VIEW ON TITHING

We have the commandment from the prophets of old, and here also is the command through the prophet of the last dispensation. I know it is contended by some people that the Savior in restoring the fulness of the gospel in his dispensation did not insist on the law of tithing, and that it was done away in the law of Moses, etc. Anyone who takes that position is entirely wrong, for here is the word of the Savior himself, in the gospel according to St. Luke, 11:42:

"But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God; these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

In other words pay your tithing, of course, but don't go around boasting about it as you do. This ye ought to have done, said he, and the other ye ought not to have left undone. So there is the positive injunction of the Savior of the world that the principle of tithing shall be observed.

#### HAVE FAITH TO PROVE THE LORD

My brethren and sisters, my testimony is that I could always get along better and be more prospered, more blessed and certainly more satisfied in my heart and soul, at the end of the year, if I got along with 90 per cent and gave the Lord his ten per cent. I have tried to do that; not perfectly, not as I should, but I have done it well enough to prove the Lord. I accepted the challenge which he made through Malachi:

"Try me and prove me herewith, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

I have proved the truth of it in my own experience and to my own satisfaction. I know there are those who quibble about it and say: "Will 90 pounds of flour go as far as 100 pounds of flour? Will \$90 go as far as \$100? If you are spending a dollar a day, will not the one amount last 100 days and the other last only 90 days?"

Yes, mathematically you are correct, but, spiritually and counting faith in God and in his promises, you are all wrong. For "without faith it is impossible to please God." You may take as a sample a couple of men working—I have in mind two such men now. One spends all his means, and hasn't enough to pay tithes, he thinks. The other struggles along and pays his tithing. At the end of the year the one who has paid his tithing is better off somehow or other. He has had less sickness, less of what we call bad luck, and a better "break" as they phrase it, than the other man has had at the end of the year.

## SANCTIFY THE LAND OF ZION—KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS

I bear witness before you, my brethren and sisters, that if we keep that law, the Lord, just as he has promised, will sanctify the very land, and it shall be the land of Zion to us. It is a land of Zion to the man who has paid his tithing honestly before God. He feels it in his soul. He feels that he is dwelling on a blessed, happy, prosperous land. He knows that he is keeping the commandment of the Lord. Do you not think the Lord, by his Spirit, will sanctify and bless the very land for us according to his promise? I know he will. I feel that way when I come on this block. Time and again, especially if I am alone, my hat goes off in reverence as I step inside the wall. Why? Because I feel in my heart and in my soul that the very ground upon which I stand is holy, sacred unto the Lord. It has been blessed by the power of the holy priesthood and it is sanctified, so that the spirit of reverence, the spirit of thankfulness to God comes over me, and off comes my hat in token of that reverence.

I know, too, that in our homes, with our farms, in our merchandising and all that we have, if we keep this law, we will sanctify to the Lord the land upon which we dwell, the homes in which we live, and all that we engage in; and we will feel the influence of his spirit and know by the power of the living God that we are helping to build up his work, far more, of course, than we would if we fail to obey this commandment.

## HOW THE TITHING IS EXPENDED

I repeat, means are called for as well as prayers. Prayers are necessary, preaching is necessary, but it takes work, it takes means to build up the kingdom of God.

I have just given you enough figures to illustrate how the means are expended. I could give a great many more items. In closing, I just want to take occasion to say that the funds that you give to the Trustee-in-Trust of the Church are honestly and wisely expended with absolute integrity and sincerity of purpose, supplemented by the wisdom that the Lord gives. No man or set of men could expend them with greater care. I know that. I have known it for twenty years, for I have been in the Presiding Bishopric and with the President of the Church since that time. You can trust these men implicitly. They have not the first selfish thought for themselves with respect to any of the means. Every penny is as sacred as if it were held by any of your own family. You can depend upon that. President Grant is almost an exception among men in this regard. He almost leans over backwards in the strictness of his integrity and honesty.

## PROVE THE LORD IN THE PROPER SPIRIT

Now I have taken all the time I should. The Lord bless Zion, bless latter-day Israel. May we as members of the Church resolve now once again in our hearts and souls that we will prove him, not in the way of challenge, not in the way of saying: "Here, I am giving you some-

thing, and I want a whole lot more in return." No, that kind of spirit in paying tithes will not get you any blessing. The Lord loveth a cheerful giver—one who can go to the bishop and say: "Bishop, I feel all right. I want to help the Church. I am going to do all I can. Here is my tithing, my full tithing. I want to build up this work and be the means of helping it." If he goes in that spirit, thankful for what he has received, he will obtain the blessing. But let him not give something merely in the hope of getting more in return, for that spirit will not do at all. Let him give in this spirit: "Lord, thou hast blessed me. Here is thy portion. Of all that thou wilt give unto me, I will surely give a tenth unto thee." The Lord bless you. Amen.

The choir sang an anthem: "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof."

### ELDER STEPHEN L. RICHARDS

#### MESSAGE OF THE WORD OF WISDOM

I know of nothing wiser than the Word of Wisdom. I regard this great message from the Lord as being one of the most distinctive and one of the most vital contributions coming to the world through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Like all great messages and documents it connotes even more than it denotes. It is given in sufficient detail to obviate all ambiguity, and at the same time it is sufficiently general to have application to many phases of life and to all of those items which enter into clean living. It proceeds upon the assumption that the greatest thing in life is living, and that the most indispensable thing to good living is health—bodily, mental and spiritual.

We cannot contemplate a good man who does not have respect for the sacred institution of his body. God has given to us in this dispensation a new conception of the body of man. It is something more than earth and the elements of earth. We believe that the spirit is the literal child of God, that it comes to earth in divine providence to take on mortality, that while here it is housed in a tabernacle, that that tabernacle itself is made through the beneficent provision of the Creator in his own likeness. In that conception no one may defile the tabernacle, wherein dwells the spirit, without offering affront to God who gave it. He cannot pollute his body with poisonous or disintegrating substances without committing an offense against his God and his Creator.

#### SENT BY WAY OF GREETING

The Word of Wisdom has come to us in what seems to me the most excellent, the most pleasing manner possible to give a message. It came by way of greeting to the Saints, not by way of constraint—so it states—in which respect it has seemed to me to be comparable to the greatest messages which came from the Redeemer of the world when in the flesh he spoke to mankind. It rings with the same spirit as do the Beatitudes, wherein the Christ said, not by way of constraint, not in the thunder of commandment, but in that lovely spirit which