

who have sent them to us with their compliments. These flowers add much to our pleasure and comfort on this occasion.

The choir singing for today's sessions of the conference will be by the Tabernacle Choir, with Elder J. Spencer Cornwall conducting, and with Elder Frank W. Asper at the organ for the morning session, and with Elder Alexander Schreiner for the afternoon session.

We will begin the morning services by the Tabernacle Choir and congregation singing "Come, Come Ye Saints" hymn book page 47, L.D.S. Hymns 194.

Elder J. Spencer Cornwall directing, Elder Frank W. Asper at the organ.

The opening prayer will be offered by President Casper H. Parker, of the Hillside Stake, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Singing by the Tabernacle Choir and congregation, "Come, Come Ye Saints."

Elder Casper H. Parker, President of the Hillside Stake, offered the invocation.

Selection by the Tabernacle Choir, "Come, Restful Peace"—by Bach.

## PRESIDENT GEORGE ALBERT SMITH

I am sure that all present, this morning, have every reason to be grateful to the Lord for our blessings. Seated, as we are, in this comfortable Tabernacle, although the weather is inclement, we, here, and in the adjoining building, are comfortable and because of the intelligence of men, devices have been provided so that we can both see and hear even in separate buildings and some distance apart.

### ORGANIZATION AND GROWTH OF CHURCH

A hundred eighteen years ago next Tuesday the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized under the direction of our Heavenly Father and his beloved Son, Jesus Christ. The Savior later directed, in a very positive way by revelation, that the Church should be called after his name—the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. There were but a few people in the room when the Church was organized, and they were not very popular. The enemy of all righteousness had already begun to disturb those who believed that Joseph Smith had received the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated. He was hounded from place to place from that time on, not for any wrong that he did but for the same reason that the prophets of old had to suffer for teaching the truth.

Organized as it was in the state of New York the first branches were there, and then, under pressure, members of the Church moved to Kirtland, Ohio, and there were made uncomfortable, not because of anything they had done to disturb their neighbors, but because

they testified that God had spoken in this latter day and that, to many people, seemed sacrilegious.

The Church moved from place to place, continuing to grow, and I may say that every day, when the sun set, found the Church larger than it had been when the sun arose that morning. Eventually the people assembled in Jackson and other counties in Missouri, and then from there went to Commerce, Illinois, which later became the city of Nauvoo. Commerce was only a small place, with three or four houses; we would call them ranch houses these days, I think, but the Prophet of the Lord conceived the idea of building Zion in that particular part of the world.

The result was that the people who were driven from Missouri and other places and who were coming in from Europe began the building of the City Beautiful—Nauvoo—on one of the most picturesque sites for a city along the Mississippi River, and they drained the soil so that it would not be swampy and unhealthful for them.

They established homes, built a beautiful temple, raised their crops, and in less than seven years Nauvoo was the largest city in the state of Illinois. Chicago then had a population of approximately five thousand; Springfield, Illinois, a population of approximately twelve thousand. Nauvoo, in something over six years, became a city of approximately twenty thousand souls.

It has been marvelous how the Lord has brought into the hearts and minds of individuals a desire to pray and worship as he would have them to do.

#### WESTERN MOVEMENT

In the year 1846, the beautiful city of Nauvoo was destroyed by mobs of wicked men who were determined that the Latter-day Saints should not live there, and they drove the helpless people across the Mississippi River, from where began their pilgrimage to the Rocky Mountains. Of course we have an idea that the property that we possessed as a people was an inducement, but one of the principal reasons was they hated the people who believed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. They started west, being scattered from that part of the country, and the majority of them began the journey west with wagons drawn by such animals as they could obtain, and they eventually arrived in the valley of the Great Salt Lake.

The Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum had been martyred, although the Prophet had indicated in a sermon preached not very long before the people were driven out, in which he said to them that the persecution would continue and that eventually they would go to the tops of the Rocky Mountains, and become a mighty people in the midst thereof.

If he had never predicted anything else, that of itself indicated he was a prophet of God.

In 1847, the vanguard of those people arrived in this valley, and others followed, until most of the people who had lived in Nauvoo

were located here. Later, approximately four thousand of the Saints who had come from the eastern part of the United States and from across the sea were assembled at Iowa City on the Mississippi River, and having no conveyances or animals to draw them they built hand-carts and started their pilgrimage across the plains to the valley we are now in. Many of them lost their lives by starvation and cold. Some of the bravest and most courageous people in all the world were with those groups that were willing to turn their backs on the so-called civilization to go into the wilderness and make their homes among the wild beasts and the still more savage red man.

#### ARRIVAL IN THE SALT LAKE VALLEY

One hundred years ago last July the first of those people arrived here; one hundred forty-three men, three women, and two children were in the first company. What did they find here? It may be illustrated by what was said by a stranger who some years later referred to this as a desert country. He was talking to my grandfather for whom I was named, and he said:

"Mr. Smith, why did your people leave that wonderful rich, fertile land in the east and come here into this God-forsaken country?"

And Grandfather's reply to him was typical of the man:

"Why," he said, "we came here willingly because we had to."

A hundred years have elapsed since that time, and today we are meeting in a house that was erected by those people. Among the first things they did after they came here was to take possession of the country in the name of the United States—it was then Mexican territory—and then they began building their little homes and houses of worship. The first place of worship was not very far from where I stand on this block, called the old Bowery.

#### OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH

The first Sunday after they arrived, they held religious services. The fact that they were uncomfortable; that they had no homes to shelter them, made no difference. They were in the service of the Lord. They were his children, and so they were called together as has been the custom ever since the beginning, on the Sabbath day, to worship our Father in heaven.

It may be of interest when we think of the desecration of the Sabbath day in our own land—I speak of the land of America—a day that has been set apart by many people for their vacations and for their pleasures, notwithstanding there thundered down from Sinai one of the Ten Commandments that we should honor the Sabbath day and keep it holy. One of the first sermons that were preached in this valley was by President Brigham Young, and he warned the people to honor the Sabbath day and to keep it holy, and no matter how difficult their circumstances they were not to go out and do manual labor on the Sabbath day. From that time on, the Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has encouraged its people to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy because it is pleasing to our Heavenly Father that we do so.

#### PROGRESS DURING LAST CENTURY

From that little group of people that came into this valley, they began to scatter. Today in Idaho there are over one hundred thousand members of the Church—in Wyoming large numbers; in Nevada large numbers; in Arizona, and California—it may be of interest to some of you to know that in the territory surrounding Los Angeles there are more members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints residing now than in any other section of the country outside of the Salt Lake Valley. The Church membership has continued to grow and spread. I haven't mentioned Colorado. I haven't mentioned some of the states in the north. I haven't mentioned western Canada.

In every part of the United States there are branches of the Church and wards and stakes, in many parts, the population of which is largely a membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. And here we are in this house today. Count your many blessings. Think of our opportunities. Think of our privileges. I wonder if we can be grateful enough for what the Lord has done for us.

In a hundred years, the name of a church that was held in derision by many of our Father's children, has become honored by the great and the good and the wise men and women of the world. Almost every day there comes to the Church offices at Salt Lake City correspondence from different parts of the world that praises the membership of this Church. Many of these letters are written by members of other churches or by people who belong to no church. Only last year you were visited here by the governors of all but five of the states and territories of the United States. They came here to hold a convention. They attended an evening meeting in this house, representatives from all these various states and territories. They had their wives and secretaries and associates. There were over four hundred of them as I remember now. They met in this Tabernacle, and some of those individuals who were here remarked after the meeting concluded, there was something different here from what they had found elsewhere.

#### COMMENT OF FORMER GOVERNOR MILLER

Last year the board of directors of the United States Steel Corporation, some of whom had not been here before, met in this city. They had a noon-day luncheon in the Hotel Utah and invited their friends in while they were here, and after the meal was over, the president announced that there was no program, but if anybody had anything to say he was at liberty to speak.

Former Governor Miller of New York, who was the counsel general of the United States Steel Corporation, said: "I would like

to say a few words," and after that, referring to the fact that he had been in our canyons and seen the valleys and had visited Brigham Young University and the fine campus there and other things that he had observed that interested him very much he said:

These people here have something that we don't have. I don't know what it is, but they have it, and we do not. It may be spirituality or something else. You may call it what you will, but I am saying to you that they have something that we do not have where we live.

My brothers and sisters, that is what you feel this morning, the inspiration of the Lord. He has promised us that when two or three of us shall meet together in his name he will be there and that to bless them, and when congregations such as we have this morning assemble, I am sure that under those circumstances they are entitled to his blessings. I have no doubt we have in this audience this morning many people not members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but they are his children, his sons and daughters, and in this house they will feel that influence and that spirit that inspires men and women to righteous living. We want them all to know that, crowded as we are, they are all welcome, and we hope they can be made comfortable.

#### MESSAGE OF THE MISSIONARIES

The Church continues to grow and develop. Why? Because it is the Lord's will. He has promised us if we would do our part that he will open our way, and he has done it in a marvelous manner, even since the great world war in those countries that were torn with strife. We have today more than four thousand missionaries traveling over the face of the earth, mostly men, some women, giving their time, offering what they can in the way of encouragement to a sick world, for we are a sick world, calling men and women to repentance, assuring them that unless they turn unto the Lord there will be no peace. These missionaries pay their own expenses or have their expenses paid by their loved ones, receive no compensation from the Church whatsoever, and the desire is that all men and women, wherever they may be in the world may have brought to them the gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord, to the end that they will acknowledge God and his Son Jesus Christ, be willing to take the advice of the Father of us all and live in such a way that in the end we may have eternal life in the celestial kingdom. "Eternal life," think of it, in the celestial kingdom, and the Lord has promised that.

Now today we are here, representatives from many parts of the world. We come, I hope, with worship in our hearts, with love in our hearts for our fellow men.

The second great commandment which was equal to the first, the Master said, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," is the key word to the Latter-day Saints, if I may use that term, to bring us near to the Lord, loving his other children as we love ourselves and so doing desirous of bringing to them the knowledge of the truth. Today in

this house that was dedicated to him, builded during the poverty of the people, we are met in worship. The great temple to the east of us, one of the beautiful buildings of the world, was erected by the people when they lived under very poor conditions.

I call your attention to the fact that during the last one hundred years the Latter-day Saints have been contributing their means for homes and schools and houses of worship, and at the same time they have sent into the world seventy thousand missionaries who have spent their own money and contributed their time.

#### CONTRIBUTION TO PEOPLE IN DISTRESS

Since World War II these people, living in these valleys where the Church is organized and where we have our branches and wards and stakes, have sent one hundred carloads of bedding and food and clothing across the sea to help those poor people that are in such distress.

All these years you have been paying your tithing if you have been real Latter-day Saints. What has been done with it? It has been developing the country that we live in and disseminating the truth of God in the nations of the earth. Your tithing has not been squandered, and if you have paid an honest tithing, I may say to you without hesitation the other nine-tenths, has been a greater blessing to those who have paid than the one hundred percent has been to those who have not. It is the Lord's work.

#### FAVORABLE POSITION OF CHURCH MEMBERS

What is our situation? When the people came here, we were called ignorant. That was the word that went out. I had a man who was supposed to be a minister tell me one time: "Why," he said, "I understand you are the most ignorant people in all the world." That was the attitude. What is the record? After a hundred years, this state, the home of the largest community of the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, outranks every state in the American Union for education. More high school students, more university students, more men and women of affairs, and more scientists have been born in this state in proportion to population, of course, than in any other state of the Union. You may go where you will and take communities such as we have, the people are not better housed, not better fed, not better educated, any other place in the world, than here in the tops of these everlasting hills that were so forbidding when our people came here.

Now, brethren and sisters, haven't we something to be grateful for? Isn't it wonderful, not only to be here with this great organization but to know that we are here by the will of the Lord? That we are here because he has made it possible for us to live here? And so today I welcome all of you from wherever you may have come into this great congregation and the adjoining congregations and say, to

use the words of the man who discovered the telegraph, "See what God hath wrought." Men couldn't have done this. With all your generosity and all your giving, all your missionary work, with your care of the poor, with your development of the country, with all that you have been giving as ordinary people, I testify that what you have left brings to you more happiness, more peace, more comfort and more assurance of eternal life than any other people in the world enjoy today. I don't say that boastfully, but gratefully.

#### SEVENTY-EIGHTH BIRTHDAY

I am celebrating my birthday. Seventy-eight years ago today, right across the street, I was born. My life has been spent very largely in this community and traveling for the Church. I don't know of any man in all the world that has more reason to be grateful than I. People have been kind and helpful to me, members of the Church and non-members alike. Wherever I have gone, I have found noble men and women. Therefore on this my birthday, after having traveled approximately a million miles in the world in the interests of the gospel of Jesus Christ, one of the frailest of my mother's eleven children, I testify that the Lord has preserved my life, and I have had joy beyond expression, and I have enjoyed the results of loving my neighbor as myself, and all this brings happiness.

#### TESTIMONY

After all these years of travel in many parts of the world, associating with many of the great and good men and women of the world, I witness to you, I know today better than I ever knew before that God lives; that Jesus is the Christ; that Joseph Smith was a prophet of the Living God; and that the Church that he organized under the direction of our Heavenly Father, the Church that received divine authority, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Church that was driven into the wilderness and with headquarters now in Salt Lake City, Utah, is still operating under the guidance of the same priesthood that was conferred by Peter, James, and John upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. I know that, as I know that I live, and I leave that testimony with you, and I pray that our Heavenly Father will continue to guide us and help us and inspire us and bless us, which he will if we are righteous. I am so thankful to be here with you this morning, and to look into your faces, hundreds of whom I have met in different parts of the country, and I take this occasion to thank you for your kindness to me as I have traveled among you.

May the Lord add his blessings. Thankful for the comforts that we have today, I pray that his peace and his love will abide with us forever, and that we may be the means under his guidance of bringing millions of his children to an understanding of his truths that they, too, may be blessed and are blessed this day. This is my testimony to you, that this is the gospel of Jesus Christ, the power of God unto

salvation to all those who believe and obey it, and I bear that witness in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## PRESIDENT GEORGE F. RICHARDS

### *Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

President Smith has given us a brief history of the Church and the Latter-day Saints up to the present time. We are on the road toward perfection but we haven't reached that point yet. This house is filled to overflowing, many people standing for want of places to sit. The Assembly Hall, no doubt, is filled likewise as are other places where the Saints are gathered, and many thousands of the Latter-day Saints are listening in their own homes this morning. I am sure.

I feel greatly honored to be asked to speak at this meeting following the President. I feel that I have a message to deliver to the Latter-day Saints, those who shall hear my voice and others who may read later my discourse. If only the Latter-day Saints hearing what I have to suggest, the counsel and advice I may have to give, would respond to the same I would be one of the happiest men alive. It is more than I can expect, but some hearts, I hope, will be touched. What I have to say, the subject I intend to speak upon to me is a vital subject for Latter-day Saints.

### A GOSPEL OF SACRIFICE

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16.)

In this we see the sacrifice made for us by the Father and the Son, the greatest ever made—a manifestation of love with which there can be no comparison.

The gospel we have received is a gospel of sacrifice and self denial from beginning to end.

The Lord has said:

Let no man be afraid to lay down his life for my sake; for whoso layeth down his life for my sake shall find it again.

And whoso is not willing to lay down his life for my sake is not my disciple. (D. & C. 103:27, 28.)

### THE LAW OF THE TITHE

One of the greatest sacrifices that God has required of us as members of his Church is that contained in the law of the tithe.

On July 8, 1838, the Lord gave to the Church a revelation on the subject of tithing, in which he requires of the members of his Church that they pay one-tenth of all their interests annually. This is the revenue law of the Church. It is used in promoting its financial interests; in the Church educational system; in the building and maintaining of temples; in building houses of worship in wards, stakes, and