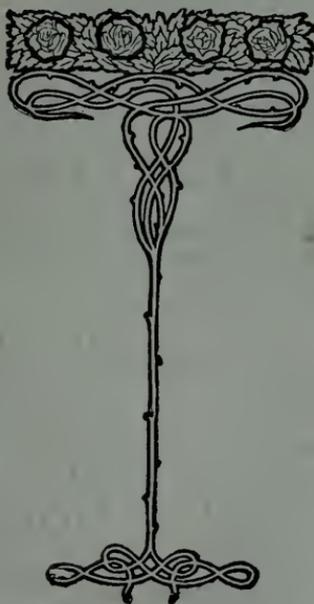


April
1913

Eighty-third Annual Conference

OF THE

Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints



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with a full report of the discourses

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this matter intelligently, when we endeavor to trace our genealogy and seek to complete the chain connecting us with Father Abraham. The subject is certainly a thing of immense interest to us.

I rejoice that the amalgamation of the Latter-day Saints of different nationalities takes place so beautifully and completely. People who have come from different climes soon become one strong and united community. The way we associate and affiliate, and the way we destroy all differences that naturally would and do exist in many other parts of the world between the Americans and the Germans and the Scandinavians, ought to be a lesson to all others. All differences seem to be passing away and disappearing in a single generation, and thus we are fast becoming "one nation upon the mountains of Ephraim."

Brethren and Sisters, God bless you. May we understand our privileges and live up to them; may we rejoice in the many blessings that we receive almost daily, and appreciate the privilege we have had to be assembled in a splendid conference. The many glorious testimonies, to which we have listened, are certainly calculated to make the heart of every Latter-day Saint rejoice. That we may go away from this conference renewed in our determination to serve God more perfectly hereafter than we have done hitherto, is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

ELDER GEORGE F. RICHARDS.

Obedience a heavenly and eternal principle.—Essentials to salvation.—The Redeemer a perfect exemplar of obedience.—Duties to be learned, and diligently fulfilled.

My brethren and sisters, I suppose this congregation is made up in

large proportions of members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and there is one principle which I desire to impress upon your minds this morning, in the few minutes that I shall occupy,—and that is the principle of obedience.

I call your attention to the 20th chapter of Exodus, the Ten Commandments, which were written by the finger of the Lord upon the table of stone. One of these commandments, in part, reads: "For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and seas and all that in them is." The Apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews, tells us how this was done. He says: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." If the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear, what must they have been made of but the elements of which they are composed? which elements are eternal. God commanded the elements, and they obeyed, and out of chaos came forth order, and the earth was formed, and the waters were separated from the earth, and the light from the darkness, and the sun was placed in the firmament to give light by day and the moon and stars to give light by night, and vegetation was placed upon the earth, grains and fruits and flowers and grasses, and all things which are necessary to beautify the earth and to sustain the life of men, animals, fowls, etc. Animals were also placed upon the earth, and these all were for the benefit of man. Order, then, follows obedience unto the commands and the laws of God. The law by which the universe is governed, is

the law of God. We may call it the law of nature, but the law of nature is the law of God, and all His creations excepting man are obedient, hence the beautiful order which we see in all nature. If they were disobedient, as man is disobedient, there would be universal confusion, disorder and annihilation. Man only of all the creatures of God disobeys His command, and disregards the law which He has framed for our guidance and government, that order and perfection might be established. This, because of man's agency. This is the point which I desire to call to your attention, that the law which God has given to us for our government is a divine law, and just as perfect as are the laws by which the universe is governed. And if we would be as obedient as are the elements, and His other creations, we would be perfect, and all would be in harmony and order. The difference between the Gospel law and the manner of our observance of it, represents the things which we have to repent of.

Repentance is a divine principle, a principle without which we cannot be saved and exalted in the kingdom of God, because we have exercised our agency in unrighteousness, we have not been strictly obedient unto the Lord's commandments, and therefore we have need to repent and to put ourselves in order. These are provisions the Lord has made in his gospel for our salvation; and we will not repent, we cannot repent, if we have not faith; hence faith is a principle of the gospel, a necessary principle of life and of salvation. The ordinances which the Lord has established as a part of the gospel law, for the salvation of the children of men,

must be obeyed and we must add to our faith virtue; and to virtue godliness, brotherly kindness, charity, etc, thus making ourselves as Godlike as it is possible. We are His children in very deed, having been born of Him in the spirit, and we have inherited the very attributes which he possesses. They are in us, and they make us God's embryo, We believe that as we are now God once was, and by the practice of virtue and righteousness, by obedience unto law and authority, He has become what He is, and as He is, man may become, on the same principle.

There is no perfection of salvation and exaltation in any other way than this, by observance of the laws which God has given us for our government. Christ, our Savior, is the great prototype of mankind. He gave Himself a ransom for our sins, that we might live again after death, thus redeeming us from the effects of the transgression of our first parents, and also that we might be redeemed from the effects of our individual sins through accepting Him and His mission, and yielding obedience unto the principles of the gospel. We stood with Jesus in our former estate, when by His power Lucifer, who was the arch enemy of God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, and who has ever since sought to lead the children of men down to his level, was cast out of heaven, we stood upon the same platform, and that is why we are here, and privileged as we are today, because of our integrity and faithfulness in that former estate. We kept our first estate, and if we will do as Jesus did, keep our second estate, we will be "added upon forever and ever." Jesus kept the covenant which He made on the

other side for that covenant pertained to this life, as well as the previous life. "Thy will be done, and the glory be thine for ever," characterized his whole life's conduct. It should be so with us. It should be only necessary for us to know what our Father would have us to do, and with all our might, mind and strength we should go to and try and do those things. The beautiful song, so beautifully rendered yesterday by President Ballard:

"I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord,

Over mountain, or plain, or sea;
I'll say what you want me to say, dear Lord:

I'll be what you want me to be."

That is the principle which should actuate us, whether it be great things or small which may be required at our hands, whether it comes direct by the voice of God to us or through His servants whom He has called, it matters not, for the Lord has said "Whether it be by my own mouth or the mouth of my servants, it is the same." That which comes through the mouth of him whom God hath called and sustained in his position God recognizes as doctrine, as law for the guidance of His people. That individual Prophet of God who thus speaks is responsible for what he says, and those who hear are responsible for their course, whether they accept and yield obedience unto those things, or whether they reject them. When the authorities of the Church have established an order in the Church, for instance, that one day in the month we shall abstain from food and drink, fasting and praying, giving assistance to the poor, that is all that should be necessary, even as it was all that

was necessary for Adam to know that his Father commanded him that he should offer burnt offerings and perform sacrifices. It was sufficient for Abraham to be commanded of God to go and offer up his son, an offering on the altar, which he was told would be acceptable unto the Lord. It ought to be sufficient for us, my brethren and sisters, to know that these things have come to us through the servant of the Lord, all the commandments, all the laws and ordinances of the gospel, and we should observe them with all our hearts, yield obedience implicitly and without reserve. I want to tell you that nothing short of this, is pleasing and acceptable unto God. Therefore let us learn our duties. Let us learn where the Lord would have us to go, what he would have us to do, how he would have us to speak, and let us do these things, regardless of what other men or peoples might think of us. Unless we have the courage to do right, to act conscientiously before God, we will not be accepted of Him.

I pray the Lord to bless you. I feel to thank those who have made music for us on this occasion, and these our brethren who have taken part in the exercises, and you for your faith and attention. I thank the Lord, and pray that all that has been said, and the inspiration of His spirit which has been felt by us on this occasion, may be sanctified to our good and profit.

And now I bear my testimony, that I know that this gospel is true, that it is the power of God unto salvation, and there is no power outside of this gospel that is the power of God unto salvation, if we will keep the commandments of God, and will be honest and sin-

cere in our purposes, that we will know the truth of these things, that we will love the truth, and that we will rejoice in sacrifices that we will have to make in order to fulfill the law of God. May the peace of the Lord be upon all Israel, I pray, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

The choir sang a hymn, commencing "Here, by Babylon's way."

Benediction was pronounced by Elder John N. Pike.

SECOND OVERFLOW MEETING.

Another meeting of the Conference was held in the Assembly Hall, at 2 p. m., at which Elder Joseph F. Smith Jr., presided.

The Thirty-first ward choir again furnished the musical exercises.

The choir sang the anthem, "Star of descending night."

Prayer was offered by Elder Moroni Snow.

The choir sang the anthem, "Grant us peace, O Lord."

ELDER J. GOLDEN KIMBALL.

(Of the First Council of Seventy.)

The short time that I shall occupy I trust that what I shall say I can crystalize, and make clear and comprehensive. Of course the great question is as to whether I have a message to deliver to you. This call has come somewhat unexpected, although I try in my labors in the ministry to always think about something and then try to tell it. Now, if there is any one thing that I am normal in, it is frankness. Whenever the time

comes, in my ministerial labors, that I cannot be frank and honest with the people I will feel that my usefulness has come to an end. I cannot talk if I have not freedom, and if I ever feel that I have not the spirit of the people I will be unable to talk. There has been a great deal said, during this conference, about the third generation, and the fourth generation. Now, I am not going to speak on that subject, because God is the Father of all, and Jesus Christ is the Redeemer and helper of all. But there is a great responsibility rests upon us who are fathers, and upon the mothers, and I do not think there has ever been a time in my life when I have felt the responsibility to be so weighty and great upon me in all my labors in the Church as it is at the present time with my own family. They are not many in number, but there are enough, and about all I can handle.

I think you will find somewhere in the Old Testament, that "the fathers have eaten a sour grape and the children's teeth are set on edge." I have to confess to you that I have eaten some sour grapes in my day, and there is a problem regarding by children; and while I am interested in my children and family, I have similar interest for your children and families. I will read some other scripture that I thought of today. I have heard it many times; it is found in Matthew, 8th chapter and 11 and 12th verses:

"And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer dark-