

Stake Conference

General Session

April 10, 2016

Presiding: President Esplin

Conducting: President Esplin

Organist: Merlyn Leetham

Music Director: Mary Beth Clark

Prelude: Two prelude numbers, "More Holiness Give Me" and "God So Loved the World"

Welcome: President Esplin

- Grateful to have Patriarch Sperry on the stand with us.
- We appreciate the prelude music.
- Alta Canyon Building: Brothers: Scott McMillin and Steve Glick.
- Little Chapel on Creek Road: Brothers: Steve Gough and Steve Eyre.
- Wentworth Assisted Living Center: Brother Kent Griffith.
- Appreciate the efforts of our technology people.
- Thank you to the 9th ward for hosting this Stake Conference.
- Michelle Rhodes will be the person assigned for Emergency Medical.

Opening Hymn: #85 "How Firm a Foundation," verses 1, 2, 3, and 7.

Opening Prayer: Kirk Cullimore 1st Ward

Sustaining of Officers: President Ludlow

Musical Number / Choir Anthem: "O Come Let Us Sing", directed by Merlyn Leetham, accompanied by Ilene Kellogg

Speaker: Sis Margaret Krishna Velu 4th Ward (10 min)

Speaker: Bro Durga Krishna Velu 4th Ward (10 min)

Speaker: Sis Kaye Jackson (10min)

Intermediate Hymn (Choir and Congregation): We will stand and sing #19 "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet"

Speaker: Bro Eric Jackson (10min)

Speaker: Sis Lourdes Tea 7th Ward (10 min)

Speaker: President Esplin

Notes

General Conference, Temple Dedication, Easter and these Stake Conference Sessions

- I have loved these past few weeks and our meetings this weekend.
- It's Frustrating – I'm already forgetting the words.
- Because I can't remember does it make it meaningless? My earliest recollection is when I was in Kindergarten.
- Sister Westover, is teaching the Sunbeams a waste of time? I couldn't name many Stake Conference talks I've heard in my life – does this mean they were meaningless?
- President Hinkley at the end of one conference asked, "Why do Humming Birds Hum?" "Because they can't remember the words!" You may forget the words that are spoken.
- I hope you will hum the tune you have felt this month. Study and ponder talks – remind yourself of the tune.

Motives are important

- The church is an amazing thing – we sustain one another even in our own imperfections. We have faith and humility that the Lord will lead us through normal men and women who have been called by those in authority. We all had that witness this past week in Gen Conf.
- Since last night's presentation by Ron Esplin highlighted these events of the Prophet Joseph Smith's life:
- September 22, 1823 – Goes to the hill.
- September 22, 1824
- September 22, 1826
- Summer of 1827
- September 22, 1827
- September 22, 1828
- Imagine if Joseph had been permitted to use the plates and the work for his own personal gain financially or for reputation and power?
- We must have clean hands – but also a pure heart!
- Elder Oaks asked in his great Conference Address – why do we serve?
- Good companionship
- Because of Guilt
- To obtain Blessings
- To Please our family
- The Best motive is because we love the Lord.
- We all are on a journey to have our hearts sanctified
- The Savior's pre ministry:
- Luke 2:52 "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man"
- D&C 93 – preserves writings of John the Baptist
- "And I John saw that he received not of the fullness at first, but received grace for grace.."

Prophet Joseph Smith

- Why did we need a restoration?
- D&C 1:17
- “Wherefore, I the Lord, knowing the calamity which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph Smith Jr, and spoke unto him from heaven and gave him commandments”
- “Calamity” – same Declaration on the Family:
- “we warn that individuals who violate covenants of chastity who abuse spouse or offspring or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities ...will bring upon individuals...calamities foretold”.

Lovina – Hyrum’s oldest child

- Some struggle with certain issues in the history of the church.
- Joseph and Leaders were real people – we tend to separate their church callings and personal life.
- Kaye is descendent of Hyrum Smith through 1st wife Jerusha Barden who died in Kirtland – in 1837 Hyrum married Mary Fielding at the suggestion of Joseph. This is a family story:
- 1838 fled Kirtland to Far West 1,000 miles
- 1839 Hyrum and Joseph arrested in Missouri – Hyrum’s family crossed frozen Mississippi River in February.
- Joseph and Hyrum escape in April to Illinois when Lovina was 12 years old.
- Lots of friends – especially Lorin Walker (mother died, father on mission – living with Prophet Joseph Smith working with horses – She called him “my Edwin”).
- December 1843, the Prophet threw Ball for young people
- Lovina danced with several boys – Among them, Lorin and a new young man named Joseph Jackson who was a non member.
- Me made unwanted advances and asked for Lovina’s hand in marriage – Hyrum turned down.
- The man then asked Joseph to intercede – he refused
- The man then became a Mormon hater went to Carthage to stir things up and contributed to Joseph and Hyrum’s death.
- On Saturday, June 22nd Joseph and Hyrum leave Nauvoo trying to defuse situation caused by the Expositor episode.
- Earlier Joseph had said – “that if I and Hyrum were ever taken again we should be massacred, or I was not a prophet of God” .
- Joseph urged Hyrum to take his family on the next steamboat and go to Cincinnati but Hyrum had replied – Joseph, I can’t leave you”
- Sunday June 23rd return
- Lovina and Mary Smith great their father and Joseph.
- Joseph “Lovina, when are you going to get married”?
- Lovina “We’re just waiting for you Uncle Joseph”?
- Joseph “Go get your beau”! – He married Lovina and Edwin the evening of June 23rd.
- Next day Joseph and Hyrum left for Carthage.
- Joseph stopping at temple “This is the loveliest place and the best people under the heavens; little do they know the trials that await them”

- Now I wonder what was on Hyrum's mind as he listened to John Taylor sing a poor wayfaring man of grief – his family. His oldest daughter had just married!

Testimony of Joseph Smith and Book of Mormon (Stake Conference for Youth)

- I was deeply touched by President Staples testimony and story of conversion. He prayed and received a witness of the spirit in a strong and memorable way.
- My experience at 12 years old – I prayed in closet for over an hour but got nothing. Over time – I have come to recognize the peace and gentleness of spirit testifying.

Heber J Grant

- Early church history – young man got married in SLC & on honeymoon in Park City
- While hiking in the mountains – poison ivy head to foot – came home early to find he had been called as President of the Toole Stake.
- President John Taylor made the call. This new Stake President was only 23 years old. He said: "I don't want to be the president of the Tooele Stake, as a matter of fact, I don't even like Tooele". (its not the end of the earth but you can see it from there!) President Taylor said – no, we want you to accept this call because it has come from the Lord so he said he'd do it.
- 2 Sessions of stake conference 1st session he was sustained and spoke 7 ½ minutes and sat down. He was embarrassed it was so short but he didn't have anything else to say.
- He overheard an older brother say: "It's a pity they had to send somebody out here to preside, they couldn't find somebody in Tooele County with enough sense to speak at least 10 minutes and besides that boy they sent out here to preside over us."
- At lunch between sessions – Joseph F Smith, 1st Counselor in the 1st Presidency – drills him on his talk. "You said in your brief talk that you believed the gospel with all your heart and your purpose to live it but you didn't not bear testimony that you absolutely know this gospel is true! Don't you absolutely know it is true?"
- His response "I do not" What you are the Stake President!!
- He turns to President John Taylor and says "President Taylor, I am in favor of undoing this afternoon what we did this morning" Can you imagine – all those in favor of releasing this stake president after 2 hours manifest it...
- Joseph F Smith said, "I don't think any man should preside over a stake who doesn't have a perfect and abiding knowledge of the divinity of the work"
- President Taylor put his head back and laughed and laughed until his body shook. He said, "Joseph, Joseph, Joseph, he knows it just as well as you do. The only thing is, he does not know that he knows it".
- One year later, that stake President was called to fill the next vacancy in the quorum of the Twelve Apostles. His name was Heber J Grant.
- My testimony – quiet and soft. Only few times have had significant and profound spiritual manifestations. Bishop – seeing the light come back into a young person's eye's when he's repented. Thoughts coming into mind about my children and their needs. Study has enhanced that testimony, but in the end it is the feeling I have and continue to have in meetings such as this.
- Testimony is found in the bearing of it.

Story of Mosiah Lyman Hancock

- 12 years old when Joseph and Hyrum were martyred
- "I saw the Prophet ride out of Nauvoo the last time"
- I went out to meet their martyred bodies with many other saints
- "I went to see those noble martyrs after they were laid out in the mansion"
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- heads placed to the north
- stood in line with the other saints – came to feet of Joseph, passed up left side to head and down the right side. Next, came to feet of Hyrum, up left side and down right side.
- After people had gone his father took him into the mansion house again.
- Had him place one hand on Joseph's chest and raise the other arm and swear that he would be faithful to the restored gospel. Did the same on Hyrum's chest.
- I hope we all can picture yourself in Mosiah's place and swear the same oath!

Grateful for the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ

- Overheard a dear friend comment in jest as he attempted to break through what he perceived as church red tape and bureaucracy "Maybe it would be better for if we had a new restoration and start over again". . .
- I love the gospel that Joseph Smith was an instrument in restoring. But I am so grateful for the inspiration of each prophet since that time –
- Meeting schedules, temples, seminary and institute, young men and young women organizations, primary, mission program, welfare system, guidance and inspiration on raising families, and how to live in times of wickedness and upheaval.

Closing Choir Anthem: "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth", directed by Merlyn Leetham, accompanied by Ilene Kellogg

Closing Prayer: Dick Johnson