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Journal of Discourses,  
Volume 24

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John Taylor, February 11, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered in the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City,

Sunday February 11, 1883.

WHY THE SAINTS MEET TOGETHER – THEIR PRETENSIONS – WHAT THEIR PROFESSION  
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[JD 24:2 – p.3, John Taylor, February 11, 1883](#)

to assist us? The Lord, and if He does not I am sure we cannot do it, and if He does not show us how we cannot do it. Well, some people come and try to convert us. Very well, let them convert away. If they have anything to convert you to, I say for God's sake take it, if they have something that is more intelligent than that which has been communicated to you. We are desirous to obtain all truth from whatever quarter it comes, and every good thing that can be made manifest, and if anybody has got any truths that we have not we are prepared to embrace them, but we have no truths to barter away for the fictions, ideas, theories and opinions of men. It is written: "They shall be all taught of God." Have those men received anything from God to communicate? If they have let them state it, and if they have not let them hold their peace. "They shall be all

taught of God." He will be their instructor, their judge, their guide, their director and their lawgiver, and he will give them the light and intelligence which they require. We are operating with and in possession of principles that are great, grand, glorious and intelligent, that have existed in ages past, that exist to-day, and that will exist for ever and ever, worlds without end, Amen. We are building up the Zion of God, and He is to be our instructor. We are building up the kingdom of God, and He is to be our guide. We are building up the Church of God, and unless we are under the guidance and influence of the Spirit of God, we neither belong to the Church of God, the Zion of God, nor the kingdom of God. And hence it is necessary that we should comprehend the position we occupy.

[JD 24:3, John Taylor, February 11, 1883](#)

We have been in the world and we have preached the Gospel to the world and are doing it, and that is part of our duty, and we are fulfilling it as fast as the Lord opens the way. We have done a great deal. I think that at an assembly some little time ago there were twenty-five nationalities represented. Is there any difference of sentiment among these diverse people? No. In speaking with a gentleman recently on some of the difficulties between the English and the Irish people, I told him that it was lamentable that such a feeling should exist. Well, said he, they are two different races and they cannot affiliate, one being Celtic and the other Anglo-Saxon, and their sympathies and feelings are dissimilar. Their ideas and feelings differ; their education and their instincts differ. That is very true so far as it goes. But what of us? We are gathered here under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and that as I before said, produces a unity of feeling and spirit, a oneness and sympathy that does not exist in the world and Jesus has said, By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye love one another. We have people among us from all part of the United States, from Ireland, Scotland and Wales, from England, France and Germany, from Denmark, Norway and Sweden; also from Iceland, Australia, New Zealand, from the islands of the sea, and in fact, from nearly every civilized country. And how is it brethren? Are we Scandinavians; are we English; are we Scotch, Swiss or Dutch, as the case may be? No; the Spirit of God, which we obtained through obedience to the requirements of the Gospel; having been born again, of the water and of the Spirit, has made us of one heart, one faith, one baptism; we have no national or class divisions of that kind among us.

[JD 24:3, John Taylor, February 11, 1883](#)

What, then, are we aiming at? We are aiming to introduce among us the principle of virtue, integrity, honesty, and a knowledge of God and of His laws. This is what we are seeking to do. And do we injure any man or set of men in so doing? I think not. I will say to the credit of our merchants, that they are spoken of as honorable men, as men who pay their debts better than the majority of mankind. Such is the report I hear from gentlemen with whom I communicate. This is pleasing to hear. It is pleasing to see the principle of honor introduced in our trading; and we ought to be honorable one with another and with all men, treating all with the respect they deserve and merit at our hands. But because we do this are we to submit to every kind of indignity; are we to submit to be outraged, to be traduced; are we to permit, in a social capacity, evils and crimes to be introduced in our midst, and never lift up our voice against them? Are we to permit our sons and daughters to affiliate and associate with corrupt men and women? No. But if our youth choose to pursue a course of that kind, all well. No, I will not say it is well; it would be better if they did better. We are here to introduce correct principles; and we profess to be moving on a more elevated plane; we profess to be under the influence of the inspiration of the Almighty; and God cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance.

[JD 24:3 – p.4 – p.5, John Taylor, February 11, 1883](#)

Let me read that prayer a little more: "Our Father, who art in heaven." What, is He indeed my Father? Yes. Is He our Father? Yes. "Our Father, who art in heaven; hallowed be Thy name." We are children of God; that is the relationship that we sustain to Him. Being born of the Spirit, we become the sons of God. And what else? The heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. Is this the position we occupy? So say the Scriptures. And what is the difference between those who have been born of the water and the Spirit, and those who know not the Gospel, and who possess none of the gifts thereof? Let us stop and inquire. You have

sons, have you not? Yes. What will the boys be when they are grown up. They will be men, will they not? They are now the sons of men. If a man be inducted into the family of God, and becomes a son of God, what will he become when he gets his growth? You can figure that out yourselves. It is said, "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." What shall we be? Heirs of God. What else? Joint heirs with Jesus Christ. What, joint heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord? Yes. What do a man's heirs possess when he leaves this world? They inherit the possessions of the deceased father or benefactor. We say that God is the God of the universe, the Maker of heaven and earth, the Sustainer of all things visible and invisible. And are we to be joint heirs with Him? So the Bible states. Well may the Lord say in one of the revelations given through the Prophet Joseph Smith, "He that hath eternal life is rich." Jesus said to the Samaritan woman when asking her to give him a drink of water, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that sayeth to thee, give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Again; Jesus said to His disciples: "In my father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." Where? In heaven, of which we have very little knowledge, and about which we comprehend very little. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also." What was there in His Father's house? Many mansions. What! Mansions in heaven? Yes? What else? He declares He was going to prepare a place for them – mansions, that where he was there they might be also. It is very plain, if we could only open our eyes and understand it as it is. There is a great difference between this principle and the ideas that men entertain regarding earthly things. The first is in accord with the eternal duration and exaltation of man, and is in consonance with his highest and most exalted aspirations; the other is momentary, transient, fleeting and evanescent. Men are grasping and grabbing at the world, and at the riches of the world. I might mention the names of prominent men of this nation – no matter, I do not like to deal in personalities – men who gather together their millions. By and by they drop down into a little place just about two feet by six, and that is all there is of it. And what of their riches? – anything pertaining to the future? No. Such men are foolish, if they could comprehend it; but they cannot. They, however, think that we are big fools. There was a prominent man whose name I have forgotten, but I remember some lines that he wrote. When I am gone, he said, men will erect a splendid monument to my memory, upon which they will write: "Here lies the great!" If I could rise and speak, I would say, "False marble, where? Nothing but poor and sordid dust lies here." Has any man ever taken anything out of the world? No. Naked they come into the world, and naked they return; they leave all their wealth behind them. Then if, as intelligent beings, made in the image of God, we disregard the teachings of our heavenly Father, and are led by influences that are wrong, improper, impure and incorrect, and suffer ourselves to make shipwreck of our faith and our good consciences, shall we not be the veriest fools when we stand before the Judge of all the earth? But if we can succeed in securing eternal life and exaltations, thrones and principalities, powers and dominions, which we sometimes talk about and which are as true as anything can be – if we can succeed in doing this, we shall be amply repaid for all the inconveniences that we may have to put up with, and all the trouble that we may have to endure.

[JD 24:5, John Taylor, February 11, 1883](#)

Now we will return to the old prayer again. "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come." What kingdom? The kingdom of God. What does that imply? Government, rule, authority, dominion. "Thy kingdom come." What, that God shall dictate affairs upon the earth? Yes. That His word, His will, His law shall go forth? Yes. One of the ancient Prophets in speaking of these things said, "The law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." You will find those things written in your Bible, and can look for them at your leisure. Now if we are to expect a thing of this kind to take place, when the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, and when the will of God is to be done on earth as it is done in heaven, ought we not to try as citizens of the kingdom of God to introduce it and be governed by and to be under its influence? I think we ought. Are we then to yield ourselves to the false traditions, ideas, notions and opinions of men? I think not. We want to strive in all the relations of life, in our family relations, in our individual relations, in our marital relations, and in our associations with men, to

conduct ourselves in that way that God would have us do if He were here Himself to speak on that subject; and to seek to place ourselves in conformity with His law, His word and His will.

JD 24:5 – p.6, John Taylor, February 11, 1883

Now, people take a great deal of pains to try to interfere with us in our marital relations. What have they got to give us in exchange outside of these things? O you Gentiles, present us something superior to that which God has revealed, and we will embrace it. But you cannot do it. We are at the defiance of the world to bring forth any better, purer or more exalting principles. What would they give us in return for that of which they seek to despoil us? Would they introduce all the institutions of a pseudo-Christianity, with its prostitution, the houses of assignation, its social evil, its foeticide and infanticide and the political and social hypocrisy and depravity, and its debauching, demoralizing, and corrupting influence, and call this a fair return for virtue, purity, honor, truth and integrity? Would they induct us into some of their leading ministers of using the sword, the bayonet, and the cannon to extirpate what they term heresy, set man against his fellow-man and deluge the nation in blood? What do they tell us? They set themselves up as our exemplars, and among other things say, we must marry as they do. And how is that? Let me ask some of you venerable, white-headed men that were married in various places, what kind of a covenant did you make? You were asked if you would take the woman to be your lawful wedded wife, for how long? Until death did you part. What a miserable thing. And this is what they have to offer. A woman takes a man as long as he lives, and then when he dies all is gone into oblivion; no eternal unity, no claim pertaining to heaven or the future; no sons, no daughters, no wife, no husband. That is nihilism, I think. This is the condition they would put you in to-day, if you would listen to them. But we are told that we should remember the rock from whence we are hewn, and the pit from whence we were dug. God has shown us principles that are ten thousand times more exalting and ennobling than anything they have to offer. No; you may continue in such operations; that is your business. You may revel in the idea of living with your wives in time, and then dropping into the grave without hope of any further union. But let me have my wives and children, and my associations in the eternal world. Let me have a religion that will live in time, and exist whilst eternal ages roll along. That is the kind of religion I want, and if you like the other, all right, take it. But give me, if you please, the liberty to pursue happiness in my own way; if not I shall try to take it. I want none of those evanescent principles that vanish when time ceases. I profess to be an immortal being, as we all are. A spark of Deity, struck from the fire of His eternal blaze, dwells in us, a portion of that intelligence that dwells with the Gods; which, if we will follow out through the influence of the Holy Ghost, of which I have spoken, will bring us back again into the presence of God; and with us our wives, our children, and our associations. Godliness, indeed, as stated by the Apostle Paul, "is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come," and despite the ideas, the opposition and the contumely of ignorant and unenlightened men, we will rule and reign and triumph, not only in time but throughout the countless ages of eternity. That is the kind of religion that I want. I would not give a straw for the other; if other people like it, all well and good. I do not want to interrupt them. But they want to interrupt us; and they do it, many of them, though we treat them never so kindly. They seem to have a perfect mania on these points; they run wild about our private affairs.

JD 24:6 – p.7, John Taylor, February 11, 1883

Now, there are certain inalienable rights that some men in this nation consider belong to all men, one of which is, the right to live. The government of the United States did not give men life; they received it from another and higher source. God himself is the author of life and existence, more so than we ourselves sometimes think. There is not one of you could leave this place to-day unless God permitted it, and not only permitted it, but sustained you and empowered you to do so. We live in Him, we move in Him, and from Him we have our being.

JD 24:7, John Taylor, February 11, 1883

Do you believe that these men are sincere when they allege that we are so very wicked and that they desire to improve our morals? It would be something like their marriage – it ends in death, and sometimes even before

that. What has been the proceeding here? Who are the authors and abettors of the iniquities that prevail in our midst? Wicked and unscrupulous men, the professed advocates of reform and a hypocritical civilization, such as ministers, politicians and others. Who are the introducers and originators of our gambling hells, or bagnios, and of the open and flagrant acts of debauchery and corruption that prevail in our cities where Gentiles reside? Who are the protectors of drunkenness and other vices? Our professed Christian reformers. These are their institutions; and their emissaries have been trying to introduce the murder of the innocents in the shape of foeticide and infanticide. Can we believe in the sincerity and truthfulness of such hypocritical, corrupt and degraded men? They tell us it is contrary to law for a man to be married as we are, especially if he has more wives than one. They talk about polygamy; but that is not the thing which they are aiming at. I will mention these things some other time.

[JD 24:7 – p.8, John Taylor, February 11, 1883](#)

There are one or two statements that I wish to make before I close. Have they manifested a desire to rid us of lasciviousness? Where are the bagnios? Who are they kept for? For our good neighbors who love virtue so much. Again when thousands of men withdrew from the polls that they might not be considered obstructionists, what did they crowd upon us? You have heard a statement about Mayor Little and his son. Talk about purity! Was there any purity about that! The young man was obliged to object to his father, who was an honorable man, registering, because he had what? Broken any law? I do not think he had ever broken a polygamic law, but he had two wives some time ago when there was no law against it. Some of these things we mean to contest yet. We have not laid aside our franchise. If any think so they make a great mistake. There is not one man or woman in twenty who have refrained from exercising their franchise at the polls who, if the law of the United States was carried out and constitutional principles sustained could be interfered with according to the most rigid interpretation of the so-called polygamic laws, and we shall contest these rights. We are not going to give up everything. In the interests of peace some of us hold our franchise in abeyance at the present time; but as I stated at Conference when I spoke of these things – we mean to contend for our rights legally and constitutionally, inch by inch to the last end, and to maintain the principle of human rights in the interest of ourselves, in the interest of our children, in the interest of the honorable men of this nation, and in the interest of the freedom of man throughout the world. So do not think we are giving up everything: we have not given up one solitary iota. Yet we thought it better to withdraw until we had a fair opportunity to contest all these things peaceably and quietly, and to contend for our rights legally and constitutionally as American citizens and as men. Can we think that men are very sincere who pursue the course that has been adopted toward us? And what on the back of the refusal to let Brother Little register? It is purity they are after; is it? Here comes along the keeper of a bagnio and its inmates? Can they be registered? Yes! Because, according to a ruling, not a law, but a perversion of law, an oath is prescribed to American citizens, wherein loathsome, damning vices are protected. And they can register while the honorable and virtuous are rejected. And our good, Christian folks try to crowd these things down our throats. Well, we can bide our time.

[JD 24:8, John Taylor, February 11, 1883](#)

I will prefer to another affair that took place. Another man, when he came to be registered, after looking at the oath said: "I don't think I can take it, because I have got a wife and keep a mistress." But he was requested to read the oath. After having done so, he said: "I see the crime is here, in it being in the marriage relation, and though I have a mistress as well as a wife the mistress is not in the marriage relation, and I can take it. This man was said to be candid. Of course he was, and people say that he was honorable to tell his feelings. Yes, he was honorable, if it can be honorable for a man to pledge himself before the altar to be true to his wife and to the covenants he had made before God and witnesses – and then break those covenants; if that is honor, he may be called an honorable man, but we do not call it very honorable amongst us. This shows that lascivious cohabitation can be tolerated and protected by men who would seek to be our teachers and our reformers. Such men and women under the old Mosaic law would have been stoned to death. I say, my soul, enter thou not into their secrets, and, mine honor, be thou not with them united.

[JD 24:8 – p.9, John Taylor, February 11, 1883](#)

Furthermore, there is a little thing which I wish to refer to that has lately come to my knowledge; I have a knowledge of a great many things – for men come to me with all kinds of affairs. It is a circumstance that is to be deplored. A married man considered here an honorable man, an upright man, a man that has taken an active part in some of the schools, who has given considerable to the building of churches and it has been thought that he was really seeking to do good amongst us – has lately sought to abduct an honorable young lady, or tried to persuade her to leave her home clandestinely with him and go to a distant land. How can we trust these people? These are facts; I have the letters; I know what I am talking about, and yet these are reformers, identified with churches, schools, and other places of improvement, who do not shrink to associate themselves with those infamies. A very low state of morality exists among them, as we know. How is it with us? Do we have men that sometimes do wrong? Yes. Do we sanction the wrong? Can an adulterer have a place amongst us? I tell you No, he cannot, and any Bishop who would permit anything of that sort ought himself to be removed. We are in favor of chastity, purity and virtue, not nominally but really, and we should make a distinction between one thing and the other and maintain virtue and correct principles in spite of the hypocrisy and corruption that exists, for it is among us and around us. And it is for us to look after our wives, our sons and daughters, and preserve our chastity, our honor and our virtue in all these matters. Let us seek the blessing of God, and He will help us and direct us. But because some of these men do wrong, and act iniquitously, shall we condemn the whole? By no means. There are thousands and hundreds of thousands of honorable, upright men and women in this and other nations, who outside of religion, would scorn to be associated with such infamies. Treat all men aright; but be careful of that loose system of morals that exists in the world; be careful how you associate with such people or permit them in your habitations. Look well to yourselves and to your families, to your sons and to your daughters; and let us seek to do right and cultivate the principles of truth and God will sustain us, and Zion will go onward, and our enemies will be confounded, from time to time, and salvation will flow to Israel if Israel will be true to himself, and we will try and carry out the things that god has ordained, and accomplish the work that He has given us to do. For if ever the will of God is done on earth as it is done in heaven, it ought to commence in the land of Zion. May God help us to do it in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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Joseph F. Smith, October 29th, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH,

Delivered in the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, October 29th, 1882.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

GREATNESS OF THE WORK INAUGURATED AND ACCOMPLISHED BY THE PROPHET  
JOSEPH SMITH – SKETCH OF THE PROPHET'S EARLY LIFE – REFUTATION OF THE  
FALSE CHARGES MADE AGAINST HIM AND THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS – CHARACTER  
OF OUR TRADUCERS – DIVINE NATURE AND VALUE OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

JD 24:9 – p.10, Joseph F. Smith, October 29th, 1882

Brother Woodruff in the course of his remarks made the assertion that Joseph Smith was the greatest Prophet that has ever lived of whom we have any knowledge, save and except Jesus Christ Himself. The world would say that he was an impostor; and the Lord said that his name should be had for good and for evil among all the nations of the earth, and this much, at least, so far as his name has become known, has been fulfilled. This prediction was made through the Prophet Joseph Smith himself when he was an obscure youth, and there was but little prospect of this name ever becoming known beyond the village where he lived. It was at an early period of his life and at the beginning of the work that this prophecy or revelation was given, and it has been truly verified. To-day there is not another man, perhaps, who has figured in religion whose name is so widely known, and the report of whom has gone so far and is so wide spread among the nations as that of Joseph Smith. In connection with the work of which he was the instrument in the hands of God of laying the foundation, his name is spoken of in nearly every civilized nation upon the globe for good or for evil. Where it is spoken of for good; it is by those who have had the privilege of hearing the Gospel which has come to the earth through him and who have been sufficiently honest and humble to receive the same; they speak of Him with a knowledge which they have received by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, through obedience to the principles which he taught as a Prophet and as an inspired man. They speak to his praise, to his honor, and they hold his name in honorable remembrance. They revere him and they love him as they love no other man, because they know he was the chosen instrument in the hands of the Almighty of restoring the Gospel of life and salvation unto them, of opening their understanding of the future, or lifting the veil of eternity as it were from before their eyes. Those who have received the principles which he promulgated know they pertain not only to their own salvation, happiness and peace, spiritual and temporal, but to the welfare, happiness, salvation and exaltation of their kindred who have died without a knowledge of the truth. The work in which Joseph Smith was engaged was not confined to this life alone, but it pertains as well to the life to come and to the life that has been. In other words, it relates to those that have lived upon the earth, to those that are living and to those that shall come after us. It is not something which relates to man only while he tabernacles in the flesh, but to the whole human family from eternity to eternity. Consequently, as I have said, Joseph Smith is held in reverence, his name is honored; tens of thousands of people thank God in their heart and from the depths of their souls for the knowledge the Lord has restored to the earth through him, and therefore they speak well of him and bear testimony of his worth. And this is not confined to a village, nor to a State, nor to a nation, but extends to every nation, kindred, tongue and people where the Gospel, up to the present, has been preached – in America, Great Britain, Europe, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and upon the islands of the sea. And the Book of Mormon, which Joseph Smith was the instrument in the hands of God of bringing forth to this generation, has been translated into the German, French, Danish, Swedish, Welsh, Hawaiian, Hindostanee, Spanish and Dutch languages, and this book will be translated into other languages, for according to the predictions it contains, and according to the promises of the Lord through Joseph Smith, it is to be sent unto every nation and kindred and people under the whole heavens, until all the sons and daughters of Adam shall have the privilege of hearing the Gospel as it has been restored to the earth in the dispensation of the fullness of times.

[JD 24:10 – p.11, Joseph F. Smith, October 29th, 1882](#)

The world presume that we have not received a knowledge of the truth. Those who are in ignorance in regard to the character, life and labors of Joseph Smith, who have never read his revelations or studies or investigated his claims to divine authority and are ignorant of his mission, revile him, sneer at his name, and ridicule his claims to prophetic inspiration, and call him an impostor. Jesus was also called an impostor in His day, except by a few that hearkened to His instruction, and believed His testimony. The great majority of mankind then living who knew of Christ, deemed Him an impostor, and considered him worthy to be put to death; precisely the same feeling existed towards Joseph Smith.

[JD 24:11, Joseph F. Smith, October 29th, 1882](#)

The disciples of Jesus Christ anciently were regarded in the same light as their Master, the Savior; so it is not at all surprising that the people of the world to-day, who know not the truth, should pronounce Joseph Smith an impostor and try to ridicule the doctrines which he taught; but in so doing they make themselves ridiculous,



for they know little or nothing about them; indeed, in ninety–nine cases out of a hundred where the doctrines of the Latter–day Saints – which are no other than the doctrines which were taught by the Savior himself or contained in the Bible – are ridiculed and pronounced false and evil, they are so pronounced by a class of people who, being ignorant of, or wilfully perverting the truth, build aerial castles in order that they may tear them down, or "make a man of straw" to shoot at so that they can create a great noise and excitement about the "Mormons," and thus we are often charged by those who abuse us and write and preach against us with believing and practicing the most absurd things – things which no Latter–day Saint ever dreamt of believing or accepting as a principle of his faith. As I have said, in ninety–nine cases out of a hundred the Latter–day Saints are accused by their enemies of believing doctrines which they do not believe, and which are not the doctrines of the Latter–day Saints at all. They accuse us of every abominable thing. They call us murderers; they say we are immoral, ignorant, superstitious; they call us dupes, they say we are deceived, that we are enslaved by the Priesthood; that we are fettered and in bondage. Now, is it true that the Latter–day Saints are ignorant? If so, then I am sorry for the great majority of mankind, for millions of them are in a far worse condition than we are, in this respect. I will say here, and not without good and sufficient proof to back it, that the Latter–day Saints will compare favorably with any other people upon the face of the earth for good, sound common–sense, and every other good thing. Hence, to say that the Latter–day Saints are an ignorant people is saying only what may truthfully be said of the whole world. Taking the best evidence that we have to prove the facts, the statistics of the schools as compared with the statistics of the schools in the various States and Territories and of European countries, it appears that the people of Utah stand in the front ranks in relation to education, and are in advance of many of their neighbors and stand equal with many who have far greater advantages than they have. Yet we do not boast of being very intelligent; and only claim the credit which belongs to us, that we stand on a par with our neighbors and with our fellow–citizens throughout the United States; and for that matter, will compare favorably with any people on the face of the globe.

[JD 24:11 – p.12, Joseph F. Smith, October 29th, 1882](#)

But we are called an "immoral people." Well, is the world so very moral? Are our accusers so very pure and holy and so extremely righteous that they should accuse us of being immoral? Consistency would demand that he that is without guilt should throw the first stone. But it is a fact that in our case our bitterest accusers – and this has been well demonstrated hundreds and perhaps thousands of times – are themselves reeking with corruption. Generally those who are the most immoral themselves are the first to make the charge of immorality against the Latter–day Saints! But I deny the charge in total, and I assert, without fear of successful contradiction – that there is not an equal number of people upon the face of the globe to–day who present to the world as much pure and simple morality and virtue as do the people called Latter–day Saints. In other words, there is not a more moral people upon the face of the earth to–day than the Latter–day Saints, taking them all in all. Not but what there are some "black sheep" among them. But who can fathom the depths of crime and corruption which exist in all the great cities of the world? You may go to the rural districts throughout the United States, and gather therefrom the most virtuous of our country to the number that are gathered together as Latter–day Saints, and I will venture to say that there are half as many children murdered among them annually, either before or after their birth, by their own mothers or fathers, as are born to the Latter–day Saints in the same period. The Latter–day Saints are proverbial for NOT murdering their children. They have hosts of them, and they do not try to destroy them neither before nor after birth, but endeavor to rear them to manhood and womanhood, that they may teach them the principles of the Gospel of Christ – the highest code of morals known, that they may be able to bear off the kingdom of God upon the earth, and to regenerate the world. This is the object for which the Latter–day Saints are raising children, that God may have a pure and a righteous people. How much the Latter–day Saints neglect their opportunities or privileges or fall short of their duties in regard to training their children, and instructing them in the principles of morality, virtue, purity and uprightness, is difficult to say; but of this I feel sure that while they are the best people that I know of there is great room for improvement in this direction.

[JD 24:12 – p.13, Joseph F. Smith, October 29th, 1882](#)

But, it is said, the immorality of the Latter-day Saints consists in their marrying more wives than one! We are not charged with the crime of frequenting houses of ill-fame, of fostering illicit intercourse, of infidelity to our wives – of child murder, of drunkenness, profanity, dishonesty, cruelty or indolence, or if we are the charge is utterly false, but our great offence is in marrying our wives and protecting them and our children as all honorable men should God forbid that I should undertake to compare the honorable marriage of the Latter-day Saints with the debauchery and sexual crimes of our accusers! If our actions and our faith in regard to marriage are called wicked and immoral by them, in the name of God and humanity what will you call the crimes of those that accuse us? There is no adequate term in the dictionary of the English language with which to make a comparison, hence "Mormon" plural marriage cannot be degraded to the level of a comparison with the sexual crimes and iniquities of the world; there is no similitude between them. One is the antipode of the other – one is virtuous, pure and honorable, and the other is corrupt, treacherous and debasing to the utmost degree. Our system of marriage promotes life, purity, innocence, vitality, health, increase and longevity, while the other engenders disease, disappointment, misery and premature death – that is the difference. Hence there is no resemblance for they are not allied to each other at all.

JD 24:13 – p.14, Joseph F. Smith, October 29th, 1882

The people of Utah are charge with having committed terrible murders and robberies. "Danites" or "Destroying Angels" are talked about by sensational writers and believed in by the uninformed. Now, what is the fact? Utah stands head and shoulders above every other Territory in the United States so far as the crime of murder is concerned. You cannot find a western Territory or State within the United States where there has not been a hundred per cent more murders, lynching and lawlessness than can be found in the annals of Utah. Take the State of California, the State of Nevada, and all the surrounding Territories, and it will be found that there has been less violation of law, fewer murders and less lynching in Utah than in any one of these from the beginning. There is no man that knows anything about the history of the western States and Territories for the last thirty years but knows this to be absolutely the fact. But because a few horse thieves and murderers have per chance been summarily dealt with by officers of the law – who were the appointees of the United States, and acting under the authority of the parent government and the laws of the Territory – the whole people of Utah are accused of being murderers. I attended a Methodist revival meeting held in a big tent in this city a few years ago by some itinerant preachers, who had spent but a few days in Utah, and were totally ignorant of her history, and it fairly made one's blood run cold to hear them relate their pious suspicions of the horrible murders that had been committed in Utah. They thought, or pretended to believe, that if the rocks of these mountain gorges could only speak, that nearly every rock could some terrible tale unfold of horrible secret murder and rapine. The most damnable nonsense that was ever uttered by man. But this is the sort of preaching that is generally done against the Latter-day Saints by this class of men, and as I have said, those who denounce the doctrines of this people as heresies and as abominable, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred know nothing whatever of the facts. If the Latter-day Saints had not been Latter-day Saints, if it had not been for their religion, and their faith in God and in His omnipotence to deliver them from the power of their enemies; or if the Territory of Utah had been inhabited by the same number of people composed of the various sects and denominations of Christianity, so-called, and the one-thousandth part of the infamies that have been perpetrated upon this people had been perpetrated upon them, many of the perpetrators of these infamies would have been long ago summoned to their final abode by "Judge Lynch." But the patience of the Latter-day Saints, and their willingness to leave their cause in the hands of God has spared them from shedding the blood of their enemies, and preserved them from violence or harm. Men that have not deserved to live, and would not have been suffered to live in any other community under the same circumstances, have equal protection with the very best citizens, and no man would harm a hair of their heads. We have too much good sense to make martyrs of such characters, and consequently they are left alone to pursue their nefarious course. Sometimes it seems rather hard to bear it, but it is the best to do so, I suppose. We are engaged in the work of the Lord, and He will bear it off victorious.

JD 24:14 – p.15, Joseph F. Smith, October 29th, 1882

Let us return to the Prophet Joseph Smith. He was accused of nearly everything that was vile, by his enemies, who, as is well known by the Latter-day Saints, were generally entirely ignorant of his true character and mission. What did Joseph Smith do? Was human blood found upon his hands? No, verily no. He was innocent. Was he a slanderer and vilifier? No, verily, he was not. Did he wrongfully and unjustly accuse men of wickedness? No, he did not. Did he institute an order of things that has proven injurious to the human family? Let the people who have become acquainted with his doctrines, and with the institutions which he established upon the earth and his own life's labor answer. He was born December 23, 1805, in the State of Vermont. His parents were American citizens, as had been their ancestors for generations. In the Spring of 1820 he received the first supernatural or heavenly manifestation. He was then fourteen years of age. Ordinarily we do not expect a very great deal from a boy who is only fourteen years of age, and it is not likely that a boy of that tender age could have become very vicious or wicked, especially when he was born and reared on a farm, apart from the corrupting vices of great cities, and free from contact with the debasing influences of vile associations. It is not likely that he spent many idle moments during the working years of his life up to fourteen years of age; for his father had to labor for his living and earn it from the soil by the labor of his hands, being a poor man with a large family to support. In 1820, as I have said, Joseph Smith received a revelation in which he claimed that God had declared that He was about to restore the ancient Gospel in its purity, and many other glorious things. In consequence of this, Joseph Smith became very notorious in the neighborhood where he resided, and people began to regard him with a great deal of suspicion. He was at once called an impostor, and a few years later he was styled by his enemies, "old Joe Smith." His fame became known throughout the United States. He was called "a money digger," and many other contemptuous things. If you will look at his history, and at the character of his parents, and surroundings, and consider the object of his life, you can discover how much consistency there was in the charges brought against him. All this was done to injure him. He was neither old nor "a money digger," nor an impostor, nor in any manner deserving of the epithets that they applied to him. He had never injured anybody, nor robbed anybody – he never did anything for which he could be punished by the laws under which he lived. When he was between 17 and 18 years of age, he received another heavenly manifestation, and some great and glorious things were revealed to him, and for four years subsequently he received visits from a heavenly messenger. He did not claim he was in communication with wicked men or demons from the lower regions. He claimed he was in communication with Moroni, one of the ancient Prophets who lived upon this continent. He was a good man when he lived here and it is not likely that he had become wicked since he went away. This personage, he claimed, revealed to him the mind and will of the Lord, and showed him the character of the great work that he, in the hands of God was to be instrumental in establishing in the earth when the time should come. This was the labor that was performed by the angel Moroni, during the four years intervening between 1823 and 1827. In 1827 he received from the hands of the angel Moroni, the gold plates from which this book [Book of Mormon] was translated by him through the inspiration of the Almighty, and the gift and power of God unto him. I heard it read when I was a child, I have read it many times since, and I have asked myself scores of times, have you ever discovered one precept, doctrine, or command within the lids of that book that is calculated to injure anybody, to do harm to the world, or that is in contradiction to the word of God as contained in the Bible? And the answer invariably came, No, not one solitary thing; every precept, doctrine, word of advice, prophecy, and indeed every word contained within the lids of that book relating to the great plan of human redemption and salvation is calculated to make bad men good, and good men better. Did Joseph Smith, during the three years intervening between 1827 and 1830, while he was laboring with his hands for a scanty subsistence, dodging his enemies and trying to evade the grasp of those who sought to destroy him and prevent the accomplishment of his mission, struggling all the while against untold obstacles and depressing embarrassments to complete the translation of this book, have much chance of becoming wicked or corrupt? I do not think he had. When he had finished translating the book he was still only a boy, yet in producing this book he has developed historical facts, prophecies, revelations, predictions, testimonies and doctrines, precepts and principles that are beyond the power and wisdom of the learned world to duplicate or refute. Joseph Smith was an unlearned youth, so far as the learning of the world is concerned. He was taught by the angel Moroni. He received his education from above, from God Almighty, and not from man-made institutions; but to charge him with being ignorant would be both unjust and false; no man or combination of men possessed greater intelligence than he, nor could the combined wisdom and cunning of

the age produce an equivalent for what he did. He was not ignorant, for He was taught by Him from whom all intelligence flows. He possessed a knowledge of God and of His law, and of eternity, and mankind have been trying with all their learning, wisdom and power – and not content with that, they have tried with the sword and cannon – to extirpate from the earth the superstructure which Joseph Smith, by the power of God, erected; but they have signally failed, and will yet be overwhelmed by their efforts to destroy it.

JD 24:15 – p.16 – p.17, Joseph F. Smith, October 29th, 1882

Again, the world say that Joseph Smith was an indolent person. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized April 6th, 1830. Joseph Smith was martyred in Carthage, Illinois, on the 27th of June, 1844 – 14 years after the organization of the Church. What did he accomplish in these 14 years? He opened up communication with the heavens in his youth. He brought forth the Book of Mormon, which contains the fullness of the Gospel; and the revelations contained in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants; restored the holy Priesthood unto man; established and organized the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, an organization which has no parallel in all the world, and which all the cunning and wisdom of men for ages has failed to discover or produce and never could have done. He founded colonies in the States of New York, Ohio, Missouri and Illinois, and pointed the way for the gathering of the Saints into the Rocky Mountains; sent the Gospel into Europe and to the islands of the sea; founded the town of Kirtland, Ohio, and there built a temple that cost about a quarter of a million of dollars; he founded the city of Nauvoo in the midst of persecution; gathered into Nauvoo and vicinity some 20,000 people, and commenced the building of the temple there, which when completed cost one million dollars; and in doing all this he had to contend against the prejudices of the age, against relentless persecution, mobocracy and vile calumny and slander, that were heaped upon him from all quarters without stint or measure. In a word, he did more in from 14 to 20 years for the salvation of man than any other man save Jesus only, that ever lived, and yet he was accused by his enemies of being an indolent and worthless man! Where shall we go to find another man that has accomplished the one thousandth part of the good that Joseph Smith accomplished? Shall we go to the Rev. Mr. Beecher or Talmage, or any of the great preachers of the day? What have they done for the world with all their boasted intelligence, influence, wealth, and the popular voice of the world in their favor! Joseph Smith had none of their advantages, if these are advantages. And yet no man in the nineteenth century, except Joseph Smith, has discovered to the world a ray of light upon the keys and power of the Holy Priesthood or the ordinances of the Gospel either for the living or the dead. Through Joseph Smith, God has revealed many things which were kept hid from the foundation of the world in fulfillment of the Prophets – and at no time since Enoch walked the earth has the Church of God been organized as perfectly as it is to-day – not excepting the dispensation of Jesus and His disciples – or if it was we have no record of it. And this is strictly in keeping with the objects and character of this great latter-day work, destined to consummate the great purpose and designs of God concerning the dispensation of the fullness of times. The principles of baptism for the redemption of the dead, with the ordinances appertaining thereto, for the complete salvation and exaltation of those who have died without the Gospel, as revealed through Joseph Smith, is alone worth more than all the dogmas of the so-called Christian world combined. Joseph Smith is accused of being a false prophet. It is, however, beyond the power of the world to prove that he was a false Prophet. They may so charge him, but you who have received the testimony of Jesus Christ by the spirit of prophecy through his administrations are my witnesses that they have not the power to prove him false, and that is why they are so vexed about it. In my humble opinion many of our enemies know that they lie before God, angels and men, when they make this charge, and they would only be too glad to produce proof to sustain their accusations, but they cannot. Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God. He lived and died a true prophet, and his words and works will yet demonstrate the divinity of his mission to millions of the inhabitants of this globe. Perhaps not so many that are now living, for they have in a great measure rejected the Gospel and the testimony which the Elders of this Church have borne to them; but their children after them and generations to come will receive with delight the name of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the Gospel which their fathers rejected. Amen.

## Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883

### SYNOPSIS OF A TEMPERANCE LECTURE,

Delivered by Elder Moses Thatcher, before the Young Men's Mutual  
Improvement Association of Hyrum, March 7th, 1883.

(Reported by C. C. S.)

#### PROHIBITION ADVOCATED – EFFECTS OF DRUNKENNESS ILLUSTRATED, STATISTICS, ETC.

[JD 24:17, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

In responding to the invitation of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association of Hyrum, I beg to say that press of other matters has prevented me from preparing myself to speak upon this subject as its importance demands, but I can submit some statistics which show the effects of intemperance on the human body and soul more forcibly than anything I can say.

[JD 24:17 – p.18, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

Intemperance, license and prohibition have recently been somewhat fully discussed through the columns of the Utah Journal. Those who advocate strict prohibition as a means of checking intemperance among our people, seem firmly impressed with the idea that every possible safeguard should be thrown around the youth and those of mature age who have not, within themselves, the power to resist temptations that are fast sapping the foundations upon which have rested the prosperity, morality, and purity of great Christian nations, that are now wallowing in the filth and degradation of intemperance. Holding that there are some, even among the Latter-day Saints, too weak to resist the tempting cup when pressed to their lips by the hands of false friends, yet who are too good to be left to destroy peace and happiness, desolate home, and die, perhaps, in the gutter, I am an uncompromising advocate of prohibition. No man is permitted to sell poisoned food. Who does so knowingly, to the destruction of life, answers the law on the charge of murder. Why should any be held less guilty of crime for dispensing liquid poison?

[JD 24:18, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

Put the essence of tobacco into the mouth of a rattlesnake and see if the venom which makes its fangs the instrument of death, possesses neutralizing force sufficient to counteract the more deadly poison of the vegetable drug. And yet I have seen tobacco in pieces larger than my hand in barrels from which my brethren and friends had drank the whisky that extracted from that tobacco its deadly narcotic properties.

[JD 24:18, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

I have beheld with horror the effects of double-distilled, tobacco-poisoned whisky. Untainted by it, I have seen man face perils that spoke of death, and under the sway of reason and calm judgment offer his coat to save the life of his companion; when the fierce blast of a winter storm was searching the marrow of his bones, chilling his vitals and clutching with icy hand the benumbed, almost frozen spark of life. That was the natural man, whose generosity the fear of death could not conquer.

[JD 24:18, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

Driven wild with whisky, the heart beating like the quick throb of an overworked engine, reason dethroned by distilled poison burning like living coals in the brain, he who offered the coat to save, sped the ball which pierced the heart of his friend, whose warm blood, rushing through the murderous rent, curdled in crimson clots on the frozen snow, and the hearts of two mothers broke.

[JD 24:18, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

Who shall declare that to be a legitimate business which, in its effects, makes man a demon, dyes his hands in blood, and sacrifices tender and loving hearts upon the altar of intemperance? How can any man with one spark of the milk of human kindness in his heart, offer to his fellow–man that which he knows may destroy the body and ruin the soul? How can any father or brother ask our lawmakers to legalize and thereby become responsible for the crimes of those who seek to lead the weak and unsuspecting into temptations, which if yielded to, generally end in misery, pauperism, and ignominious ruin?

[JD 24:18, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

Look at the home of the drunkard who would move heaven and hell in order to secure the means for gratifying his unnatural appetite! Is it a cheerful, prosperous, beautiful and healthful home? Does he educate his children and feed and clothe them well, or does he permit them to go bare–footed, half–clad, and otherwise exposed to disease and suffering? Does he not pay whisky bills while denying wife and children the means with which to keep the wolf of want from his door? Look at the waste of property all around him! If he has a house, look at the tattered rags hanging from the broken windows, the leaking roof, creaking doors, fireless hearth and general cheerlessness of the place he calls home. Gaze through the sorrowful eyes down into the painstricken heart of his wife, and see if you can find a sentiment there which calls for a single blessing upon the head of the man who has assisted in the degradation of her husband. Look at his lean horses and starving cattle, if he has any left, as they perish in the pitiless storms that chill their marrowless bones, and say that no act of prohibition should be enforced to assist in checking such an one in his downward course.

[JD 24:18 – p.19, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

Is it possible for the inebriate to confine the results of his intemperance to himself? No, it is not possible! It extends to others in spite of all he can do, and in so far as it injures them, his agency should be curtailed. With kindness and long suffering, with gentleness and good will? Yes! and if necessary, by removing with every legitimate and lawful means the temptation which he cannot resist unaided.

[JD 24:19, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

Should the acts – the agency of the brother who, short time ago, left exposed, by reason of his engendered love of liquor, a hundred thousand dollars' worth of property intrusted to his care, be in any way restrained?

[JD 24:19, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

Do intemperate men usually stand at the head of banking, railroad, manufacturing and commercial affairs? Do they stand at the head and control matters in which the Lord and good men have delight?

[JD 24:19, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

Contrast the intelligent look, the energy, the mental and physical endurance of the temperate man with those of the intemperate. Contrast the difference between their surroundings, homes and families, and then say which you prefer, and which you will imitate.

[JD 24:19, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

I will now submit for your consideration an account of some of the evils of intemperance in England, and its cost: In the year 1879, the inhabitants of the United Kingdom expended for intoxicating drinks, \$640,716,320. The names of 3,000,000 persons were registered on the books of the "Poor Law Unions" during that year, and \$4,000 lunatics were in the asylums. In 1877, 320,000 were apprehended for drunkenness; 75,000,000 bushels of grain – an amount equal to what Utah, at our present rate would produce in forty years – is used yearly in the manufacture of intoxicants, which cause there annually 120,000 premature deaths. "It is the opinion of the best informed individuals that the cost of the mischief resulting from drinking, viz., Pauperism, Crime, Disease, Waste of Grain, Accidents, Loss of Labor, &c., amounts to fully as much as the cost of the drink itself, and, therefore, if the direct and indirect cost of the drink be added together, it will give about thirteen hundred millions of dollars as the amount the nation loses yearly through intoxicating liquors."

[JD 24:19, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

In return for this stupendous outlay the nation reaps a harvest of crime, misery, destitution, vice, disease, ruin and death. If the money was paid to rid the nation of such evils, it would be proof of common sense, "but to buy them at such a price, is supreme folly," and would seem utterly impossible to an intelligent people. "During the seven years ending in 1877 the inhabitants of the British Isles spent for drink, \$4,820,189,180, and paid for Poor and Police Rates \$505,723,590. During the same time, 3,334,110 persons – nearly ten per cent of the entire population – were convicted of crime, and 1,271,838 were apprehended for drunkenness.

[JD 24:19, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

From the above tables (taken from Parliamentary returns) it will be seen what an enormous amount of money is spent on intoxicating liquors. Side by side we see the crime and drunkenness with the consequent taxation, &c. How we suffer in other ways from the liquor traffic can never be realized.

[JD 24:19 – p.20, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

The money paid for drink during those seven years would cancel England's national debt, and leave \$1,000,000,000 to spare. It would pay for 26,082 miles of railway which is 10,000 miles more than was then being operated in the United Kingdom. Had the money been invested in building houses it would have erected a new one for every family there, and built schools to accommodate all the children in that country.

[JD 24:20, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

Had the money spent by the English people during the past 50 years for liquors, been invested in securities realizing five per cent per annum, principal and interest would now exceed by \$5,000,000,000 the entire capitalized value of all the wealth of the United Kingdom, including its money, lands, railways, collieries, ironworks, quarries, mines, houses, mills, and every other description of property.

[JD 24:20, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883](#)

Now all these things have grown and developed under the fostering care of legalized crime. In other words, intemperance in England, and intemperance in the United States, if not the offspring of legalized crime is at least the bloated pauper of a system of license that encourages drunkenness. And for this reason, having shown you some of the fearful effects of intemperance, I unhesitatingly condemn the system of license under which it has grown to such proportions. In contrast I cite you to statistics, compiled by the best authority, showing that drunkenness has decreased from 40 to 90 per cent, in the State of Maine, where prohibition has been enforced. [The lecturer here read from the writings of Hepworth Dixon, a beautiful description of the happy condition of the people of St. Johnsbury, Vermont, who had adopted "prohibition," and concluded by adopting as his sentiments the following sound principles of Dr. Albert Barnes, enunciated in his sermon, "The Thorne of Iniquity."]

"I lay it down as a sound principle in regard to legislation that society should not by its law protect evil. This, perhaps, is sufficiently clear from the remarks already made; but the importance of the principle in itself, and the application which I intend to make of it, require that it should be made a little more distinct and prominent. The position is that the purpose of society in organizing a government, and the purpose of a government under such organization, should not be to protect evil in any form. The law is made for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men-stealers, for liars, for perjured persons (1 Tim. 1:9,) and not to protect those who practice these vices, or protect anything which will give facility in practicing them. The true object of legislation is to prevent, not to protect evil. God never instituted a government on earth with a view to its throwing a protecting shield over vice and immortality. He has never commissioned men to sit in high places to accomplish any such work. The end of government, so far as it bears on that point at all, is to suppress crime, to punish wrongdoers, to remove iniquity, to promote that which is just and true. And it matters not what the evil is, nor how lucrative it may be, nor how much capital may be invested in it, nor how much revenue may be derived from it, nor how many persons may have an interest in its continuance – the business of the lawgiver is to suppress it – not to protect it; to bring it to as speedy an end as possible, not to become the panderer to it, or the patron of it. What would be thought of a government that should, under any pretext whatever, take under its protecting care thieves, counterfeiters, and burglars? A third principle in regard to legislation is equally clear, and equally important: It is that society should not undertake to regulate evil by law. Its business is to remove it – not to regulate it."

JD 24:21, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883

Having an abiding faith in prohibition, backed by local option, I would have the Y. M. M. I. A. of Hyrum, use their influence to have illicit liquor dealers here, discontinue their degrading, unlawful traffic. This failing, rise up and help the city authorities to enforce the law.

JD 24:21, Moses Thatcher, March 7th, 1883

If there are any in favor of license to sell liquor in Hyrum, please manifest it. [Not a hand was raised.] Who are in favor of temperance and prohibition? [Every hand was raised.] May God bless and preserve you from the blight of intemperance and the sin of drunkenness.

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Orson Pratt, October 26, 1879

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE ORSON PRATT,

Delivered in the Tabernacle,

Salt Lake City, October 26, 1879.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

EXHORTATION FROM ISAIAH – THE SAINTS OBEYING IT – GLIMPSE AT THE  
SETTLEMENT OF UTAH – FULFILLING ANCIENT PROPHECIES – JACKSON COUNTY,



MISSOURI, THE DESTINATION OF THE SAINTS – THE TEMPLE TO BE BUILT  
THERE – NEW JERUSALEM – HOW IT WILL BE PRESERVED FROM DECAY – ITS  
DESCRIPTION – THE WICKED POWERLESS TO PREVENT THE SAINTS FROM  
FULFILLING THEIR DESTINY.

[JD 24:21, Orson Pratt, October 26, 1879](#)

I will read a few passages of Scripture which will be found in the 54th chapter of Isaiah. (The speaker then read most of the chapter referred to.) Continuing, he said:

[JD 24:21, Orson Pratt, October 26, 1879](#)

I hope that the congregation will pardon me for undertaking three Sabbaths running to instruct them when there are so many of our brethren – those who are ordained and filled with the spirit of truth – who would be glad, no doubt, to speak to the people; but a great many of my younger brethren, younger than I am, may perhaps have a great many opportunities after I may pass away, provided that the Lord sees proper in His wisdom to call me hence.

[JD 24:21 – p.22, Orson Pratt, October 26, 1879](#)

I feel a great pleasure in standing before a congregation of Latter-day Saints, or a mixed assembly of those who belong to the Church and those who have not received the great message which the Church has received. It gives me great joy and great satisfaction to speak to them in the name of the Lord, and unfold, as far as the Spirit will give me utterance, that which the Lord has said concerning His people in the latter days. I had nothing upon my mind when I arose and walked into the stand, but upon opening the Bible my eyes fell upon this chapter, and I thought that I would read it – and perhaps something might occur in relation to this chapter that would be interesting in regard to the latter days, for certainly what I have read relates to future times – times that have not yet come.

[JD 24:22 – p.23 – p.24, Orson Pratt, October 26, 1879](#)

"Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes" is the exhortation of the prophet to some class of people that should dwell on the earth. If we wish to know what class of people the Prophet had reference to, read the last verse of this chapter: "This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." It would seem then, from the declaration given in that clause of the seventh verse of this chapter, that the Prophet was speaking of his servants and their heritage – that is, the heritage that his servants should occupy – that they were not to be narrowed and contracted in their feelings in regard to their inheritance as though it were to be in a small tract or region of country. The Lord had otherwise determined according to the words of this chapter. He intends they should inherit a great land, that they were to stretch forth the curtains their habitations, and for fear that they would be limited in their views and contract themselves to a small region of country, the Lord says expressly, "Spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes." Well, we are trying to do this as Latter-day Saints. When we first came here we located this city in the month of July, 1847, some 32 years ago this last summer. Then it was thought by many that had not a knowledge of prophecy, that we were too expanded in our views to lay out a city – being only a handful of pioneers – to lay out a city covering several miles of ground, when there was not yet a house built; when comparatively there was before us a great dry, barren desert. It seemed almost folly to even some of the Latter-day Saints to see the surveyor with his measure line, others with their instruments of observation, getting the height of this land above the sea level – making great preparations, while we yet camped, a little handful of us, in wagons and in a few tents. It seemed folly to lay out a city covering an area of several square miles; but those who did this

work were under the direction and inspiration of the Almighty. We knew that this people would become a very great people. We knew that the words of Isaiah would be fulfilled which are recorded in the 60th chapter, "A little one shall become a thousand, and small one a strong nation." Now we believed that. It was not merely an opinion such as might be formed by the enlightened judgment of the human family, but by the inspiration of that Spirit which knows all things, we laid out a city sufficiently large in extent to accommodate and gather together an extensive population for this inland country and desert. Have we been disappointed? Has the Lord disappointed us in our expectation? Go over the area of this whole city, over these northern wards and western wards, and travel and traverse all the different lots and streets, and see if you find many vacant places. Is not the land generally taken up? Is it not generally occupied? Are there many vacant lots, where there are no houses or habitations? Are there many places where there are no fruit trees, no gardens? Are there many streets where there are no ornamental trees, no water ditches? We find after we have traveled several days and traversed nearly all the streets of this city, gone for miles each way, that all the lots with some very few exceptions, seem to be occupied, and not only so but some of the lots originally intended only for one family are now split up, divided and subdivided, and contain several habitations in the same lot, and scarcely room enough at that. We find the population coming into this city so great that there seems to be scarcely room, and even our water in dry seasons seems to be very scarce, not sufficient to water even the trees that are so necessary to be kept alive, to say nothing of gardens and flowers and shrubbery. "Enlarge the place of thy tent and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not;" that is don't be stingy, don't be contracted, don't limit yourselves to a small area of country but break forth on the right hand and on the left. Already within the last 32 years we have been fulfilling this commandment. We have stretched forth the gardens of our habitation several hundred miles in the south especially, and one or two hundred miles in the north, into the Territory of Idaho. Utah does not seem sufficient for us, hence we have built many large towns and villages in Idaho. We have spread forth our towns, our villages and our settlements to the south for some 300 or 400 miles, and even after doing this we find the place is too strait, and the saying is: "give place to me that I may dwell." We would scarcely suppose that a work of this great and important magnitude would have been accomplished in so short a time as scarcely one-third of a century, when all this great basin – nearly all with the exception of one or two small portions of the country traversed by Fremont and a few of his followers – was explored and considered an unprofitable desert, considered unfit for the habitation of man, in consequence of the dryness and parched condition of its soil. But the Lord when He begins to fulfill and accomplish a work among His people does so by degrees. He did not convert this great American desert, several hundred miles in extent, into a fruitful garden in one day, nor in one year; but in a few years, comparatively speaking, He has accomplished this work and has done it too with an eye to the predictions that were uttered by His servant Isaiah, the Prophet, and His servant, David, the Psalmist.

[JD 24:24 – p.25 – p.26 – p.27, Orson Pratt, October 26, 1879](#)

The Sabbath before last I addressed the congregation and spoke of the people inhabiting the great mountain territory, removing. You will recollect this. You know our enemies have had a great many speculations about our moving. A great many have supposed that we would remove to an island of the sea; others have pointed out Vancouver's Island, others Russian American, as it used to be called; others have pointed out Mexico; others the islands of the Indian Ocean; and others South America, as the future destination of the Latter-day Saints. But Sunday before last I endeavored to point out to you our hopes, our views as contrasted with the views of our enemies, in relation to our future destination. I will repeat again, to bring to the remembrance of the Latter-day Saints, and those who might have been present on that occasion, what was then said. We expect that these mountains will not be the residence of all the Latter-day Saints; we expect that the great majority of the people will emigrate. We want to tell you where our eyes are fixed. As stated in our former discourse, they are fixed upon a land – not in the distant islands of the Indian Ocean, nor in the Pacific Ocean, nor in South America, but our eyes are fixed upon a land on the western boundaries of the State of Missouri and the boundaries of the State of Kansas. We expect to go there just as much as we expect the sun will rise and set. We have no other expectation. We expect to return there just as much as the Jews expect to return to old Jerusalem in the latter days. Perhaps you may inquire if we expect to return as a majority. Yes. Do we expect to return as a great people? Yes. Do we expect to return with our wives and our children? Do we expect to return in a peaceable manner? Of course. Have you ever seen any other feeling on the part of the

Latter-day Saints, only to promote peace wherever they may settle? What has been our object from the commencement? Peace and goodwill to all men. But perhaps you may still further inquire concerning our emigration to the eastern boundaries of the State of Kansas, and to the western boundaries of the State of Missouri, what we intend to do in that part of the country? We expect to be farmers, a great many of us. We expect to introduce all kinds of machinery and manufactures. We expect to build mills. We expect to become a very industrious, frugal, economical people. We expect to have our merchandise and our stores and storehouses in that land. We expect to build a great many hundred school-houses in that country, just as the same as we have already done in this country and in the two adjacent Territories, Idaho in the north and Arizona in the south. We do not calculate to neglect our children in regard to their education. We expect to build a great number of academies or the higher schools, and besides a great many school-houses. We expect to erect universities for the still higher branches to be taught. We expect to build many hundreds of meeting houses, and we expect to be a people very densely located there – not one man taking up six or eight miles of land, and calling it his farm; we don't expect to settle a very dense settlement in that region of country. We expect to own the land, too. How? By purchase. We expect to purchase the land that we have not already purchased. We have already purchased a great deal of land in Jackson County and Clay County, Missouri, and our purchases are on record if they have not destroyed the record; but we were driven from that land, from our farms and homes; our houses were burned down, our merchandise that we had in our store was taken and strewn through the street; our printing office – one of the most distant western offices in the Union – was also destroyed; the type was taken out and scattered through the streets; our hay stacks were burned, our cattle were shot down, and we were driven in the cold month of November from our houses and lands purchased of the general Government, and we fled before our enemies. "Well," says one, "are you not afraid to go back again to purchase land in that country when you were thus treated in the early settlement in 1833, when you were driven from your homes, some of you massacred, your property destroyed – are you not afraid to return?" O, I expect they are more civilized now. Do you think civilized people would murder now? Do you think they would drive people from their homes now? We may give them a chance to see. At any rate we shall fulfill our part, purchase the land, gather together upon our own purchased land, and we calculate to obey all the laws of the State of Missouri, and all the laws of the State of Kansas that are constitutional in their nature. But, says one, suppose the people should rise up and say you should not possess the land, what would you do? We would leave the matter in the hands of the Lord, just the same as we did at first when He led us by revelation to where the great central stake of Zion should be built. We went there because the Lord told us to go. We settled upon the very spot where the Lord commanded us. We commenced to lay the foundation of a temple about three-quarters of a miles from Independence, Jackson County, Missouri. It was then a wilderness, with large trees on the temple block. I visited that place 47 years afterwards, namely, a year ago last September, and not a tree was to be found on that temple block – not so much as a stump – everything seemed to be cleared off, and one would scarcely know, unless very well acquainted with the ground, where the temple site was located. There, however, we expect to build a temple different from all other temples in some respects. It will be built much larger, cover a larger area of ground, far larger than this Tabernacle covers, and this Tabernacle will accommodate from 12,000 to 15,000 people. We expect to build a temple much larger, very much larger, according to the revelation God gave to us forty years ago in regard to that temple. But you may ask in what form will it be built? Will it be built in one large room, like this Tabernacle? No; there will be 24 different compartments in the Temple that will be built in Jackson County. The names of these compartments were given to us some 45 or 46 years ago; the names we still have, and when we build these 24 rooms, in a circular form and arched over the centre, we shall give the names to all these different compartments just as the Lord specified through Joseph Smith. Now, our enemies do not believe one word of this. They think we are enthusiastic, they think that this is all nonsense, and I do not know but there may be some of the Latter-day Saints that begin to partake of the same spirit, owing to their assimilating themselves so much to the fashion of the world, that they have lost their strong and powerful faith in that which God has predicted by the mouth of his servants. Perhaps you may ask for what purpose these 24 compartments are to be built. I answer not to assemble the outside world in, nor to assemble the Saints all in one place, but these buildings will be built with a special view to the different orders, or in other words the different quorums or councils of the two Priesthoods that God has ordained on the earth. That is the object of having 24 rooms so that each of these different quorums, whether they be High Priests or Seventies, or Elders, or Bishops, or

lesser Priesthood, or Teachers, or Deacons, or Patriarchs, or Apostles, or High Councils, or whatever may be the duties that are assigned to them, they will have rooms in the Temple of the Most High God, adapted, set apart, constructed, and dedicated for this special purpose. Now, I have not only told you that we shall have these rooms, but I have told you the object of these rooms in short, not in full. But will there be any other buildings excepting those 24 rooms that are all joined together in a circular form and arched over the center – are there any other rooms that will be built – detached from the Temple? Yes. There will be tabernacles, there will be meeting houses for the assembling of the people on the Sabbath day. There will be various places of meeting so that the people may gather together; but the Temple will be dedicated to the Priesthood of the Most High God, and for most sacred and holy purposes. Then you see that, notwithstanding all these Temples that are now building in this Territory, and those that have been built before we came here in Kirtland and Nauvoo, the Lord is not confined to an exact pattern in relation to these Temples building in the different Stakes any more than He is confined in the creation of worlds to make them all of the same size. He does not make them all of one size, nor does He set them rolling on their axes in the same plane, nor does He construct any in many respects alike; there is variation as much as there is in the human form. Take men and women. There are general outlines that are common to all, but did you ever see two faces alike among all the millions of the human family? What a great variety, and yet all are constructed in general outline alike – after the image of God. So in regard to the building of Temples. The Lord will not confine Himself to any one special method to be so many feet long, so many feet wide, and so many places for the Priesthood to stand, but He will construct His Temples in a great variety of ways, and by and by, when the more perfect order shall exist in yonder heaven. And when I speak of yonder heaven I do not refer to that kind of heaven the sectarian world sings about, beyond the bounds of time and space. I have no reference to any heaven beyond space, but I have reference to the heaven that the Lord has sanctified and made heaven in other worlds that he has created, consisting of all kinds of materials the same as our world is, and when this world passes through its various ordeals, it, too, by and by, will pass away and die like the body of man and be resuscitated again, a new heaven and a new earth, eternal in its nature. The new worlds that are thus constructed and quickened by the fullness of the celestial glory will be the heavens where the Gods will dwell, or in other words, those that are made like unto God, when their bodies are changed in all respects like unto His glorious body, changed from materiality and cleansed from sin and redeemed, they will then be immortal and dwell in a heavenly world. Now, in this world there will be Temples, and these Temples will be constructed according to the most perfect law of the celestial kingdom, for the world in which they are built or in which they stand will be a celestial body. This last Temple that I am speaking of, or this last one to be built in Jackson County, Missouri, will be constructed after that heavenly pattern in all particulars. Why? Because it will never perish, it will exist for ever. "What! Do you mean to say," says one, "that the materials of that temple will not wear?" "Do you mean to say," some of you may inquire in your hearts, "that age will have no effect upon the walls and the materials of that temple" This is what I mean – I mean to say that not only the Temple, but all the buildings that shall be built round about that Temple, and the city that will be built round about it, which will be called the New Jerusalem, will be built of materials that never will decay. "But," says one, "that will be contrary to the laws of nature." You may cite me to some of the buildings that existed before Christ that were built out of the most durable materials that could be found, and yet when the storms of hail, rain and snow came, these buildings began to waste away until they could scarcely be recognized. Well, I do not ask you to think that this temple and the city round about it will defy the rough hand of time and the work of the elements of our globe, and exist for ever, so far as natural laws are concerned; but there is a principle higher than these natural laws. Did you never think of it – a higher principle, a higher kingdom that governs all these laws of nature, such as you and I have been accustomed to understand ever since our youth. I say there is a higher law, a controlling power over all the laws of nature, that will prevent these buildings from decaying; and I wish while dwelling upon this subject to say a little about another subject; that is, the building up of Palestine with the new Jerusalem. It will be the old Jerusalem rebuilt upon its former site. Now, will that city ever be destroyed, will it ever decay? Will the Temple to be built in Palestine ever be thrown down or ever be furrowed with hail, rain, snow and frost – will these ever have any effect upon it? No, not in the least.

JD 24:27 – p.33, Orson Pratt, October 26, 1879

Why? Because God will be there. So He will be in the temple of Zion on this continent, and by His power, by His laws – which are superior to all those grosser laws of nature – He will preserve both of these cities, one on the western hemisphere, and one on the eastern hemisphere, from any decay whatever. Now, we have it recorded here in this book, in the 31st chapter of Jeremiah, that this city on the eastern continent shall not be thrown down any more forever. It seems, therefore, to be an eternal city, never to be destroyed. "But," says one, "I cannot believe that; I cannot believe but what these cities will be subject, just as much as anything else to decay." Do you believe this good book – the Bible? If you do, you are obliged to believe that such things are possible. Do you want to know some of them? I will mention one instance. You will recollect that Moses commanded Aaron to take a pot of manna and lay it before the Lord, to be kept for their generations. Now it was a noted fact that if the children of Israel gathered more manna than would last them until after the next morning, it would decay, but on the last day before the Sabbath they gathered manna for two days, and they found that on the Sabbath day it was preserved. Who preserved it? Why did it last two days instead of one? Because God counteracted those lesser laws, or laws of nature, by His divine power, which is greater than them all, and He therefore preserved for two days that which would not last longer on the other days of the week than twenty-four hours. Well, we find that the Lord ordered the manna to be placed in the tabernacle to be kept for their generations, that they might see the bread wherewith He had fed them in the wilderness, when He brought them forth from the land of Egypt. Did that manna decay? No, it remained fresh and pure in the tabernacle. Why? Because God was there; His divine power was there; a miracle was wrought to counteract the general laws of nature such as we generally understand them to be, and this manna was preserved from generation to generation. Now the Being that could produce this effect upon a small quantity of substance on a pot of manna could He not do the same in regard to whole buildings, or is His arm so limited that He has to work in a little narrow corner and preserve a little handful of manna from spoiling through decay. I would say that the same Being that could perform this, which we might term a lesser miracle, could extend the same power to stone, wood, and to all kinds of metal and material that might enter into the construction of a Temple. Shall I limit that power to the preserving of a Temple! No. The same Being could preserve the city round about the Temple, hence it is a city that shall never be destroyed nor thrown down from that time henceforth and forever. God will be in the city. He will take care that the building materials suffer nothing from the laws of nature. He will take care that the city is illuminated by His divine power, and especially the Temple, the most sacred of all the Temples, where He will have His throne, where the Twelve Apostles will have their thrones, as the judges of the twelve tribes of Israel; He will take care that there is nothing in that Temple that shall decay in the least degree. So it will be in the New Jerusalem. Zion upon this great western hemisphere will have a city called the New Jerusalem (because it has never been built before) and God will preserve it by His divine power. Read what the Psalmist, David, has said in the 50th Psalm: "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. Gather my Saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." Perhaps you may ask why it is called "the perfection of beauty." Shall I read from the chapter I opened with? In the 11th verse of that chapter we read: "O though afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundation with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones." Now any person that has studied these things to any great extent, knows concerning these precious stones how very precious they are esteemed, and how a small portion of these stones is very frequently valued at more than its weight in gold, some of them one hundred times their weight in gold, and yet the Lord will bring or create, or form, as the case may be, or tell His children how to form those precious stones in great abundance, sufficiently pure and crystalized in order to complete the foundations and also the temples and the public buildings of that great city called the New Jerusalem. But before this shall commence, the Lord has addressed them as a people afflicted: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted." Just as the Latter-day Saints have been now for upwards of forty years driven from place to place before we emigrated to this great mountain desert, persecuted by our enemies, our cities taken from us, our villages taken from us, our farms taken from us, our flocks and herds shot down; we were robbed of all these things, and yet without any redress from the Government under which we live. We then came forth beyond these great rocky chains of mountains, hoping that in the distant desert, where no other people would have thought of locating

themselves, we might live undisturbed. We have been greatly prospered in this desert. We have lived here long enough to fulfill a great many of the prophecies that are contained in this good Jewish Bible. But we have not yet got through with fulfilling prophecies. We are designed as a people to fulfill a great many prophecies. We shall move however, as I have already stated, down into that region of country. But you may say – that is, some of the weak Latter-day Saints may say – that it will cost so much; we will have to purchase all that country sufficiently extensive to give place to all this people. How are you going to obtain means enough to purchase a country large enough for all this people to dwell in? Well, now, the Lord has that in His own hands, don't you know it? Is it a difficult thing for the Lord to make his people rich when they are prepared for it, after days of tribulation, after passing through a great many afflictions and difficulties, tossed to and fro; would it be a difficult matter for the Lord to open up whenever He pleases, means of unmeasurable riches, more than all the Latter-day Saints would know how to use? Hear what the Lord says: "For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders." Who were the people here spoken of? They were people that should be clothed upon with this light that I have been speaking of, this glorious light; the presence of the lord will be in their midst, and it will radiate over their temples, it will light their city by night and by day. "But are you sure." says one, "that such a thing will take place?" I have no time to read all the Lord says on the subject, but if you read the 60th chapter of Isaiah, you will find that the sun shall be no longer necessary by day, nor the moon by night, to give light to a certain people. Why? Because "the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down." Not like our sun which arises in the morning and exists above the horizon for a few hours, then descends, and darkness covers the earth. Not so with this light, the glorious divine light that will lighten up the heights of Zion. It will never go down, it will be a standing miracle by day and by night, from one week to another, month after month, year after year, until the one thousand years shall have rolled away over the heads of the people that dwell on the earth. But let us see what more is said. That same God that has spoken of these great riches, brass for gold, iron instead of silver, for wood brass, and for stones iron – I say that that same God has exhorted the latter-day people called Zion to "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." I do not mean something that never can be discerned. I mean that true light that emanates from the great fountain of light, the Messiah, the Redeemer; that true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world; that true light which is in all things and giveth light to all things; that true light that lighteth up the understanding of the children of men and quickeneth their memory; that true light that quickens the eyes of this mortal tabernacle, that we are able to discern objects round about us; that true light which is of God, will be rendered visible to the eyes of all the inhabitants of that city. And shall I limit it there? No. The light will shine so conspicuously from that city, extending to the very heavens, that it will in reality be like unto a city set upon a hill that cannot be hid, and it will have quite a tendency to strike terror to all the nations of the earth. Will all see it? No, some may be too far off, beyond the ocean, to behold that miraculous light that will shine forth in this city, but I will tell you the effect it will have upon the kings, queens, rulers, congressmen and judges of the earth – they will hear of it by telegraph; the news will be flashed over the civilized nations of the earth, but they will not believe it. They will say, "Let us cross the ocean, and let us see this thing that is reported to us by telegraph; let us see whether it is so or not." Well, when they get within a day or two's journey of the city they will be alarmed. Some of these kings and nobles, when they see the light shining forth like the northern lights in the arctic regions, illuminating the whole face of the heavens – when they see this light shining forth long before they reach the city, fear will take hold of them there, says the Psalmist, in the 48th Psalm, they will become weak, and their knees will smite together like the knees of Belshazzar. They will try to haste away from the glory of God and from the power of God, and to get out of the country as soon as possible. Fear and terror will be upon them. It will have an effect upon many other kings and nobles, more pure in heart, more honest, that are willing to receive the truth; it will have a different effect upon them, so much so, that they will say with Isaiah, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen from thee. And the gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." These are the different effects which it will have upon the rulers of the various nations, some believing, some trembling, some humbling themselves and willing to forsake their thrones and their kingdoms and their empires to come and dwell with the people of God, while others more wicked, more

corrupt, will not be able to endure it. This shining light will be seen for many miles distant, and the wicked will flee away; they will be fearful lest they be smitten by that power that illuminates the people of God, hence the terror of the Lord will be there. Terror will take hold of the wicked when Zion becomes as fair as the sun and as clear as the moon, and her banners will be terrible to all nations. One would naturally suppose when we see the present hardness of heart that exists among our enemies, when we see our Elders waylaid, young peaceable boys that are taking their first mission abroad to proclaim the Gospel of the Son of God – when we see them shot down and their murderers tried by a jury and acquitted of that – one would naturally suppose that a people so hard in their hearts would not be converted to believe even if they should see the power of God manifested. But do you suppose that among these people where such things are carried on in the light of day, where murderers go free and where judges say, "commit murder, commit riots, take the life of the innocent; we will free you" – do you suppose that there are no honest hearted among the people that are allowed to do this? If you do you are mistaken. There are many of the honest in heart deceived by the cunning craftiness of the children of men, by priestcraft which lies at the foundation of all the persecutions endured by the Latter-day Saints. Priests, afraid of their craft, afraid of this little one, afraid that the little one will become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation, say: "let us down upon them, let us drive them from their homes, let us burn their houses, let us persecute them from city to city, let us fall upon their missionaries and put them to death." We would hardly suppose that there could be found an honest person among such a people, but there are. There are good-hearted people all through the States. In Missouri, where they first drove us? Yes, many. In Ohio, where we were also driven? Yes, many which are honest before God, and will receive the testimony of the Gospel, and unto this Zion that I have been speaking of such will gather together, to swell the numbers of the Latter-day Saints, and we will become a strong nation and they cannot help themselves, and this is what makes them feel so bad. But, says one, we can help ourselves. We have got the Secretary of State, Mr. Evarts, and he in connection with others of the Cabinet, have published a circular unto the nations of Germany, Great Britain, Norway, Sweden and Denmark, asking their help; "Will you not step forward," say they, "and put a stop to the emigration of the Latter-day Saints. We are afraid they are growing too strong. We are afraid there are too many of them in yonder hills. O, Great Britain, help us! O Germany, help us! Let your arm stretch forth and allow no more of these Latter-day Saints to gather to the mountains of Utah! O keep them back. Shut up the ports of Liverpool, of Europe, and let no more emigrate to that land!" Do you think they can shut the ports of heaven? Do you think that yonder spirits that dwell in the presence of God the Father, will be kept back, and will not come here and take infant tabernacles to swell the borders of Zion? Think you, you can shut down the gates of heaven and control this matter? Stretch forth your arm and try to stay the arm of the Almighty, that He send no more spirits here to swell the borders of Zion! Would it not be well to pass laws to prevent these spirits coming, to prevent this heavenly emigration? Think you, you can stay the purposes of the Great Jehovah? No; these spirits will come and our streets will be full of children, sons and daughters, and they will say, as they crowd up: "The place is too strait, Give place to me that I may dwell," and they will stretch forth the curtains of their habitations, they will lengthen their cords and strengthen their stakes in spite of all the powers of earth and hell combined. "A little one," says the Prophet Isaiah, "shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation." Daniel caught the same spirit. He saw a little one planted in the mountains. He saw a kingdom organized, an ecclesiastical government called the Kingdom of the God of Heaven. He saw it organized – not in the lower countries of the earth, but he saw it organized in a high and lofty region; in other words, as is recorded in the 18th chapter of his prophecies, he saw an ensign lifted up upon the mountains. What is an ensign? "Why," says one, "according to our dictionary, and according to our opinion upon this subject, I should suppose an ensign, or standard, to be something unto which the people will gather." You have thought right. This ensign, says the Lord, shall be lifted up upon the mountain. What is an ensign? It is not only something unto which the people will gather, but it is something of divine appointment, something that the Lord organizes, something that will be a pattern to all peoples, nations and governments erected in the mountains, and He calls upon all the inhabitants of the earth to see it. In another place the Prophet Isaiah says: "And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." Can you hinder it? Can you oppose the almighty hand of Jehovah that he shall not accomplish His purposes? It cannot be done. You may afflict, you may pass laws, you may call upon distant nations to help you, you may shut down the emigration against the Latter-day Saints, you may drive them, you may burn

their houses – you may do all this, but they will continue to live and to stretch forth in spite of all the powers beneath the heavens, and become a great people under the Constitution of this great land. We never want to be freed from the Constitution of our country. It is built upon heavenly principles. It is established as firm as the rock of ages, and when those that abuse it shall moulder in corruption under the surface of the earth, the American Constitution will stand and no people can destroy it, because God raised it by our ancient fathers, and inspired them to frame that sacred instrument. The Constitution is one thing; corrupt politicians are another thing. One may be bright as the sun at noonday, the other as corrupt as hell itself; that is the difference. Because we have a good Constitution that is no sign that the strong arm of the law, founded upon that Constitution, will protect the minority as well as the majority. The politician may suffer the majority to trample upon the rights guaranteed by that Constitution to the minority. They have done it before, and perchance they will continue to do it until they are wasted away. Then will be fulfilled another saying in this same chapter which I have read – "For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." Now, there are a great many cities in the United States that will not be totally destroyed when the inhabitants are swept off the surface of the earth. Their houses, their desolate cities will still remain unoccupied until Zion in her glory and strength shall enlarge the place of her tents, and stretch forth the curtains of her habitations. That is the destiny of this nation, and the destiny of the Latter-day Saints. Amen.

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John Taylor, January 21st, 1883

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered at Ogden, Sunday,

January 21st, 1883.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE CHURCH BASED UPON THE PRINCIPLE OF PERFECT FREEDOM – WHEN  
A PRESIDENT RESIGNS, HIS COUNSELORS GO OUT OF OFFICE – HIGH PRIESTS  
TO PRESIDE – PRESIDENTS CHOOSE THEIR OWN COUNSELORS – ALL AUTHORITIES  
SUSTAINED BY VOTE OF THE SAINTS – POSITION OF PRESIDENTS CANNON AND  
SMITH IF PRESIDENT TAYLOR SHOULD RESIGN – SAINTS NOT TO INTERFERE  
WITH THE RELIGION OF OTHERS.

[JD 24:33 – p.34, John Taylor, January 21st, 1883](#)

We convene in Conference in the various Stakes that everything pertaining to the interests of the Stakes may be considered in those conferences, and that all matters may be properly represented, and all the Saints have the privilege of voting for or against those officers who are presented to the Conference for their acceptance. It is also usual to vote for the officers of Wards in the Wards over which they preside, such as Bishops and



their Counselors, with all the Lesser Priesthood, so that there may be perfect unanimity in all our acts. Because the Church of God is based upon the principle of perfect freedom of action. And while, as was said this morning, we have a Priesthood and an organization, and proper authority in the Church and Kingdom of God, it is proper that all of these authorities should be presented from time to time before the people, that all the people everywhere, not only in a Stake, but in all the Stakes, as well as at the General Conference, may have the opportunity if they know of anything wrong, anything immoral or unrighteous associated with the acts of any of the leading authorities of the Church, of speaking of it, that everything and everybody may be properly presented and that the conduct of all men may be intelligently scrutinized; for, if we cannot bear the scrutiny of our brethren upon earth, how shall we be able to meet the scrutiny and investigations of our heavenly Father when we shall stand before Him. And if there is anything immoral or unrighteous, of any kind, it is proper and expedient that it be righted; and this applies quite as much to the Presidency, the Twelve and the leading authorities as to any other individual in the Church; in order that everything may be presented in its proper form, and everybody have a full opportunity of offering their ideas and views in regard to these matters.

JD 24:34, John Taylor, January 21st, 1883

Now I want to say a little on some of the votes that have been taken this afternoon, in order that we may comprehend the situation. You have had a new name presented before you for the President of your Stake. Brother Peery, who was your former President resigned his office, which he had a perfect right to do; and we have nothing to say about it. It was according to his own feelings freely expressed to me and to others. It was necessary that his place should be filled. We selected Bishop L. W. Shurtliff, for whom you have just voted; and that is all right, and having done so you ought now to sustain him. In regard to the Counselors of the President, when he resigned and his place was filled, they also ceased to act as Counselors; they were dropped as authorities of the Stake with the President of the Stake, not because of any act of theirs. These brethren are good men. Here is Brother Herrick, for instance, he has maintained a good reputation, and a good position in the Church; but he was Counselor to a man who resigned his office; and as I have said, when the President resigned to whom they were Counselors they also ceased to act as such. The question arises, who shall be the Counselors to the new President? That rests with the new President and those that put him in office; and it seems that he has retained one of the old Counselors, Brother Middleton, and has chosen a new one; and that is right. Is there any disposition to hurt Brother Herrick? Not in the least. I speak of these things for your information, in order that all may comprehend the true position. For instance, supposing that I, as President of the Church, were to resign, or anything should occur to me, what would be the result? My Counselors would drop into their former place in the Quorum of the Twelve; and whoever succeeded me would have the selection of his own Counselors with the approval of the General Conference. He might and he might not retain as his Counselors those whom I have chosen. It is proper that we should understand these things in order that the right kind of feeling may exist, and no improper reflection be cast upon any person.

JD 24:34 – p.35, John Taylor, January 21st, 1883

The High Priests occupy a position in their Priesthood whereby they are enabled to perform the various duties that they may be called upon to fill. You will find in reading the Doctrine and Covenants the following statement regarding the quorum of High Priests: "Which ordinance is instituted for the purpose of qualifying those who shall be appointed standing presidents or servants over different Stakes scattered abroad." That is, it is the duty of High Priests to preside; the principle of Presidency is connected with them. You have a High Priest's Quorum over which Brother Farr presides; what is the duty of that quorum? To meet together to instruct one another in regard to the principles of the government of the Church and kingdom of God; that its members may understand the various organizations of the Church, the laws and the principles of government thereof, and the various duties they may be called upon to fill; it may be to occupy the position of a President of a Stake; it may be a Counselor to the President; it may be a High Counselor; it may be a Bishop or his Counselor. There are divers positions that High Priests are called to occupy, as deaths and other changes often transpire, and new Stakes and Wards are being organized. But the changes do not affect the status of the individual at all, as in the case of Brother Herrick, referred to. Here is Brother Shurtliff called from acting as

Bishop to be the President of a Stake; have we a right to do that? Yes. Who is the Bishop? A High Priest. His place being vacated, that position needs supplying, and who shall supply it? These things are left for the counsel and the deliberation of the proper authorities to operate in for the welfare of the Church as far as they know how, and according to the best judgment they possess; and then they should be presented to the people for them to vote upon. But in dropping a President it drops his Counselors. They were selected to be his Counselors, not somebody else's; and when some one else takes his place, then he should have his own Counselors. These are the views entertained on this subject, and they are correct and very proper. The order of the Church is for us to fulfill and magnify the calling to which we are called, and do it with an eye single to the glory of God, each man fulfilling the various duties and responsibilities of his office. I referred this morning to the feelings that prompted the acts of the Savior while upon the earth. He came not to do His own will, but the will of His Father who sent Him. It was a hard thing for Him to do. Did you ever think of it? When He found the accumulated weight of the sins of the world rolling upon His head, his feelings were so intense that He sweat great drops of blood. Could I tell it, or could you? No. Suffice it to say that He bore the sins of the world, and, when laboring under the pressure of those intense agonies, He exclaimed, "Father, if it be possible, let his cup pass." But it was not possible. It was the decree of God; the fiat of the great Jehovah, and he had it to do. And on the cross He was heard to exclaim, "It is finished." And he gave up the ghost; and went to move in another sphere, having atoned for the sins of the world and fulfilled His mission given Him in the flesh.

[JD 24:35, John Taylor, January 21st, 1883](#)

We also have been called and set apart to perform a certain mission; and the Holy Priesthood has been conferred upon us that we may be enabled to perform the various duties devolving upon us. And many of our duties are not of the most pleasing nature, and yet we cannot shrink from them any more than Jesus could; we have them to do. It is not a very pleasing thing for our Elders to go forth to the nations of the earth to preach the Gospel without purse or scrip, and then to be opposed, persecuted, maligned and abused, and even outraged in many instances. Yet it is a duty placed upon us by the Almighty, and we have to perform that duty as Jesus performed His, and our Elders go forth weeping, bearing precious seeds, the words of life and salvation, carrying in some instances their lives in their hands. This is required of us. Why? Because all men are the offspring of God, in whom He is equally interested.

[JD 24:35 – p.36 – p.37, John Taylor, January 21st, 1883](#)

Then we are Saints of God have duties to perform. We have to build up His Church according to the plan which He has appointed, and according to the order that He has revealed. Those of you who heard Brother Lyman yesterday, heard him describe the manner of entering into the Church of God, also the power and privileges associated therewith. Those who heard Brother Joseph F., this morning, heard him speak about the organization of the Church, and the various orders and principles, powers and authorities associated therewith. These are so many principles introduced by the Lord. None of us, as was remarked, introduced any of them; none of us know them, neither do the world know them to-day. God introduced and put in order those principles that have been communicated to us in regard to the Gospel and in regard to the organization of the Church, and the various offices thereof, and everything pertaining thereto. And this Church and kingdom has been placed in communion with the kingdom in the heavens, with the Church triumphant, as it is sometimes called. And the Church is a living principle, a living power, a living communion; and as in former times God placed in the Church Apostles and Prophets, Pastors and Teachers for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ, until we all come in the unity of the faith, and a knowledge of the Son of God; so it is in these latter-days. He has revealed His will, His law, His power and His Priesthood; and He has been pleased to receive us as members and officers of His Church. And it is for us to magnify our calling and honor our God in any and every position that we may be called upon to fill. Paul said on a certain occasion, that a dispensation of the Gospel had been committed to him, and it was woe unto him if he preached it not. So we may say, that a dispensation of the Gospel has been committed to us; and woe be unto us if we preach it not; woe be unto us if we fulfill not the duties and obligations that are devolving upon us. I would say that this Priesthood is not for the honor of man, not for his exaltation alone; but it is

imparted to man in order that he may be made the medium of salvation to others. It is true it is honorable to be a servant of God; it is true it is honorable to hold any office in the Church and kingdom of God; it is true there is not a more honorable position that a man can hold than to be found in the family of faith and the household of God, to belong to the Church and kingdom of God – there is nothing more honorable than that. Talking of the Elder, why he is a herald of salvation; he is a legate of the skies; he is commissioned of the great Jehovah to bear a message to the nations of the earth, and God has promised to sustain him. He has always sustained His faithful Elders, and He always will. And what of the Elder? He is commanded to call upon men to believe in Jesus Christ, to repent of their sins, and to be baptized for the remission of sins, promising them the gift of the Holy Ghost; and all who obey the requirements receive this divine gift. Is that true? Do you Elders not know that to be true? Does not this congregation know that it is true? And when you obeyed the Gospel, when you had hands laid upon your heads for the reception of the Holy Ghost, did you not receive it? If you were honest, you did; if you were true and sincere you did, and you are my witnesses as to the truth of these things of which I speak. What does it prove? It proves that God is with the Elders of Israel; it proves that God lives. Is not that a great witness to the Latter-day Saints, and is it not a witness to the world? Who dare come before the world with such a statement? Nobody but those that have the authority, as the Lord sanctions and acknowledges none excepting those that are authorized of Him.

JD 24:37, John Taylor, January 21st, 1883

Is there any greater position that man can occupy upon the earth than to be engaged as a herald of salvation, commissioned of the great Jehovah to proclaim the words of life to a fallen world, and to call upon them to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins, promising them if they do it that they shall receive the Holy Ghost? This is the position occupied by our Elders, as well as that occupied by Seventies and High Priests. They go forth in the name of the Lord; and people believe their testimony and gather here. And why? Because they would not allow you to worship God in the world whence you came, and they will scarcely do it here.

JD 24:37 – p.38 – p.39, John Taylor, January 21st, 1883

We talk a great deal about the religious liberty that is guaranteed unto us in this land of the free, home of the brave and asylum for the oppressed; yet men are contriving all the time to deprive us of the rights of conscience, and of religious liberty. And what of it? Would we treat them as they treat us? No, no, no; a thousand times no. Why not? Says Jesus, "The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also." On the same occasion He said to His disciples, after commanding them to love one another, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." There was then, and there is to-day, and there always has been, a spirit of antagonism between the powers of light and the powers of darkness. There has been a conflict in the world ever since the creation of man to the present time. And that spirit of antagonism to the truth that existed in former ages exists in this age, and we have reason to know it. Is it because we are wicked that we are opposed? We are not as good as we might be by a great deal, it is true; we ought to be better than a great many people, and we are; and our lives and conduct prove it, notwithstanding there are a great many evils among us that we ought to repent of and put away. Yet, do we injure anybody? I do not know that we do. Do we wish to deprive anybody of his rights? Not that I know of. We are accused a good deal of this and everything else, in fact. Do we wish to interfere with anybody's religion? I hope you do not do it here. You have Methodists and Presbyterians and Catholics, as well as other different sects; would you want to interfere with them? I do not think for a moment that you would. We may think that their ideas are foolish in many respects, but then they have a perfect right to entertain them, and there are none, I think, that recognize that right sooner than we as Latter-day Saints. We believe in freedom of conscience; we believe that all men should be guaranteed the right to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience. Some may want to worship a God without body, parts or passions; a God that sits on the top of a topless throne; although to me the idea of worshiping such a God would be most ridiculous, if other people desire to do it, all right, and they should be protected in that right. But while we accord to all men the

right to think, and the right to worship as they please, we claim the same right for ourselves. And then we do not want to have a set of men placed over us in a governmental capacity who do not recognize the rights of humanity; men who want to control the human mind. We want to maintain correct principles; and we want to sustain all men that do maintain them. We have a right to do that. Some, however, think that we have not that right even; and they are frequently trying to introduce principles that are at variance with our constitutional rights. But it is our duty to maintain our rights; it is our duty to stand up for those principles which guarantee freedom to man, and we intend to do it, God being our helper; and not permit the wicked and ungodly, the corrupt and depraved to deprive us of our rights. But I shall be talking about politics if I keep on much longer; what I have said, however, is correct, and it affects us as American citizens. We possess just as many rights as any other American citizens; and if there is anything contrary to this, it is contrary to the genius of the institutions of our country. We are all free and equal, at least, we are supposed to be; but we are not. We may as well laugh as cry about these things though, as it makes but little difference. We are engaged in doing the work of God; and we are seeking to do the will of God; and He has established a Church, which we, in the name of Israel's God, will help to sustain. And we should not be concerned about the consequences of our acts. The Lord has all men in His keeping, and He has us in His keeping; and we cannot do anything only as He permits us. How could you Elders, who have been out preaching and baptizing, and confirming members into the Church, have imparted to them the gift of the Holy Ghost through the laying on of hands, excepting God were with you. And if God were not with Israel to-day, Israel could not be sustained. But God is on the side of Israel; and He will sustain His people if they will observe His laws and keep His commandments. And no man can successfully fight against Jehovah, for He will say to any that oppose Zion, as He did to the waves of the mighty ocean, "Hitherto shalt thou come and no further, and here shalt thy proud waves be stayed." We are in the hands of God; and the nation is also in the hands of God; and we can do nothing unless He permits us; neither can this or any other nation. He controls them according to the counsel of his own will; and He manipulates, manages and directs the affairs of the children of men. He has appointed us to do a work. It is not our work; but we are willing to do it with His help. Will He be thwarted in His designs? I tell you, No. The Kingdom of God will roll forth, and no man can stay it. And woe to that man who lifts up his hand against it; for the Lord is managing this work, not us, and it is His business to take care of His Saints. Therefore, we feel easy, comfortable, joyous and happy. And I feel all the day long like singing hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth; and He will reign until all His enemies are put under His feet. And Zion will progress and triumph, and the work of God will go forth, and the kingdom of God will be established, and the Zion of God built up, and all things spoken of by the holy Prophets will be fulfilled; and the kingdom of God will progress until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our God and His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever, and unrighteousness and wickedness, corruption and evil will be trampled under His feet. God bless you, and lead you in the paths of life, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEO. Q. CANNON,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday, June 25, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

HOSTILE FEELING TOWARDS THE SAINTS – THEIR MORALITY COMPARED WITH THAT

OF THE WORLD – LAXITY OF LAWS AND IMMORALITY IN WASHINGTON – OBJECT OF  
THE EDMUNDS' BILL – CAUSE OF FORMER HOSTILITY – SAINTS TO CONTEND FOR  
LIBERTY – RIGHTS OF CONGRESS – OTHER THINGS TO BE DREADED MORE THAN  
HOSTILE LEGISLATION – SHAME OF CONGRESSMEN – DESTINY OF THE SAINTS.

JD 24:39 – p.40, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882

I am exceedingly thankful to have the opportunity once more of being with you and of partaking of that peaceful and sweet influence which prevails in the midst of this much despised and terribly abused people. The contrast, to me, is exceedingly marked between the circumstances in which I have been placed and the influences that I have had to meet, and those which surround me to-day. There have been some things which have transpired which have not been very pleasant; but on the whole, I can truthfully say, that I have enjoyed myself better than I expected, and probably much better than many of you would suppose that one under the circumstances could do. At no time, in my experience – in my life, have I ever seen a more embittered feeling manifested against the Latter-day Saints than prevailed during this past winter. You have had opportunities of understanding this to some extent, for you have felt that influence here, and you have seen its effects in the results that have been wrought out. And I suppose if we were like other people we should have been terribly alarmed at the manifestations we have witnessed. There was a time when it seemed as though all hell had broken loose, and that nothing less than the entire destruction of the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints would satisfy popular clamor. A most extraordinary manifestation, especially when we consider the absence of all provocation for such an outburst of wrath. If a person last winter had come into Utah Territory and traveled through our settlements, visiting the houses of the people and examining the condition of affairs here, he would have found it difficult to understand the cause of all the excitement that was raging throughout the United States concerning this people. If there are those who do not believe in the existence of spiritual powers and influences, let them examine into this Utah question and the effects of its agitation upon the public mind, and it seems to me they must be convinced that there are unseen powers which operate upon the minds of the people at large, to produce such extraordinary outbursts of prejudice and passion as we have witnessed – fifty millions of people stirred up from one end of the land to the other by a tornado of passion, unreasoning, blind, besotted, bloodthirsty, which has carried men and women before it, and has dethroned reason, concerning a people who were quietly pursuing their avocations, molesting none, doing nothing that could be construed by any reasonable person into anything that would be offensive.

JD 24:40 – p.41, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882

It is generally supposed that we are living in an enlightened age. Popular preachers claim that this is the crowning generation for light, and knowledge, and truth; that we are living in fact, in the full blaze of Gospel light and glory. Politicians also claim that this republican government of the United States is the fruit of the ripened experience of all the ages; the product of the accumulated wisdom of the centuries; that human aspirations finds the fullest development under our form of government. This is the boast of the press, and these are the teachings of the pulpit. And yet, through agencies which boast of their enlightenment, this whirlwind of passion to which I have alluded – this spasm of feeling that has convulsed the nation, has swept over the land, and everything has been done that was possible to make it destructive in its effects upon the objects of its wrath. I have thought, and have sometimes expressed myself, that if lies could destroy a people, we should have been buried out of sight long ago. The basest and most malignant and most cruel, the most unfounded and causeless misrepresentations and falsehoods have been circulated, and men and women who knew nothing about us, preachers who had no idea of our real belief, and editors who had no conception of the true condition of affairs in this Territory, have all lent themselves, sometimes understandingly, and other times ignorantly to do everything in their power to destroy an innocent people. And what has been the crime? We have been accused of immorality. God knows if that were to be a crime sufficient to evoke destruction, there would be other communities visited with wrath beside ours, even if we were all that we are painted. But

the fact is, there is no other Territory or State in the United States – and I say this knowingly and understandingly – where virtue is respected, revered and protected as it is in Utah. There is no other community in the United States in which more young men grow up to manhood pure, in proportion to the population than in the Territory of Utah.

[JD 24:41, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

As I have repeatedly said, we believe in marriage, we have opened the door in that direction, and we say to the sexes marry; but we close the door in the other direction, and say, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not seduce, defile, prostitute or lead astray innocent beings; if you do, and we had the power, we would punish you. It seems like a paradox that those who do that which is according to their religion should be punished, while those who trample upon their religion should go free. And yet this is really true. All that we can be accused of is, we have embodied in our religion practices that belonged to the Patriarchs, which we believe, and so declare, God has revealed to us, for the purposes of salvation and of producing greater purity and of checking the flood of vice that is sweeping through the land and sapping the foundation of this nation and all the nations of Christendom. We have adopted the principle of plural marriage as part of our religion. We have not led women astray, we have protected them. We have not coerced them or used violence, but have thrown around them a shield of protection, and at the same time have left them to exercise the fullest liberty and the most extensive right of free choice in every respect. But this is a sin; this shocks, we are told, the moral sense of the nation. While, on the other hand, there are communities who say they do not believe in adultery or in seduction – that is, their religion teaches them that these things are wrong; but many of whose members practice these crimes, and yet they pass along unnoticed and undisturbed.

[JD 24:41 – p.42, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

Salt Lake City is 2,400 miles from Washington – a remote place; it might be supposed the effect of our examples, if they were bad, would not reach that distance; that if there was any contagion flowing from our practices it would have expended its force before traveling that far. But in Washington City, at the head of the government, where Congress has unquestioned jurisdiction, there is no law against adultery; no one can be punished in the District for violating the marriage vow; that escapes the attention of Congress. So with fornication; its goes unpunished, unless it should be of so flagrant a character, done in so open and indecent a manner as to excite public condemnation. Now if morality were to be achieved it might be thought that Washington would be a fine field for the exercise of the power that is unquestionably invested in the Congress of the United States. I presented this view of the question to Senator Edmunds, when this bill, which has since become a law, was being discussed. I called his attention to the fact that it was not an unfrequent thing, in taking up an evening paper in Washington City, to read accounts of the finding of two or three infants that had been cast away or deserted by their inhuman mothers, found in vacant lots and in out-of-the-way places, and that too in the most elegant city to be found in the United States. It appeared to me, as I said to him, that Washington was a splendid field for the exercise of the power of Congress. If it was a sincere wish to check immorality, and to put down vice that prompted the Edmunds' bill, however mistaken its author might be in his ideas respecting the existence of these evils in Utah, the best place to commence was at the head. But it was plain to be seen that nothing in that bill was designed to reach real vice, to strike down immorality; it was a blow at our religious practices. To be sure, however, as to what the intent of the bill really was, and to know this from his own lips, I asked him if adulterers could be punished in Utah Territory under the provisions of the bill. His reply was that if a man who had one wife were to live openly and continuously with another woman he could be punished under it; but adulterers would not be very likely to expose themselves to the operations of the law in that manner. He said that "sporadic cases of adultery could not be punished by this bill." I thought the reply one of which a Senator of the United States should be ashamed. I have known Senator Edmunds for some time, and have had some admiration for him, but I declare I blushed for him when he made the reply that "sporadic cases of adultery" could not be punished under the provisions of this bill, now become law.

[JD 24:42, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

Now, you can see what the design is. It is not to punish immorality. If immorality were the object to be reached, that law would have been made broad enough for every case, whether they be practices, what they term under religious guise, or practices in violation of religion. What then is the object of the measure? It is to strike down a prominent feature of our religion; that is its object, and there is no other object to be achieved. It is the fact that we make marriage a part of our religion that excites animosity, and they are determined to destroy us.

[JD 24:42, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

"If you were to protect immorality and not call it religion," I have been told many and many a time, "we should not object to it; but you are sanctioning by the forms of religion that which we cannot endure, and which is hateful to our civilization." It is the marriage ceremony, that is the offensive part of it; it is, in other words, the marrying that excites dislike and hatred.

[JD 24:42, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

Now, is this to be wondered at? I do not wonder at it; I am not surprised at all at this feeling; for the reason that I have always expected that this doctrine, like every doctrine connected with this Church, would excite the bitter hatred of those who oppose the work of God. It was the fact that the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the Elders of this Church declared that revelation had been received from God, that excited animosity in the first place. The Elders of this Church might have preached any doctrines they pleased and not said they had been taught them by revelation, nor by special divine assistance, nor by angels having come from heaven, but preached them as the speculations of men, as doctrines discovered, framed and arranged by men, by some theologians of eminent ability, and they would have had no particular difficulty. In preaching precisely the same doctrines we now preach, that is, the first principles of the Gospel, a church might have been made one of the most popular churches upon the face of the earth.

[JD 24:42 – p.43, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

But what was it that excited animosity? It was the declaration that God had spoken from the heavens and had restored the primitive Gospel in its original purity and power, and that we had the power and authority to administer in the ordinances of the Gospel through which had been restored the gifts and blessings and powers that pertained to the Gospel in the days of Jesus. It was this declaration that excited animosity throughout the religious world against the Latter-day Saints in the beginning. Every preacher felt that he was condemned by this declaration. If we had stood upon the same platform as they, saying that our organization was the result of man's wisdom, we should then have had some sympathy from them. But because our Elders declared that God had spoken, and that we preached that which had been revealed to us, animosity was excited, and mobs rose against us, entertaining the most bitter feelings, and committing the most terrible outrages.

[JD 24:43, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

It is interesting reading now, in this year of our Lord, 1882, to go back to that which occurred fifty years ago, in Missouri, soon after this Church was organized. The charges against us then were that we believed in Prophets, that we believed in revelation, that we believed in healing the sick, according to the pattern in the New Testament, that we were so credulous as to believe that God would work miracles; and the crowning accusation was that we were Yankees and abolitionists, and therefore were unfit to live in the State of Missouri. I say, it is interesting in these days to go back and read the documents issued by the mob in 1832–3 in Jackson Country, Missouri. There was no plural marriage then to cause offense. The cry against us then was, that we believed that God was a God of revelation as He was in ancient days; that He was the same God in this, the 19th century, that He was in the first century of the Christian era, when Jesus and the Apostles ministered among men. This was considered sufficient cause for mobs to organize themselves and drive our people from their homes and lands, and to kill some of them.

If we were to practice plural marriage in some other manner, and not sanctify it by the forms of religion; if we were to be guilty of anything of this character, separating it entirely from all religious ceremonies and ordinances, there would be little, if anything, said about us. To judge from expressions I hear, I do not suppose it would excite any particular animosity.

JD 24:43 – p.44, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882

We, as a people, have to pass through these ordeals. It is a great consolation to me, it has been while I have been absent, to know that we are fighting the battles of religious liberty for the entire people; it might be said, for the entire world. And there is no people on this continent in so good a position to do this to-day as we are, for there is no people so well organized as we are. No man, single-handed, could do what we are doing; no half dozen could do it; they would be crushed. Let any man go out from this place and attempt, single-handed and apart from any other organization, to fight the battle that we are fighting, and he would soon be overwhelmed. But we are an organized community; we can live here as we did in the early days without help from any other source except God. We can raise our food; we can make our clothing. If it be necessary we can pinch ourselves, dispense with luxuries, and can live on those things which are barely essential to life. We do not necessarily have to depend upon other people for support. If grasshoppers come and sweep our fields, as they have done, there is no cry from Utah to the general government for help. We have borne these afflictions unassisted by our fellow-citizens; and we have proven to our own satisfaction, if not to the nation at large, that we are capable of sustaining ourselves. Therefore, when wrath is excited against us, we do not lose employment, we do not lose food, we are not turned out of our houses nor otherwise impoverished; because we have the elements in our own midst from which we can draw a living; and we know how to use them for our own sustenance, and for the preservation of those who are dependent upon us. Hence we are in an excellent position to fight the battles of freedom; and it is the most glorious warfare that men or women were ever engaged in. I expect we shall continue to contend for liberty, not with physical weapons but with steadfast moral courage, despite the Edmunds' law, despite the Poland law, despite the law of '62, or any other law that may be made in violation of the Constitution, and of the Bill of Rights. We shall have to contend unceasingly for those principles, without wavering or yielding one iota in our determination. I claim this not for Latter-day Saints alone, but I claim it for every man and woman in this Republic; for I say that the men and women in this great nation have the right to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, as long as they do not, in so doing, interfere with the rights of their fellow-citizens; and I claim that they have the right to do this, despite the Supreme Court decisions, despite the action of Congress, despite the expressions of pulpit and press; and I am willing to contend for that liberty for every man and woman whether they be of the Methodist, the Presbyterian, the Episcopalian, or any other persuasion, or whether they be believers in the doctrines or views of Col. Robert Ingersol. God has given us this right, and He has given unto us our agency. If we violate His will He will punish us; He has threatened us with punishment if we do so, and we are responsible to Him, and not to the Congress of the United States, not to the President of the United States, nor to any human being; we are responsible alone to our God, and there is no power upon the earth that can justly deprive me or deprive you of this right. They may, by force of power, by illegal measures and unconstitutional laws do this; men may be imprisoned or slain; but the principle that I now declare is a fundamental, a constitutional principle, and it will endure. And the day will come in this land when every man will have this right, regardless of his profession. Are we to be dictated to by popular preachers? Such men say to the Congress of the United States, "You must enact certain laws; we demand it of you; our congregations demand it; you must put down 'Mormonism.' We do not want that religion. We are Methodists; we are Presbyterians, or we are somebody else, and we call upon you to maintain orthodoxy and to put down heterodoxy." I would just as soon be dictated to by the Pope of Rome, by Mr. Ingersol or by a "Mormon" Bishop, as to be dictated to by popular preachers, as to what I must accept as religion.

JD 24:44 – p.45, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882



Fault is found with us in this Territory because it is said the hierarchy dictates legislation; but you know this is not true. I wish we could dictate it more than it is done. We have our views like other citizens, but who has ever known them to be forced upon any? And, yet, this is the head and front of our offending, namely, that in Utah there is a theocracy dictating legislation. Now, who is it that has demanded of Congress this Edmunds' law against Utah? It has been the pulpit of our nation, the orthodox pulpit. It is at their behests this legislation has been enacted. They would destroy us; and if they could do this then they would turn their attention to somebody else – the Catholics, the Infidels, the Spiritualists, – they would not be satisfied until they obtained what they call "uniformity." They do the very thing themselves that they charge us with doing, and which they pretend they desire to prevent in this Territory.

[JD 24:45, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

It is this principle of freedom of which I have been speaking that we are determined to maintain; we shall contend for it to the very uttermost as long as life remains. This is the feeling I have. Do you not feel the same? I am sure you do; I know you all do; I need not call for any expression of your feelings. We cannot fight law; we must submit to law, the law being more powerful than we are; but we can do as John Bunyan said: "I cannot obey, but I can suffer." We cannot renounce our religion; we cannot throw it aside; we cannot trample upon the commandments of God; but we can endure the penalty of obeying God's law, even if it be imprisonment. It is part of the contract. We know what others had to endure for the religion of Jesus, and if we expect to obtain the same glory as they, we must be prepared to endure the same consequences.

[JD 24:45, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

I do not make these remarks to stir up feelings of defiance. It would be a most unwise and a most unfortunate position for us to occupy, to place ourselves in an attitude of defiance against the laws of the land; but while we do not defy, we at the same time shall maintain, I hope, the principles of liberty, and claim them for every man and woman as well as ourselves. We shall never cease our effort, I hope, until from one end of the land to the other men and women can worship God whether they be Mormon or infidel, or whether they believe in Buddha, or are believers in the God of Israel, the Lord of the whole earth, or worship a wooden god, without interference or interruption from others as long as they do not trespass upon or interfere with the rights of their fellow-citizens. All ought to have this right, and no one should seek to deprive them of it.

[JD 24:45, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

The most nonsensical arguments have been used against us in consequence of our claiming liberty of this kind. Say some men: Suppose there were Thugs in this country, or Hindoos who believed in burning widows as they did in India, shall the government not have the right to put down such murders and such ceremonies of cremation? Suppose that human sacrifice was deemed proper by some religious ordinance, do you mean to say that government has not the right to interfere with and to stop the taking of life in such a way?

[JD 24:45 – p.46, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

Certainly, I have never said it had not, neither have I claimed it when I have said that we had a right to practice this feature of our religion. There is a very wide distinction, but many do not seem to understand the difference. There are certain acts that are crimes in and of themselves; they are not made so by statutory law; one of these is murder. It always was a crime against nature and always will be. He who takes the life of a fellow being commits a crime, even if it should be in a land where there is no law; it is in and of itself a crime – malum in se. It needs no statutory law to make it so. Marriage occupies a very different position from this. Before the law of 1862 was passed by Congress a man might have married in this Territory two or more wives, there being no law – human nor divine – that we had any knowledge of, prohibiting it. There was no law of the United States against it; there was no law of the Territory against it, and it was not in and of itself a crime. It was made a crime by the law of July 1, 1862, which, we assert, was in violation of the first amendment to the Constitution. It was malum prohibitum! – a crime made so by statutory law. There is a wide

distinction between the two; and every ordinary mind must, I think, readily admit that there is no comparison between marriage and murder, robbery, theft and crimes of a kindred character. Still there are a great many people who do not seem to understand this. They say, "Suppose you believed in murder, in human sacrifice, do you mean to say that we would not have the right to interfere with you; that we could not do anything to check that practice?"

[JD 24:46, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

Certainly they could and should. They could check any practice that we might be guilty of that would interfere with the rights of our fellow men. Government has the right, and owes it to its citizens, to protect them in their rights – to protect their lives, to protect their property, to protect them in all their civil rights and in their religious rights also, and to prevent others from doing them violence. Beyond this it should not go. And they call our system of marriage, bigamy. Such confusion of terms! The essence of the crime of bigamy is that a man, already married to one wife, clandestinely marries another. Both women are wronged and deceived; the first by his marrying a second time during her lifetime; the second by his concealment of the fact that he already has a living wife. In the anxiety to attach odium to our system of marriage, our enemies call it bigamy, ignoring the fact that, according to our rules, a man who has one wife does not take another wife without the consent of the first wife; no advantage is taken of her by keeping her in ignorance. The new relationship has been entered into by common consent. There is no element of crime about this – that is, of the crime of bigamy. It is, as I have said the concealment that makes it a crime; it is the fact that both women are deceived and wronged by the act of the man. And such a man ought to be punished. That which has been done has been done in the face of high heaven, in the light of day, believing, as we did, that it would be the means of preserving this community in purity, that if every means were used to provide for marriage there would be no margin of unmarried women left for lust to prey upon.

[JD 24:46, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

Men have said to me: "Mr. Cannon, we cannot understand why it is that women will consent to such arrangements."

[JD 24:46 – p.47, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

"My dear sirs," I have said, "do you not think that the ladies who occupy questionable relationships to gentlemen in this city (Washington) would be very glad to have that relationship sanctified by marriage; do you think they would object to it? Would any true woman, if she loved a man, put herself in such a false position in society, and yet not marry him if she could do so honorably? Which relation would be the better and more honorable?"

[JD 24:47, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

I do not wish to convey the idea that plural marriage can be universal. In the very nature of things as I have often said, it is impossible; the equality of the sexes would prevent this, were men ever so desirous to make it so. Take our own Territory: the males outnumber the females; it cannot therefore be a practice without limit among us.

[JD 24:47, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

No one need be afraid of the extensive spread of this system even if the Edmunds' law were not in operation. Besides all this, it should be borne in mind, that God did not give this revelation and commandment to us to urge upon the world for its practice.

[JD 24:47, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

The greatest foe we have to contend with is ignorance. We are not known. We are lied about most extensively, and every avenue is blocked against us. Popular journals are afraid of injuring their circulation by speaking the truth concerning us. The publishers are affected by the same influences as the politicians – the pulpit and this popular clamor cause men to be afraid. If we could be known as we really are – not in Salt Lake alone, for this city is not a fair sample of Utah; if it were possible for the people generally, who reiterate these popular cries against us, to travel through our settlements north and south, and see our people, there would be a very different public feeling in regard to us. But we have been inundated by falsehood, we are nearly covered by its waves, and people who know nothing about us are so startled at this idea of polygamy, as it is called, that they are prepared to believe anything that may be said about us. We have this to contend against. In the end, however, we shall be abundantly successful, for a people possessing the qualities that the people of Utah do, can and will live – a people who are united, a people who are honest, a people who are frugal, a people who are temperate, a people who are orderly in their lives and who are virtuous, truly virtuous, can withstand a tremendous amount of pressure. There is only one way in which this people can be checked and that is by extirpation. Otherwise, the qualities they possess are bound to live in the struggle. The doctrine of "the survival of the fittest," applies to us, and insure us a long, a prosperous, an uninterrupted and a glorious career. We can live in spite of adverse legislation, in spite of commissioners, in spite of governors, in spite of acts of persecution; we can live and still flourish, and still grow and still increase; and we shall do it. I am not at all afraid as to the result. Of course legislation of the Edmunds' kind can pinch us; it can be made excessively disagreeable to us. It may test us in ways that may be new to us; but sincerely I say to you, my brethren and sisters, that I dread other things that exist in our midst more than I do hostile legislation.

[JD 24:47, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

I dread the increase of luxury; I dread the increase of class distinctions which I see growing up. The disintegrating influences of wealth are far more to be dreaded than any outside pressure of this character. All that is being done in this direction is to hoop us up, as the copper hoops up barrels. This has been the case already. During the last five or six months I have had letters from all parts of our Territory, and they uniformly bespeak a determination to cling together.

[JD 24:47 – p.48, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

But watch the effect of wealth; look at its effects. Communities get wealthy and they begin to think about their wealth. Where their treasure is there is their heart also. Especially is this the case if they are divided into classes. Then the rich are in a position to be tempted and tried far more than they would be if they were on the same plane with their fellows. If we are nearly alike temporally we feel alike. In this has consisted much of our strength in the past. We were not divided into classes, with interests diverse one from the other. The sacrifices we had to make fell pretty equally upon all, and there was no temptation offered one class because of its greater wealth, to compromise with principle, or to question the policy of standing up unflinchingly for principle, or to feel different from the bulk of the community.

[JD 24:48, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

The increase of wealth, therefore, and the consequent increase of fashions are more to be dreaded than hostile legislation. Let a wife follow all the fashions of the day, and then let her children do the same, and a man must have a deep pocket to sustain such a family. Give him two or more wives and their children of this kind, and how long can he keep up? Introduce fashions among us, and make women fashionable, and make their daughters fashionable, and what is called "the problem" will not be long in being solved. If a man then had more than one wife he would need a large income to sustain them. Some women might be shrewd enough to understand this, and if not wanting their husbands to have another wife, might take pains to consume all the income.

[JD 24:48, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

Well, our enemies never have had and never will have wisdom enough to adopt any plan that will hurt this work. Why, instead of injuring this people in what they have already done against us, they are only advertising us. The effect of this persecution – I cannot call it anything else – has been to call forth three able productions by men who personally knew little or nothing about us. One man had visited here and the other two were prompted in the interest of justice to write and speak as they did, feeling that a great injustice was being done to us, and that Constitutional rights were being trampled upon. One of these, a gentleman in Boston, delivered an able lecture; and another Bostonian wrote an able pamphlet; another gentleman in New York, wrote one of the best pamphlets on life in Utah, that I have seen for many years; and besides these there have been many correspondents who have written upon the subject, and the result is that men and women have been awakened to the consideration and examination of this question. But if they had been silent concerning it, many never would have thought of it. We must be advertised, and I do not know any better way than that which has been adopted.

[JD 24:48 – p.49, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

As far as my own case in Congress is concerned, I have not allowed myself to be annoyed. Remarks have been made very frequently about my bearing the attacks upon me so pleasantly. I have replied, "why should I not feel so – I am the wronged man? I had a larger majority in my favor than any other man upon the floor of the House. I am the representative of the people of Utah, properly elected, and fully qualified and eligible for the position. This the committee of the House, after the close of the strictest examination – and it might be said, the most prejudiced examination, have decided. Fourteen out of fifteen of the committee on elections, after making a full examination of the case, have decided that I was properly entitled to the certificate, and as a consequence to the seat. If the consciousness of being right ought to make a man feel pleasantly, then I am entitled to the feeling. I feel as one who is called to make sacrifices for a glorious cause."

[JD 24:49, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

Great pressure was brought to bear upon republican members to have them vote solidly on this question. One somewhat prominent man purposed to make a speech denouncing the wrong which was being attempted against me. He told me that Speaker Keifer heard of his intention and "bulldozed" him out of making it. One member said to me: "Mr. Cannon, in voting against you as I did, I told those around that I did the most cowardly act of my public life." Another said, "Mr. Cannon, I wrote to my wife and told her that I had done the meanest thing I ever did since I have been a member of Congress, in voting as I did against you." "But," said he, "what could I do?" These are samples of expressions made upon the subject. You can understand that my position was one not to be ashamed of. The man that is wronged has no occasion to feel the blush of shame on his cheeks; it is those who commit the wrong who ought to have that feeling; and they cannot help feeling that they are inferior to the one they have injured. But notwithstanding the pressure of which I speak that was brought to bear upon members, the conspirators against the liberties of Utah dared not trust my case to the House till the Edmunds' bill had passed. There were some strong men who could not see their way clear to vote against my taking my seat. It was felt therefore that the only way my case could be reached was by the Senate and House passing a law and having it signed by the President of the United States. In this way, by using all the power of the government, except the judiciary, the case was reached; but then they had to trample upon the Constitution to do it; for the law, as applied to me, was ex post facto.

[JD 24:49, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882](#)

I had gone to Washington eight years previously; I had been at the bar of the House four times to be sworn in, the same man in every respect. It was not charged that I had violated any law since that time, or rendered myself ineligible. After a determined contest I had been confirmed in the seat by the 43d Congress – a Republican Congress – also by the 44th Congress – a Democratic Congress; also by the 45th and 46th Congresses. Now by what law could a man in my position, having the majority of the votes, and the fact being conceded that the election had been fair and that there had been a full expression of the people's will, according to the forms of law – I ask, upon what principle of right could such a man be excluded from a seat

in the 47th Congress? Legally he could not. There is only one way in which that could be done, that is by trampling upon the principle of representative government and the Constitution of the United States. This was done in my case, and this action will stand on the books as a precedent that will cause men to feel ashamed of it in days to come.

JD 24:49 – p.50, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882

Now, my brethren and sisters, I return here feeling, as I have said, excellently, and cheerfully, full of courage and hope, not at all weakened in my feelings. I feel exceedingly hopeful and joyful and am satisfied that we are in the right path, that we are on the winning side, because we have right, we have justice and we have truth on our side. The only fear I have is that we shall fail to make use of the opportunities God has given unto us of maintaining our integrity and being true and faithful, for God has said, "I have decreed in my heart that I will prove you in all things, whether you will abide in my covenant, even unto death, that you may be found worthy; for if ye will not abide in my covenant, ye are not worthy of me." He has also told us, "whoso layeth down his life in my cause, for my name's sake, shall find it again, even life eternal: Therefore, be not afraid of your enemies."

JD 24:50, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882

This exhortation God has given unto us. And we may as well prepare ourselves, if we are not already prepared, for everything of this kind. The time must come when the principles of truth and righteousness will prevail over the land; and it is our destiny to maintain them and make them universal. The prophecies that were made by the Prophet Joseph Smith concerning this nation and us will be fulfilled. He said that the time would come when the Latter-day Saints would be the only people that would maintain constitutional principles upon this land. I have been taught from my youth that that was the destiny of this people; that this nation would drift away from the Constitution and Constitutional principles; that mobocracy would reign, and the principles of right would be sacrificed to the power of might. And we can see this coming to pass.

JD 24:50, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882

In former times mobs came against us with cannon and muskets, with powder and ball, and the torch, and life and property alike fell sacrifices to their violence. That was the expression of the popular will; it found vent in illegal forms, the laws being trampled upon to satisfy its demands. But matters have changed. Mobocracy to-day assumes the forms of legality, and, therefore, in meeting this power you have to wrestle with it under the form of law. In the early days when the mob came upon us we could take our guns and meet it, but when a mob comes backed up by law, clothed in the garb of the law, claiming shelter under the Constitution, it is very different; and that is our position to-day. We have fought mobs from the beginning; there have been times when we have held our own, determined to stand our ground; at other times we have been driven; until, at last, we found refuge in these mountains.

JD 24:50 – p.51, George Q. Cannon, June 25, 1882

Now we are subjected to another sort of test, and I look upon it as necessary to develop us and to prove us. I accept this, in the providence of God, as a means to school this people. It will make statesmen and legislators of us; it already shows the necessity of education; it will have the effect also to broaden our views, to enlarge our intellects, and to stir up our young men and our young women to prepare themselves for usefulness. We have to be a superior people; we have to educate our children, and make them the peers, and I may say, the superiors of all others, for we have the principles which will make us a superior people. And in order to become such a people, I do not know any better training that we could have than that which we are now receiving, unpleasant though it may be. Read the history of New England and you will see that we are passing through precisely the same training that the colonists there did. It developed them, and was the means of making them the great people that they have since become.

I pray God to bless you and fill you with His Holy Spirit, and help you to remain faithful and true to Him and to one another, that you may never lose your courage or falter for a single moment, but maintain your integrity to the last, and teach your children to do likewise, that you and yours may be found among those who shall be recognized as having been valiant in the cause of God upon the earth. Let us be wise and prudent in all our talk, and cautious in everything we do, feeling to submit to wrong rather than to do wrong, trusting the Lord to overrule the intentions of our enemies for our good and the final triumph of truth over error, and good over evil. There need be no rashness, no defiance or manifestation of feeling. Let us show the world that God has given unto us principles which lift us up above these clouds that now envelope us; and that we have not been taught in vain, that we have not passed through the scenes of the past fifty years without having learned many valuable and excellent lessons. Amen.

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Wilford Woodruff, January 27, 1883

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE WILFORD WOODRUFF,

Delivered at Nephi, Saturday Afternoon, January 27, 1883.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

IMPORTANCE OF THE WORK OF GOD – "THE KINGDOM OF GOD OR  
NOTHING" – APPARENT INSIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHURCH AT FIRST – ITS  
GROWTH – ANCIENT MEN OF GOD – PERSONAL REMINISCENCE – WHAT IS  
REQUIRED OF THE SAINTS – HOW JOSEPH SMITH'S PRAYERS WERE ANSWERED.

JD 24:51, Wilford Woodruff, January 27, 1883

We meet with the Saints of the several Stakes at the Stake Quarterly Conferences for the purpose of giving instruction which all need in order to qualify themselves to magnify their callings as Saints of God, engaged in establishing and building up the Church and kingdom of God. And I will here say, as I have often said, that all men, and all women, regardless of the position they occupy, or the office they hold, are dependent upon the Lord for His Spirit to assist them in their labors.

JD 24:51 – p.52, Wilford Woodruff, January 27, 1883

I made a covenant with the Lord, years ago, that whatever He would impress me to say, I would preach to the people. If we are not able to speak to your edification, it is not because there are not truth and knowledge, principles and laws sufficient within the pale of this Church, and connected with the work in which we are engaged. I look upon the cause of God and the mission that He has given each of us connected with it, as requiring the whole attention, the might, mind and strength of each one of us, in order to magnify our calling and accomplish the work committed to our hands.

JD 24:52 – p.53, Wilford Woodruff, January 27, 1883

The Lord raised up Joseph Smith specially to do the work that he performed. He was ordained and appointed before he was born to come upon the stage of action in this age of God's mercy to man, through the loins of ancient Joseph who was a descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to lay the foundation of this great and glorious dispensation – a dispensation that will be marked and distinguished in the annals of human history for its grand and mighty, and also its serious and awful events. The day has already dawned when the light of heaven is to fill the earth; the day in which the Lord has said that nothing should be kept hidden, whether it be things pertaining to one God, or many Gods, or to thrones, principalities or powers; the day in which everything that has been kept from the knowledge of man ever since the foundation of the earth, must be revealed; and it is a day in which the ancient prophets looked forward to with a great deal of interest and anxiety. It is a day in which the Gospel is to be preached to every nation, tongue and people for a witness of what shall follow; a day in which the Israel of God who receive it in their dispersed and scattered condition are to gather together to the place appointed of God, the place where they will perform the "marvelous work and wonder" spoken of by the ancients who, in vision, saw our day; and where they will begin to inherit the promises made to the fathers respecting their children. The work that is to be so marvelous in the eyes of men has already commenced, and is assuming shape and proportions; but they cannot see it. It will consist in preaching the Gospel to all the world, gathering the Saints from the midst of all those nations who reject it; building up the Zion of God; establishing permanently in the earth His kingdom; preparing for the work of the gathering of the Jews and the events that will follow their settlement in their own lands, and in preparing for ourselves holy places in which to stand when the judgments of God shall overtake the nations. This is truly a good work; and it is a marvel (when we look at it with our natural eyes) how this people are sustained in their faith and hope of accomplishing it, besides having to provide for the wants of themselves and families, which is of itself as much as most men can accomplish. We cannot do the work which God through us intends to have done, unless we place ourselves under His care and direction, and take the sentiment, "The Kingdom of God, or nothing," for our motto, as well as the end and aim of our life. This we must do to be truly the servants of God. We cannot serve God and mammon. We cannot build up the Kingdom of God and withhold our hearts from Him. We must either come under the dominion of God, and be led and directed by Him, or under the dominion of Satan, and be ruled over by him. It is for us, through our faith and works, our desires and course of life, to choose which we will take, as we must take the one side or the other.

[JD 24:53, Wilford Woodruff, January 27, 1883](#)

Nobody in this world has cause to rejoice as we have. None have the encouraging future before them that we have; for Zion is not to be moved out of her place, neither is "the kingdom" to be given to another people. God rules and reigns, and we are His people, and He is our God.

[JD 24:53, Wilford Woodruff, January 27, 1883](#)

This work, this marvelous work and a wonder, the work that will eventually fill the whole world – and neither man nor the devil can prevent it – commenced, as all the works of our God begin, in a small way. It was likened by the Savior to the mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds, put in the soil, which grew until the fowls of the air could lodge in the branches thereof. This certainly is the characteristic of this Church and Kingdom, commencing as it did on the 6th day of April, 1830, with only six members. But the Lord told Joseph in one of the revelations that he was laying the foundation of a great work, how great he knew not. Joseph was young at that time, and could not comprehend fully the nature of the work which he had been called and appointed to commence in the earth.

[JD 24:53 – p.54, Wilford Woodruff, January 27, 1883](#)

When Joseph presented to the Christian world the principles that God had communicated to him, he at once aroused their prejudices; he had to struggle against traditions which they had inherited from their fathers who knew not God nor His ways, traditions which had come down to them through the ages, which were antagonistic to the saving truths of heaven. And hence his life was one continual struggle, meeting with opposition on every hand, especially from the priests of the day; but he lived through it and rejoiced greatly in

his labors until he finished his testimony in the flesh, after laboring some fourteen years to that end. He had to wade through deep waters; but he never was discouraged or disheartened, notwithstanding he had to contend against foes without and foes within. He never lost sight of the majesty of his calling, nor the divinity of this work; but spake and acted in the midst of the people under all circumstances the man that he was – the Prophet of God, the Seer and Revelator of the last dispensation. He left us under painful circumstances, sealing his testimony with his blood; but his works follow him. The Gospel of the Kingdom which he preached, flourished under the wise administration of God's servants who followed him. The Lord blessed and sustained His Apostles, and led them to this land, where the standard of Zion has been planted, which begins already to attract the notice of the nations afar off. And here in this land, notwithstanding the difficulties we have had to wrestle with, incident to settling a new country a thousand miles from civilization, having also to protect ourselves against the raids of the wild and untutored Indians, the Lord has prospered us, and blessed us on every hand; and we are to-day a blessed people. Yet the Christian world is opposed to us, and the Christians generally hate us. The Savior himself had the same spirit and feeling to contend against. There was no man more unpopular than He; no man more persecuted than He. And why? Because He preached false doctrine? No. The real reason was, as He himself declared, because they loved darkness better than light, because their deeds were evil. There are but the two powers, that of God and that of the devil. There is but the one true and living God, and He is our Eternal Father, the creator of this earth: and He will give it to His children to inherit.

[JD 24:54, Wilford Woodruff, January 27, 1883](#)

We are nearing the end of the 6th thousand years. We have the history, or a partial history, of the dealings of God with the nations from the day of Father Adam down as contained in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, from which we may learn many valuable lessons. God has raised up at different ages certain men to do a certain work, as He raised up father Abraham. He was a noble spirit, we are told, before he left the realms of glory to come and tabernacle in the flesh. He had the spirit of the Gods with him when he was born; and he was faithful to God, and He had confidence in him; and whatever God required at his hands, he performed. So with Enoch. He stood at the head of the dispensation in which he lived. He, in the course of time, some 350 years, built and perfected the city called Zion. He, however, met with all kinds of opposition from the people among whom he labored; but the power of God was manifested to such an extent that his enemies stood and trembled through fear; and through that power he was enabled to perform the mighty work which he and his people did; it was not because the devil and his party were any more kindly disposed towards the Saints of God, but because they could not help themselves; and in the wisdom of God Enoch and his people and their city were taken away from the earth.

[JD 24:54, Wilford Woodruff, January 27, 1883](#)

The devil in different ages has made war against the Saints and overcome them; and he has tried his best to destroy this Church and Kingdom. As I have said, Joseph and the first Elders met with the fiercest kind of opposition; but, with some exceptions, we have stood it all, and are the better to-day for having passed through the fire. When we went upon our first foreign mission, Joseph said to us, "No matter what may come upon you, round up your shoulders and bear it, and always sustain and defend the interests of the Church and Kingdom of God." When we took our departure his demeanor in parting was something that I had never noticed or experienced before. After crossing the Mississippi River I crawled to the side of a house and lay down upon a side of sole leather, while suffering from the chills and fever. While resting there the Prophet Joseph came along and saw me. He gave me some parting advice in answer to some remarks made, and then told me to get up and go on, and all would be well with me. That is the way I parted with him upon that occasion. From that day to this I have noticed the steady growth and increase of this people. We have nothing else to do but to build up the Kingdom of God. If we do this He will keep us and provide for us. We want to labor as a body of Priesthood, to enter into the holy of holies; we want to come before God, and pray until we get the spirit of this work, until we comprehend our calling before God.

[JD 24:54 – p.55, Wilford Woodruff, January 27, 1883](#)



There has never been such a dispensation upon the earth as the present one. In other dispensations men had to lay down their lives, and others to hide up in dens and caves of the earth, and wander in sheep skins and goat skins, for the word of God. We have had a taste of the same treatment in our day. And we have also seen days of poverty. When for instance, we left to go on our first English mission, two dollars would have bought everything I left to feed and clothe my wife and children. I hardly had a day's provisions in my house. It was a good deal so with my brethren; but we did not stay to nurse our wives. Those were the days of our poverty; and we never knew what it was to be comfortably well off until we came to these valleys of the mountains. We had a great many trials in those days or what we called trials. I want to get this principle into your minds, that God Almighty is guiding the course of this Church and Kingdom, and not we; and He has organized it for this day and generation and it never will be rooted out of the earth again. The Prophet Joseph knew what he was doing; in fact, he knew much more than he dared to tell on account of the prejudice, traditions, and unbelief of the people. I used to have peculiar feelings about his death and the way in which his life was taken. I felt that is, with the consent and good feelings of the brethren that waited on him after he crossed the river to leave Nauvoo, Joseph could have had his desire, he would have pioneered the way to the Rocky Mountains. But since then I have been fully reconciled to the fact that it was according to the programme, that it was required of him, as the head of this dispensation, that he should seal his testimony with his blood, and go hence to the spirit world, holding the keys of this dispensation, to open up the mission that is now being performed by way of preaching the Gospel to the "spirits in prison." But those who shed his blood, and the people and nation who sanctioned it in their hearts, have that to meet, and they can more escape the death of the body. My views and feelings in regard to the Twelve and leading men of this Church have been this, that when they leaven this stage of action they will be permitted to lie down in peace surrounded by their families and friends; and also, that God will never require them to stain their hands with the blood of their fellow men, in order to protect themselves from violence; but, that the Lord will fight our battles, and frustrate the measures that would lead to such an issue. And the wisdom of this is manifested in the fact that part of our duty is to build Temples, and officiate in the same; and this we could not do so acceptably to God if our hands were stained with the blood of our fellow-men, even in our own defense. Hence I believe that God will cause the wicked to slay the wicked; and that He will cut off our enemies by judgment from time to time, as it shall be deemed prudent by Him. All is peace in Zion, and I thank God for it. I am reminded of a saying made by Brother Cannon upon entering the well furnished parlor of one of President Merrill's houses, of Richmond, in Cache County. "What," he said, "all this and heaven too?" Yes, God intends to give to His Saints the good things of the earth, as well as the blessings of heaven, as they shall become able to use them properly.

[JD 24:55 – p.56, Wilford Woodruff, January 27, 1883](#)

The Lord intends to build up His Zion through us His weak and feeble creatures. He intends to make Zion strong and powerful in the earth. He will bless us with means and He will put it into our hearts to build Temples to His name, in which His Saints may perform the work that is required at their hands in redeeming their dead.

[JD 24:56, Wilford Woodruff, January 27, 1883](#)

Brethren and sisters, you should live by faith, realizing every day that all power rests with God, and that it is through Him that we are able to live in peace and enjoy plenty; that it is through Him the wrath of our enemies is turned aside from time to time, and that it will be through Him that the remainder of their wrath will be restrained. You should enter your secret closets, and call upon the name of the Lord. Many of you have learned how to pray; then fail not to let your prayers ascend up into the ears of the God of Sabaoth; and He will hear you. I think sometimes that we do not fully comprehend the power that we have with God in knowing how to approach Him acceptably. All that these men holding the Priesthood, and all that our sisters need do, is to live near to God, and call upon Him, pouring out their soul's desires in behalf of Israel, and their power will be felt, and their confidence in God will be strengthened. But the blessings of heaven can only be obtained and controlled upon the principles of righteousness. I have heard the Prophet Joseph pray when the power of God rested down upon him, and all who heard him felt it; and I have seen his prayers answered in a marvelous manner almost immediately. Governor Reynolds on one occasion employed men to try and kidnap

Joseph, and they almost accomplished their designs, but Joseph had some Gentile friends as well as his brethren, through whom he was rescued, and was taken to Nauvoo and released under a writ of habeas corpus. But the Governor continued to harass him with writs, and was determined to destroy Joseph. Joseph and the Twelve went before God in prayer, offered up prayer, and asked God to deliver him from the power of that man. Among other things he told the Lord that he was innocent before Him, and that his heart was heavy under the persecutions he endured. In about forty–eight hours from that time word reached Joseph that Reynolds had blown his brains out. Before perpetrating the deed he left a note on his desk stating, that as his services were not appreciated by the people of the State, he took that course to end his days.

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There is another instance that occurs to my mind. A certain man took a stand against Joseph, and endeavored to bring persecution on him. He went to his God and laid the matter before Him, asking to be delivered out of the hands and power of that wicked man. Joseph was a Prophet, a Seer, a Revelator. He was acquainted with God; he knew the voice of the Spirit when it spoke to him. After offering up his prayer, the whispering of the still small voice came to him saying, "Wait with patience." The next day that man was taken sick with cholera, and died in a few hours. See how quickly the Lord answered his prayer offered up while a prisoner in Liberty Jail. At that time, Presidents Young, Taylor and several of the Twelve were on their way through Clay County to lay the corner stones of the Temple, in fulfillment of the revelation given in the Doctrine and Covenants, section 118. Joseph had no sooner called upon God than he was liberated; and his prayer answered to the very letter. The voice of the Spirit again spoke to him, speaking peace to his soul, and telling him that his troubles should be of short duration. It was but a few days when he had the pleasure of shaking hands with his brethren, and enjoying the society of his family and friends. Joseph lived to accomplish the work that was required of him notwithstanding the persistent and determined opposition that he had to contend against. And after his death the work still went on, God and His angels all the while guiding and sustaining by His Spirit the Prophet Brigham. And He will continue to sustain His servants; and through them and His people Israel He will bring to pass the greatest and grandest work that the world has ever known. It is for us to wake up to a sense of our duty, and call upon the Lord in humility, and live near to Him; and our eyes will be opened, as in the case of the young man the servant of the ancient Prophet Elisha, and we will see that there are more for us than against us; and that the element of opposition tends only to hasten the fulfillment of the purposes of God. Put your trust in God and rely on His promises, living up to the light and knowledge you possess; and all will be well with you whether living or dying. God bless you, Amen.

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George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEO. Q. CANNON,

Delivered in the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, March 18th, 1883.

PECULIARITIES OF PUBLIC PREACHING AMONG THE SAINTS – A COMPREHENSIVE  
RELIGION – EQUALITY OF MAN – SAINTS THE CHAMPIONS OF RIGHT – A PROVIDENCE  
OVER THE SAINTS – LEAVEN OF TRUTH AT WORK – TRUTH TAUGHT BY JOSEPH SMITH

ARGUMENT – EFFECTUAL PRAYER.

[JD 24:57, George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883](#)

I am glad to have the opportunity once more of meeting with my brethren and sisters in this place. And while I speak to you this afternoon I trust I shall have the assistance of the Spirit of God. I have had excellent health since I have been gone. But this morning, from the effect of a cold which I have taken, when I arose I felt worse than I have done since I left home, and as though I could scarcely come to meeting. The ride in the air, however, has helped me, and I feel better than I did.

[JD 24:57 – p.58 – p.59, George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883](#)

There is a natural curiosity on the part of the Latter-day Saints to know everything connected with our political affairs as well as everything connected with our religious operations throughout the earth. Everything of this character is so intimately blended in the work in which we are engaged, that it is an exceedingly difficult thing to draw the line of distinction between the temporal and the spiritual, between that which pertains to the body and that which pertains to the spirit, or which pertains to the dissemination of the Gospel and the welfare of the people in political matters. It has been a cause of frequent comment in newspaper articles and in works that have been published concerning us and our organization, that we are a peculiar people in this respect, and that this intimate blending of the practical and the theoretical, of the temporal the spiritual, in our meetings and in the addresses of our Elders, is a marked peculiarity. The reason of this is very apparent to those who are familiar with the character of our work and with our belief concerning these matters. We attach an importance to the physical organization which God has given unto us, greater, I believe, than any other religious people that I have ever met with. In like manner our religion extends its ramifications into every department of our lives, leaving nothing untouched, nothing connected with our earthly existence uninfluenced by its power and its teaching. I am thankful that this is the case, because it gives religion full scope, it gives it an opportunity to exercise its proper influence upon the man and to make him more perfect and more godlike. Our God is not a religious God alone. The God we worship does not confine himself to religious matters, so-called, in contradistinction from those that are secular. He is not a God that concerns himself alone with the spirit of man, but He is a God of science, He is a God of mechanism, He is a God of creative power, a God of government, a God who attends to all the departments of human life and progress, as we see them exemplified here upon the earth. The first acts that are recorded of Him in the record that has come to us were creative acts, acts of organization, labors that might in one respect be termed temporal labors. Among the first communications He had with man He taught him how to live practically, to make himself clothing, and to perform other necessary labors connected with his comfort and his happiness upon the earth. And where they have been willing to be taught He has taught men government, the principles of government, from the beginning. He has established the best forms of government where men have listened to His teachings – governments best adapted for the person for whom they were intended and for the objects that were to be accomplished; and He knew in the days of Moses, as He did in the days of Enoch, the principles of government that were best calculated for the happiness of those peoples. So far as they listened to Him, so far as they were governed in righteousness and in truth, each received the laws and the necessary instructions that were best suited to their condition and circumstances, for the progress that they had made and the progress that it was anticipated they would make. And He knew all that was necessary to be known, without the benefit of the experience that each nation has received from their labors and from their progress under the forms of government that they have had. Our government to-day is considered the ripened fruit of the ages of experience that men have gained upon the earth. Yet there is not a principle connected with it that was not known to God, that was not taught by the Almighty in the earliest days, and that has not been put into operation under His instruction at one time or another among men. And these principles are embodied in what we call the Gospel. It has been truthfully and very forcibly said many time in our hearing that there was no principle connected with man's existence upon the earth that is not a part and parcel of that Gospel which God has revealed unto us and commanded us to obey; that that which the world call "Mormonism" embraces

within its scope every good thing upon the face of the earth, leaving nothing outside. Every true principle of science, everything connected with the cultivation of the earth, with the government of cities and of nations, with the management of all the multiplied affairs of men in their great and varied diversity – that everything of this character comes within the scope of the Gospel which God has revealed, in the system of salvation that He has commanded us to receive.

JD 24:59, George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883

There is one great principle connected with the Gospel of Jesus Christ as it has been taught among all the people who have ever received it, as we find from their teachings in the records that have come down to us, the same principle that lies at the foundation of our form of government, and makes it the most valuable feature connected with it, and that is, the equality of man before God. No man can be a true follower of Jesus Christ; no man ever could be – anterior even to His coming – a true follower of God, without embodying in His faith and practice and in every feeling of his heart this principle to which I have referred, the equality of man. There could be no class distinctions wherever this Gospel was received and put into practical operation. Every man who received it became the equal of his fellow–man; he would be recognized, a proper place be assigned unto him, and he would have his proper influence in the society of which he was a member. It is this principle of the Gospel that will make us, also, a thoroughly free people, a thoroughly great people, a people who shall have place in the earth, and have influence in the affairs of the children of men.

JD 24:59 – p.60, George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883

There have been fears indulged in many times, and expressions have been given to those fears, that the growth of the Latter–day Saints was a menace to surrounding peoples and to the government under which we live. There can be no menace in the growth of such principles as are taught and as are recognized and enforced among such a people as we are. It would be impossible for tyranny to flourish for any length of time in our midst. Oppression of every form would sooner or later have to disappear, or else there would have to be apostasy from the true principles of the Gospel on the part of the people. Oppression, tyranny, misrule, cannot co–exist with the principles of the everlasting Gospel as they are taught in our midst and received by us. There must be the greatest possible liberty of thought, of expression and of action in our midst – that is the greatest possible consistent with good order, and the preservation of the rights of others. Liberty cannot be permitted to degenerate into license, but the utmost liberty can be enjoyed so long as it does not overstep that boundary. It becomes, therefore, a natural duty devolving upon us, with our views concerning these eternal principles that have come down from God, that were taught by God in the early ages unto man, that have been re–enforced from time to time by Him through the silent, unseen agency of His power in various ages – I say it becomes our natural duty to see that these principles are carried out and maintained in the earth. We become their natural champions. Besides advocating and maintaining them, it becomes our province to struggle for their supremacy.

JD 24:60, George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883

As I have said these principles were taught in the very beginning. If we had the records we would find that they were taught to our father Adam, because they are consistent with man's agency. God gave unto man when He placed him upon the earth, the fullest agency – the power to do that which was right in his own sight without let or hindrance. He taught those principles to Enoch, and He taught them from time to time to all the men of note who would be taught by him. Abraham became in his turn the great expositor of those truths; and you will find by tracing the lives of these men in the record that has come down to us, that in every instance they were men who were champions of the right, who stood out boldly and fearlessly in the midst of their fellow men, contending for those God–given principles which they believed to be the inalienable right of every human being. You will find that the opponents of truth, or, to speak more plainly, according to our phraseology and our methods of expressing ideas, the followers of Satan – you will find that whenever there was persecution upon the earth, they were its authors. Whenever men were trampled upon and their rights were denied them, when men fell victims to violence and the mal–administration of the laws, it was those

who were led by Satan's influence and yielded to his power, who were the instruments in committing those evils. Hence you find that good men never persecuted bad men; never destroyed wicked men when they had power. They were not oppressors, they were not tyrants, they were not persecutors, they did not infringe upon the rights of their fellow men, upon the liberty of conscience, nor upon its proper exercise, nor upon the exercise of man's agency; they never sought to restrain it. If wicked men were disposed to do wickedly, so long as they did not transcend certain well-defined bounds that found their expression in law, you will find no account of good men interfering with bad men. You will not find them, as I say, taking upon themselves the role of oppressors, nor saying that men shall not do that which their conscience and that which they in their agency think it is their right to do. God does not do it. Jesus did not do it, and no servant of God ever did it that had a true conception of his calling. God has given to every man his agency, and he respects that agency. He might grieve over its exercise, angels may weep, and the heavens themselves may weep over the wrong exercise by man of the agency that God has given unto him, but he nevertheless has it to its fullest extent; but the devil and those under his influence would, if possible, destroy man's agency and prevent him from exercising it to suit himself.

JD 24:60 – p.61, George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883

I am thankful that we are surrounded by such delightful circumstances to-day. We have escaped another peril, and we still are a free people. Is there anyone in this congregation who professes to be a Latter-day Saint who is not filled with profound thankfulness to God for that which He has done for us? Is there any man or woman, or child of age sufficient to comprehend these things, who has not come this day to this house of worship with a feeling of profound thankfulness to our God for His mercy and His loving kindness, as manifested unto us His people? Though I have been taught and always have believed that not one word of His promises would fail, still I say that I am almost amazed myself when I see how wonderfully God hath wrought, when I look at our circumstances, when I see the liberty that we enjoy, knowing as I do the plans and the concerted efforts which have been made to deprive us of our liberty, and to bring us into a bondage that would be intolerable to us. A paean of rejoicing went up from all quarters of the land about a year ago, that is, on the 22d of March. Every man who desired to see the overthrow of the Latter-day Saints, to see their system obliterated, rejoiced from one end of this land to the other – there were among them preachers, politicians and journalists, and the rabble everywhere, who rejoiced that a deadly blow had been struck at the Latter-day Saints. Men, while they admitted that the Constitution had been violated, justified the act in consideration of the great good that they supposed would be accomplished. Yet we to-day have all the happiness, the peace, the enjoyment, and the quiet that we could reasonably desire. If it were not for God's power; if it were not for His overshadowing protection; if it were not for the promises that He has made unto us, how long could we endure? How long could we maintain ourselves in our present position?

JD 24:61 – p.62, George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883

But God made promises unto His people; and those promises have been abundantly fulfilled thus far, and they will be fulfilled to the very letter. And this Church and this people, and this organization will continue to grow and spread, and gather influence and power in the earth, until every word that has been spoken under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost will be fulfilled, and not a single word fall. It cannot fail, for God has spoken it. Already the influence of this work is being felt to an extent that none without the eye of omniscience can comprehend. We can see little glimpses of it here and there where our eyes are open to perceive; but the full extent of the influence that is being wrought in the earth through this work that God has established, is impossible for man to comprehend. I do not believe that any power short of omniscience itself can comprehend it. The principles of this Gospel which God revealed through the Prophet Joseph, have been like a little leaven, and they have been gradually leavening the whole lump. The effects have gone forth and the influence is being felt in every direction throughout the world. Though we are but a small people, but a handful, so to speak, and in some respects quite insignificant, yet an influence has gone forth from this people, from the teachings of the Elders of this Church that is being felt everywhere. It has invaded every domain of thought, and gradually made itself felt – the leaven of truth has; and men begin to acknowledge principles as a part of their faith which but a short time ago they denied and scouted at. In this way the work of God is being

carried on far beyond that which we can see with our natural eyes. The work of the preparation of the earth, and of its inhabitants, is pressing forward with a rapidity that we who are taking part in it do not realize. We look at ourselves too much, we think that God's operations and labors are confined to us who comprise this Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In doing so we make a great blunder. He is operating among the nations of the earth. His spirit has gone forth; and it is accomplishing that which He said should be accomplished. And this great work of the last days will be cut short in righteousness. It is not the conversion of men and women and their baptism into the Church that is alone to be accomplished. The work of God is not to be measured by the number of souls that are brought into the Church. The progress of events connected with this last dispensation cannot be thus gauged; and when we think so we make a great mistake. Look abroad in other realms. Look at the religious world, and see how fast the principles that we believe in are being received. It may be said that they are not received properly. True, but notwithstanding truth is progressing; and the mind of man is being emancipated from many errors.

[JD 24:62, George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883](#)

Repentance after the grave is now taught – you have heard it, and read about it in the newspapers. Prominent preachers talk about it and receive it; and actually preach as scriptural doctrine, that it is possible for spirits to receive the Gospel in the spirit world.

[JD 24:62, George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883](#)

Another step has been made in advance, through the preaching of the Elders of this Church, or rather by means of the revelations of God through the Prophet Joseph Smith, in scientific truth which is astonishing; I refer to the doctrine of the eternal duration of matter. When first this was made known it was ridiculed everywhere by religious people, who viewed it as a principle, the teachings of which detracted from the dignity and glory of God. The popular idea was that this earth was created out of nothing. This was the almost universal belief among Christians. Joseph Smith said it was not true. He advocated the doctrine that matter always had an existence, that it was eternal as God Himself was eternal; that it was indestructible; that it never had a beginning, and therefore could have no end. God revealed this truth to him. Now who is there that does not believe it?

[JD 24:62, George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883](#)

So with regard to the periods occupied in the creation of the earth. Joseph taught that a day with God was not the twenty-four hours of our day; but that the six days of the creation were six periods of the Lord's time. This he taught half a century ago; it is now generally received as a great truth connected with the creation of the world. Geologists have declared it, and religious people are adopting it; and so the world is progressing.

[JD 24:62 – p.63, George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883](#)

Again: It is not an uncommon thing at all now to hear of faith being exercised, of healings being produced through the prayer of faith. The daily papers frequently publish accounts of people being healed in this way. The adversary is trying, of course, to take advantage of it to rob God of the glory. He is determined that God shall not have any credit for these things. But it matters not how much he may struggle, mankind are receiving these truths, and progress is being made and error is being overcome.

[JD 24:63, George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883](#)

So it is with regard to religious liberty. We are contending to-day for liberty on the old platform. God, as I have said, gave it in the beginning, and we stand on that platform, and are contending for those rights, and we will achieve the victory, and this Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will be recognized as occupying the foremost rank in this work. The principles of liberty, the rights of man will be established, and will be guaranteed to every man as in olden times; but there will be a struggle first.

The effect that the defence of our system, this last winter, had upon one of the great political parties of the United States was most remarkable. I was amused at it, and it afforded me a great deal of interesting reflection. There are a great many members of this Church who do not seem to have a thorough comprehension of their own doctrines, who nevertheless call themselves Latter-day Saints; and they are Latter-day Saints so far as their profession goes. But if asked about the principles of their belief some of them are ignorant of the extent of their application. It is in politics as in religion. There are a great many men who make a profession of politics, professing to understand, to act upon, and to stand upon certain political principles, which are embodied in their platforms, or which, however, they are really ignorant. You may have thought it very strange that any members of the democratic party, for instance, which professes to be the champion of home rule, as well as other great fundamental principles, should be found so oblivious to their own principles as to take any part whatever in attacks upon us for the purpose of depriving us of our rights as citizens. But so it has been. If it had not been for the recreancy of some Democrats the Act of March 22, 1882, known as the Edmunds' law, would never have become one of the statutes of the United States. Mr. Edmunds succeeded in cajoling some of the Democrats. An astute man is Senator Edmunds. In their action towards us these Democrats seemed to be blind to the fact that they were apostatizing from their own principles; and that in doing so they were striking a deadly blow at the platform on which the party stood. We had been reasoning against this action; but our voices were unheard; we were considered heterodox upon religious matters, and it was supposed that we were heterodox upon political matters: therefore all that we said upon this subject fell heedlessly upon their ears. But we succeeded in getting an apostle of democracy to aid us, one of the old leaders of democracy – Judge Jeremiah S. Black. He began to preach the true doctrines of democracy to his Democratic brethren; and to their amazement, some found that they had, in voting for this law, been trampling upon their own principles. And he proved it to them so thoroughly, that some of them became ashamed of it; and they said, "We have gone far enough." He explained the principles of the Constitution and the rights that men had under that instrument when properly administered. Good doctrine for every politician, and every class, not for democrats so-called alone, but for republicans also. There is something in such doctrine that strikes a chord in every freeman's breast. It calls forth a response from every lover of liberty by whatever name he may be called. He says, when he hears the rights of man explained by an authority that is entitled to respect: "There is something in that which I cannot but accept." Such men hesitate before flying in the face of principles expounded in this way, to commit acts, the effects of which are to deprive people of liberty. The effect of Judge Black's argument upon some of the Democrats was to stiffen their backbone so much that they could not consent this time to have other measures enacted as were proposed.

JD 24:64, George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883

I was very much struck by a statement made to me by President Taylor since my return, showing that faith when connected with works accomplishes wonderful results. Brother Caine and myself, with some other Utah friends, were in the Senate chamber on the 23d of February last, watching Senator Edmunds' attempt to get through his special legislation of which you have read. It seemed as though nothing could prevent it. Senators with whom we had conversed said that they saw no possible chance of stopping it; that its passage seemed inevitable. But a Cabinet minister gave a dinner party that evening, and one by one those who were invited stole from the Senate Chamber while the bill was under discussion to the dinner party; and the first that was known when a vote was called was that a quorum was not present. In the absence of a quorum, you know, a legislative body is powerless to act. For four hours Senator Edmunds did all in his power to get action on his bill; but every attempt was resisted by the Democrats upon the ground that there was no quorum, and they accordingly filibusted until Edmunds, disgusted and tired, called for an adjournment.

JD 24:64, George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883

President Taylor told me upon my return that, on the 22d of February, feeling exercised in his mind about our political affairs, and that it was a time of peril, he called a few of the brethren together and they met at the Endowment House according to the holy order, and besought God, in the name of Jesus, to baffle the plans of

our enemies and frustrate them in their designs, and put them to confusion and shame. In watching Senator Edmunds that evening, I thought that if ever there was a man confused, chagrined and confounded at the futility of his own attempts, it was he. And there is no doubt in my mind that the prayers of President Taylor and the brethren ascended favorably unto the ears of the God of Sabaoth, and were heard and answered. The dreadful wrong was defeated and failed, and it may be said, it met with its death blow; for every attempt afterwards made to bring it up, was unsuccessful. In this way God has wrought out deliverance for Zion.

JD 24:64 – p.65, George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883

I mention this because there are a great many people who think that prayer is not effective. It is effective in not only producing desired results, but in increasing faith in the hearts of those who exercise it in that manner. If you pray to God – as I have no doubt you did, that He would baffle the attempts of our enemies to injure us – you have had the satisfaction of knowing that He heard your prayers, and that your prayers were answered; and you can go before Him now with increased confidence and ask again, because you see the fulfillment of your prayers, and you share in the gratification and joy and thanksgiving in which answers to prayer always bring to those who offer them in faith.

JD 24:65, George Q. Cannon, March 18th, 1883

I have talked longer than I expected. I rejoice with you, my brethren and sisters, to-day; and I bear my testimony, as I have so often done in your hearing, that God lives; that He is the same God to-day that He was in days of old, and that if he will continue faithful to Him, He will lead us back to His presence, there to reign with Him eternally in the heavens, which may God grant, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE ERASTUS SNOW,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Friday Afternoon, (Annual Conference), April 6, 1883.

(Reported by Gibbs and Irvine.)

THE PAST AND FUTURE OF THE AMERICAN CONTINENT – THE LAW OF THE LORD  
AND THE LAW OF THE LAND – THE EFFORTS OF OUR ENEMIES TURNED TO OUR  
ADVANTAGE – LIGHT AND LIBERTY OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS – THE WORK OF  
THE LORD AMONG THE NATIONS – JUDICIAL FOLLY AND INJUSTICE – FAITH  
INSEPARABLE FROM WORKS – PARABLE OF THE TALENTS EXEMPLIFIED.

JD 24:65, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883



If the Lord gives me strength to make myself heard, I shall feel it a pleasure to occupy a little time this afternoon, accorded to me by my brethren.

JD 24:65 – p.66, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883

I feel to express unto my heavenly Father, and to my brethren and the people, my gratitude for their prayers and faith for the blessings of God to me in permitting me to appear before you on this occasion, and to feel the degree of health and strength which is vouchsafed to me, thus enabling me to continue my efforts and labors with my brethren and the people of God. For some two or three months my health has not been of such a nature that I could labor with the satisfaction which has attended me heretofore; and I fully realize what Elder Woodruff said this morning concerning the aged Elders of Israel passing away, and that the responsibility and labor of bearing off this kingdom will soon rest upon the generation which is growing up in our midst, upon which will devolve the work of carrying the Gospel to those who have not heard it among the nations of the earth, and gathering Israel and establishing Zion and building up and maintaining the Kingdom of our God upon the earth, which must be done through faith, by righteousness, and by defending and maintaining the rights of man and the liberty and freedom which God has ordained for the welfare of all flesh, for the protection and blessing of the human family, and which it has been His purpose to establish and maintain upon this American Continent. Latter-day Saints, especially those who have grown up with this people, as I have done from my childhood, and witnessed the manifestations of the overruling providence of God in guiding the destinies of this people, inspiring His servants who have led and directed the movements of this great people, and in defending them and fighting their battles by the sword of His Spirit, and the invisible power that have labored with us and for us – I say to those who are able to see and comprehend these things, it is clear and plain that God has had His eye upon this American continent as the place where He first commenced His great work on the earth, where the greatest manifestations of His power were exhibited in the days of the fathers before the flood, when the fathers were gathered in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman and received their last instructions and blessings from Father Adam, the Patriarch of this earth, and where Enoch gathered his people and established Zion, and where Noah preached righteousness to the people and prepared the ark of safety, and where He has determined ultimately to establish His Zion and gather together His people, establish, maintain and defend His government and the Priesthood which he has revealed for the salvation of the human family, where He will bring again Zion that He has taken away, even the Zion of Enoch; for when He shall bring again Zion, says the Prophet, the Lord will appear in His glory. And He has long been laboring in His own marvelous manner among the nations of the earth, turning and overturning, to bring to pass His purposes and to gather together His elect; and He has moved upon the oppressed of many lands and climes – those who sought for enlarged freedom and liberty whose minds reached out for more light and more truth, and whose understandings were expanded – to gather upon this American continent, and implanted in the hearts of our fathers a love of freedom and liberty and equal rights. He led them through schools of oppression. They passed through many difficulties, and endured the rule of tyrants. They bore oppression and suffered until they learned how to appreciate freedom and liberty, and how to detest misrule, tyranny and oppression; they struggled to burst the shackles that bound the human soul; they struggled for freedom of thought, of speech, of action; they struggled unitedly to burst the bonds, to break the yoke, from off their necks; they vied with each other in this labor of love from north to south, from east to west, in all the colonies which were early planted upon this continent. The Lord guided their labors to a successful issue, resulting in freedom from the tyranny of the effete governments of the old world; He directed the combined efforts and labors of those men in consolidating the result of their labors and framing the system of government under which we are now permitted to live.

JD 24:66 – p.67, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883

[At this point part of the congregation moved from the body of the Tabernacle to the gallery causing a stay in the proceedings. Quietness having been obtained the speaker continued.]

JD 24:67, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883

I was saying that God our heavenly Father had moved upon the nations and sent out from the nations of the old world streams of emigration to the new world, who were panting for freedom and liberty, and who struggled to burst the bands with which they were bound, and the yoke from off their necks, and were striving to learn how to be free. And in penetrating the new world and its wilds, and in grappling with and overcoming the difficulties attending the forming of new settlements and planting colonies in the new world, they learned the value of freedom, and therefore studied to preserve it; and they labored to establish a form of government under which it might be maintained. In all these works and labors we discern an overruling providence, and manifestations of the mercy and loving kindness of God to His people, and the revelations of His Spirit imparted, to a greater or less degree, unto the wise and patriotic fathers of our country, who were thus enabled to unite upon the best form of government existing among men, or which, perhaps, ever has existed, unless it has been those which God himself directly revealed through the Patriarchs and Prophets of older times. But so far as any political organizations of government upon this earth, the Republican or Democratic form of government established in these United States – (the foundations of which were laid by our fathers over a hundred years ago), is the best calculated to promote the objects sought, and to maintain the rights of man, and the guarantees of religious and political freedom, of any form of government known to mankind. But that it or any other form, in this imperfect and sinful world, is altogether perfect is not to be expected, and therefore cannot endure for ever. But we regard the present form of government of this nation as embodying the greatest amount of virtue and principles best calculated to maintain and preserve the rights of man.

[JD 24:67, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883](#)

In the early history of this Church a revelation was given through the Prophet Joseph in which the people are commanded to observe the Constitutional laws of the land, and to uphold by their votes and sustain upright and honorable men to administer them [...] which also stated that He had inspired the fathers to establish this form of government for the good and benefit of man. I will read a few paragraphs found on the 342d page of the Doctrine and Covenants, new edition:

[JD 24:67, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883](#)

"And now, verily, I say unto you concerning the laws of the land, it is my will that my people should observe to do all things whatsoever I command them;

[JD 24:67, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883](#)

"And that the law of the land which is constitutional, supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges, belongs to all mankind, and is justifiable before me;

[JD 24:67, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883](#)

"Therefore I, the Lord, justify you and your brethren of my Church, in befriending that law which is the constitutional law of the land;

[JD 24:67, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883](#)

"And as pertaining to the law of man, whatsoever is more or less than these, cometh of evil.

[JD 24:67, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883](#)

"I, the Lord God, make you free, therefore ye are free indeed; and the law also maketh you free.

[JD 24:67, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883](#)

"Nevertheless, when the wicked rule the people mourn.

"Wherefore, honest men, and wise men should be sought for diligently, and good men and wise men ye should observe to uphold; otherwise whatsoever is less than these cometh of evil."

JD 24:68, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883

I deem it of much importance that these principles should be well understood and thoroughly impressed upon the minds of the Latter-day Saints throughout the world, and especially those dwelling upon this American Continent and within the pale of this government, that they may implant in the hearts of our children a love of freedom and human rights, and a desire to preserve them, and to aid in maintaining a defending them in all lawful and proper ways; and to study the constitutional laws of the land, and make others acquainted with them; knowing the principles contained therein, and of learning how to apply them to ourselves, to our children, and to our fellowmen who are willing to be governed thereby; study them that we may also learn how to use them in suppressing tyranny, misrule and other evils that affect mankind; for God has ordained this form of government in this age of the world, and has chosen His own instruments to further His great purposes on the earth – the organization of his Church, the proclamation of the everlasting Gospel, the establishment of His Zion, and bringing to pass His wonderful works which He predicted by the mouths of the ancient Prophets. And this political system and order of government is a power in His hands established, preserved and defended thus far by Him, which He will continue to use as long as the people are worthy of it, as long as they will maintain their integrity, uprightness and virtue; and at no time will the Latter-day Saints, as a people, ever stand approved before God in violating those principles or slackening their efforts to maintain and defend them. They are closely allied to the teachings of the ancient Prophets and Apostles, to the doctrines, practices and teachings of the Savior and His disciples, and they are the best means and aids of extending and promoting those principles on the earth. Whatever some may have thought of the mal-administration in our government and of the efforts of individuals and sometimes of large faction, to abridge the rights of the people, and of their blind zeal and efforts to reach the Latter-day Saints, and to stamp out the religion we profess – whatever may have been thought of the efforts of such individuals, cliques, or factions, and of their warfare trample under foot constitutional provisions of our Government – undermine the foundations upon which it rests – we must never in our feelings charge any of these things to this system of government, or to the principles enunciated in the Constitution, which we are commanded to observe and keep. We must charge it always where it belongs – to the bigotry, the ignorance, the selfishness, ambition and blind zeal of ignorant and corrupt politicians, their aiders and abettors, and all this should only serve to make us try more earnestly, anxiously and faithfully to combat such efforts upon constitutional grounds, calling upon God to help us therein.

JD 24:68 – p.69 – p.70, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883

We were told this morning by Brother Woodruff – quoting the word of the Lord given through the Prophet Joseph Smith concerning the promises He has made to His people – that inasmuch as we will be true to ourselves, true to God, true to our covenants and to our holy religion, that He will fight our battles, defend and maintain our cause, make it triumph and flourish, so that the wicked shall have no power to prevail against us. These promises have often been repeated to us, and last October we had a renewal of this assurance and this promise in the word of the Lord given unto us through His servant President John Taylor, and at a time and period, too, when many in our midst were weakening and their knees were beginning to tremble a little, and there were others who were inclined to falter and doubt, and fear was upon some. Our enemies – especially the bigot, the hypocrite, the demagogue, the political quacks of the country – rejoiced, thinking that they were succeeding in their efforts to weave webs around us, to forge fetters for our feet and yokes to place upon our necks, and to lash us into obedience to them. But the great majority of the Latter-day Saints were calm in their feelings as a summer's morning, trusting as they have ever done in the promises of God, inspired with faith and hope in his overruling providence; and while we were doing what we might do properly under the Constitution and institutions of our country for the maintenance of our freedom and liberty, leaving the rest with God, exercising faith in His promises, continuing to pray for His blessing to attend our efforts and to

hedge up the ways of our enemies, yet we have waited calmly for the result of the promises of God, and the answer to our prayers and the fulfillment of those things that have been spoken to us; and how signally have we seen them fulfilled. We have seen the very means which the enemies of this people have devised and intended for their enslavement become before us as chaff, as thorns crackling under the pot, as a broken yoke to be used to kindle the fires of freedom and liberty. In former times the efforts that have been made in Congress and out of Congress to press the representatives of the people to hostile and unconstitutional legislation as a means to help religious bigots to suppress the doctrines of Christ, the ordinances of life and salvation, the rule and reign of righteousness among the people of God – I say, in their efforts to reach our religious principles and faith, and the exercise of those principles under that faith, and to crush it out from the earth – in their efforts to do so, they have moved upon statesmen to violate the Constitution of our country and the principles of human freedom on which our government has been founded in order to accomplish this purpose. But all those who have thus stultified themselves before the world, and before the heavens, and have done violence to their oath of office and to the Constitution, to the rights of man, and to the principles of freedom and liberty, have weakened, have gone down, the sceptre of their power has fallen from their grasp, they have been dishonored before the heavens and before their people as a rule, and sooner or later we will witness others going down into the pit of forgetfulness as their predecessors have done. For the Lord has decreed it. And to-day the young men of Israel who are assembling in their Improvement Associations in all the Stakes of Zion, in all the Wards and settlements of the people throughout the land, and in their quorum meetings, and in their political assemblies, are all learning and cultivating these principles of liberty in their minds, introducing and extending them among the rising generation, the sons of Zion, and not only the sons, but the daughters that are coupled with the sons, the wives that are coupled with the husbands, in this labor of love, the struggle for the maintenance of freedom and liberty. It is a source of satisfaction to me that the Lord has moved upon His servants and the Legislature of our Territory to be among the first to lead the van of human progress in the extension of the elective franchise to women as well as men, and to recognize the freedom and liberty which belongs to the fairer sex as well as the sterner; for the Gospel teaches that all things are to be done among us by common consent, and the Prophet Joseph commanded and introduced in our midst the custom we are following to-day, that of presenting to all the congregations of Israel, at our General Conferences, and our local or Stake Conferences, the General Authorities of the Church, to be justified or condemned by the voice of the people, to be upheld and sustained by the confidence, faith and prayers of the people; or otherwise to be reproved by the votes of the people for the misdeeds or mal-administration. These are things continually before the people, as well as the revelations which God has given unto us, and which are written and taught in our Sabbath schools and public gatherings, and to all who come within the scope of these instructions, viz., a love of freedom and liberty.

JD 24:70, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883

The leaders of this people are charged with being blind, leaders of the blind; and the people are charged with being blind, led by the blind. I deny the charge and brand it false. We know and understand perfectly that our leaders are neither blind nor are the people blind. On the contrary, we have received the light, the light of truth, the light of God. We have come to the understanding that every soul of man, both male and female, high and low, is the offspring of God, that their spirits are immortal, eternal, intelligent beings, and that their entity depends upon their agency and independent action, which is neither trammelled by God himself nor allowed to be restrained by any of His creatures with His sanction and approval; that the whole theory of God's rule and government in heaven and on earth is founded upon this principle of agency – self, independent action. And it is upon the free and independent exercise of this agency that the decree of God is founded, that all men shall be judged according to the deeds done in the body, none having it in his power to say that he was not at liberty to exercise this agency untrammelled.

JD 24:70 – p.71, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883

So far as relates to the administration of government and the exercise of political power, or the exercise of any manner of influence – political, religious or social – every man and every woman will be held accountable to God for the manner in which they exercise it. Kings and emperors, presidents and statesmen, judges and all

officers of the law, will be held responsible for the administration of the power reposed in them. And if, while acting officially, they disregard their oath of office and violate the principles that should govern them, they become guilty of mal-administration, and will be held accountable unto God, and should be strictly accountable to the people who place them in power. But every individual capacity, will be held answerable to God for all his acts of whatsoever character, and so far as, in the exercise of that agency, men trespass upon the rights of their fellow-men they must be held answerable to their fellow-men for such trespass and wrong. And for this purpose human government is instituted, approved by the people, to hold each other responsible unto each other or unto the community, for the abuse of their freedom and liberty, and for this purpose laws are enacted and judges provided to judge according to the law, and to administer the law when it becomes necessary to punish transgressors. And God has commanded us in the revelation which He gave to us, that in case Church members violate a law of the land, they shall be delivered up to be dealt with according to the law of the land; that if they shall murder, rob or steal, or commit perjury or any other crime of which the law of the land takes cognizance, they shall be delivered up to be dealt with for their offence. But that for all manner of iniquity they shall be delivered up to the law of God to be dealt with according to the law of God; and those laws which are given unto you, as the laws of God, for your government in the Church must be treated as such. And it becomes our duty as good Saints, as those that are bound together by the ties and in the fellowship of the Gospel, as those that have covenanted to serve God and to keep his commandments, to work righteously and to deal justly one with another, that if we violate the principles of the Gospel and the laws which God has given unto us, that we shall be delivered up to the judges in Israel, and the Teachers shall labor with such, and their labors of love shall be directed earnestly to the reformation and repentance of all persons that have done wrong and done violence to the feelings, faith and fellowship of their brethren and sisters. And for every manner of sin shall they be held accountable unto the Councils of the Church, to the Bishops who are common judges in Israel; and to the High Councils. And though we may succeed in winning them to repentance, and they turn away from evil and will do so no more, and succeed in eliciting the sympathy and forgiveness of their brethren, still, if they have violated a law of the land, they must be made subject to that law, and to endure the penalty. And if they pay the penalty with patience, which is but the legitimate fruits and testimony of genuine repentance, satisfying all that they appreciate their wrong and determine to do so no more, when the penalty is paid, they may with renewed determination begin to serve their God, and prove to their brethren that their repentance was genuine and sincere. And although we are required to forgive whomsoever He will, because he searches all hearts and knows, as we cannot know, how far their repentance is genuine, and how far they ought to be forgiven.

[JD 24:71, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883](#)

It is important that we as Latter-day Saints, understand what God requires of us towards each other in the Church of Christ, and also what He requires of us towards the State. For the constitutional laws of the land are for the protection of the rights of all flesh; the liberties of Saints as well as those of sinners. And if sinners can afford to dishonor the law, surely Saints cannot, neither can they justify others in so doing; neither can Saints afford to override the laws of God, or to wink at others who may do so.

[JD 24:71 – p.72, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883](#)

God will not hold us faultless if we do. He requires us as Elders, as Apostles, as Presidents, as Bishops, as Seventies, as parents, to teach (wherever it is our prerogative and duty,) correct principles, and observe them ourselves and seek to enforce them upon others. And it is not alone the duty of High Councils and Presidents of Stakes, and of Bishops and their Counselors to labor to correct the errors of the people, but it is the duty of every Elder, High Priest and Seventy – and especially the Priests, Teachers and Deacons that are appointed and called to be standing ministers in the Church, to visit the house of each member and become familiar with every family, and every individual member of the family, and their daily walk and life and conversation; and ascertain whether they are living as Saints should live; whether the heads of families preside in righteousness in their houses; whether their houses are set in order; whether they have an altar erected whereon are offered up their daily, morning and evening devotions; whether every member is taught to reverence and respect that altar; whether each individual prays in secret as well as responds to the calls made upon him to pray in the

family circle and in public; whether each one that has enrolled himself in a quorum attends his quorum meetings and is obedient to the President of his quorum, his counsels and instructions; and if they are enrolled in the Mutual Improvement Associations, whether they sustain that institution and the leaders thereof, and are performing well their part; whether the parents are faithful in sending their children to Sunday school and to other institutions of learning; whether they teach their children to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, etc. These are duties and obligations that we cannot ignore, that God will not justify us in neglecting, and those who are called to bear a part of the Holy Priesthood cannot be justified if they neglect all these duties, or any portion of them; for the Lord has said, "blessed are they who hear my sayings and shall keep them all, for the same shall be great in the kingdom of heaven; but if any one shall fail or neglect to observe and keep the least of these my sayings and teach others to do so, the same shall be least in the kingdom of heaven." For the Lord is not to be mocked; and though we may excuse ourselves in many ways for carelessness and neglect, and we may supplicate for forgiveness, as we are in duty bound to do for all our transgressions and shortcomings, yet we cannot in any wise plead justification, or suppose that God will justify us, for He has said He cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance, and yet He showeth mercy and kindness unto thousands of those who repent and seek to turn away from their follies.

JD 24:72 – p.73, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883

Over fifty years have passed away since the light of the glorious Gospel in its fullness began to dawn upon us, and still we are measurably walking in darkness. Yet the Lord has said that we are the only people and the only church – speaking as a whole – upon the face of the earth with which He is well pleased. As a whole we are the best people He can find. He has sent out His word throughout the earth. He has sent His servants abroad carrying, as it were, a torch in their hand – the light of the Gospel, inviting all to come to it, that as many as love the light may see it and follow it as one would follow a light in a dark place, or until the dawn of day. The Holy Spirit has been upon His servants and in the gathering together of this people. It is the Holy Ghost that has moved upon the people in the islands of the sea, in all the different nations of Europe, in the various parts of America, and in all lands where the light of the Gospel has been carried and the testimony of Jesus has been sounded. It is the testimony of the Spirit from on high bearing witness to and moving upon the hearts of the people that has drawn them into the light of truth and that has gathered them together with the Church of Jesus Christ. It was not worldly prospects held out before them that induced them to gather. I speak now of the people as a whole and not individually; for there may be individuals who have been influenced by worldly considerations, by personal, selfish motives. But all such, sooner or later, get their eyes open and see their folly and sin and wickedness, and repent, or they are purged out from among the Latter-day Saints. They apostatize, they turn away from us; they go back into Babylon, and they strike hands with our enemies and fight against God, and go down into perdition; for none can remain and continue to stand among the Saints of God, and hold fast to the principles of the Gospel, and enter into life only on the pure principles of virtue, integrity and righteousness, as we heard this morning, and as we are told by the Lord in certain revelations to the Church, namely, that the powers of the Priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and the powers of heaven can in no wise be used except on the principles of righteousness. And no man or woman can continue long in sin in the midst of the Saints, where the Gospel is preached in power, and where those who minister, do so in the power of their Priesthood and by the Holy Ghost, without being purged out from their midst. For that spirit will reveal and make manifest what sort they are. If the law of the Lord is properly administered among them and they are found violating it they will be judged according to the law of the Lord, and be separated from the Saints. And although we do not look for entire separation of the sheep from the goats, of the tares from the wheat, until the Great Judge Himself shall come to complete the separation, it is nevertheless expected that all men who act as judges in Israel should be helps in separating the sheep from the goats, the tares from the wheat, as fast as they are made manifest, and the tares may be plucked up without destroying the wheat; and it becomes our duty to do it. But He enjoins us to be wise lest we in our zeal and anxiety destroy or pluck up some of the wheat that may be growing under the shade of the tare, whose roots may be intermingled with it. We must therefore be prudent. It is better in some instances to allow the tare to remain until its character be more fully developed and made manifest, until it can be plucked up without endangering the wheat.

I testify unto all Israel, and unto all the world, that God has called us, and required us to observe and practice these things; and that it is not the work of man, and that the institutions of this Church are not the institutions of man. And when we speak of the institutions of our common country, we say in the main, though God has used man in instituting this form of government, and in establishing its institutions and maintaining freedom upon this land, they are nevertheless the institutions of heaven; and God has revealed unto us that He did establish them by the hands of wise men, whom He raised up for that special purpose, and redeemed the land by the shedding of blood. It is therefore part of His great work, as much so as the part of revealing the keys of the Priesthood to Joseph, and the ordinances thereof, for the salvation of His people. For the political organization upon the land was designed by heaven to be a protection to the righteous. "But," says one, "is it not designed to protect the wicked?" No, not in wicked acts, but in their freedom and liberty, to think and to speak and to act, and to choose for themselves; for in those rights all must be protected. God has always protected them, both in heaven and on earth. And he designed that all men should protect one another, and if necessary be united for the protection and welfare of all flesh. Not that the laws of the land or the laws of God will protect the wicked in doing wickedly, but on the contrary, will condemn and judge them. They are left to choose for themselves their course of life in exercising their agency in all things pertaining to themselves and the service of their God, and to use freedom and liberty in doing good, that which is right; but there is no such thing as liberty to do wrong and be justified in that wrong, neither on earth nor in heaven, neither by the laws of God, nor the just laws of man.

Now, the Supreme Court of the United States, in its great zeal to establish and maintain monogamy upon this American continent, and to strike a blow at the patriarchal order of marriage, believed in by the Latter-day Saints, in its decision in the Reynolds' case announced the doctrine that religion consists in thought and matters of faith and concerning matters of faith, and not actions, and the government is restrained by the terms of the Constitution from any efforts to curtail this freedom and liberty. Wonderful doctrine! A wonderful strain of judicial thought to announce to the world, this wonderful doctrine that the government should not attempt to restrain the exercise of thought, or the exercise of faith! I would like somebody, that knows how to defend this doctrine, to tell me how any one man, or any set of men on the earth could go to work and catch a thought and chain it up and imprison it, or stop its flight, or root it out of the heart, or restrain it, or do away with it. Let them go to and try to chain the lightning, stop the sun from shining, stop the rains from descending and the mist from arising from the ocean, and when they have done this, they may talk about restraining men's faith, and exercising control over the thoughts and faith of the people. The fathers who framed our Constitution were not such dunces, I am happy to say, as Attorney-General Devens, who put that nonsensical language and doctrine into the mouths of the chief justices of the Supreme Court of the United States – the fathers who framed our Constitution, I say, were not such dunces, they did not attempt to place constitutional restrictions upon the law-making power from any effort at making law for the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. And the exercise of religion implies something more than mere faith and thought. I may think about being baptized for the remission of my sins, I may believe it is right I should do it, I may be convinced that God has required it of me, and I may think I ought to do it, and think I will; but all this faith and all this thought don't amount to as much as you can put in your eye, until I arise and go forth to be baptized, and when I do this, then I exercise the faith which is in me, and it produces the works. This principle may be equally true of everything else pertaining to the exercise of religion. I may believe it is right for me to be enrolled with a religious community that meets to worship, and I may believe it is right and a religious duty to meet with them from time to time to celebrate the supper of the Lord and partake of bread and wine, and when I partake of the bread and of the wine in commemoration of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, it is but the exercise of that faith which is in me. I may believe that God meant what he said when he gave that general commandments to His children to multiply and replenish the earth, and I may think about it; but it is my duty, if I want to raise potatoes, to plant the seed; if I desire to raise fruit I must go to and plant the fruit trees; if I desire to cultivate the earth I must use the proper means necessary to cultivate and improve it before I can gather the fruits of it. And then to do the other thing, to form a union as God has enjoined in the

holy bond of matrimony, we must enter into that bond for the purpose of multiplying our species and thus bring forth the fruits of our bodies. I may believe this doctrine, as contained in the revelations of God; but what will this amount to unless I exercise myself in it. I shall remain a bachelor, worse than a hermit – a parasite in the commonwealth – unless I rise up and put my faith in practice and exercise myself in my religious belief.

JD 24:75 – p.76, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883

I say also, when the time comes that God sees in the midst of His people an increase of the female element, and the wicked ready to devour that element and appropriate it not in the way to "multiply and replenish the earth," but for the gratification of fleshly lust, and will actually take and employ hellish means to prevent the increase of their species, and show that they are not only beneath the brute, but beneath the vegetable creation, by refusing to bear fruit, thereby placing themselves in the category of the trees that are dried up, fit only to be cast into the fire, he can take measures to counteract this evil. And I say before God, angels and men, that every man and woman who joins in unholy wedlock for the gratification of fleshly lust, and studiously plan to frustrate the command of God in the multiplication of their species, show that they are unworthy – what shall I say? – unworthy to be classed among the honorable of the earth. And we have reason to believe that many have done, and are to-day, in the great cities of Babylon, taking steps to destroy their own offspring, committing infanticide and foeticide, all of whom, and their aiders and abettors, are but ripening for the damnation of hell. And when God sees this damnable doctrine taught, and taught by such men as Mr. Henry Ward Beecher and other modern divines falsely so-called, who teach the world that it is a positive evil to multiply and increase so greatly in the land – when such doctrine is taught by leading lights, and so readily accepted by the masses, the Lord says, the time has come for Him to take measures to counteract this great evil, by introducing laws in the midst of those who fear Him and work righteousness and live according to the principles of life; men who are upright, honest and faithful, men who are willing to assume the responsibility; to take the daughters of Eve to wife and multiply and replenish the earth, for those men are unworthy of them. It is as Jesus said concerning the man who hid it in a napkin; he laid it carefully away, and by and by brought it out, saying, here it is as I received it, not having increased at all; in other words, we are just where we were when we started. Another one says I received two talents; and have increased to four, another says I received five talents, and now have ten: the master says to the one who hid his talent, who perhaps laid it carefully away and kept it nice, watching over it with the greatest care; or in other words, to him who did not multiply and increase, but on the contrary took pains to avoid doing so, "Take from him that which he seems to have and give to him that has ten; for he that has and improves upon that which he receives, shall receive more abundantly.

JD 24:76, Erastus Snow, April 6, 1883

May God bless and keep us in the way in which He can sustain and defend us, and lead us onward, as He has done hitherto, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH,

Delivered at the Funeral Services of the late James Urie,



in the Sixteenth Ward, Salt Lake City, February 2d, 1883.

CONSOLATION WHICH THE BEREAVED HAVE – OTHER CALAMITIES WORSE THAN  
DEATH – EFFECTS OF SIN – WHAT IS TO BE GAINED BY FAITHFULNESS – HOW ALL  
WILL BE JUDGED – THE RESURRECTION – PROOFS OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION – THE  
SPEAKER'S TESTIMONY.

[JD 24:76 – p.77, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883](#)

It is a very difficult matter to say anything at a time of sorrow and bereavement like the present that will give immediate relief to the sorrowing hearts of those who mourn. Such griefs can only be fully relieved by the lapse of time and the influence of the good spirit upon the hearts of those that mourn, by which they can obtain comfort and satisfaction in their hopes of the future. For the loss of a father or mother in the family there is no adequate reparation; no remedy in this world which will supply such a loss, and about the only consolation we have is in the hope that we may so live that we may be permitted to meet again with our beloved, faithful and true friends who go before, or who come after us, and enjoy their society once more in another sphere or state, which will be immortal. If we can only be satisfied in our minds by the witness of the good spirit, to know that the course we pursue in this life is such a will secure to us this privilege, then, in this reflection there is a degree of comfort and satisfaction, if not of joy, notwithstanding our separation, in time, from those that we have loved and cherished, for although they are gone from us, we know we shall meet them again in a better and more enduring sphere. I remember my feelings when first called upon to part with one of my children – my first born. It seemed to me to be an irreparable loss – a calamity, and if I had not restrained my feelings I should have felt that it was cruel for the Lord to suffer one so bright, so pure and innocent to be taken away by the hand of death, after remaining with us just long enough to become the joy of our hearts and the light of our home. Indeed it was a severe trial of our feelings to part with one who seemed so indispensable to our happiness, and for a time it seemed that the substance of our joy and hope had fled forever; but I have learned that there are a great many things which are far worse than death. With my present feelings and views and the understanding that I have of life and death I would far rather follow every child I have to the grave in their innocence and purity, than to see them grow up to man and womanhood and degrade themselves by the pernicious practices of the world, forget the Gospel, forget God and the plan of life and salvation, and turn away from the only hope of eternal reward and exaltation in the world to come.

[JD 24:77, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883](#)

Far better, in my judgment, follow them to their graves before they have commenced such fearful acts, or fall into such fearful errors. I would rather a thousand times die while I have the faith of the Gospel in my heart and the hope of eternal life within me, with the prospect of becoming worthy of inheriting a crown of eternal life which is the greatest gift of God unto man, than to live in possession of all the world affords and lose that gift.

[JD 24:77, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883](#)

It would be far better for me and my whole family to die in the faith than to live and deny it and bring shame, disgrace and ruin upon us for ever.

[JD 24:77, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883](#)

The Gospel has been revealed to us in this dispensation. The revelation of the Gospel is a reality; there is no fiction about it. It is a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. The plan of salvation has been revealed for the redemption of the world. Shall we deny it after we have become acquainted with its glorious truths?

No person can turn away from the truth into darkness and error and into "by and forbidden paths," and continue in that course without forfeiting all claim to the blessings and privileges of the first resurrection.

JD 24:77 – p.78, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883

If the truth had not been revealed to the world and mankind had been left in ignorance in relation to these principles, it would have been a very different thing; there would have been some excuse for them; but the fact that light has come into the world, that the truth has been revealed and the way of salvation marked out and made plain and simple for all to walk in it, makes it absolutely necessary for all to come to the knowledge of the truth, to walk circumspectly, and to keep the commandments which the Lord has given. It would be immeasurably better for us to lay down our bodies now, in the faith of the Gospel, than to live to ripe old age and turn away from it, thereby forfeiting our claim upon eternal life.

JD 24:78, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883

If we live and turn away from the truth we will be separated throughout the countless ages of eternity from the society of those we love. We will have no claim upon them, and they will have no claim upon us. There will be an impassable gulf between us over which we can not pass, one to the other. If we die in the faith, having lived righteous lives, we are Christ's, we have the assurance of eternal reward, being in possession of the principles of eternal truth and shall be clothed with glory, immortality and eternal lives. While we sojourn in the flesh we pass a great portion of our life in sorrow; death separates us for a short time, some of us pass behind the veil, but the time will come when we will meet with those who have gone, and enjoy each other's society forever. The separation is but for a moment as it were. No power can separate us then. God having joined us together we have a claim upon each other – an undeniable claim – inasmuch as we have been united by the power of the priesthood in the Gospel of Christ. Therefore it is better to be separated in this life for a little season, although we have to pass through deprivation, sorrow, trouble, toil, widowhood, orphanage, and many other vicissitudes, than to be separated for all eternity. By complying with the principles of the Gospel we become heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. The anticipation of these great privileges brings happiness to us now, and strengthens our hopes of exaltation and eternal reward in the kingdom of God hereafter. No other power but that of God, through the knowledge of truth, can give such enjoyment, peace of mind, consolation and happiness to the sorrowing hearts of mortals. The Gospel has been revealed for the salvation and exaltation of the children of men, and if they would only receive it, it would bring, finally, unalloyed and perfect happiness to all, even a "fullness of joy."

JD 24:78 – p.79, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883

Let us look into the future. We should not brood over the hardships which we have passed through. This is a world of sorrow, of care, of probation; a world of disappointment, anxiety and toil. We find it as it is, and many of us help to make it no better. When God organized the world, he pronounced it good, but men have transgressed the laws and departed from the paths of life. Mankind do not live by principles of justice, truth, righteousness and equality. They are violators of the law, and will come under its condemnation. I am sorry to say that mankind bring evil and therefore suffering upon themselves. Men rise up and oppress their neighbors. Many take delight in oppressing their fellow creatures, and they do it because they have not the Spirit of God or the love of the Gospel in their hearts. They hate justice and righteousness and are strangers to mercy, because they know not God nor His law, nor comprehend the results of their own acts. Whereas, if they were imbued with the good spirit, they would comfort and elevate those by whom they are surrounded. Were men to use properly the blessings which God has given them for the good of all mankind, we would soon see the effects in the amelioration of the world; but many are so fallen and degraded that they care nothing for themselves nor for anybody else.

JD 24:79, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883

Many are lovers of pleasure and lust more than lovers of God. They delight in the lusts of the flesh, the gratification of their appetites, having virulent desires, living in corruption, debauchery, revelry and all manner of wickedness. Many people do not know how to be happy, not knowing how to use the blessings that God has given unto them. If they had all the world, they would use it for the gratification of their own base passions and desires, to their own destruction. But if they possessed the right spirit, they would seek to promote the peace and happiness of mankind and extend the influence of the Gospel of light and truth to all the world. They would love purity, virtue, honesty, sobriety and righteousness. We should use the blessings that we receive to the glory of the Lord. We should comfort the mourner and provide for those who are in need. If we were to use the blessings that God has given unto us to His honor and glory, all would be happy; but we do not all see nor do alike. Inasmuch as we do not use our gifts or talents that are given unto us of God for the elevation of mankind, we know too well the sad results. They are misery and ruin for time, and perhaps for all eternity.

[JD 24:79, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883](#)

Every man will have to render an account of his stewardship, and every one of us will be held responsible for his own works, whether good or evil. We will be judged for the deeds done in the flesh; if they have been evil we will have to pay the penalty and satisfy justice and the demands of a broken law. Those that have sinned against the Holy Ghost will have no redemption. All will be saved with this exception, and come out of the "prison" and be exalted and receive a reward and an inheritance in the mansions prepared for them in the house of God. God does not judge men as we do, nor look upon them in the same light that we do. He knows our imperfections – all the causes, the "whys and wherefores" are made manifest unto Him. He judges us by our acts and the intents of our hearts. His judgments will be true, just and righteous; ours are obscured by the imperfections of man. We are required to obey the laws of God revealed unto us in the Gospel. It is for Sister Urie and her little ones to comply with these laws throughout their lives. It is for the widow and the fatherless to live to the principles of the Gospel, be faithful and keep the covenants they have made. If they do this, they will be exalted in His kingdom, and they will receive all that their hearts can rightfully desire. They will receive the reward, if they are faithful, and will lose nothing. God will not suffer the righteous to be deprived of the blessings they justly merit; they will gain their exaltation. No eye hath seen, no ear heard, neither can the heart of man conceive of the glory and exaltation that is laid up in store for the faithful.

[JD 24:79 – p.80, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883](#)

This is my testimony in relation to this matter. I have known Brother Urie for quite a number of years; he was a man who had a good heart; he was a friend to mankind, so far as it lay in his power to be, which he has proved by many acts of kindness to his fellow man. He has acted sometimes unwisely towards himself and family. I am sorry to say this, but we can not ignore the fact, it is too well known. I do not believe that he has injured any individual but himself and family. They will forgive him, we will forgive him, and I trust God will forgive him for this folly. I do not believe that he would have harmed a hair of any man upon earth, or raised a finger to injure any one. He has befriended the cause of Zion and the Elders of Israel. He will receive his reward if he has been true to his covenants with God. I do not believe for a moment that he forsook them or ever denied the faith. He will answer for the wrong which he has committed against himself and family. God will not forsake him, inasmuch as he forsook Him not and was true to Him, and he will be preserved, but he will have to suffer the consequence of his folly and pay the debt. This I will say, if I had the power, as a savior upon Mount Zion, I would forgive him, and nothing would give me more joy and pleasure than to administer reclamation, salvation and exaltation to Brother Urie.

[JD 24:80, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883](#)

Let us obey our religion. Keep the commands of God, and bring up our children in the way of life and salvation, teach them the principles of the Gospel, to be virtuous, honest and pure, that they may lead pure and holy lives and cleave to the faith, that they may all come off victorious and receive the crown and the blessing of endless lives. Bishop Kesler was saying that we are mortal beings. It is true all of us are clothed with

mortality, but our spirits existed long before they took upon them this tabernacle that we now inhabit. When this body dies, the spirit does not die. The spirit is an immortal being, and when separated from the body takes its flight to the place prepared for it, and there awaits the resurrection of the body, when the spirit will return again and re-occupy this tabernacle which it occupied in this world.

JD 24:80 – p.81, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883

This great and glorious principle of the resurrection is no longer a theory as some think, but it is an accomplished fact which has been demonstrated beyond all successful contradiction, doubt or controversy. Job, who lived before the resurrection of Christ, possessing the spirit of prophecy, looked forward to the time of the resurrection. He comprehended the fact. He understood the principle and knew the power and design of God to bring it to pass, and predicted its accomplishment. He declares: – "I know that my Redeemer liveth and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth;" he further says, "and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." He looked forward to something not yet done, something which had never been done in this world before his day. It was not accomplished till long after this time. Having received the spirit of the Gospel and of revelation, he was enabled to look down into unborn time and see his body which had mouldered and crumbled into dust raised from the dead. What we saw by the eye of faith has become actual history unto us, and we possess not only the history of the fact but a knowledge by the testimony of the Holy Ghost of its truth. We are not therefore situated as Job was, we live in the "latter times which are pregnant with grand and glorious events, among the greatest of which is this glorious principle of the resurrection of the dead, which is no longer a mere prediction, a cherished hope, or a prophetic promise, but a reality; for long before our day it has actually been accomplished. Christ Himself burst the barriers of the tomb, conquered death and the grave and came forth "the first fruits of them that slept." But says one, how can we know that Jesus was put to death or resurrected? We have plenty of evidence to show that Jesus was crucified and resurrected. We have the testimony of His disciples and they produce irrefutable evidence that they did see Him crucified, and witnessed the wounds of the nails and spear which He received on the cross. They also testify that His body was laid away in a sepulchre wherein no man had lain and they rolled a great stone to the door and departed.

JD 24:81, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883

Now the chief priests and Pharisees were not satisfied with the crucifixion and burial of our Lord and Savior, they remembered that while living He had said that after three days He would rise again, so they established a strong guard to protect the sepulchre and set a seal upon the stone lest His disciples should come by night and steal the body away and say unto the people, "He is risen from the dead," and thus perpetrate a fraud upon the world.

JD 24:81, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883

Lo and behold! by this act those unbelieving guards became actual witnesses to the fact that a heavenly personage came and rolled away the stone and that Jesus came forth. The disciples witness and testify to the resurrection, and their testimony can not be impeached. It therefore stands good, and is true and faithful.

JD 24:81, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883

But is this the only evidence we have to depend on? Have we nothing but the testimony of the ancient disciples to rest our hopes upon? Thank God we have more. And the additional evidence which we possess enables us to become witnesses to the truth of the testimony of the ancient disciples. We go to the Book of Mormon; it testifies of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in plain and unmistakable terms; we may go to the book of Doctrine and Covenants containing the revelations of this dispensation, and we shall find clear and well-defined evidence there. We have the testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith, the testimony of Oliver Cowdery, and the testimony of Sidney Rigdon, that they saw the Lord Jesus – the same that was crucified in Jerusalem – and that He revealed Himself unto them. Joseph and Sidney testify to it, as follows: –

"We, Joseph Smith, Jr., and Sidney Rigdon, being in the spirit of the sixteenth of February, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-two, by the power of the spirit our eyes were opened and our understandings were enlightened, so as to understand the things of God – even those things which were from the beginning before the world was, which were ordained of the Father, through His Only Begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, even from the beginning, of whom we bear record, and the record which we bear is the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who is the Son whom we saw and with whom we conversed in the heavenly vision." (Doc. and Cov., sec. 76, verses 11–14.) They were called to be special witnesses of Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection.

JD 24:81 – p.82, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883

We have also the testimony of the ancient disciples who lived on this continent of the crucifixion and resurrection. You will find their testimony recorded in the Book of Mormon. The disciples who lived upon this continent knew what transpired at Jerusalem; the Lord shewed them these things. After His resurrection He manifested Himself to His disciples on this continent, and shewed them the wounds He had received on Calvary. They were convinced that Jesus was the Christ and the Redeemer of the world. They beheld Him in the flesh and they bear witness of it, and their testimony is true. We have the testimony of many witnesses. We have the testimony of eleven special witnesses to the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon, which book testifies of Christ's resurrection, containing as it does the records of the ancient prophets and disciples of Christ on this continent, thus confirming their testimonies.

JD 24:82, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883

Is it all the evidence we have? No. Joseph Smith boldly declared to the world that if mankind would sincerely repent of their sins and be baptized by authority they should not only receive a remission of their sins, but, by the laying on of hands, they should receive the Holy Ghost, and should know of the doctrine for themselves. Thus all who obey the law and abide in the truth become witnesses of this and other equally great and precious truths. To-day there are thousands of Latter-day Saints living in Utah and throughout the world who have attained to the possession of these things, both men and women. If we witness by our acts, and from our hearts our determination to carry out the mind and will of the Lord we shall have this double assurance of a glorious resurrection, and be able to say as the Prophet Job said – his was a glorious declaration – "For I know that my Redeemer liveth and that He shall (again) stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Thousands have received this testimony and can witness unto God and testify from their hearts that they know these things.

JD 24:82, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883

I bear my testimony, and surely it is of as much force and effect, if it be true, as the testimony of Job, the testimonies of the disciples at Jerusalem, the disciples on this continent, of Joseph Smith, or any other man that told the truth. All are of equal force and binding on the world. If no man had ever testified to these things upon the face of the globe, I want to say as a servant of God, independent off the testimonies of all men and of every book that has been written, that I have received the witness of the Spirit in my own heart, and I testify before God, angels and men, without fear of the consequences that I know that my Redeemer lives, and I shall see him face to face, and stand with Him in my resurrected body upon this earth, if I am faithful; for God has revealed this unto me. I have received the witness, and I bear my testimony, and my testimony is true. The testimony of the Latter-day Saints is in addition to and consonant with that of the disciples of Jesus Christ who lived at Jerusalem, those who lived on this continent, the Prophet Joseph, Oliver, Sidney and others, of our crucified and risen Redeemer, because they received it not of them, but by the same spirit by which they received it. No man ever received this testimony unless the Spirit of God revealed it unto him.

We will see Brother Urie again. Sister Urie will meet him on the other side of the grave. The spirit and body will be re–united. We shall see each other in the flesh, in the same tabernacles that we have here while in mortality. Our tabernacles will be brought forth as they are laid down, although there will be a restoration effected; every organ, every limb that has been maimed, every deformity caused by accident or in any other way, will be restored and put right. Every limb and joint shall be restored to its proper frame. We will know each other and enjoy each other's society throughout the endless ages of eternity, if we keep the laws of God. It is for us to remain true and faithful and keep our covenants, and to train our children up in the paths of holiness, virtue and truth, in the principles of the Gospel, that we may with them be prepared to enjoy the perfect and eternal day.

JD 24:83, Joseph F. Smith, February 2d, 1883

May God bless you, and my earnest prayer is that the Lord will bless Sister Urie and her dear little ones in this bereavement; that He will preserve their lives, establish them firmly in the faith of the Gospel and in the love of the truth, that they may be worthy to come forth in the morning of the first resurrection, crowned with glory and eternal lives. I pronounce this blessing upon them, inasmuch as they live faithful, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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Charles W. Penrose, March 4th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY ELDER CHAS. W. PENROSE,

Delivered in the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, March 4th, 1883.

(Reported by Gibbs and Irvine.)

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST – CHURCHES OF MEN – CONFLICTING IDEAS – TRUE SOURCES  
OF LEARNING – ONENESS EXPLAINED – ONLY ONE TRUE RELIGION – "PROBATION AFTER  
DEATH" – IDEAS OF HELL CHANGING – DIFFERENT DEGREES OF GLORY – WORK FOR THE  
DEAD – COMPLETENESS AND SIMPLICITY OF THE GOSPEL.

JD 24:83, Charles W. Penrose, March 4th, 1883

Having been called upon this afternoon, to speak to this congregation, I earnestly desire that I may be so influenced by the spirit of truth that I may be able to bring forth such things as will be profitable for us to reflect upon. I feel that we are greatly blessed in being privileged to meet in this house, dedicated to the worship and service of our Heavenly Father, where we can attend to those things which are required of us, in peace and in unity of spirit, and receive instructions as the Holy Spirit may prompt.

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We meet in the name of the Lord. All that we do should be done in the name of Jesus Christ, for so we have been commanded. The Church to which we belong is the Church of Jesus Christ. It is composed of people called Latter-day Saints, but it is Christ's Church. He has set it up, He has organized it, and all the principles and doctrines which have been made known to us have been revealed through Him. It is His work and He will watch over it and direct it and consummate it. And He has commanded us that we shall do all things in connection with our faith in His holy name, and in that way only will it be acceptable to our Heavenly Father; for all the blessings that come from our Father to us His children, will come to us through Jesus Christ. His is the only name given under heaven whereby man can be saved. The Gospel of Jesus Christ must be preached to every creature. For it would not be just for our Heavenly Father to condemn any of his creatures who did not believe in Jesus Christ, without giving them an opportunity of understanding who He is and what His commandments are. All people, then, must hear the Gospel and have an opportunity of receiving it or rejecting it. Jesus Christ sent out His Apostles, after His resurrection, to preach the Gospel to all the world in that day and generation, and they went forward and fulfilled the commandment which he gave to them. Since that time a great many false doctrines have been introduced into the world, and a great many churches have been established, according to the notions and ideas of men not authorized by the Lord Jesus, not accepted of Him, not recognized by Him in any way. They are the churches of men, and the doctrines preached therein, in a great many respects are the doctrines and commandments of men. They are not of God. They are not recognized by Him. They are not acceptable to Him. And so with many ordinances which have been introduced since that day. Some men have introduced them in the name of Jesus Christ, but they were not authorized by the Lord to do so, and therefore He will not accept them, and they are of no benefit to the children of men so far as their salvation is concerned. But in the day and age in which we live the Lord Jesus has manifested Himself again, and has re-organized the Church which He set up in ancient days, in the same form and shape, with the same officers, with the same ordinances, with the same commandments, and with the same spirit, power, gifts and blessings. And in this Church, if we live under the inspiration of the spirit and attend to the duties and obey the commandments which He reveals, in the way He has pointed out, we will be accepted of Him, and that which His servants perform on the earth in His name in the way He has appointed, will be the same as though it was performed by Himself in person, and will be accepted of the Father, just the same as though performed by the Lord Jesus Christ, and what they seal on the earth will be sealed in the heavens, and what they loose on the earth will be loosed in the heavens, according to His word. We have this great blessing and privilege, then, in belonging to this Church, that we become the people of the Lord Jesus, the Saints of the Lord, members of the Church of Christ, not members of any church made by a man, or a set of men, but the true church of the living God, established by Himself through the Lord Jesus Christ. And if we offer up our sacraments before Him in the way He has appointed, they will be accepted by Him, and we will receive the benefits that result from properly attending to these things. At the present time there are a great many different sects professing to be the churches of Christ. A great variety of doctrines are taught therein. Generally speaking these doctrines are supposed to be taken from the book called the Bible. Ministers usually read a portion of scripture either from the Old Testament or from the New Testament and preach discourses therefrom. But although these different religions and these different discourses are supposed to be taken from the one book, yet they are very conflicting. The notions and ideas of one sect in regard to the things contained in the book, differ from those that are entertained by another sect, also professing to be the church of Christ. And even in each of these various sects the people do not all believe alike. They do not understand alike the doctrines that pertain to their particular sect. For instance, the people in what is called the Methodist church do not all believe alike. The people of the Baptist church do not all believe alike. There is not only a difference existing between the Baptist and Methodist, but the Methodists differ among themselves, and Baptists differ among themselves; and so with the rest of all the different sects in Christendom. The reason of this is because they have no real and definite standard. They take the Bible – or rather profess to take the Bible as their standard; but their ideas concerning the Scriptures differ. They do not all understand the Bible alike. If they all understood the Bible alike there would be a unity of faith; but their ideas differ in regard to the meaning of the things contained in the Bible. At the present time there is a great controversy going on in the Christian world in regard to the manner in which this book should be read, and in regard to its authority. Some claim that every word in the book is inspired; that the word contained in the Bible must be relied upon implicitly as the very word of God. Others dispute this, deny the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, and some of them think

the book should be regarded in the same light as secular history. And so the notions and ideas concerning the Bible are quite varied. Outside of the Bible they have no standard. We may perhaps except the church called the Roman Catholic Church. That church has a standard in the person of the supreme head of the church – the Pope, the traditions, and the decisions of the councils of the church. But neither the Roman Catholic Church, nor the Episcopal Church, which has come out from it, nor any of the sects which come out from the Episcopal Church, have any inspired standard among them save and except the things that were written of old contained in the Bible, which they do not comprehend alike. In the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints we have something besides the written word. We have the living oracles of God, men that have been called and ordained and set apart to minister in Christ's stead, men in whom the Lord has place His spirit, and not only His spirit, but His authority that they may act in His name; and they have access unto Him. It is their privilege not only to expound the things that were written of old which have been preserved and placed on record, and which are contained in the books of the Bible, but also to receive intelligence from the same source from which these things that are inspired that are in the Book were given. The same fountain from which the Prophets of old partook is open to us, and the servants of God in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can learn the mind and will of God respecting us as it exists in His own bosom, because the fountain of revelation is not dried up. Access is open unto our Heavenly Father as it was in times of old; and if Peter could learn the word of the Lord and teach it to the former-day Church, so the servants of God holding a similar position to-day can call upon the Lord and receive His word and declare it to the Latter-day Church. If the Prophets of God of old wrote and spoke as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost, there are Prophets of God living upon the earth to-day who can speak and write as they are moved upon by the same power. And the word of God that comes down from heaven in our day is just as authoritative as the word of God that came in times of old and that is written in the old books, and it is of much more importance to the people called Latter-day Saints, because it comes direct to them from our living head. It does not come in any ambiguous phraseology; it does not come in a shape that would leave it open to controversy; but it comes to us clear, plain and straightforward, so that all may understand. We have the benefit of the living oracles; not only the words of the oracles that are dead, but the words of those that are living.

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And we find when we come to investigate the things that God makes manifest in our own day through the living oracles, that in spirit and in doctrine they correspond with the things that God revealed in days of old. We, then, have "a more sure word of prophecy" than the things that were written aforetime. The Apostle Peter spoke of this in his day. He said that holy men of God wrote and spoke as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost, and that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. He said further, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and they day star arise in your hearts." They had the living oracles. The people who lived in Peter's day had not only the words of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the other prophets, and the Book of the laws, as written by Moses, the inspired prophet of God, who looked upon God and talked with Him face to face – they not only had these things written in the ancient records, but they had living oracles, men in their midst who were authorized to speak in the name of the Lord and declare to the people of the living word of God for their present benefit. And as it was with the people in that day, so it is in this Church that Jesus Christ our Savior has re-established on the earth. We have the living oracles, those who are called and ordained to stand between us and the Lord. And in addition to all this we have the great privilege of the Holy Ghost universally diffused throughout the body of the Church for the benefit of every member thereof; for every man and for every woman, for every individual who has been baptized into it and has received its ordinances. Every person in the Church may receive of this spirit which is the light of God, which is the spirit of inspiration, which bears record of the things of God, and makes plain to all who have it the things that God reveals through the living oracles. If a servant of God speaks or writes under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, the same spirit by which He writes or speaks is in the members of the church, and it is their privilege to see as He sees, to comprehend as He comprehends, that we may all see "eye to eye" and understand the things of God alike.

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Some people have an idea that it is impossible to bring a great number of individuals to understand religion exactly alike. People sometimes point to the difference that there is in human character. It is true that our characters vary, as do our countenances. The faces that are before me to-day are all different, although we are all of the same race. We are all different in our appearance. Even brothers and sisters of the same family differ in their appearance in some respects. So it is with all things that God has made. It is not only so in regard to the human family, but it is so with the brute creation. No two blades of grass are exactly alike. No two leaves upon the trees in the forest are exactly alike. No two worlds that God Almighty has made that glitter in the firmament on high at night are exactly alike. There are some peculiarities about each of them, distinct and different from others. This is all true. But is it impossible to bring people who are thus organized, people of different characters and different minds, to see and comprehend exactly alike? No, there is no difficulty about it when the thing is properly understood. Take any of what are called the exact sciences, and people can be brought to understand them just exactly in the same way. Take a sum in arithmetic, for instance. When a dozen people understand the rules in the same way they will work out the sum in the same way, no matter where they were born, or what language they speak. When they understand the principle and rule that governs the workings of the sum they all work it out in the same way, and what a dozen or a hundred can do a million can do. It makes no difference about the number. If all understand the principle alike they will work it out alike, and the result will be exactly the same. Why cannot this be done in those things called religion? It is true that religious principles are not governed altogether by the same rules and laws as those which govern secular things. But yet if people are in possession of the same spirit, and the truth is made clear before their understandings, they can all be brought to see exactly alike, and we have proven this in our own experience. For instance, when the Gospel of Jesus Christ came to us, it found us when we were scattered abroad in different nations. We have people here from England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and from different parts of the European continent; from Sweden, Norway, Germany, Italy, and from the various cantons of Switzerland; a great many from the various States of America, from the islands of the sea, from the East Indies, from Africa – people from all quarters of the globe. Now, when the Gospel came to us, it found us in a scattered condition. We lived in different countries, we spoke different languages; we had different ideas in regard to God and His ways. But we were taught that we must believe in the true and the living God; that we had all sprung from Him; that He was our Father, and that we were made in His image; that the idea prevalent in the world that the Deity is a being without body, parts or passions, an incomprehensible nonentity, was altogether wrong. We were told that we had sprung from God, and being His offspring we were like Him, and that, therefore, in some respects He is like us; that He is a personage, and as every seed begets its own kind, and we are the offspring of God, we could form some conception of what He is like, and we put away our old ideas. We came to a unity of the faith concerning God, that He is an individual; that although He is a spirit, yet He dwells in a tangible tabernacle. Man is a spirit as well as God, because we have sprung from Him. The spiritual part of our being is the offspring of God, which spiritual part dwells in our natural part that has come from the dust. In this way we could form some idea concerning the Deity, and we all formed the same idea; we all came to the unity of the faith in this respect. We were also taught that it was needful for us to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and when we had full faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to obey His commandments, that we were to repent of our sins. Now there were different ideas in the world as to what constituted repentance; but we were taught that in order to repent acceptably before God, we must come to the determination in our minds to leave off sinning, to cease doing that which is wrong, and to get to understand and to do what is right. Then we were taught that in order to receive remission of sins we must be baptized. Now there were different notions in regard to baptism in the world. Some people believed that the marking of the sign of the cross with a little water on the forehead by a priest was baptism. Others believed that sprinkling water upon the face was baptism. Others that it was needful to immerse the whole body in water to constitute baptism, and still others that a person ought to be immersed three times. But we were taught that baptism was at once a burial and a birth; that in order to be properly baptized the person who administers the ordinance should have authority from God, because he uses the name, of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and he has no right to use the names of the holy trinity without being expressly authorized of God to do so. We learned that in the first place, then, an individual who administers the ordinances must have authority to administer, and he must administer in the way that the Lord has appointed – not the way that man may think is right, but the way the Lord has ordained, or else it would not be acceptable to God. And we were taught that the individual to be

baptized must believe and repent, for without faith and repentance baptism would be of no avail. So the individual who was baptized must be a repentant believer, and the individual who administered the ordinance must be an ordained servant of God having legitimate authority from on high – not that which he had taken upon himself, not that which he may have felt called upon to do in his own heart; but he must be a bona fide representative of Deity, a man called and ordained and set apart by authority from God to administer in His name, or it would not be valid. And then the individual who baptizes must go down into the water with the person to be baptized – the candidate must be buried in the water in the likeness of Christ's death and burial, and then be raised out of the water in the likeness of His resurrection – and the object of this was for the remission of sins.

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This was very different from the doctrines which prevailed in the world. But when this was taught to us in plainness, and we were baptized in this way, we received a testimony in our hearts that we were made clean, that our sins were remitted, that they had been washed away – not by the water, but through our obedience to the ordinance which God had established and the blood of Jesus Christ, which was shed for the remission of our sins. We had the conviction sealed upon our hearts that we had received this blessing. As the result thereof we were thus brought to the unity of the faith. Then when the servants of God laid their hands upon us, according to the pattern revealed from heaven, and conferred upon us the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, we received the same spirit from on high, the same Holy Ghost. The people who received this ordinance in Scandinavia had the same spirit come down upon them as the people who received it in England or in Scotland, and the people on this Western Hemisphere on which we live have received the same spirit as the people received on the Eastern Hemisphere. In every part of the globe, wherever this ordinance was administered the same spirit rested down on the people and bore the same testimony to them. Now, although there are a variety of operations of this spirit, yet the spirit is the same and the light that it brings is the same. People do not all receive that light to the same degree, but the light is the same, just as the light of the sun is the same to all. Some people can see a great deal further than others with their natural eyes. Their eyesight is better, but the light by which both see is the same. So it is with regard to the gift of the Holy Ghost. All people do not receive it in the same degree, because they are not all gifted with the same capacity, and all have not the same desires; but the difference is not in the spirit, it is in the individual. Some people are very earnest after the things of God, and he who seeks finds, and the more he seeks in the right direction the more he finds. He that is dilatory in searching after the things of God, obtains but little; he that is diligent obtains much. All may receive it, but they must obtain it in the way that God has appointed, all receiving their measure according to their diligence and desire; but the spirit is the same. And this spirit has operated upon our hearts in such a way as to make us – a people of diverse feelings and opinions – of one heart and one mind in regard to this matter. And wherever this Gospel has been preached and people have received it, they have been brought to a "unity of the faith." They no longer have many faiths and many baptisms, but one faith, one baptism and one God, having commenced to walk in the same straight and narrow way that leads to life and which is the only way of salvation. And all people who desire to enjoy the fullness of His glory must walk that straight and narrow way; "for wide is the road, and broad is the gate that leads unto death, and many there be," we are told, "that go in thereat." There is only one way of life, only one plan of salvation, because there is but one God to serve. If there were many Gods to worship, there might be many different ways to salvation; but as to us there is only one God, there can be but one Gospel, one Church, one gate leading to the celestial city.

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I have shown that it is possible for a great many people of different ideas and notions to be brought to understand things alike. And if this can be done in regard to one or four things (I have named four) or principles, it can be done in a million or any number of principles. And we are told in the Scriptures that the time is to come when all shall see eye to eye; because all shall know God from the least unto the greatest. There is, too, a time to come when the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon all flesh, "when the sons and the daughters will prophesy, the old men dream dreams, and the young men see visions," etc; and when the earth

and all that live upon it shall be redeemed and sanctified; the earth will then be as it was when it rolled out of the hands of the Creator, and the people will understand God and His ways; they will understand them alike. There will not be a thousand different religions; but there will be one only, one God the Father of all, and one Holy Spirit burning in the hearts of His children.

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At the present time there is a diversity of opinions and notions and ideas concerning God and His ways; but I have stated that this one way in which the Saints have begun to walk, is the only true way. That may sound very exclusive; it may seem also to some a little inconsistent. That is because they may not understand the matter in all its bearings. I say, there can be but one true religion, simply because there is only one true God. True religion is that religion which comes from God; and that religion which is man-made cannot be the religion of God; it is therefore not binding; nothing religious is binding upon mankind but that which is revealed from God. That which comes from God through His servants and is declared to the people is binding; he that receives it will be saved; and he that rejects it will be condemned. This must be so because it comes by authority, from Deity himself. It is His word; it is His will; and he who rejects it, rejects it against his own salvation; and none can be saved who do not obey.

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Some may ask. "Do you mean to say that all the people that have lived upon the earth since the days when Jesus and the Apostles preached, who did not hear and who did not obey the Gospel, are all damned and lost forever?" I answer, No. We merely hold to the proposition that there is but the one true way. I will refer you to the language of the Savior himself upon this point spoken to Nicodemus, one of the rulers of the Jews, who sought an interview with Jesus by night: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." There is a very plain declaration, and a very conclusive one. There are millions of people who have lived upon the earth who have not been "born of water and of the Spirit." Take, for instance, the millions of Jews alone who lived before the introduction of the Gospel by Christ, and after it was preached to their ancestors. For, let me tell you, the Gospel was preached before Christ preached it. When Jesus came, he did not introduce anything new, he came to restore something that had been lost. The Gospel was known by our first parents when they came out of the Garden of Eden. It was known to Abraham. It was preached to Israel before the law was added. It is stated by Paul to the Hebrews. "All our fathers were under the cloud, and they all passed through the sea; and they were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did partake of the spiritual rock that followed them, which rock was Christ." They were baptized the same as we have been, but they did not receive the faith of the Gospel fully in their hearts; they did not profit by the word preached, therefore, God added the law as a schoolmaster, to bring them to the right way. He added the law of carnal commandments because they would not receive the fullness of the greater law in faith. When Jesus came, He restored the Gospel; but there had been millions and millions of people among the Jewish nation alone, from the days of Moses to those of Jesus, who had not been "born of water and of the Spirit." They termed nations outside the Jewish nation the heathen, and none of them for hundreds of years had obeyed the Gospel – had received ordinances by which they could be born of water and of the Spirit. So in regard to the people from the days since the ancient Apostles were put to death, who had authority from God, who were sent forth to minister in His name, to preach the Gospel to all people, and baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and to teach them all things whatsoever he had commanded them. From their day to the time in which we live, thousands and millions of people have passed away without receiving or obeying the Gospel of the Son of God. According to the doctrines of men, because they did not hear it, they will be condemned for ever. The heathen nations for ages past have not even heard the doctrines of men professing to be Christian. They worship idols; they worship beasts; they worship the heavenly bodies, etc. Many millions of them are outside the pale of Christendom. What is to become of them? "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye are born of water and of the Spirit, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." So says the Savior; and there is no other name given under heaven whereby man can be saved than the name of Christ Jesus; and yet there are millions and millions of people who have passed away from the earth never having heard the name of Jesus Christ. A great many millions

more have died without a knowledge of the true Gospel. And what is to become of them all? According to the doctrines of modern Christendom, they are all destroyed, they are all damned. That is a horrible thing to think of.

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There is considerable controversy going on in the Christian world to-day, not only in reference to the plenary inspiration of the Bible, but in regard to probation. There is a discussion in progress now in regard to what is called "probation after death." The question is whether there is a probation after people leave this world, or is it confined to the sphere in which we now move. Some of the ministers are beginning to think that there must be a chance for souls after they leave the earth to learn the way of life and salvation, but the great majority of modern divines, representing popular religious opinions, believe that this is the only state of probation; that when death overtakes a man, that is the end of his opportunities for salvation. According to that rule all those millions of people who have died without hearing the name of Jesus Christ have gone to hell.

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There are different ideas about hell now—a—days. A few years ago there was only the one idea, which was that hell is a great, bottomless pit full of flaming fire and brimstone, into which the wicked are cast never to return, whilst the devils are continually stirring up the flames for the everlasting torment of the doomed. And this scene used to be described by popular divines in the most hideous and shocking manner. People have recently modified their ideas concerning future punishment, and the change is greatly due to the teachings of the Elders of this Church, and the doctrines which have been set forth and published as revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith. The controversy that is now being conducted by leading theological minds upon the subject of probations, has been brought about through the effects upon the public mind of the preaching of the Elders of the doctrine revealed in the very beginning of the Church. You will find in the Doctrine and Covenants that God revealed to Joseph Smith as early as March 1830, that "eternal punishment is God's punishment." Because God is an eternal being. His laws are eternal, and there are penalties attached to all of them. But it does not follow that because a person may be banished into the eternal punishment it is intended that he shall stay there eternally. He may go into eternal punishment, he may go to the place prepared for the rebellious and the sinner and stay there but for a certain period. Some may stay longer than others. In the language of the Scriptures, some are beaten with many stripes, and others are beaten with but few stripes; but all stay until they have paid the uttermost farthing;" all are punished according to the gravity of their guilt. It will be "more tolerable" in the day of judgment for people who did not hear the word of God in the flesh, and who were wicked, than for the wicked who did hear the word of God and rejected it. But the time will come when all men will be judged, and the Apostle Paul says they will be judged by the Gospel; all will appear before the judgment seat to be judged according to their works, receiving according to their merits or demerits, gauged by their light and their opportunities.

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Now, the Lord made this very plain in the revelation he gave to Joseph Smith. The term eternal damnation God said had been used to work upon the hearts of the children of men altogether for His glory. That is, in the low condition of humanity in which most people are placed there must be a threat of punishment and a promise of reward to influence people to do what is right simply because it is right; to love truth for its own sake. But humanity is in a low, degraded condition, and a promise of reward has to be held out to induce people to do right, and threats of punishment to restrain them from doing wrong. That is not the higher plain on which men are yet to stand. If people are trained aright they will love that which is true and dislike that which is untrue; they will love that which is virtuous, pure and Godlike, and dislike everything contrary thereto. They will do good, but not for reward; they will turn from evil, but not from fear of punishment. They will love truth and work righteousness for their own sake. But in the degraded condition of humanity this eternal punishment that has been preached has been allowed to go forth to work upon the hearts of the children of men altogether for the glory of God, that evil might be curbed, that transgression and sin might

be restrained, that people might be checked from going headlong to destruction through fear of the consequences. On the 16th of February, 1832, the Lord made this matter plainer. He gave to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon, one of the most glorious visions that human beings ever gazed upon. It is the most complete and delightful that I have ever read. There is nothing in the book called the Bible that can compare with it. It is full of light; it is full of truth; it is full of glory; it is full of beauty. It portrays the future of all the inhabitants of the earth, dividing them into three grand classes or divisions – celestial, terrestrial, and telestial, or as compared to the glory of the sun, the glory of the moon, and the glory of the stars. It shows who will be redeemed, and what redemption they will enjoy; and describes the position the inhabitants of the earth will occupy when they enter into their future state. In that glorious vision we are told that there is only a certain class who shall not be redeemed in the due time of the Lord. I will read a few verses:

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"Thus saith the Lord, concerning all those who know my power, and have been made partakers thereof, and suffered themselves, through the power of the devil to be overcome, and to deny the truth and defy my power –

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"They are they who are the sons of perdition, of whom I say that it had been better for them never to have been born.

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"For they are vessels of wrath, doomed to suffer the wrath of God, with the devil and his angels in eternity;

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"Concerning whom I have said there is no forgiveness in this world nor in the world to come;

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"Having denied the Holy Spirit after having received it, and having denied the Only Begotten Son of the Father – having crucified him unto themselves, and put him to an open shame;

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"These are they who shall go away into the lake of fire and brimstone, with the devil and his angels;

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"And the only ones on whom the second death shall have any power;

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"Yea, verily, the only ones who shall not be redeemed in the due time of the Lord, after the sufferings of his wrath;

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"For all the rest shall be brought forth by the resurrection of the dead, through the triumph and the glory of the Lamb, who was slain, who was in the bosom of the Father before the worlds were made;

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"And this is the gospel, the glad tidings which the voice out of the heavens bore record unto us;

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"That he came into the world, even Jesus, to be crucified for the world, and to bear sins of the world, and to sanctify the world, and to cleanse it from all unrighteousness;

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"That through him all might be saved whom the Father had put into his power and made by him;

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"Who glorifies the Father, and saves all the works of his hands, except those sons of perdition, who deny the Son after the Father has revealed him."

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I do not intend to read from this vision the condition of the people who will be redeemed in the different degrees of glory; you can do that for yourselves. I merely refer to it that the point may be made clear, that there are only a certain few who will not be redeemed in the due time of the Lord, through the merits of the atonement wrought out by Jesus Christ. The sons of perdition are to go away into this everlasting punishment and abide there. And as we are told in another part of the revelation, the height and the depth, and extent of their misery no man knoweth. It is not revealed except to a few, and then the vision is closed up, as the things they behold are unlawful to be uttered.

[JD 24:93, Charles W. Penrose, March 4th, 1883](#)

The "sons of perdition" are those who have received the Gospel, those to whom the Father has revealed the Son; those who know something concerning the plan of salvation; those who have had keys placed in their hands by which they could unlock the mysteries of eternity; those who received power to ascend to the highest pinnacle of the celestial glory; those who received power sufficient to overcome all things, and who, instead of suing it for their own salvation, and in the interest of the salvation of others, prostituted that power and turned away from that which they knew to be true, denying the Son of God and putting Him to an open shame. All such live in the spirit of error, and they love it and roll it under the tongue as a sweet morsel; they are governed by Satan, becoming servants to him whom they list to obey, they become the sons of perdition, doomed to suffer the wrath of God reserved for the devil and his angels. And for them, having sinned against the Holy Ghost, there is no forgiveness either in this world or the world to come. But all the rest Christ will save, through the plan of human redemption prepared in the beginning before the world was.

[JD 24:93, Charles W. Penrose, March 4th, 1883](#)

Now the question may be asked, how can these things be? If no man can enter into the Kingdom of God except he be born of the water and of the Spirit, and only a few are to receive this eternal condemnation, how can the rest obtain this great salvation, how can they escape eternal punishment? The Lord has provided a plan for them, and it is very simple when properly understood. I noticed in reading the reports of recent discussions on probation after death that it was admitted by the learned men engaged in it that they did not know anything definite about it. The notions and ideas of even the most advanced divines are but theories and speculations. But here we have the revelations of God concerning these things, that we may not be in the dark; so that we can all come together and see eye to eye and understand alike. For it is true, and truth can be made plain to all that desire its light. But when people do not want to see the truth, they can shut their eyes and exclude it from their spiritual vision, as people sometimes shut their eyes and exclude it from their spiritual vision, as people sometimes shut out from their eyes the light of the sun, from their "best rooms," which, by the way are their

worse rooms, for the very reason that the blessed sunlight does not enter there – so people can close the windows of the soul and shut out the rays of the sun of righteousness; but he who desires to behold the truth may see it and comprehend it. As we now see each other by the light of the sun, so people of different minds and different races may turn their eyes towards the truth, and by the light of the Holy Ghost, they will see it exactly alike. They will no longer be divided on principles of doctrine.

JD 24:93 – p.94 – p.95, Charles W. Penrose, March 4th, 1883

But how can salvation come to those who never heard the Gospel while living; who never had the opportunity of being born of the water and the Spirit, of being baptized by one with authority, for the remission of their sins, and having hands laid upon their heads for the reception of the Holy Ghost – how can they hear, how can they understand, how can they obey? People have fallen into the common mistake that it is impossible to learn the will of God when they leave this world. I do not know where the idea sprang from. I think it came from some of the monkish cells of the old Romish Church, descending down through the various sects that have come out from that Church. Why should not a person when out of the body be able to understand as when in the body? If we believed like some of the people of India, that when the spirit leaves the body it goes back to Brahma, or emerges into the generally diffused spirit of the universe, then we might conclude that they would not understand anything when they leave the body. If the spirit becomes a nonentity when it is disembodied we might have reason for entertaining such a notion. But we understand that the spirit is the real man, and that body is but the outside covering; that when the change we call death comes, the body returns to the earth as it was, but the spirit returns to God who gave it. That the spirit is the actual person, that which thinks and reasons, the body being but the medium conveying impressions to the real man operating inside of it. That when the spirit is liberated, although not subject to the same laws as when in the tabernacle, yet it is the same person, a son or daughter of God; a being capable of thinking; of receiving inspiration; of accepting or rejecting that which is presented; and therefore is a subject of salvation. If not, why not? What is the reason? I think we will find when we shuffle off this mortal coil, when we get rid of the trammels of the mortal body, and enter into the spirit state, we shall be if anything more intelligent than when in the body. We shall not be bound by the same laws that now bind our mortal flesh, and we will be able to comprehend a great many things which were very hard for us to get a little inkling of while in the mortal tabernacle. "Well," somebody may say, "that is very reasonable; but how does it coincide with the Christian religion, with the doctrines laid down in the Scriptures?" Let us see. Jesus Christ, we read, was put to death by wicked men. They took His body down from the cross and laid it in a new tomb hewn out of the rock. But where was Jesus? That was not Jesus in the tomb. It was his mortal body that was laid away. Where was Jesus? People generally suppose that He went to heaven. Stop a moment. After Jesus Christ was raised from the dead a woman whose name was Mary, was weeping at the sepulchre, when Jesus appeared before her. Mary stepped forward apparently to embrace Him, whereupon He said to her: "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God." Three days had elapsed between the time when the body was taken down from the cross – the time when he said, "Father, unto thy hands I commend my spirit," and the time of His resurrection. Where had He been in the interval? Peter tells us in his first epistle, 3d chapter, from the 18th to the 20th verses: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit: by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient; when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah." It appears that after being put to death He went somewhere. Where? "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." What spirits? "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing." Now, that makes the matter very clear to a person that wants to understand. But you take a learned divine whose mind has become befogged by the traditions of men and he does not want anything to do with that scripture, or if he does he will try to explain it away. How do the clergy explain it? They say the spirit of Jesus in Noah preached to the people before the flood. Now, compare that idea with the text I have quoted. It was not Noah who was put to death. But it was He that was put to death in the flesh, and quickened by the spirit, that went and preached to the spirits in prison. Again, in the 4th chapter of the first Epistle of Peter, and the 6th verse, we read this: "For this cause was the Gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, and live according to God in the

Spirit." Here were people that were preached to who were not men in the flesh. Who were they? They were spirits in prison, and they were in prison because of their disobedience in the days of Noah. They had been there about 2,000 years, and Jesus went and preached to them. What did he preach? He preached the Gospel. What did he preach to them for? That they might be further condemned and taunted with their miserable fate? Oh no. He went there that He might preach to them the Gospel, "so that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit." This is what the ancient prophet predicted concerning Jesus. We read that he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up for to read. He took the book of the Prophet Isaiah, and what he read was this: "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." That was Christ's mission – not only to preach to men in the flesh, but to preach to men in the spirit. Isaiah says in c. xlix, 9v., "That thou mayest say to the prisoners, go forth, to them that are in darkness, shew yourselves;" and in c. xlii, 7v., "to bring out the prisoners from the prison and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house."

[JD 24:95 – p.96, Charles W. Penrose, March 4th, 1883](#)

Jesus left His body sleeping in the tomb and went to the spirit world, and the repentant thief who died by His side went there also. Some people think that because the thief said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," and Jesus replied, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," that he (the thief) went direct to heave and in the presence of God. Now, if he did, Jesus Christ broke His own word; for he said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Where did the thief go? Wherever Jesus went, the thief went, and he had the privilege of hearing Jesus preach the Gospel, so that he might have the chance of being judged according to men in the flesh, but according to God in the spirit. And how could he do that? By receiving the same Gospel that men had in the flesh. Jesus, then, left his body in the tomb and went to the spirit world. Those everlasting gates had to be lifted up. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." He went and preached deliverance to the captives, and opened the prison doors to them that were bound. He went to proclaim the acceptable day of the Lord. He came back to His sleeping body, and having the keys of hell He also grasped the keys of death, and His body was quickened. He stood upon His feet and ministered to His disciples. He could then go to His Father and report the accomplishment of His mission. He could say: "I have done the work thou gavest me to do; I have preached the Gospel to the meek; I have bound up the broken-hearted; I have preached deliverance to the captives; I have opened the prison doors of them that were bound; I have led captivity captive; I have shed my blood as an atonement for the sins of the world; now, Father, accept of me and my labors." Then He could come to the earth and say: "All power is given unto me both in the heavens and on the earth." He had fulfilled His mission, and had received immortal keys and honors and powers as a reward of the fulfillment thereof. He shall occupy the highest place among all the sons of God, because He is the firstborn, and has performed the work of the firstborn in the plan of human redemption. He will be exalted above every creature, because He was the most obedient of every creature. He will be the greatest, because He was the humblest. He will be the richest, because He was the best. He is the sinless Christ, and therefore He wears the eternal crown.

[JD 24:96 – p.97, Charles W. Penrose, March 4th, 1883](#)

There is another question that arises here. If men can hear the Gospel in the spirit world, can they obey it fully in the spirit world? Let us look at that a little. Here are the Gospel ordinances. Are ordinances of any effect? Yes, they are. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Just the same as if an alien does not obey the naturalization laws he cannot become a citizen of the United States. God's house is a house of order. He has a way of His own, and he that will not accept that way cannot obtain the blessing. Then can those spirits who hear the Gospel in the spirit world obey the Gospel fully? Can they believe? Yes. Can they repent? Why not? It is the soul of man, or the spirit of man in the body, not the body, that believes. It is the spirit of man in the body that repents. What is it that obeys the ordinances? Why, the spirit. But these ordinances belong to this sphere in which we live, they belong to the earth, they belong to



the flesh. Water is an earthly element composed of two gases. It belongs to this earth. What there is in the spirit world, we know little about. But here is the water in which repentant believers must be baptized. Can they be baptized in the spirit world? It appears not. What is to be done, then. The Apostle Paul asks this question in the fifteenth chapter of the first epistle of the Corinthians: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not all?" Why are they then baptized for the dead?" It seems that the people to whom that was written were familiar with the ordinance called baptism for the dead, and they were baptized for their dead. Paul was arguing upon the literal resurrection of the body, and says, What shall they do if the dead rise not; why are they then baptized for the dead? Our learned divines may presume from that that the doctrine is not laid down sufficiently clear to endorse it; but to us there is no doubt concerning it, the Lord having revealed the principle to the Prophet Joseph Smith. He also explained the manner in which the ordinances should be administered, like everything else He has revealed, in great plainness. And that is why we are building Temples. People who visit our city frequently say, "What a fine meeting-house you are building." No, that is not a meeting-house; this Assembly Hall and the adjacent Tabernacle are meeting-houses. That is a Temple, a building in which we expect to perform ordinances for the living and the dead; wherein we may be baptized for our dead, that they may receive the benefit of that ordinance, provided they believe and repent and do the spiritual part, while we do the material part, that they may receive the blessings of obedience to the Gospel, and live according to God in the spirit. Some will say, "I cannot see why a thing done by one person should stand for another." How do you understand the doctrine that Jesus Christ has done something for all of us? We read that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." Not my blood or your blood is to be shed for the remission of sins; but He who was without sin allowed His blood to be shed as a sacrifice for our sins. Now the whole question hinges on that. If you reject the doctrine of proxy in baptism, you must reject the doctrine of proxy in the atonement.

[JD 24:97, Charles W. Penrose, March 4th, 1883](#)

Now, there is no dubiety in the minds of the Latter-day Saints on this subject. We have learned these things from God, and we understand them alike. Why? Because we desire the truth; we do not care about the nonsense of men, we want divine truth which comes from God. And when it comes we are anxious to receive it; we seek for it; we ask for it; and He enlightens us by His Spirit, and when the Good Shepherd speaks, we know His voice; and it is that voice that has made plain to us the doctrine that we who have obeyed the Gospel in the flesh may be baptized for our ancestors in the spirit world.

[JD 24:97 – p.98, Charles W. Penrose, March 4th, 1883](#)

If you will look at this in the spirit that accompanies its unfoldment, your hearts will be filled with joy at the mercy and goodness of God. If there are men or women here who have not believed this, and they will ponder upon it, and seek to God for light upon it, they will have their eyes opened to see that it is one of the most glorious principles. It opens the way for the redemption of our fathers who lived and died without hearing the sound of the Gospel. It opens up the way for the redemption of the heathen nations who never heard the name of Jesus Christ. It opens up the way for the hosts of Israel, with their posterity, who ages ago fell away from the truth and went into darkness; for those whose hearts have been heavy, and whose eyes have been blinded – for it is written "blindness in part has happened unto Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, "There shall come out of Zion a Deliverer, and He shall turn ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." Those that will live upon the earth of their lineage who shall obey the Gospel, in the latter times will perform the outward ordinances for and in behalf of their dead ancestors. This glorious doctrine lifts up the dark curtain of sectarianism and lets in the light of heaven, and makes plain the justice of God, and the mercy of God. The mercy of our God extends to all of his children, not only to one little branch through the loins of Abraham. All shall hear, all shall have opportunity of knowing the ways of life and truth, and the opportunity of knowing the ways of life and truth, and the opportunity of rejoicing therein; and this is the means that God will adopt to accomplish this great and stupendous result! Every heart shall be gladdened with the tidings of salvation. The living and the dead shall be visited and even those who have been thrust down to hell, who have been beaten with many stripes, and have suffered their portion in the eternal punishment, will have the arm of sweet mercy

extended to them when stern justice is satisfied; and in due time every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ to the glory of God the Father. And the time will come when death and hell shall be destroyed, and there will be no more death, neither sorrow nor pain, but every creature, in heaven above and the earth beneath shall be heard to sing, "Blessing, and honor, praise and power, be unto God and the Lamb forever, who has redeemed us by His blood out of every nation and tribe and tongue and people!"

JD 24:98 – p.99, Charles W. Penrose, March 4th, 1883

The Gospel is plain and simple and easily understood and appreciated by the honest seeker after truth. The reason that people generally do not receive it when it is preached to them by the servants of God – it is a hard saying, but true nevertheless – is because their deeds are evil; because they love the things of the world more than the things of God, and the love of the Father is not in them. And because they reject the truth when presented to them, and delight in the spirit of the world, they oppose the truth; and if not openly, in their hearts they sanction acts of persecution and hatred against the Saints of God. Some of them are corrupt in their practices, and such persons are ever ready to assail and traduce the character of our leading men, men whom we know to be pure in their lives, and to be righteous before God; it is the very worst of men who take this course, and thus the Evil One, the destroyer of the souls of men worketh in them and through them. And when they have opposed this work all that they possibly can, they will find that it flourishes and grows and spreads forth, while they will go to the place prepared for them, where they will remain until they shall have paid the uttermost farthing for their willful wickedness. All men who fight against the Holy Priesthood of God, will have to meet that some day. Their acts are not hidden from the eyes of Him who does not slumber. Their evil deeds and wicked sayings will be revealed openly. The time will come when the first angel of God will sound the trump declaring the secret acts of men during the first thousand years; and the second angel will sound his trump and reveal the secret acts of men and the thoughts and intents of their hearts during the second thousand years, and so on down to the last thousand years, even until it shall be declared that time shall be no longer, and the secret acts of all men in all the ages shall be brought to light. My brethren and sisters, let that be a caution to you and to me. When we went down into the waters of baptism and were immersed by the servants of God having authority to administer that ordinance for the remission of sins, though our sins were as scarlet they were washed whiter than snow; and we came forth from the water clean and pure, cleansed by the blood of Christ from all sin. But since that time the acts we have performed will have their effect upon us for good or for evil, and we shall be accountable for them when we stand before the bar of God. They will be seen and known of all; they are written in the books out of which we are to be judged, and every man's acts are stamped upon his own being, in characters that will speak for themselves, in the day when we shall see as we are seen and know as we are known.

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Then let us try and do right for the sake of the right, live in the light of the spirit, see eye to eye, and prove ourselves worthy of the great salvation; and may God help us to do, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEO. Q. CANNON,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, September 24th, 1882.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

PEACE ENJOYED, BUT TROUBLE EXPECTED – FALSEHOODS ABOUT THE SAINTS – POWER OF THE SAINTS DREADED – TRUTH AND ERROR IN CONFLICT – PLURAL MARRIAGE NOT THE REAL OBJECTION – MINING FOR PRECIOUS METALS AVOIDED – GOOD EFFECT OF UNLAWFUL LEGISLATION AND RULINGS – HOPES FOR THE FUTURE.

[JD 24:99, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

I am thankful this day for the peaceful circumstances that surround us. I am thankful that throughout these mountain valleys a goodly degree of liberty prevails, and that the people are able to meet to worship God without molestation or fear. The saying of the Savior is exceedingly applicable wherein He taught His disciples that sufficient to the day is the evil thereof. If we Latter-day Saints did not enjoy the present and lived in anticipation of the dreaded future, I imagine that we should be a very unhappy people, for there never has been a day, or at least a period in our history when, so far as threats were concerned, the future – if we look at it naturally, from men's standpoint – did not look forbidding. But we have proved that dreaded evils, when met courageously and with an undaunted spirit, generally vanish.

[JD 24:99 – p.100, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

We are in an excellent position to-day, as we have been at many times in the past, to have our faith tested to the proof, to see whether we really have faith in God or not. The idea generally prevails among those who are not familiar with us and with our methods of preaching and teaching, that in order to gather the people together from the various nations the Elders of this Church hold out extraordinary inducements to their converts, telling them flattering tales about the life that they will lead if they will only gather to Utah; and by these means they are successful in beguiling the ignorant and unsuspecting, inducing them to forsake their homes and connections. But those who have been familiar with the teachings of the Elders of the Church know that the very opposite of this has been the course and the style of the teaching adopted by those who have faithfully preached this Gospel to the inhabitants of the earth. From the beginning we have been taught to expect that our adherence to this Gospel might cost us everything that was near and dear to us upon the earth; that God designed to have a tried people, a people that should be tested to the very utmost, that should be felt after in the most trying manner, a people that would be willing to pass through and endure faithfully the most severe ordeals. And up to the present time those who have entered this Church, who have espoused the doctrines taught by the servants of God, have not been disappointed. It is true that in many respects the faithful people of God have had a much better time, have enjoyed circumstances that have been more pleasant and prosperous than they were led to expect; but this has been because they have had the faith to overlook the evils by which they were threatened, and attached no importance to them, and did not allow them to disturb their peace or to annoy them in any manner. For [ it ] had not been for faith, the faith that God planted in the hearts of those who espoused the truth, it would have been impossible for them to have endured; they would have been so frightened that they never could have remained faithful to this work. And one of the most striking evidences that this people offer to the world of the divinity of this work, which the world opprobriously call "Mormonism," is the fact that in the midst of the most severe trials and persecutions, surrounded by circumstances that in some respects have been the most threatening in their character, the people of God have remained true and faithful, united and undisturbed.

[JD 24:100, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

One by one the falsehoods that are propagated concerning us are exposed. The idea has been industriously circulated, printed and published, that the people throughout the valleys of Utah were only held together by the strength of superstition and delusion; that the few cunning men who had succeeded in gaining power and place among them, by their shrewdness and by the cunning arts, had succeeded in duping the people and holding them together. I do not suppose that any single idea has been more widely circulated concerning us than this; and I do not suppose that any other idea is more widely believed about us than this.

[JD 24:100 – p.101, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

The great majority of people who do not understand by actual contact with us, or who take no pains to investigate our doctrines, imagine that it is by this means that the Latter-day Saints have been gathered together and held in these mountains. Why, it is not 20 years ago that one of the stories most frequently circulated, published and dwelt upon, upon the platform and in the public press, was that no man or woman could leaven Utah without the consent of President Brigham Young; that no man or woman could write a letter from Utah Territory without it being inspected by him; that we lived here in a condition of terror imposed upon us by President Young and those who were immediately associated with him; and that if a man or woman attempted to leaven, especially if he or she had left the faith, he would be followed by destroying angels, and that if he escaped at all it would be at the risk of his life and probably the entire loss of all that he owned. So firmly had this idea obtained possession of many minds that to-day it forms the staple of two or three dramas that are played upon the stage and that receive considerable patronage east and west.

[JD 24:101, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

When Albert Sidney Johnson came here with the army in 1857–8, the popular idea was, that as soon as the troops reached this valley there would be a complete outburst on the part of the people; that they would hail with unbounded joy the presence of the stars and stripes in the midst, and that women by hundreds would leave the bondage in which they were supposed to be living.

[JD 24:101, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

Now, as I have said, one by one we have proved the falsity of these statements. But does this misrepresentation and slander concerning us cease? Not in the least. The manufacture still continues. Every conceivable slander is manufactured and put in circulation. No sooner is one lie nailed to the counter than another is started and passes current, until there are many people who scarcely know what to think, they having such exaggerated ideas concerning the people of Utah Territory.

[JD 24:101, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

The railroad has done us an immense amount of good in making us better known. The travel to and fro across the continent, together with the travel throughout these valleys north and south, east and west, has had the same effect. But with increased knowledge there has come an increased dread. A feeling has taken possession of a great many minds that we are a people greatly to be dreaded. This brings to my mind a remark made by a man whose name you are familiar with, he having taken a very prominent part in the discussion of our case in Congress, in the House of Representatives, a representative by the name of Haskell, a sort of half preacher. One day in conversation with me, at the time the Edmunds' bill was being discussed, he remarked: "I have had occasion, Mr. Cannon, to examine Catholicism and am somewhat familiar with the Roman Catholic organization. I have also paid some attention to the organization of your Church. I think it the strongest and most magnificent organization that exists at the present time in Christendom, or within the range of my knowledge – where did you get it?"

[JD 24:101 – p.102, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

It was no feeling of admiration that prompted these remarks. He followed them up by stating that the time

would come, if this legislation did not answer, when the army would be brought to bear upon us and our organization would be wiped out in blood. You see the feeling he had was one of dread, of apprehension. Instead of viewing this organization in its true light he looked upon it as an engine of evil that would be likely to accomplish dreadful results, that was in antagonism to existing institutions, and that would have to be put down by such law as the Edmunds' law, or if such legislation failed, then by the strong arm of the military, by the use of weapons of war and the shedding of blood. That is the feeling that some men have concerning us. In the course of our conversation I invited him to come out to Utah. "Come out," said I, "and know what you are talking about; you have ideas about us which are entirely incorrect. If you will travel through our valleys, as I will furnish you opportunities to do, if you will come out, I will give you letters of introduction which will enable you to see our people at their homes, and if you are a fair man, a man disposed to accept the evidence of your own senses, you will change your views concerning the people I represent.

[JD 24:102, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

There are men who make use of us to gain favor with the ignorant and with those who have strong religious prejudices and but little knowledge concerning us. There are men who seek to gain popular approval in this way, and instead of telling the truth, or being willing that the truth should be told and known, they are ever willing to have every kind of story propagated however false it may be. Will there be any change in this respect? We have been looking for it for the past 52 years, ever since the Church was organized, but that change has not come. As I have said, as soon as one slander has been disproved, another has been put in circulation. There is no end, neither will there be to the falsehoods that will be told and circulated concerning us. It may be asked: Why is this? For the best of all reasons, that whenever God has attempted to do anything upon the earth, from the days of Father Adam down through the centuries that have intervened until to-day, all hell has been aroused against that work and against those engaged in it. Even when men have had only partial truth, and have attempted to reform existing errors, they have had this opposition to contend with to a greater or less extent; and no great reform has ever been effected upon this earth without costing the best blood of the generation in which the reform was attempted. Our generation is no exception in this respect. Even in this land, under our glorious form of government, the most glorious ever framed by man, under which the largest amount of liberty is to be enjoyed – even under it, the blood of Prophets and Apostles has been shed and has stained the earth; and we, because of our religion, were obliged to flee from our homes and take refuge in these mountain wilds and build up new homes in order that we might live in peace and in quiet, unmolested by those who hate us.

[JD 24:102 – p.103, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

This is not a new thing in the earth, the antagonism between error and truth, between wrong and right, between the followers of him who seeks to usurp dominion upon the earth, and the followers of the Son of God. That antagonism has been a perpetual one, an undying one. It cost the blood of the best Being that ever trod the earth, even the Son of God Himself, and all His Apostles and all the prophets – they all, with few exceptions laid down their lives for the truth. And yet we talk about our civilization, the enlightened nineteenth century, and we say as did the generation in which the Savior lived: "If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have slain the Prophets, we would not have been guilty of shedding their blood." This was the cry of the generation in which the Savior lived, yet that same generation crucified Him in the most ignominious manner.

[JD 24:103, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

Now, it has been said to us – and I cannot tell how many times I have been told it – "if you 'Mormons' would only do away with some of your doctrines that are so objectionable, there would be no trouble." I have had men speak to me in this strain whose opinion I respect very highly, who were friendly, who were kindly disposed, who were anxious to have these difficulties settled, and to have us escape the evils with which they believed we were threatened and might perhaps be overwhelmed. It is not many days since a prominent man said to me, "Why, Mr. Cannon, there are fifty millions of people that are opposed to you. Now cannot you

waive some of your peculiarities. If you will say that you will do this this year, or next year, or within a certain period, while I am not authorized to speak for the government, yet I can say there need be no trouble about your affairs."

[JD 24:103, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

Now, I have not a single doubt in my mind that there are thousands of well-meaning people, who would like to see us enjoy peace in these valleys, and enjoy the land, which we have reclaimed at so much toil and sacrifice from a wilderness, undisturbed by outside influences. They firmly believe that this is attainable if we only would forego some of our peculiarities. There never was a greater mistake, never a more mistaken idea entertained by anybody. How do we know it? By the sad and bitter experience of the past. It is true if we were to apostatize; if we were to renounce our religion; if we were to put aside that which we believe God has entrusted to us and commanded us to impart to the world, I do not doubt but what we would get along so far as the world is concerned, without the antagonism that we now have. But, then, who can do this? If a choice has to be made, as it would have to be made by us, of rejecting salvation on the one hand, and accepting peace and favor with the world on the other, who is there that is prepared to make that exchange? But friends have said to me, "O, you make a mistake when you think that we ask you to renounce your religion."

[JD 24:103 – p.104, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

Now, there is something more than marriage as a point of attack that rises in the minds of men in talking about this. Mr. Haskell expressed it. It was not plural marriage alone that was in his mind. It is not plural marriage alone in the minds of hundreds, and I may say thousands, who have examined this question. There is something more than this; there is something behind this, something that is greater than this, and that is the organization of the people, the union of the people, that which many men call the theocracy of this organization. It was that which excited the mob, in the earliest days of the organization. While at Far West, in Caldwell County, in the year 1838, the General who headed the militia that came out under the exterminating order of Governor Boggs of Missouri, in his address to the "Mormon" people said, "You must scatter and live like other people, and do without your Bishops and your Prophets and your leading men, and not listen to their counsel." This is not the exact language, but these are the ideas. In other words you must break up; we cannot endure your organization, your coming together and being united as you are. We fear you will take possession of our principal counties, and your political influence will be so great that in time you will hold control of this country; and we cannot endure it, and you must go. Governor Boggs' order said, if the people in a given period, they would be exterminated. So the people had to flee in the depth of winter, and cross the Mississippi into the State of Illinois. Now, whoever heard then of plural marriage? It was not practiced. It was the organization of the people that was objectionable; and so it was afterwards when we were compelled to leave Nauvoo. The mob burned our houses and killed our cattle, and destroyed our grain, not because of any feature of this kind, but because we were "Mormons," and believed in a form of religion that they did not believe in. So they were determined that we should leave there.

[JD 24:104, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

And that reminds me of another falsehood that went the rounds in those days to justify the outrages against us. All manner of stories were circulated concerning our thieving; it was said that we were a band of thieves and robbers; that the people near Nauvoo and along the upper part of the Mississippi, through all that region of country, were living in a state of terror, so it was alleged, because of the proximity of the "Mormons," and it would be a great blessing to drive them out, for they were outlaws. So the mob deemed themselves justified in their outrages for those reasons; and public opinion was created against us which sustained them in killing the Prophet Joseph Smith and Hyrum, his brother, in shooting President Taylor, and in killing other men and women. And public opinion was created so unfavorable to the "Mormons" that other people thought, "Well, they are a bad lot; they deserve extirpation; we are sorry to see the laws trampled upon and violence restored to, but something must be done with these 'Mormons.'" "We must get rid of them in some way; and if the law cannot reach them," as was remarked by the mob, when Joseph had been tried and acquitted for treason,

"powder and ball can."

JD 24:104, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882

The same process is now going on. What is it that produces the condition of affairs that exists here to-day? It is a public opinion that is adverse and hostile to us which justifies the outrages and illiberal acts to which we are subjected. It is this which actuates men to trample upon the Constitution and all the institutions of the government. It is this which permits the right of representation to be stricken down and causes a Governor of a Territory, who is guilty of the most outrageous acts of tyranny, to be sustained by three administrations, and a voice scarcely heard in protest against it – republican government stricken down and the people of these mountains, without exception the best and most quiet people to be found within the confines of the republic, deprived of the right of representation.

JD 24:104 – p.105, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882

I allude to this, though it is a political matter, as it comes appropriately within the line of my remarks. What is the cause of it? It is, as I have said, because God has stretched forth his hand to do a work in the earth, and the devil is determined that it shall not be done. He is determined to shed the blood of every man connected with it, and he puts it into the hearts of the children of men to hate the truth and to hate those who teach it. Yet there are a great many people who say there is no God and no devil. I would like them to explain why we have suffered as we have; why it is that a people who, were it not for their religion, ought to be applauded for what we have done in these mountains, are treated as we are treated. When we had the control of these valleys, from one end of the land to the other, from north to south, drunkenness was unknown; a woman might then have traveled our streets and our highways, even to the most remote parts of our Territory; and never hear a word of disrespect, never witness a gesture that would cause her to blush; she could travel in perfect peace and safety throughout all our cities and settlements. Robbery was unknown, and human life was sacred. So with property. Peace reigned in our borders. We look back to it now – I do, I look back to those days and contrast them with the present, and ask myself, How long is this condition of things to continue? We could leave our doors unlocked; no one thought of thieves. Virtue was cherished, and a man who would be guilty of unvirtuous acts was denounced. And such industry as we practiced – and it is no boasting to say so – was unparalleled. We dwelt here in peace – people from various nations speaking various languages, of various modes of thought, and various educations, living here in peace and quiet, each man pursuing his own course unmolested by his neighbors. This was the condition of our Territory. It might be thought that a people thus living, living in a country that no other people could possibly covet, that is so far as agricultural interests, the pursuits we follow mainly in Utah, were concerned – it might be thought that such a people might be left unmolested to enjoy the fruits of their industry and toil.

JD 24:105, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882

We did not touch the mines, for we knew if we opened them and embarked in mining that they would be coveted by others, and therefore it has not been our policy to touch mines. In the beginning it would have been a most unwise policy to have done this; it would have unsettled us, and instead of spending our time in raising the food necessary to sustain life we would have been prospecting in the mountains, hunting for the precious metals. But when the railroad was finished and it was then possible to obtain supplies from other places if we ran short, it was even then impolitic for us to take up mines from the fact that if we had obtained rich mines we could not have hoped to have held them; they would have been coveted, and in the courts the probabilities are we should not have stood as good a chance as other people.

JD 24:105 – p.106, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882

If you think, my brethren and sisters, that we are to be unmolested and left free from attack, you are deceiving yourselves. It is not written in the heavens above, or in the earth beneath; just as sure as we live we shall have opposition, persecution and violence to contend with. God has stretched forth His hand to establish a power in

the earth. That power has excited antagonism in the past; it excites antagonism to-day, and it will continue to excite antagonism to the end, until God reigns, and the inhabitants of the earth bow to His sceptre. This book (the Bible) is full of predictions concerning it. All the prophets who have ever spoken concerning the last days have foretold that God would do a mighty work in the last days; and he is doing it.

JD 24:106 – p.107, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882

"Well," says one, "Do a handful of people like you expect to revolutionize the earth and accomplish these results?" Yes, we expect it; we believe it with all our hearts; we labor for it; we teach it to our children. We would make this country a peaceful, a delightful place for people to reside; we would make this union of which I have spoken possible in these valleys; and if our principles were extended over the earth, they would make the earth in the same condition. I thank God with all my heart that there is such a work going on. When I hear of people coming from remote lands, impelled by their faith, who have heard the preaching of the Elders who have gone forth in their weakness, and in many instances, yes, in the most of instances, in their scholastic ignorance, to proclaim the Gospel – when I see the wonderful results of their preaching, men and women from foreign lands with the testimony of God in their hearts, that this is His work, which they have received through repentance and being baptized by a man having the authority, each man testifying in his own language – the Scandinavian, the German, the French, the British, the people of far of Africa and of the islands of the sea, and the various countries where our Elders have gone, all flocking together like doves to their master's windows, many of them never having seen an Elder from Utah, but having heard men who had the authority to teach this Gospel – all coming from the various points of the compass, testifying in all humility and in the name of Jesus, that God has given unto them a knowledge of the truth – when I see these things my heart is filled with gladness and thanksgiving. I thank God that my lot has been cast in these valleys; that we live in a day when God is doing so mighty a work; when He is gathering His people together; when He is pouring out upon them the spirit of union, for that is the spirit of the Gospel. Jesus in his last prayer adds: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou has sent me." He prayed for them all, that they might be one with Him as He was one with the Father; that the same union, that the same love might be in their hearts. The Latter-day Saints are an unlettered people, far from being what we hope they will be; but they are an honest people, honest enough to embrace the truth when they hear it; honest enough to forsake houses and lands and homes, and everything that men hold dear in this life, for the sake of the Gospel as they believe it. It requires moral courage to be "Mormons," to take upon them the opprobrium of the world, to know that it may cost their lives before they get through with it, and it requires the power of God to be with men and women to enable them to do this. And I thank God that He has found such, here a few and there a few. In the various nations where the Elders have gone they have found them, God directs them to them, and they come; and their children will inherit the earth and they will be intelligent and they will become a great people. For they will possess all the virtues which constitute true greatness among men. I have no fears in my own mind for this people. When I have been spoken to as to the effect of this legislation, I have remarked that such a people as are in Utah Territory cannot be crushed out by adverse legislation. They will endure an immense amount. You take a people who are united; who are industrious, who are frugal, who are acquainted with hardship, who have endured persecution in the past and are familiar with it and expect it, you take such a people, having in their hearts the love of God and the love of each other, believing that the best expression they can give of the love of God is to love their neighbor as themselves; a people of that kind cannot be crushed. They are bound to live upon the earth in the struggle for existence; bound to have their place among mankind; they are perfectly fitted to survive any struggle or any condition that may be brought upon them.

JD 24:107 – p.108, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882

As for this legislation, I want to say to you, that in some respects I am thankful for it. Let persecution come if it will have a good effect. And as for the rules which have been made by the Commissioners, as I stated myself personally, to those gentlemen, I disagree with their construction of the law, and I think the rules are wrong; nevertheless, I am thankful they have made them in their present form. Brethren have said to me:



Cannot we represent to the Commissioners how wrong and unjust those rules are, and endeavor to have them changed so as to make them applicable to the people out of, as well as those in the marriage relations? I told them, Yes; try it if you wish; and if you can effect a change, all right; but in my own heart I am thankful that the Rules have been made as they are. They are made applicable to all – those who have never broken any law; as well as those who have. There is no distinction between those who entered into plural marriage before and those who entered into the state after 1862. Until the law of 1862 was passed, you should understand, there was no law of the United States, no law of this Territory, that made plural marriage a crime. You ought to understand this, and I have not doubt you do understand the difference between that which is a crime in and of itself, per se, and that which is made a crime by statute. Plural marriage is not a crime in and of itself, it is malum prohibitum, made so by a law, and that law was enacted in 1862. Now unless legislation is made ex post facto persons who married prior to 1862 violated no law; but the rules as they have been enforced exclude these people from registration; they exclude even a wife whose husband took plural wives prior to 1862. Most extraordinary ruling. But I have been thankful for it. Why? Because it puts us all in the same boat and does not divide us. A better plan could not have been devised to make us one than the ruling they have made in regard to those "in the marriage relation." There are hundreds of people who can take that oath that if those words were not in it could not take it. They can register because of these four words. They can walk up boldly and take that oath that they have done nothing of the kind "in the marriage relation." I am thankful that is the case. Why? I should feel extremely bad, I think, if we were reduced to the level of those who have violated the laws of God and of man. We have violated, some of us, the laws of man, but we have not in our faithfulness violated the laws of God. We are sincere in our belief; and give me a fanatic any time in preference to a scoundrel. I can tolerate a fanatic who does what he believes to be right; but I have no sympathy for a man or woman who commits an act knowing it to be wrong. We have been excluded from registering because we have done something enjoined upon us by the Lord; but men who have done things knowing them to be wrong, who have acted contrary to the laws of God and of man, men and women both, can take the oath and register.

JD 24:108, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882

Well, I am glad of it; I am glad I am not in that category; I do not want to be in that crowd. I want to be able to say, as I can say, that because of my religion, because of my doing that which I believe I should be damned if I did not do I have been disfranchised. I believe with all my heart that God gave a command of that kind, and it rested with such power upon me that I believed I would be damned if I did not obey it. Now, I am willing to take the consequences of that; but I would hate to be put on a level with every adulterer and seducer in the land; and I am not by the ruling of the commissioners. There is a sharp, well defined line of demarcation drawn between the Latter-day Saints, who practice plural marriage because of their religion, and the adulterer and seducer.

JD 24:108, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882

I see the hand of the Lord in it all, and I acknowledge it. God is overruling and will overrule these things for our good. He will test us, He will prove us, and if there is a weak spot in us that is not seen He will find it out. We expect to attain to the glory that Christ, our Lord and Redeemer, has attained to. We pray for it, we have striven for it, that we might be counted worthy to sit down at the right hand of God, our Eternal Father; be counted worthy to dwell with Jesus in the eternal worlds, and with the holy ones who have gone before, with men whose blood has been shed, who have not counted their lives dear because of their religion – we expect to be with them. Can you imagine, then, for one moment that we can attain unto that glory unless we, like them, are willing to endure all things for the sake of the Gospel?

JD 24:108 – p.109, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882

Now, the world thinks this is a very strange practice for a religion; they wonder at it; they cannot understand it. Yet, let any man look abroad in the earth and see the floodtide of corruption, the evils under which mankind groan in the various nations of Christendom, as also the division and strife that exist in all religious

matters. Marriage and morals rightfully belong to religion and are part of it. Go out into the world and ask the ministers of religion: "What shall I do to be saved?" One will tell you one thing and another another thing, each man walking his own road, every congregation divided from its fellow congregation – strife and confusion of every kind amongst those professing to be the followers of Jesus Christ. But I have often thought, when I have been traveling in the world and seen the spirit that is manifested, that if I had no other hope than that which I see all around me, I would not care to have a family, I would not care to have children, there would be so little to live for; men seeking to take advantage of their fellow men in every possible way; men seeking to destroy their fellow men; professors of religion having none of the spirit that the Bible teaches us is the Spirit of God. I never go from home without turning my face towards these valleys, and the people of these mountains, and without a profound feeling of thankfulness to God that my lot has been cast among this people, with all their faults, and they are numerous, and with all my faults, and they are numerous. We have a love for each other and are striving to overcome our faults and to cultivate that love which belongs to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[JD 24:109, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

Now, let us be patient. As I said to some friends whom I met yesterday, I never felt happier in my life than I do at the present time. True, I have had to endure domestic affliction, which has made me sorrowful. Yet I am gladdened by the hopes I have for the future, and I can truly say I never felt happier among our people than I do now. All is peace; God is with us, His angels are around about us, and His Holy Spirit is being poured out upon us. I do not know that the sun is any less bright, that the moon is any the less clear, that the elements are any less pure and delightful than they were twelve months ago. Our grain, our vegetables, our fruits, all ripen, the earth yields of its strength and gives us of its increase for our good. Peace reigns in our habitations; peace reigns in the hearts of the people. We know that God overrules all, and that He will control all things for His glory, and for the accomplishment of His purposes. Why, then, should we be sad? Why should we mourn? Why should we dread the future? Why should we anticipate that which will never occur? There is no need for it. Let us enjoy to–day. Let us rejoice to–day in the goodness of God, and when to–morrow comes it will be laden with blessings as to–day is. And so it will be every day and every week and every year until we are ushered into the fullness of the glory of our God.

[JD 24:109, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

I have not had the opportunity before of thanking you for your faith and good feelings towards me while I have been gone. I can assure you, my brethren and sisters, I have appreciated them. Men have said to me, in view of that which we are passing through, and the bitter feeling manifested towards us – How cheerful you seem to be! I replied that I had cause to be cheerful; that there was not a man on the floor of Congress that had more cause for cheerfulness than I had. Behind me stood my constituents in solid columns, giving me their support and kind feelings and love. And I have several times said, that from almost every habitation in Utah, from north to south, where Latter–day Saints dwell, I knew that prayers to Almighty God ascended morning and evening, not from men alone but from women and children, in my behalf. I knew that, and it gave me great comfort; yea, indescribable comfort. I thank you for your kind feelings, as I do all my brethren and sisters.

[JD 24:109, George Q. Cannon, September 24th, 1882](#)

I pray God to pour out His Holy Spirit upon you; to preserve you from every evil; to keep you in the truth; to cause you to love it more than anything else in the earth, and to follow it even to the end, which I ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Moses Thatcher, April 7th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY ELDER MOSES THATCHER,

Delivered in the Large Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Saturday Afternoon,

at the Annual Conference, April 7th, 1883.

A COMPARISON – WRATH OF MAN MADE TO PRAISE GOD – FALL OF SENATOR

EDMUNDS – FATE OF THOSE WHO OPPOSE GOD'S WORK – PERSECUTION FOR RELIGION

UNAVAILING – CASE OF THE HUGUENOTS – INTEMPERANCE – STARTLING

STATISTICS – DRINK THE CAUSE OF OTHER EVILS – APPEAL TO THE SAINTS.

[JD 24:110 – p.111, Moses Thatcher, April 7th, 1883](#)

I feel very grateful indeed for the happy and peaceful circumstances with which we are surrounded this day, and I cannot help realizing how different they are to those which surrounded us a year ago. The pressure from the outside world at that time was very great, and the power of him who has been an oppressor from the beginning was exercised throughout this nation for the hurt of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. But when perils have threatened we have learned to appeal to the invisible forces of heaven against the visible forces of earth, and in no age of the world with which I am acquainted has the right ever failed to succeed if those who maintained it were directed, sustained and upheld by the power of God our eternal Father. When men make it their special mission to contend against this great work, they do not realize that God is a power, they cannot comprehend that exercise of faith that turns aside the shafts of our enemies and delivers us from the snares which shrewd politicians and wicked and ungodly priests lay to entrap the people. How well I recollect a conversation I had about a year ago, with a very thoughtful man, a man connected with the Church, but who at times is given to view things from the natural standpoint. It was shortly after the arrival of the Commissioners who came to Utah to administer the provisions of the Edmunds' law. This brother was not ignorant of the exertions which has been made throughout the Union to secure the enactment of that and other proscriptive measures, nor was he ignorant of the intent of leading politicians in the Republican party to forge chains with which to bind us, while depriving us of our liberties. He understood full well the means which had been used; he was not ignorant of the fearful waves of prejudice which had swept every State in the Union. Realizing what the intentions of the wicked were, and understanding the mighty power of a mighty nation, he felt exercised and desired to know if something could not be done to compromise the question; in other words; if it was not possible to submit to the President and Cabinet certain propositions by which the people might be enabled to maintain their rights and liberties. I have not forgotten what my reflections were while listening to his remarks, and I remember the reply which I was led to make. It was this: We had been gathered from the nations of the earth. We came to these mountains to serve God without respect to the thoughts or suffrages of other people. We came here to maintain liberty of conscience and freedom of worship, the provisions of the Constitution of our common country, and not to compromise them upon any terms whatever; that I knew of no earthly wisdom upon which we could safely rely in maintaining those rights; that if the religious, political and social affairs of the people were given over to the management of a hundred of the wisest uninspired men to be found in Zion, they would utterly fail to accomplish the purposes of God, though they might in their efforts to please man, sacrifice liberty and the freedom of conscience, violate the sacred provisions of the Constitution, and make those whom they sought to serve pliant slaves, unworthy of the blessings which of right belong to a free people; that the adoption of such a policy would, within six months, place us in such a condition of confusion and misery that God alone could relieve our distress; that if, on the

other hand, we would exercise faith in Him, live our religion, be prayerful and humble, He would bring us off, as He has done many times before, victorious. Can we not see how the Lord has stayed the passions of men and made their wrath to praise Him? Let us reflect upon the difference between the power exercised by the great leading light of the Republican party during the passage of the Edmunds' bill in the Senate of the United States a little over a year ago, and the exercise of the influence of the same man a year later. Senator Edmunds, when he first called up his bill was, in the Senate, almost supreme. By the power of his intellect and the fierce invective of his tongue, he ruled, as it were, absolute master, and his bill unconstitutional and unjust, passed the Senate with but little opposition. Few statesmen cared then to measure arms with him, but mark the results when God did so a year later.

[JD 24:111, Moses Thatcher, April 7th, 1883](#)

Had the faith of this people changed? Did we believe more in the laws of God in March, 1882, than we did in March 1883? Certainly not. Why then was Senator Edmunds unable to carry out his views and measures regarding this people in the latter as he had succeeded in doing in the former year? Because God is a force in the world and its affairs, whether men acknowledge it or not. His power always has been, and always will be greater than man's power.

[JD 24:111 – p.112, Moses Thatcher, April 7th, 1883](#)

Men may think what they please and sneer at what they may be pleased to call fanaticism, but this I know, shame and confusion was the part of Senator Edmunds when, after six hours vain endeavor to force the passage of another infamous measure against us, he stood up in the Senate and confessed that he could see by the ruling of the presiding officer, and by the votes of his opponents, that it was impossible to carry the measure which he had in hand, and therefore moved for an adjournment. Was his defeat, chagrin and shame accomplished by the wisdom of man? We think not. We at least are willing, as we always have been, to acknowledge the hand of God in these things. God not only holds the destinies of nations in His hands, but He holds also the destiny of individual man. He can humble those who measure arms with Him, as He has done many times in the past. We fear not the power, nor do we gloat over the fall of man, public or private, but we have learned by experience that when they rise up and contend against this people and the principles of liberty and right, God marks them, and their course thenceforth is not upward but downward. In March, 1882, when in Washington, D. C., in company with other brethren, visiting Brother George Q. Cannon, then our honored delegate, I remember the sentiments expressed by some members of the Republican party. They would come privately and say: "We view this bill – referring to the Edmunds' bill – as infamous in its measures; we can see that it is unconstitutional, that it seeks to rob a whole people of their political rights. But our profession is that of politics; we have no other business, and numerous petitions are coming here daily from our constituents, praying us, commanding us, to pass some law for the suppression of "Mormonism." Now what shall we do? If we comply not with their demands our constituents will, at future elections, reject us at the polls." Was not a similar argument used by the Jews, when they said, "If we let him thus alone, all men will believe in him, and the Romans shall come and take away our place and nation?" Fearing that, they crucified him, and what was the result? The very thing they sought to save was that which was speedily lost. When weighed in the balance they were found corrupt, cruel, vindictive, murderous; unable to maintain principle, defend justice, or do what they knew to be right. A disposition to oppress swayed their hearts and tyranny marked their actions to such an extent, that God rejected them as a people, scattered to the four winds and made of them, in the midst of nations, a hiss and by word.

[JD 24:112 – p.113, Moses Thatcher, April 7th, 1883](#)

In this connection let any one who feels disposed, take the pains and trouble to look over the Congressional Record and see how those who were willing to sacrifice principle at the shrine of everything that was wrong, willing to sacrifice the liberties of a people poor and oppressed, examine and see how many of that character have been returned. Have not more than fifty per cent of them been rejected at the polls? Ask the democrats how this has come about, and why it has come about, and they cannot tell you. Ask the Republicans and they

cannot tell you. But ask God, who holds the destinies of nations and peoples in His hand, and He can tell you. On the other hand examine the record of those who fearlessly stood up in defense of Constitutional liberty, maintained inviolate their oath of office, sustained the right, and were true to themselves. They too felt the pressure of priestly inflamed public sentiment, but bowed not to its tyrannical demands. They too realized the dangers and perils that might beset their efforts for future recognition at the polls, but having moral courage they planted themselves on principle, not prejudice, and their constituents, in a great measure, have endorsed their policy and sustained their heroic conduct. If I have been correctly informed, a much greater percentage of those who sustained right on the "Mormon" question in the 47th, have been returned to the 48th Congress, than of those who pursued the opposite policy. We should entertain no fear of men or nations, for they cannot prevent the Almighty from accomplishing His purposes, or bringing to pass His decrees. History, so far as I have been able to trace, nowhere records success gained by hatred and persecution over men pledged to principle, justice and truth.

[JD 24:113, Moses Thatcher, April 7th, 1883](#)

Mens' convictions, religious beliefs and just religious practices cannot be persecuted out of them. The nearest approach to success in this direction was, perhaps, the massacre of St. Bartholomew in France, wherein seventy thousand defenceless Huguenots perished miserably, victims of the malice and cruelty of Roman Catholicism.

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That shocking butchery of men, women and children was acquiesced in by Charles IX, then King of France, and when his ally Philip III, of Spain heard of it he laughed, the only time he was known to laugh in his life. The Pope of Rome illuminated the eternal city, caused medals to be struck off, mass to be performed, and named Charles "the defender of the faith," in commemoration of those horrid deeds of blood and misery.

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Notwithstanding the Pontifical approval bestowed upon the king for that seventy thousand-fold murder he was till his death daily and nightly haunted by the thought of his victims until his misery and remorse caused, it is said, drops of blood to ooze through the pores of his skin. Through these cruelties the Huguenots received a fearful shock, but the consciousness of men continued to assert independence and the right to worship God untrammelled continued to grow. The freedom we now enjoy is but the fruit of the struggle for right, which persecution ultimately solidified, united and made strong in the broad, deep foundations of the freest nation on earth; thereby preparing the way for the mission of Joseph the Prophet. Much improvement had been made, but in religious matters Joseph found the people insincere, and the practices of the Christian world inconsistent and unsound. Guided by the light of heaven he struck a death blow at the idolatrous worship of a bodiless, passionless God, which the teachings of false priests had erected in the imagination of the people. In doing so he disturbed a sea of malice which since has known no rest. But though that angry sea may roll fierce billows of persecution, skepticism, infidelity and priestly hypocrisy must yield, for Joseph Smith, the Prophet of the Almighty came as a forerunner and teacher of true faith in God that cannot be conquered; it will prevail. God's kingdom will rise and shine. They say we are endeavoring to establish a theocratic government. What is theocracy? The kingdom and government of God. Who will contend against it – will the Latter-day Saints? No. It is our duty to contend for it, and to assist to build it up. It is a government of purity. It is a government of the people, and for the people; it maintains liberty and right, and is always opposed to oppression and misrule. I would like to dwell upon the subject, but time will not permit, as I desire to touch upon another at present, of deep interest to us.

[JD 24:113 – p.114, Moses Thatcher, April 7th, 1883](#)

We have been called out from the nations of the earth to serve the Lord. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." In this connection I desire to touch upon a

few practices existing among us that are not pleasing in the sight of God. Intemperance is one of them; the use of alcohol, the use of intoxicating drinks that fevers the blood and maddens the brain, incites to sin, debases man, destroys his better judgment, drives the Spirit of God from his heart, and renders the daughters of Zion unsafe in his company. What is the condition of the Christian nations in this respect to-day? Two hundred thousand men and women crowd the poorhouses, prisons and asylums of Great Britain alone. Seventy-five per cent of them the wretched victims of alcoholism. Can we think a business legitimate and honorable that deprives a hundred and fifty thousand men and women of comfortable homes, drives them wild, and sends them as driveling idiots and paupers to the asylums and jails of a Christian nation, which derives a revenue from the liquor traffic of \$150,000,000 per annum, and finds even that enormous sum inadequate to meet the expenses entailed by reasons of its use? We cannot consistently so consider it.

[JD 24:114, Moses Thatcher, April 7th, 1883](#)

Aside from the debauchery, misery, ruin and death caused by the use of intoxicants, the waste in Great Britain is simply startling. Seventy-five million bushels of grain – equal at our present rate of production to what Utah would yield in forty years – is annually consumed in the manufacture of liquors there. The inhabitants of Britain expend yearly for intoxicating drinks over \$640,000,000. During the past seven years they have expended for the same purpose more than sufficient to cancel their national debt, or build a new house for every family in the kingdom, and school-houses in which to educate all their children.

[JD 24:114, Moses Thatcher, April 7th, 1883](#)

Had the money expended there for liquor during the past half century been invested in five per cent interests bearing securities, it would now be equal to the entire capitalized wealth of the nation, including her cities, railroads, ships, factories, mines, farms, fields and gardens. And yet in view of these figures, taken from parliamentary returns we hear of the cry of want and complaints of oppression. Do the people not oppress themselves in the use – excessive use of things that weaken and corrupt their bodies and darken their minds?

[JD 24:114, Moses Thatcher, April 7th, 1883](#)

Is the condition of our own nation in this regard much better? But little if any. In 1882, according to official reports, the people of the United States paid nearly twice as much for liquor as they did for bread. More than the entire value of the products of all our woolen, cotton, boot and shoe factories. An amount equal to seventy per cent of the wages earned in all the manufacturing institutions of the country, during the same period. Three hundred millions of dollars, more than was paid for Governmental, state, territorial, county, city and school taxes combined. Enough to school the children of a nation numbering 300,000,000, or six times as numerous as ours for the same year.

[JD 24:114, Moses Thatcher, April 7th, 1883](#)

The nation consumes in liquor the value of all the public and private libraries of the country every sixty days, and spends annually nine times as much for drink as for printing and publishing.

[JD 24:114 – p.115, Moses Thatcher, April 7th, 1883](#)

Now what can we say for the people of Utah? In the main they are temperate, but there is room for much improvement. Here, I have no means for acquiring exact knowledge from statistics, but I venture the assertion that more money is spent even in Utah for alcohol than is expended for the education of our children, or the support of the Territorial government. Do we not expend more means in the purchase of stimulants than we pay to sustain the Church and Kingdom of God on earth? And in doing so are we not, though perhaps thoughtlessly, undermining the virtue of our boys, and the chastity of our girls? Do not inebriates and harlots usually go hand in hand, and saloons and houses of ill repute grow up side by side?

Had we the means of ascertaining the facts I am satisfied we should find that nine out of every ten cases of the lapse of virtue among us, could be traced to the use and influence of liquor of some kind. I am led to this conclusion by positive knowledge in a few sad cases that have come under my personal observation. Again, the love of liquor is transmissible. No man, therefore, can be a true servant of God while entailing misfortune and misery – perhaps decrepitude and idiocy upon his posterity. If any among us cannot control their appetite for drink, at least let them not transmit their thirst as a heritage to their children, who should be begotten in purity and brought forth untrammelled by unnatural and debasing appetites that tend to the lust of the flesh. A man addicted to intemperance cannot subject himself to the will of God, nor can he govern his passions to the sanctification of his body, failing in which he cannot reasonably expect to govern others in righteousness for their salvation. How then, are such worthy to stand at the head of families in Zion? To me few sights are more painful than to see a sorrow stricken wife bending over the wash tub and working like a slave to support herself and children; and perhaps her drunken husband, who warms his miserable useless body on the sunny side of walls frequented by others of his kind. If we could gaze through the sorrowful eyes down into the painstricken hearts of such wives – and there are some even in Zion of that kind – we should hardly find a blessing there for those who lift the tempting cups to the lips of their fallen husbands. It is true the liquor traffic, among Christians, is regulated by law and disposed of generally under license, but that does not make it an honorable business, nor does it in any way, so far as I can see, restrict the evils that follow its use. To regulate and license the manufacture and indiscriminate sale of whisky may, in some places, be a necessary and unavoidable evil, but such laws as moral and reformatory agencies have certainly proven failures. The poor, half-starved children, depraved men, and ruined women that nightly visit the gin palaces of London, Liverpool, New York, Chicago, and other great cities, speak unmistakably of failure. The crowded prisons, poor-houses, insane asylums, testify of failure. The gambler who resorts to forgery as a means with which to retrieve his fortune, the sot that wallows in the gutter and blasphemes the name of God, the raving maniac whose reason drink has dethroned, the murderer who took the life of his brother while intoxicated and dies with a curse upon his lips as he falls through the trap of the gallows, all testify of the woe, utter failure and irreparable ruin wrought by the use of alcohol, made easy of access by the regulations of law.

JD 24:115 – p.116, Moses Thatcher, April 7th, 1883

Let me, in the name of the Lord, urge the Saints to abstain from its use. It weakens the body and impairs the mind. When the highest order of physical excellence is required, science interdicts its use. Men trained for great bodily effort and long endurance are forced to be temperate or be defeated. Those who compete for collegiate or literary honors understand the value of temperance. In view of these facts, the Elder, High Priest or Seventy who is addicted to the use of liquor, is unfit to perform the labors which God requires of him. Is it possible that we as Elders of Israel, at home and abroad, cannot see the results of these things? Do we not know that like begets like? Do we not know that men whose blood is fevered and whose judgment is blinded are not fit to multiply and replenish, not fit to be in that holy law of matrimony ordained and made sacred by the Almighty? Let the world talk about and deride the institution of celestial marriage. What concerns us more in Utah is the fact that there are not men enough who understand the laws of life, and who stand pure and holy, upon the higher basis of that sacred law, to become the husbands of all the pure and to-day marriageable women in Zion. God foresaw what the nations would do. We were told yesterday by Elder Erastus Snow that men of great influence in the world were preaching the doctrine of human limitation, which leads to murder. And yet these very men will preach morality to you and me. While killing their own offspring, and urging others to do it, they tell us we shall not obey the laws of God pertaining to increase. I say we will. And upon natural principles, upon scientific principles. The boys and girls who live according to the law of the Lord will become the head and not the foot. They will have stronger bodies, stronger minds, and by the force of the "survival of the fittest," will, eventually, under the direction of divine revelation, govern the affairs of the world. It has been so predicted; God has decreed it, who will prevent it? Let us therefore unite in turning our faces against the evil practices so prevalent in the world. Let us begin to understand and live according to the laws of nature, realizing that violations thereof bring penalties which sometimes are transmitted to the third or fourth generation. In the transmission of life God has devolved upon His creations the highest and most

delicate functions, and which, if abused, entail misery and often premature death. God has His glory in the perpetuation of life. With wonder and admiration we behold life everywhere. We see it struggling in the vegetable kingdom and breathing in the animal creations. Cut down and trample under foot the noxious weed, and yet by the law that governs its increase it struggles upwards, and unless utterly destroyed matures seed for new life, and thereby perpetuates itself. All nature responds to the eternal law of increase. Man, being prompted by him who rebelled in heaven, alone seeks to defeat life, and bring confusion and death. While he and his emissaries strive through the commission of horrid crimes, even murder, to limit human increase, let us as Saints sanctify body and soul being pure in heart and mind, a fit lineage through which noble spirits may possess tabernacles unto the glory of God the Father of spirits. Let fathers and mothers in Zion beget children, as Samuel the ancient prophet was begotten, and I tell you there is no power on earth or in hell that can stop the progress of this people. We will increase and spread abroad until Zion shall arise and shine, and the Kingdom of God shall have supremacy and sway forever. Amen.

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Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE F. D. RICHARDS,

Delivered at the General Conference,

Saturday Morning, April 7, 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

CAUSES OF GRATITUDE – THE CHURCH ILLUSTRATED BY A VINE – PRIESTHOOD

REPRESENTED BY THE BRANCHES – INDEPENDENCE – CAUSE OF LYMAN

WIGHT – PRIESTHOOD ON THE EARTH AND IN THE SPIRIT WORLD.

[JD 24:117, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

It is a very pleasing privilege that we have of meeting together in Conference assembled in this manner. I have been very much gratified, interested and instructed, as I am sure all the faithful have been, who have been present and shared or partaken of the spirit of this Conference. I hope and pray that while we shall remain together we may feel the spirit of inspiration resting upon us to guide our minds in our reflections and our speech into those channels of communication that shall be most profitable to the people.

[JD 24:117, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

We have this day extraordinary reason for gratitude and praise to God our Heavenly Father for the peculiar manifestation of His kindness and mercy to us during the past year; not only in granting that the earth should be fruitful in yielding abundantly for the returning wants of His people, both for man and beast, but for the protection and deliverance of His people from the machinations and devices and the subtle plans of men high in authority, who have set themselves to ensnare us, and if it were possible, to hinder the work of God – men who have thought to destroy or cripple the great cause which God has established in the earth for the redemption and exaltation of the human family, from degradation and sin to the realms of intelligence and



glory in His kingdom. Surely all Saints who have been making "first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," their aim and study, cannot fail to have both seen and felt this. It is but another assurance from on high of his good pleasure in not only having given unto us the kingdom, but in preserving the rights, the powers and blessings thereof from encroachment or invasion and from injury by the hands of the wicked and ungodly.

[JD 24:117, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

I am reminded that the time at my disposal this morning is short, there being several yet to address the Conference. I will, therefore, proceed directly to call your attention to a passage of Scripture found in the 15th chapter of John:

[JD 24:117, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

[JD 24:117, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

[JD 24:117 – p.118, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

"Now, ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

[JD 24:118, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

"Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except you abide in me.

[JD 24:118, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

"I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.

[JD 24:118, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

[JD 24:118, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you; ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

[JD 24:118, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

[JD 24:118, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

One of the Prophets, I think it was Jeremiah, said that the vine was the noblest or choicest of all the trees of the forest. The Savior, no doubt, in view of this general understanding, adopted the vine to figuratively represent the precious principles which He undertook to illustrate in the foregoing passages of Scripture, and which I wish to make some allusion to, in illustration of the importance of our being in a proper position to

attend to our duties faithfully, which is necessary for the complete growth and progress of the vine, to which we are attached in all its branches, leaves, flowers and fruits.

[JD 24:118, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

Christ's Church is frequently spoken of as a vine of the Lord's planting in the earth. Our Savior and the ancient Prophets Nephi, Jacob, Zenos, and others, spoke of the husbandman going forth in the morning to employ the workmen to labor in his vineyard, during the heat and burthen of the day; and also about the eleventh hour, of his employing laborers to go into the vineyard and prune it for the last time. I wish to remind you my brethren of the Priesthood, especially those who are called to occupy important leading positions in the Wards, the Stakes and councils of Zion, that you are the men who were spoken of and written about in their parables.

[JD 24:118, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

The Prophets of those early days were so filled with the spirit and power of the Gospel and of revelation, that they looked into the future and saw in vision the birth of Christ and the work that he was to perform. They also beheld our day, and the work in which we are engaged. It must be borne in mind, that we are not working alone for our dear selves, but for those coming after us; and that our work bears a strict relation to those that have been here and gone before us to the spirit world, to whom we are as closely related; and without whom we cannot be made perfect, any more than they without us.

[JD 24:118, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

Therefore, every Elder clothed with the Priesthood has a right to officiate in ordinances affecting the happiness of those who have gone before, as well as of being the means of bestowing blessings upon those who follow him; and for the use of this power he will be held accountable.

[JD 24:118 – p.119, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

Now let it be understood, Jesus said, "I am the true vine." Everybody acquainted with the art of pruning, knows, that to make a tree bear the greatest amount of fruit he must trim it so that there will be no small branches springing up around the roots, but that there be one vine with all the sap running through it. He has not only said, "I am the true vine;" but also "ye are the branches." If the tree be properly trimmed the sap, which is the life of it, will go from the roots through the vine to all the branches thereof. Jesus said in connection with this "every branch in me that beareth fruit He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

[JD 24:119, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

Let it be understood that the healthy, thrifty growth of the limbs, the leaves, the bloom and the fruit, all depends upon the close adherence of the "branches" to the "vine" – the body of Christ. And every man bearing the Holy Priesthood must be made conscious of this in his experience and observations at one time or another if he is of any use as a living branch in this Church.

[JD 24:119, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

To this vine, in our dispensation there are three branches – the First Presidency – who are closely allied to the powers behind the veil; and they are the first to receive the mind and will of God, and communicate the same to the Church. This is that spirit of revelation, the sap that comes from the vine, that goes to all the branches. And not only do we see these three main branches next the trunk, but a little further along are twelve other branches, spreading out and each of them, shooting forth other branches, twigs, tendrils, leaves and fruit, if they abide in the vine.

[JD 24:119, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

Now if those branches by any means become injured, or are not in a healthful condition from any cause – no matter what – so that the free flow of the sap from the trunk and main branches is arrested, or retarded, the consequence is that the lesser branches, the twigs, leaves and fruit depending for nourishment and life upon the injured or deadened limb, are more or less affected, hindered in their growth, dwarfed in their development, and must suffer death unless relieved by a healthy pruning.

[JD 24:119, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

I wish now to call the attention of the Presidents of Stakes to the consideration of this fact.

[JD 24:119, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

It is the duty of every President of a Stake to attend the annual and semi-annual Conferences, which are held in this place so far as practicable, but if it should so happen that a President himself could not be present, then he should see that one or both of his Counselors come, or some faithful man of an excellent spirit from his Stake who shall be capable of receiving the instructions given, and who is able to communicate the same to his President and to the people. And such a person or persons should be men whose duty it shall be to stay until the Conference is over, attending every meeting, and paying the strictest attention to all instructions given and to all Church business transacted.

[JD 24:119, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

They should not come here in a hurry to get away before the business of the Conference is attended to; they should not feel as though they could leave before receiving all that the Presidency have to say to them; so that when they do return to their homes they may go laden with counsel and filled with the spirit of the Conference, ready to impart the same to the people of their several Stakes. The President who does this keeps alive the fire, the Spirit of the Lord in the hearts of his people. By attending such conferences he goes home with more efficient instructions to convey to the people at home, and at the half yearly or quarterly conference over which he presides, he is enabled to impart to all who were unable to attend, the spirit of this general conference.

[JD 24:119 – p.120, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

I hold it, then, to be of the utmost importance that the Presidents of Stakes do make it their business to see that they as branches abide more carefully and more strictly in the vine, and that they receive the sap and nourishment of these conferences to the utmost capacity and carry it home to support every twig, every leaf, and every particle of fruit on the vine, for their proper, healthy growth and maturity. This principle is not only applicable to the Presidents of Stakes, but it is applicable in like manner in your quarterly conferences to every Bishop.

[JD 24:120, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

In those conferences every Ward should be represented by the Bishop and his Counselors, and as many of the people as possible should be present to receive the counsels there given. What is the result sometimes when instructions have been given by President Taylor through the Presidents of Stakes, and only a part of them were present? Why, it is found, when some important matter comes up, that this counsel has been neglected, and those who ought to have been well informed are heard to say, "Why, we never heard of this before." Why did you not hear of it? Why were you not there in your place to hear of it, and thus be prepared to carry out the instruction given?

[JD 24:120, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

In like manner every branch in all the mission abroad should observe and secure a correct and proper

representation in all the conferences that are held in the various missions wherever the Gospel is preached and branches are raised up. This is an absolute requirement. (See Doctrine and Covenants, section 20, verse 81 and on). By this means, and in no other way, can the law of the Lord go forth from Zion, and the spirit of Zion extend to the most remote branch or member of the Church on the face of the whole earth.

[JD 24:120, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

This is the principle. You brethren of the Priesthood, as branches of this vine, are expected to abide in it, to have the fullest connection with it, and be prepared to convey the sap, which has been conveyed to you, through the trunk to the extreme branches, the tendrils, the leaves and the fruit that are under your care. But unless you do this your people will suffer for want of intelligence; they will have to go short of that spiritual food which you are made the dispenser of and which you are expected to impart for nourishment and support, not only in spiritual matters, but in temporal things as well.

[JD 24:120, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

Now, there is a feeling among mankind – it is a feeling that is common in the world, and it is not strange that some who have been brought up in the world should retain it – a feeling of independence, a feeling of self-sufficiency, a feeling that we are capable of doing without counsel, and that we can do this and that as we think best. My brethren, the less of this feeling we carry with us, the safer and better for us and for the people we have to instruct. We should understand our dependence on God and on our brethren who are placed over us in the Priesthood for that counsel necessary to sustain us and that will enable us to bear off the Kingdom of God in righteousness.

[JD 24:120 – p.121, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

Let me cite you to an instance of a man in the early days of the Church – Lyman Wight showed this kind of spirit when Joseph lived. It was all Joseph could do to keep him in subjection to the counsels of the Priesthood, but he did conform when brought to a consideration of his position in the Church so long as Joseph lived. But when the Prophet Joseph died he did not recognize the right of Apostle Brigham or his brethren of the Council to preside over him. And where did he go? He started an offshoot of the Church by himself, and both he and those who followed him when out into the world to destruction and to the devil together. This is the fate of those who think they can "run" themselves and can "run" the affairs of the Church and Kingdom of God separately and independent of their brethren. If he had continued and abode in the vine and made himself one with Brigham Young and the Apostles, he would have gathered with us to these valleys of the mountains, rejoiced with us, and laid down his bones here, and been one with the people of God. But, no; he went off by himself, feeling totally independent of his brethren. He abode not in the vine, and brought forth no fruit.

[JD 24:121, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

If there be any among us who say in their hearts I received my blessings from President Young, he bestowed upon me all blessings, authority, Priesthood, and keys of power that any one else has received, not excepting President Taylor or any of the Apostles, and I have just as much right to advise and build up according to my own direction as he or they have – let such take warning by the course of Lyman Wight, Geo. Miller, and others, who have struck out independently and see the end which their course has led them to. As the Savior said, "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

[JD 24:121, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

There is no other way for the brethren of the Apostles, the Presidents of Stakes, the Bishops of Wards and for all those who stand in authority in the Church – there is no other way for men to have the love of Christ in

them, to have the power of the Priesthood, to grow with God's Kingdom, but that they abide in the vine, be one with their brethren, keep fast to the truth, and derive their full share of the sap that comes from the roots through the body of the vine.

[JD 24:121, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

This is the principle I wish the brethren would consider. It is a beautiful figure which the Savior draws, and beautifully represents the great truth that should be fastened upon our minds, as He tried to fasten it upon the Apostles and Priesthood of His time. "Every branch in me that bringeth not forth fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

[JD 24:121, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

Then, we must look out and see that nothing offends us; that we live in harmony with all the instructions and counsels of the Church; we want to see the spirit of love and power flowing not only through the body, but through all the branches, until it reaches the utmost extremity of the vine. Not only the Apostles, Seventies and High Priests, but the Deacons and members, all who have been baptized into Christ and who abide in Him.

[JD 24:121 – p.122, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

Some of you may have noticed and seen that there are vines whose branches extend quite to the tops of the tallest trees, and that it was difficult to fell such trees because of the sustaining power of the vine. The vine bears the choicest of all fruits. This vine which God has planted in these last days is the choicest and greatest of all, and it will make itself manifest as such. And we wish all those brethren who are called to labor in the vineyard, to be in a position to attend these conferences, especially our annual conference, so that they may hear – and if they have not minds sufficiently strong to remember everything, to bring pencil and paper and take notes of all matters that need to be remembered and carried home and imparted to the people who reside in their various Stakes and Wards, Conferences and Branches.

[JD 24:122 – p.123, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

There is another beautiful illustration that might be made with regard to the vine, but I have not time save to refer to it this morning. It is this: If you take a vine that has had growth for awhile and you go carefully and dig it up from the earth, you will find that there is a very striking similarity in the roots to the appearance and character of the branches above. Did you ever notice this? Did you ever think of it? Well, this is a beautiful illustration of the order of the Priesthood in the eternal world. The Apostle in speaking concerning these matters, refers to a "hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." The Priesthood behind the veil are all interested in us, all anxious for us, all ready to minister to us as far and as fast as occasion permits or requires, as the roots continually generate nourishment and minister to the branches or top of the tree; so that we may be found efficient in our spheres and in our fields of labor. We ought never to feel that we are alone. We cannot be alone. We ought to know we cannot live without them, nor they live and be glorified without us. And while this responsibility is extended to us, we should sense that we and they are parts of the great whole of father Adam's family, and that there is a responsibility resting upon us that is great and that is general. This vine has yet to yield great and glorious fruits, while its branches must fill the earth and the fowls of heaven, the angels, will lodge in them. What are we doing to bring forth these fruits? What to promote the growth of this vine in the earth? What are you Presidents of Stakes doing? Do you realize that you are raising up and professedly educating in the name of the Lord a nation of Kings and Priests to God? Do you impress upon the hearts of the Saints that this is our work? Do you instruct the Teachers, and those of the lesser Priesthood how to deal with the people, and to see that there is no iniquity permitted in their midst? This is the kind of fruit that grows on this vine, brethren, and this is the kind of fruit that you are called upon to nourish, strengthen and protect. And don't you know the grape must not only grow but it must gain color. The fruit must be fully ripened. It is a fruit that needs a good

deal of warm sunny weather, the sunshine of the Holy Spirit. It can only ripen in that right kind of climate, and that climate is right here – the shining of the sun of the Holy Spirit and the understanding thereof. This nation of "kings and priests" must be so reared that when the Savior comes He will find a people ready to receive Him; a people who shall be full of the faith and the power of the Gospel; a people whose lives shall in all respects comport with the character of Saints of God; in fact, who shall be the people that the Apostle John speaks of when he says: "They sung a new song, saying, 'Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, tongue, and people and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth.'" This was their song of joy and rejoicing, which was expressive of the glory and power, exaltation and gladness that filled their souls.

[JD 24:123, Franklin D. Richards, April 7, 1883](#)

There are other interesting and important phases of our great work which bear a striking analogy to the vine and its branches, but I cannot take time to dwell upon them now, lest I wrong those who have yet to address you. I think perhaps I have said enough to call your attention to the subject and the Spirit will aid you to pursue it. My earnest desire is that we may master this and all principles of the Gospel, and make them our own eternal riches, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

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John Taylor, April 8th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, (Annual Conference) April 8th, 1883.

(Reported by Gibbs and Irvine.)

THE GOSPEL LIKE LEAVEN – LABOR REQUIRED OF THE ELDERS – PROMISES TO  
ABRAHAM – HONORABLE MEN IN THE AMERICAN NATION FORMERLY AND NOW – LIBERTY  
IN RELIGION AND THE ELECTIVE FRANCHISE CLAIMED AS RIGHTS – THE SAINTS  
CANNOT AFFORD TO DO WRONG – RELATIONSHIP TO GOD – EXHORTATION.

[JD 24:123 – p.124, John Taylor, April 8th, 1883](#)

We have had a very interesting Conference, and a great many very excellent principles have been presented to the people. As I told the Priesthood last evening we are occupying a very peculiar position in the earth, a position that has not been of our own seeking. God has set His hand to accomplish His purposes upon the earth, and for this purpose He has revealed Himself from the heavens, as we have heard since this Conference commenced. In pursuance of this He has manifested Himself and His Son Jesus Christ, and has restored the Holy Priesthood by and through the medium of a Priesthood, or various parts of a Priesthood that existed in former ages – those holding that everlasting Priesthood, which administers in time and in eternity, have been

commissioned from the heavens to come to the earth to bring to pass the very things of which they themselves had prophesied. Although we are, comparatively speaking, a small people, few in number, yet as it was in the days of Jesus so it is to-day. The Gospel is like a little heaven put into a certain portion of meal, and it is working and operating, and the ultimate result will be that the whole lump will be leavened. Not that everybody that is in the world will obey the Gospel; but the Lord will have His own way in manipulating His affairs, and great tribulation will overtake the inhabitants of the earth. As you have heard, many of the wicked will slay the wicked; but after these things have taken place the good, the honorable, the virtuous, the pure, those that are desirous to serve God will all have their position, and that thing will be fulfilled which was spoken of by Jesus – "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." The time will yet come when the Saints of the Most High will take the kingdom and hold the dominion under the whole heavens. These are principles that are familiar to us all. In the meantime, however, many important events have to take place, and a great labor has to be performed, and will be performed by the agencies which have been introduced by the Lord, and which will be hereafter introduced by Him for the accomplishment of His purposes, and the bringing to pass of His righteous will. For this purpose the Holy Priesthood has been restored; for this purpose the message of life and salvation has been proclaimed to the nations of the earth; for this purpose after the reception of the Gospel, the people have been gathered together in order that the Lord might have a people who would be under the influence of His Holy Spirit. We have all been baptized by one baptism, and have all partaken of the same Spirit, and wherever these ordinances have been administered according to the order of God, and have been received by the faithful among the nations of the earth, these effects have always followed. I have been among the nations myself, and I have been baptized people and confirmed them at least in three different languages, and the same spirit rested upon all of those different people, and so it is throughout all nations. The Lord has said he would gather together His elect from the four quarters of the earth. And how does He do it? By operating upon the minds of those who obey the Gospel. Jesus said in His day and it is true to-day – "My sheep hear my voice and know it, and follow me and a stranger they will not follow because they know not the voice of a stranger." It is under the influence of this Spirit that we have been gathered together. We used to sing:

[JD 24:124, John Taylor, April 8th, 1883](#)

Whither shall we follow, follow, follow;

Whither shall we follow, follow thee?

All the way to Zion, all the way to Zion,

All the way to Zion,

We will follow thee.

[JD 24:124 – p.125, John Taylor, April 8th, 1883](#)

What made you gather here? The impulse of the Spirit of the living God, and you could not keep away. We have representatives here from very many nations to-day. Here are Elders who have preached the Gospel in many nations. A few years ago we had some twenty-five nationalities represented at one of our public demonstrations. And thus our work is to go on and spread and increase. The Apostles, the Seventies, the Elders, and men who have received the light of truth, will spread forth that light to others of the family of God throughout the world. This is a labor resting upon the Elders of Israel, and until it is accomplished we shall not have fulfilled our mission here upon the earth. Then, again, we have other works to perform associated with the Church, with the Kingdom and with the Zion of God. I think sometimes that we as a people are a good deal sectarian in our feelings, and it is necessary for us occasionally to look at the pit from whence we were dug, and the rock from whence we were hewn. We are all too ready to cry out, as the sectarians do in their different orders,

"The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord,

The temple of the Lord are we."

And we are apt to forget sometimes the mission that God has placed upon us, which is a mission of mercy, a mission of light, a mission of intelligence, a mission that is calculated to elevate the world of mankind even all those who will receive and obey it. It is not intended for us alone; it is intended for all men. Who are the world, and who are we? We say we are the children of God our Heavenly Father. That is true; we are the children of God our Heavenly Father. And is God our Father? The Scriptures say so. But what of the rest of the world – say of this nation, and all other nations – what of them? Whose children are they? They are also the children of our Heavenly Father, and He is interested in their welfare as He is in ours; and as a kind and beneficent father towards His children, He has been seeking from generation to generation to promote the welfare, the happiness, and the exaltation of the human family. And let me say here, that He is the fountain of life, the fountain of light, and the fountain of intelligence, as we used to say in the Church of England when I was a little boy, and I suppose they say so now; it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture," He provides for us. We sometimes talk about the hand of God being over us. Of course it is, and will be over us forever, if we will only serve Him, for He is always true. But His hand is over the nations of the earth also. He is interested in the welfare of this nation and all other nations and all other peoples as well as in our welfare. What was the greatest blessing conferred upon Abraham? One was that his seed should be numerous as the stars of heaven, and as the sand upon the sea shore. I do not know that he would have got along very well in this land now adays; they would have been after him for polygamy. People do not believe so much in these things now as they did formerly. Nevertheless, the Lord told him to take another wife; but, then, perhaps the Lord made a mistake, He had not studied modern Christianity; He was, to use the language of the advanced Christian, behind the times. But whatever may be thought or said about it, according to the record that has come down to us, He used to talk to people in that day.

But let me refer you to another blessing connected with Abraham, namely, that in him and his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed. Or, in other words, that God would honor him by making of him and his seed agents through whom He would communicate truth, intelligence and salvation to the world. It is said "the glory of God is intelligence," and He is desirous to impart this intelligence to the human family, that through it they may be exalted to the Godhead. Abraham's posterity were to stand as messengers of God, as legates of the skies, commissioned of the great Jehovah to proclaim His word to fallen man, even to His children; for God has made, we are told, of one blood all the families of the earth, and has given unto them a portion of His Spirit, if haply they would feel after Him, although He is not far from any one of us. For in Him we live, and move, and have our being. And under the influence of His Spirit man has accomplished very much good; and to-day there are hosts of honorable, upright men who in their hearts fear God, but they have not yet found the right way. But in the providences of His mercy He has gathered a people from the nations that they may be taught and instructed in regard to the laws of life and salvation. And this has been brought about in fulfillment of ancient prophecy. Jeremiah, for instance, in referring to it said, that he would take them one of a city and two of a family, and bring them to Zion. And what was He to do with them when He should get them there? He would give them pastors after His own heart who should feed them with knowledge and understanding. And the same great event is referred to by other Prophets.

I was very much pleased with the remarks made by Brother Erastus Snow, with regard to our own nation, in which he said that it had been by and through the power of Almighty God, and in accordance with the words



of the Lord as contained in the Book of Mormon, that the people were, in the first place, impelled to come here, and after coming here, to contend for human freedom upon this land; and it was by and through the power of God, that the fathers of this country framed the Declaration of Independence, and also that great palladium of human rights, the Constitution of the United States. There is nothing of the bigoted, narrow, contracted feeling about that instrument; it is broad and comprehensive. And they had a bell in Philadelphia, which I, and perhaps many of you have seen, upon which was written, "Proclaim liberty throughout the land, and to all the inhabitants thereof;" but I was sorry to see that the bell was cracked. I suppose it got cracked after the grand effort that was made to proclaim liberty throughout the land; and I have thought since that it has not been soldered up yet. But with all the weaknesses and imperfections associated with men, the government of this nation has been a great bulwark for human freedom, and I felt proud at the time when Mr. Edmunds, with his colleagues, introduced his bill, known as the Edmunds' bill, that there was such a number of gentlemen who had the manhood and the moral courage to oppose it in the bold and manly way in which they did, showing plainly that they cherished in their bosoms the principles contained in the Constitution. I respect such men, and they command the respect and esteem of all honorable, right-thinking people. They could afford to render themselves unpopular in the eyes of religious bigots and fanatical politicians, but they could not afford to be amongst those that are ready to tear down the bulwarks of human freedom, and trail in the dust the flag of our country. They did not believe in our religion. Of course, that is a matter of their own, it is none of our business, neither is our religion any of their business, which they understand and appreciate. There are two things that I have felt very decided upon ever since I could comprehend anything; one was that I would worship God as I pleased without anybody's dictation; and that I would dictate to no man his faith, neither should any man dictate to me my faith; and the other was that I would vote as I pleased. And I entertain the same sentiments to-day. When the Commissioners, operating under the Edmunds' law, made their extraordinary rulings and authorized the administering of the test oath, declaring who should vote and who should not, I could not help remarking that people were acting very foolishly, that they did not know what they were doing; but whether they knew it or not their attempts to wrest from this people their rights and liberties, were not more or less than indirect attempts to tear down the bulwarks of American liberty. But in this inexcusable attack upon human rights and the principles of liberty we can take no part. What then will we do? They have no right, it is true, to interfere with us in the way they have done; they have no right, it is true, to prohibit us from voting without a hearing and without a trial; they have no right, it is true, to present to us a test oath, it being illegal and contrary to our rights as American citizens. But we will submit gracefully for the time being, withdraw from the polls, rather than act in the capacity of obstructionists; and when the time comes we will test these proceedings according to the laws of the land, and the principles of liberty guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States, which we recognize and respect. Have we yielded up our franchises? No, we have not. Will we ever do it? No, never; no, never. Have we in the least backed down from the principles by which we have been guided from the beginning? No; we still mean to live by them and to maintain them, and to contend for our rights, not by dynamite or nitroglycerine, but to do so legally and constitutionally, not only in defense of our own rights, but the rights and liberties of our children and those of every free man throughout the land. This is the course we propose taking.

[JD 24:127 – p.128 – p.129, John Taylor, April 8th, 1883](#)

As I before stated we have been called from the nations of the earth by Him who is our Father, we being His children. And He has told us to ask, and we shall receive. He has told us to seek and we shall find; to knock and it shall be opened to us. Very well. What shall we do? We will use the best means we can to defend our rights; and after we have done this we will then go to our Heavenly Father and ask Him to help us. Will He do it? Yes. Has He done it? Yes, and we acknowledge His hand in regard to these things. He has heard our prayers without noise, without tumult. He has told us thus far that if we will continue to obey Him and to observe His laws, He will deliver us and direct us even to the end. And we need have no fears whatever about the result. He has promised us that inasmuch as we do His will and keep His commandments, He will fight our battles. And I feel confident and perfectly easy, and I felt just as easy during the furore and commotion that raged through the land a few months ago as I do to-day; knowing, as I do, that if we will perform our part, the Lord will not fail to do His. Because others act foolishly we cannot afford to imitate them. We profess to be the Zion of God, the pure in heart. We profess to be men and women of integrity, of truth and

virtue, and to have faith in God. This must not only be our profession, but our practice; we must carry out and fulfill the word and will and law of God. Jesus taught His disciples how to pray. Said He: "Our Father who art in heaven." That is, your Father and my Father, the God and Father of the spirits of all flesh. "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name," O, God, we reverence thee; we observe thy law, and we wish to keep thy commandments, and purge ourselves from all evil, that we may be acceptable to thee. "Hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come." We reverence thee, O, God, and attribute to thee all that we have in this world, and all that we expect to have in the eternities to come. "Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come." Thy what? Thy kingdom come. That is the rule of God, the government of God, the dominion of God, the time when men will not be ashamed to acknowledge God as their Father, their friend and benefactor. "Thy kingdom come." When all will submit to thy rule, to thy law, to thy jurisdiction, to thy dominion; that thy will may be done on earth as it is done in heaven. How was it done in heaven? God spake, chaos heard, and this world rolled into existence; and so did other worlds under the same divine impulse and power. And all those systems that revolve around us were made and are upheld by the mighty power of God, who governs in the heavens above, and upon the earth beneath, and among the worlds. Whether men acknowledge that or not, the time will come on this earth when every knee shall bow to Him, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is the Christ, to the glory of God the Father. That time will come. It is not here now; but as I have said He has introduced this Gospel as the entering wedge, as the little leaven by which he can operate, that He may have a people under the influence of the Holy Ghost, a people that can hold communion with him, like so many thousand strings penetrating the eternal worlds and drawing down blessings from the Almighty, drawing fire, and life, and intelligence from Him; for we ourselves are sparks struck from the blaze of His eternal fire, emanating from God our Father, and we wish to operate with Him and for Him and under His guidance, for the accomplishment of His purposes here upon the earth. This is what we are here for. Now I come to another point. We pray "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." How is it done there? As I said, God spake, chaos heard, and the world rolled into existence, and it is supported by the mighty power of God, and who can stay His hand. Do you think that if all the Legislatures, all the Congresses, all the Parliaments, and all the Reichstags, all the Chambers of Deputies and Senates of the earth were to get together and pass a decree that the sun should rise five or ten minutes or half an hour later or earlier than it does – do you think it would have any effect upon it? I do not think it would – I think it would still go on in its usual course, and they would feel that they were dependent upon God. Do the world know that in Him we live and move and have our being? Does this congregation know that there is not one of them could leave this house unless God permitted it and sustained them in so doing? Do the nations of the earth comprehend that they are in His hands, and that he puts down one nation and raises up another according to the counsels of His will, and none can say, "Why doest thou thus." What have we to do? To begin with, we should deal justly and honorably with all men, and should seek to protect all men in their rights so far as we have the power to do so, and then to maintain our own on the same principle. And what then? Fear God and observe His laws, and we ought every one of us to place ourselves in communication with the Lord, and He has tried to make us understand this, but it seems very difficult for us to do so. It was in former times, and it is now. He says, "ask and ye shall receive." Is it not a very simple thing? "Seek and ye shall find." Is it not very easy. "Knock and it shall be opened unto you." But says He, you do not understand it aright. Now, let me mention a thing to you. If a child ask of you bread, would you give it a stone – you fathers and you mothers? I think not. If the child asked a fish would you give it a scorpion." Why, no. The mother would say, "Sammy, or Mary," as the case might be, "you want some bread – well I will give you some with butter and molasses." The mother would try to meet the wishes of the children, and sometimes give them a little candy to boot. Now, then, says the Lord, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." It is very plain when you get at it, and it is very simple, and people wonder sometimes, they think it an astonishing thing that God should hear people's prayers. Why, bless your souls, that is the strongest fort we have, and when we get into any difficulty in the nation or anywhere else, we humble ourselves before the Lord – and we all need to do this, for we all have our weaknesses and imperfections; and it is necessary that He should be very merciful to us. And He is, and knows how to bear with us. We need also to know how to bear with one another, and to place ourselves in communion with God, and in doing this to purge ourselves from everything that is wrong and evil. And I tell you – you Elders of Israel, you brethren and you sisters, that if you will begin to do the will of God on the

earth as it is done in heaven, the power and blessing of God will rest upon you and upon this people, and no power will be able to injure you from this time forth. God expects us to do His will, to carry out his purposes, and if His will is ever done on the earth as it is done in heaven, where in creation will it start, if it does not start here? Let every man put himself right, and every woman and every family do the same, and all the Priesthood in all its various departments and ramifications, and let every one walk up to the line and perform his duty, and in the name of Israel's God, Zion shall arise and shine, and the glory of God shall rest upon her. Our progress is onward and upward, until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ, and loud anthems be sounded from among the nations – glory and honor and power and might and majesty and dominion be ascribed unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb forever and forever. Amen.

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George Q. Cannon, May 27th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEO. Q. CANNON,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, May 27th, 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

IMPROVEMENT AMONG THE PEOPLE – INTEREST MANIFESTED BY THE WORLD IN THE  
"MORMONS" – EVIDENCES OF DIVINITY IN THE WORK – SAME EFFECTS FOLLOW THE  
GOSPEL IN DIFFERENT AGES – AUTHORITY RESTORED – PROOFS OF JOSEPH SMITH'S  
DIVINE MISSION – PERSECUTIONS ENDURED BY THE SAINTS – REASONS FOR THE SAME.

[JD 24:130 – p.131, George Q. Cannon, May 27th, 1883](#)

It is some weeks since I have had the opportunity of meeting with the Saints in the Tabernacle. Our time has been spent in visiting the various settlements north and south, and has been spent most agreeably in holding quarterly conferences. A great change has been effected in our Territory within the past few years in furnishing facilities for traveling to and fro and visiting the settlements which were once quite remote from this city. I have no doubt that these visits are appreciated by the people who are visited. They certainly are by those who make the visits. The growth and the development of the people, their increase in the knowledge of those principles that pertain to salvation as well as to this earthly existence, is so apparent that it is exceedingly gratifying to witness it. The Lord is very visibly working out His great designs and purposes in connection with this work with which we are identified. Every one who is connected with the work and who realizes its character does seek, as I believe by observation, more diligently to comprehend the nature of the duties and responsibilities which rest upon him or her. The various organizations in the shape of Primary Associations, of Sunday Schools, of Mutual Improvement Associations, of Relief Societies, as well as the meetings of the various quorums of the Priesthood, are all having a very marked effect as I can observe myself, upon the people. I probably am in a better position than many to judge of the effect of these organizations; for the reason that it has not been my privilege to visit the settlements of late years so

extensively as some of my brethren. I notice a great increase of zeal, of devotion, and above all, of knowledge concerning the work of the Lord and the labors connected therewith. And I am thankful that this is so, for certainly with the increase of the facilities to which I have referred in our Territory, there has been a corresponding increase of evils which have to be contended with and overcome, and knowledge and understanding and wisdom are necessary on the part of the Latter-day Saints to enable them to cope successfully with these evils. In our former condition of isolation it was not a matter of such great moment for the people to be trained as they now are. They were not exposed to the influences of an adverse and hostile character like they are to-day. With the change in circumstances there has come a corresponding change, it may be said, in strictness of organization, and, as I have remarked, I am happy to say a corresponding increase of knowledge. We have many things to cope with at the present time, which those who resided here 25 years ago knew little or nothing about. And it is an excellent feature of this system which God has established, that it is so admirably adapted to all the circumstances which may surround the children of men. God bestows wisdom according to the occasion and to the necessities of the case, and He gives strength and power to those who seek after them in the right spirit. He has done so from the beginning and He will do so until the end.

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When the Elders of this Church have gone forth and preached the Gospel, calling upon the inhabitants of the earth to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and repent of their sins and to be baptized for the remission of them, those who submitted to these requirements received the strength and the grace necessary to enable them to contend with the difficulties which immediately surrounded them. God poured His spirit upon them. God gave unto them a testimony concerning the truth of the work with which they had identified themselves. He gave unto them the strength necessary to overcome all the obstacles which laid in their pathway, and they were filled with joy and peace, and from that day until the present the man or the woman who has thus bowed in submission to the requirements of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ has been sustained, upheld, strengthened and delivered. The strength and the grace, the gifts and the blessings which God has promised have been abundantly bestowed and have made the individual who has received them equal to every emergency. And that which is true concerning individuals is true concerning this entire people in their collective capacity. As difficulties have increased, as obstacles have had to be overcome, and the condition of affairs has changed and seemingly grown more threatening, they have had strength and grace and power given unto them commensurate with the trials they have had to meet. And God's hand has thus been manifested in the most wonderful manner in the eyes of those who believe and who have had faith, and they have had causes for thanksgiving and praise to God every day that they have lived.

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Now, the whole work from its inception until the present time is a marvel and a wonder. It may be termed phenomenal in the earth. It is unlike anything else that we know of. It differs from every other system that is extant among men. There are features connected with it which cannot be witnessed anywhere else. Human nature exhibits itself, it may be said, in new forms. Characteristics are developed in connection with this work which may truly be said to be unique. You cannot witness their exhibition among any other people, nor in any other land. And it is a remarkable thing that though the Latter-day Saints number so few, comparatively speaking, there is no topic to-day that can be broached in the hearing of any of the people of Christendom that excites the interest that "Mormonism" does. And yet if you ask men the reason of this, it would be difficult for them to account for it. They only know that the fact exists; that to them and to the world at large it is a topic of unflagging interest. The "Mormons" are looked upon as a peculiar people. Let a "Mormon" travel anywhere in the United States or in Europe or in other lands, and it be known that he is a "Mormon," he will attract more attention than any other man. Why is this? Is it because the people are so numerous? Is it because they are so wealthy? Is it because they exercise such political power? Is it because they wield such influence in the affairs of the children of men! No, it cannot be said that any of these causes exist to any extent. The "Mormons" are not a numerous people. The "Mormons" are not a wealthy people. The "Mormons" do not wield political influence to any extent, nor influence of any other character outside of their own society. What, then, is it that constitutes this, I may say, attractiveness or this interest in men's minds concerning this organization? "Oh,"

says one, "it is because you marry more wives than one. You believe in plural marriage, and that excites interest and causes talk and attracts attention; it is that that makes you so noticeable."

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Perhaps so. But it is not many years since we did not believe in this, since it was not a practice of this Church, and yet in those days a "Mormon" was as much an object of curiosity as he is to-day – that is, in proportion to the celebrity that attended the name. "Mormonism" was as much talked about according to the extent it was known as it is to-day. It excited as much curiosity. It aroused as much hatred. It called forth as much persecution, in fact, the most severe persecution that, as a people, we have ever endured, we received prior to the announcement by our Church that we believed in this peculiar doctrine. I have no doubt that our espousal and advocacy of this doctrine has given us considerable notoriety. It has added to our celebrity. But our celebrity has not consisted alone in this. As I have remarked, our organization aroused as deep antipathies prior to the revelation of this doctrine as it has ever done since.

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Now, we have our own method of accounting for this great interest that it taken in this work. It is admitted too freely for the truth that we are an illiterate people. It is said that we are under the control of impostors, shrewd men, who lead the masses and bend them to their will. This is said concerning us everywhere. To account for the ingathering of the people from the nations of the earth men have recourse to many theories, or to several at least, one of which is that our Elders go out to the ignorant and unlearned and the down-trodden, and depict in glowing colors the beauties of this land of ours and the blessings that they will receive if they will only gather here; and that by these glowing tales and by persuading them that they can have all the wives they want when they come here, they induce the ignorant hordes of Europe to come to this country. This is one of the popular methods of accounting for the ingathering of the people from the nations of the earth and their adhesion to the "Mormon" cause.

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Well, now, if this were true, I would consider it one of the greatest miracles ever wrought among men, for this reason, that people influenced by such notions could not be held together in a land like this. It would be an impossibility to bind people together in such bonds as exist among the Latter-day Saints in Utah Territory, if they were people of this character. They would fall to pieces by their own corruptions. There would not be any cementing influence among them to hold them together one month if these were the influences which drew them here. But no observing man or woman who travels through this Territory, and mingles with the people can be deceived by any such nonsense as this. They would see in a few days that there was some other influence, that there was some other power, that there was a principle of union among this people that could not originate in such a system as "Mormonism" is popularly represented to be.

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What, then, is it that causes the Latter-day Saints to be so much noticed? What is it that has drawn them together from the various nations of the earth and produced this phenomenal condition of affairs that we witness here? Is it the shrewdness of men? Is it the power and authority of men? Then for God's sake and for the sake of suffering humanity, let some men band themselves together and do, in the name of God and true religion, that which the Latter-day Saints are accused of doing in the name of imposture and false religion. Here is an opportunity for Christendom to test this matter. They have learning, they have wealth, they have everything at their back – the popular sects, who claim to be orthodox and to worship God according to the Bible, and to divine truth, have all these – if they can do, in the name of God and true religion, that which we are doing, as they say, in the name of a false religion and as impostors, let them go to work, unite themselves together, and accomplish something like this for the sake of suffering humanity. The Latter-day Saints are gathered from the nations of the earth – the poor, the unlearned, the ignorant. Our Elders preached the Gospel

to them as they understood it, and under its influence and by its influence they are successful in gathering out a few. This Territory is being peopled by them. They are being taught how to live, how to better their earthly condition, how to improve their minds, how to acquire sound education and sound knowledge; they are being taught to live in love, in peace, to avoid litigation, to avoid strife, to avoid contention, to avoid everything of this character, and to love one another. How successful we are in this let those who travel through the Territory bear testimony. If we had our way there would be no drinking saloons from Franklin in the north to St. George in the south. If the courts would let us have our way, we would banish drunkenness from our land, or rather we would keep it from our land as we did in the beginning, for there was a time when there was nothing of the kind to be witnessed. But, unfortunately for us, it seems, some of our charters were defective. We found we did not have the power that we thought we had. The courts ruled against us, against the exercise of such power as we wielded, and we were compelled to let down the bars. Hence in Ogden, in Salt Lake City, and perhaps in some other few places, there are drinking saloons. But if we had our way, as Latter-day Saints, there would be no drinking saloons, there would be no houses of ill fame, there would be no gambling saloons, there would be nothing of this character permitted in our cities or in our settlements. We would not only be free from litigation and strife, as I have said we are as a people, but we would be free from those other evils, those other vices.

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Now, we know very well that according to the word of God as it has come down to us in this sacred volume [the Bible] union and love were two of the great characteristics that attended the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. "By this," says one of the Apostles, "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Jesus taught His disciples to be one. He prayed to the Father that they might be one as He and the Father were one, and not only that they might be one, but that those who should believe in their words might be one also. That prayer of the Savior was answered upon His disciples. They were distinguished everywhere for their oneness and for their love, and wherever they went preaching the Gospel that Jesus committed unto them, those who obeyed their teaching and submitted to the ordinances which they administered, received the same spirit.

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Now, it is a remarkable feature of this organization called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, that the same effects follow the proclamation of its principles; not in one land, but in every land where it has been carried by the Elders of this Church.

[JD 24:135, George Q. Cannon, May 27th, 1883](#)

When Joseph Smith in his youth had revealed to him that God was about to restore the old Gospel in its ancient power and simplicity, and accompanied by its ancient gifts, and was told that the authority to administer its ordinances should also be restored, it seemed, I suppose, to look at it naturally at that time, as though it would be an impossible thing to accomplish. The earth was full of religion, so called. There were any number of men professing to be followers of Jesus Christ, any number of men professing to be His ministers, professing to have the power and authority to administer the ordinances of His Church, until men were actually confused and distracted in their thoughts – and especially when they came to select the form of doctrine that they wanted to espouse – by the multiplicity of sects, each one claiming to be the true church of Christ. But Joseph Smith was told that this would be the effect when God would reveal His Gospel. It was foreshadowed to him in the plainest possible manner that which we now behold. The effect of the preaching of the true Gospel would be that persecution would be aroused. He was shown the hatred he would have to contend with, and all the adverse influences that have had to be overcome from that day until the present. Joseph Smith was told that there was no authority upon the face of the earth to administer the ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He was told that there was no church which God recognized as His own, while there were many that had parts of the truth, portions of the Gospel. There was no church which God acknowledged amid the multiplicity of sects as His. He was told to wait until the Lord should give the power

and communicate the authority. Now, though he had received this communication from heavenly messengers, Joseph Smith did not presume to take one step towards organizing a church because of the fact that he had received communications of this character. According to popular ideas, if a man had received a communication of this kind from heaven it would have been sufficient justification to him to have gone to work and organized a church. But he did not do this. He waited, and a heavenly messenger, as he testifies, came and laid his hands upon his head and ordained him to the authority that was necessary for man to hold in order to baptize his fellow-men in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. When he received that authority he commenced to baptize, and not till then. But there was still a power lacking. The Apostles had a power beyond that which John the Baptist exercised. John said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" – referring to the Savior. And when He came He came in the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood, as it is termed. John held merely the authority to baptize for remission of sins. But he could not lay on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost. And when, on one occasion after the death of the Savior, Philip went and preached the Gospel to Samaria, and people were converted and baptized, he did baptize them, but he did not lay on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost. He did not have, apparently, the authority to do so. But when the Apostles heard that people in Samaria had received the Gospel, they sent unto them Peter and John, who, when they came, laid their hands upon them and they received the Holy Ghost. In like manner Joseph Smith received the authority by divine or by heavenly administration to baptize men for the remission of their sins, but he had not then the authority to lay on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost. He afterwards did receive it, as he testifies, through the administration of the three Apostles, who presided over the Twelve in the days that they lived upon the earth, namely, Peter, James and John; they came to him and laid their hands upon him and ordained him to the Apostleship, the same authority that they themselves held, and authorized him to go forth and to build up the Church of Christ as it was built up in ancient days; and then having baptized people he commenced to lay on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost.

[JD 24:135, George Q. Cannon, May 27th, 1883](#)

"But," says one, "I do not believe in the administration of angels. I think that angels have ceased to come. While I believe that many ancient servants of God did receive the administration of angels, I think they have ceased to administer, and when I hear people assert that they have not, it always creates in my mind a feeling of doubt, and I think anybody an imposter who asserts he has received the administration of angels in these days."

[JD 24:135 – p.136, George Q. Cannon, May 27th, 1883](#)

Perhaps so. But suppose that the statement that Joseph Smith says the angel made to him should be true – that there was no church upon the face of the earth whom God recognized as His, and whose acts He acknowledged – suppose this were true, and that from the Catholic Church down to the last church that was organized there was no one church that held the authority in its primitive power and purity – suppose this were so, how in the world can the authority be restored unless heavenly messengers do come and bring it from heaven? If the Priesthood, and the authority, power and gifts of the Priesthood were taken from the earth and taken back to heaven, how can man ever receive it again unless some beings from the heavenly world come and restore it to man again? You can readily see that if you grant one proposition, the other must necessarily follow. There must be divine communication from heaven or the authority could not be restored. But how shall we tell that it is restored – by what signs? What are the evidences by which we can judge of the restoration of this divine power?

[JD 24:136 – p.137 – p.138, George Q. Cannon, May 27th, 1883](#)

Joseph Smith went forth and he ordained other men to go forth – gave them the authority under God, he being commanded of God to impart this authority to others who were suitable, on the same principle that Moses imparted the authority to Aaron, "being called of God as was Aaron." And they went forth and called upon the

people to believe in Jesus and to repent of their sins, and to be baptized for the remission of them, and they promised them that if they would believe in Jesus Christ, repent of their sins and be baptized in His name for a remission of them, they should receive the Holy Ghost, and it should produce the same effects upon them in these days that it did upon those who received it anciently. Now, here was a promise that no man that we know anything about was authorized to give aside from him. In all the churches of which we have any knowledge, there has yet to be heard the promise made by one of its ministers to the humble believer who submits to its ordinances, that he shall receive the Holy Ghost as they did in ancient days, with its accompanying gifts and blessings and powers. But Joseph Smith made this promise. The world have the opportunity of testing it. If people did not receive the Holy Ghost, then he was an impostor. If they did receive it, then his ministry was sealed by the power of God, and it was indisputable. The best possible means was given to the human family of testing his claims and his statements. He was either an impostor, trying to deceive the people, or he was a man of God, for it cannot be supposed that heaven would lend itself to an imposture, or that heaven would aid in any manner in fostering a deception. But wherever the Elders of this Church have gone preaching this Gospel, declaring unto the people these tidings, there have been men and women who have come forward and submitted to the ordinances which they administered, and who testify, in the name of Jesus Christ, that they did receive the promised blessings; and they have gathered out from the various nations of Europe, some from Asia, some from far-off Africa and the islands of the sea, and every State in the United States; they have gathered out, until now they are numbered by thousands and tens of thousands throughout these valleys, and wherever you mingle with the people and talk to them, either in their own habitations, by their firesides, in the streets, in the public gatherings, or wherever they may be, the universal testimony of these people called Latter-day Saints is that they, in obedience to the requirements which were communicated unto them by the servants of God, received the promised blessings, and the Holy Spirit has been poured out upon them, and the gifts thereof have rested down upon them. And as an evidence of this we see this union that I have spoken of. We witness this love. We see the gathering of the people together. We see such a love as is an example anywhere upon the face of the earth – the love that exists in the midst of the Latter-day Saints in these mountains. You may traverse the wide earth and go to every religious denomination, and even to those of Pagan belief, and nowhere else will you see such an exhibition as this I have spoken of, as you witness here. And yet these people are illiterate. These people are unlearned. These people are weak. These people have come from various nations of the earth. These people have been brought up in different creeds, belonging to different churches, speaking different languages, they have been trained in different habits; not of one nation, not of one form of thought, not gathered together from one township, or from one neighborhood, but from various nations and neighborhoods with this diversity of belief – that is, of former belief and education and training. Now, what would this principle accomplish amongst a more homogeneous people than ours? – a people more united than ours originally, more one in thought and training – what, I say, would this principle accomplish among such a people as this that I allude to? Why, we can imagine what it will be in years to come, as the rising generations of this people grow to manhood and womanhood under the influence of this principle – we can imagine what the results will be – a people banded together as no other people upon the face of the earth are by the bonds of the new and everlasting covenant, by the bonds of the Holy Priesthood that God has restored to the earth, and by the administration of those divine ordinances which constituted the power of the Church of Christ when it was upon the earth. It is the old Gospel restored again. You cannot point to a single feature that characterized the Gospel of Jesus as it was administered by His Apostles that is not to be witnessed among the Latter-day Saints – not a single feature. I defy the world to point to a single one. Every characteristic that made it great, that made it divine, belongs to this Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Were the ancient Saints persecuted? So are we. Did they die for the truth of their principles? So have many of our people. Did they have to flee from their homes? Were they driven by their enemies because of their religion. So have we had to flee from our homes in this nineteenth century, in this land of boasted liberty, the proudest nation and the freest nation upon the face of the globe – we have had to flee to these mountains and take refuge here because we believed in those ancient principles, and because we contended for the restoration of this ancient power. And now even in these mountains our homes are envied and men would destroy us; not because we are vile; not because we do injury to our fellows; not because our land is a land of wickedness, because it is not; not because we are full of strife and war upon our neighbors and seek to destroy them; not because of any of these things is our destruction



sought; but because we believe that God has spoken from the heavens; because we believe in a Church that has Prophets and Apostles, and has the Holy Ghost and its gifts in it; because we believe in living together in love and not fighting each other, and are not pitted against each other in parties; and because of this we are considered dangerous, and our existence is considered a menace to our neighbors. Hear and think of it! That a people with the virtues that I declare we possess, are looked upon as a menace to our neighbors, and that our destruction is a desirable thing.

JD 24:138, George Q. Cannon, May 27th, 1883

Now, while we do not profess to have the faith that we should have – we could all do with more – yet it is the aim, it is the object of the teachings of the Elders of this Church to endeavor to instill into the minds of the people faith in God, to have them contend earnestly, as the Scriptures say, "for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints." While this is the aim and the object of the teachings of the Elders – and we are well aware of the weakness of the people – yet we do testify, in the most solemn manner, that God has restored the ancient gifts that were in the Church. The sick are healed. There are hundreds of families in this Territory, thousands of them who never think of anything else but sending for the Elders, as the Apostle James said they should do, in cases of sickness. "Is any sick among you? let him call for the Elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick," said the Apostle. Now, among the people called Latter-day Saints, this is an almost universal practice, and we solemnly testify that – while we are far from being what we should be, far from having that faith we should have – there are numerous instances of the sick being healed by the laying on of hands. You know this, my brethren and sisters. Not only have the sick been healed, but the blind have been restored to sight, the deaf have been made to hear, and the power of God has been manifested in accordance with the promises he has made. And it is the outpouring of the Spirit in this manner, the confirmation of God's promises upon the people, that makes the Latter-day Saints so united. It is not the strength of imposture. It is not the delusion of shrewd men. It is not because wicked men have deceived this people. It would be impossible to hold them together under such conditions. To do so would be a great miracle than that which we now behold in the existence of the people. To see a people united together and scattered as they are over this extent of territory held together by a few impostors, – no, such a thing is abhorrent to reason. No man with reason can believe such a statement, and accept that as the solution of this organization – that is, of the problem connected with it. No man can think of it. There is something more than this. There is some power beyond this; for, as I have said, if it were not so, we should have some exhibition on the part of good men in establishing such a system as we now behold. One would think they would show their power in organizing. But it is the outpouring of the Spirit of God. Men and women and children, throughout all the congregations of the Latter-day Saints in all these settlements, if they had the opportunity, would bear solemn testimony, in the name of Jesus Christ, that they did receive those promised blessings, that that was the cause of their continuing their association with the people of God, and that that was the reason of their gathering with them to this land or of their coming here.

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Now, I know that in talking in this strain it may sound strange to many who have no knowledge of these things. They may think it a very strange thing that men should testify in our day concerning the existence of these things. But let me ask you: Where is the man of God of whom we have any account in this book, from Genesis to Revelation, that did not have communication with God? Where is there one? Not one. You have no account of a single individual who was a servant of God from the days of Adam, our father, to John the Revelator, who did not have communication from our Father in Heaven. God communicated with the people always when they were faithful.

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"But," says one, "we have none now, and we have not had, and therefore God has ceased to communicate His mind and His will to His children."

Do not deceive yourselves. This is the cry of men who themselves are destitute of this power and of this knowledge, and who take this means of accounting for it, and of making people believe that the present condition of things is the condition that should exist and that God designed to exist.

JD 24:139 – p.140, George Q. Cannon, May 27th, 1883

I do not wish to reflect upon any other body of people or upon any sect; I believe there are thousands of excellent people in the world – people as good as any that are numbered in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints – scattered through all the sects and in the Pagan world and in the infidel world. I do not confine my feelings of admiration to those who believe even in Jesus, the Son of God, whom I view as my Redeemer and my Savior. I believe that there are thousands, and it may be said millions of well-meaning, good people, whom God loves, that are numbered among the Pagans and that are numbered among the infidels to Christianity. But at the same time while I thus believe, I know that God has revealed His everlasting Gospel to be preached to the inhabitants of the earth, and when light comes, if men reject it, condemnation follows. And this is the condemnation of our present generation. A great prophet has arisen in their midst. They do not believe it. They do not believe that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God. They basely and cowardly slew him. Yet he was a Prophet of God, just as much as Elijah, or as Isaiah was, or as any of the ancient Prophets were, and he has founded a system that will grow, that will increase, that will yet be the dominating power in the earth, because the promises of God are to this effect. And this is the sin of this generation. This man came in their midst bringing to them gifts from God, bringing to them a message of love and salvation, and they cruelly and basely slew him in the most abominable manner. But like all the Prophets, his blood has not been avenged. Who ever heard of people being punished for killing a Prophet? Who ever heard of the people turning round and punishing his murderers? Such a case is not known in the history of the world. And it is true concerning Joseph Smith. His blood stains the soil of one of the sovereign States of the nation. He was slain under the pledged honor of that State that he should be protected, and yet his murderers have never been punished. And as I say, that is the sin of this generation. A church was organized by the command of God, and members of that church have been cruelly treated. They have been driven from their homes. Their pathway has been marked by the graves of those who have died in consequence of their suffering. Our track can be traced, or could be traced from Illinois by the graves of our people – men, women and children – who died of suffering, because they chose to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. And who is there that has raised his voice and said one word against this? A few men have done so – a few honorable men – have protested against it; but the great body of the people have assented to it, and have not only assented to it, but they have endeavored to follow us to our retired homes here and destroy us. They are not content we should live in this wilderness land which we found so dreadful, in many respects, and so hard to conquer. We have come here. We have conquered. We have subdued the land by continuous, persistent, and unlimited toil, and we will not cease our exertions to make this a beautiful land, and to extend hospitality to all who visit us. But we have been envied our little possessions – the fruits of our toil, the hard earnings of the last 35 years; we have been envied these; and there are those who think that the best thing that could be done with us is to extirpate us from the face of the earth, blot us out of existence. Now, I say that this is the sin of this generation. God has sent a mighty Prophet who predicted, among other things, the civil war that took place in 1861. It is on record in this book (the Book of Doctrine and Covenants). Joseph Smith warned this nation of it – twenty-eight years before it occurred. He told them the cause of it, and the consequences that would follow. This great Prophet has been in their midst, and they have slain him, and have destroyed as far as possible those who believe in his doctrine. God will hold this generation who slew the Apostles and those who lived contemporaneous with the Apostles. We may be feeble people, but we are God's people; no more than our fellow men in some respects, only so far as we obey His laws more than they do; but nevertheless we are God's people; no more than our fellow men in some respects, only so far as we obey His laws more than they do; but nevertheless we are God's people, and God will not allow His children to be slain without cause, nor be cruelly treated. He reigns in the heavens. I thank God that He has revealed himself, and that we know Him. He reigns. His justice never sleeps. We will be protected and preserved, and His anger will be poured out upon those who have merited it by their transgression. We

therefore call upon them in the name of Jesus, to repent of their sins, to turn away from wickedness and return to righteousness. And if they desire to know whether we tell the truth, let them go to God in the name of Jesus and ask Him, and we will be satisfied with the answer. That is what our Elders tell everybody wherever they go. They tell them to ask God in the name of Jesus, whether the testimony they bear be true or false. Is not this fair? Certainly it is.

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May God help you, my brethren and sisters and friends, to receive the truth and to cling to it all your lives, to love it more than life itself, that in the end you may be saved and exalted in the Kingdom of God. Amen.

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George Q. Cannon, May 6th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEO. Q. CANNON,

Delivered in the Quarterly Stake Conference, held in Logan, Cache County,

Sunday Morning, May 6th, 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

BLESSINGS ENJOYED BY THE SAINTS – IMPROVEMENT – A PERFECT LAW – WHAT WOULD  
RESULT IF THE SAINTS OBEYED THE WORD OF GOD IN ALL THINGS – PERFECT  
ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH – NO EXCUSE FOR THE SAINTS WHO SIN – HOW SATAN  
CAN BE BOUND – EXEMPTION FROM DISEASE AS A REWARD – EXHORTATION.

JD 24:141, George Q. Cannon, May 6th, 1883

I feel greatly pleased at the opportunity of meeting once more with the Saints in Conference in this place. It is nearly two years since I have had this privilege, during which time many important events have transpired. There is one thing, however, connected with the work of God which is very gratifying, that notwithstanding the perils through which we have passed, though our liberties have been menaced, and the perpetuity of the institutions of the kingdom of God have to human appearances been endangered, we still meet together this day in this Tabernacle unembarrassed from the efforts of our enemies and free to worship our God according to the dictates of our own consciences. This land to which God led us and in which He has planted us is still a land of liberty to us and to all those who are of our faith. To me this is a cause of profound thankfulness, for it is an evidence that God has not forgotten us, that the promises which he has made are still kept in remembrance by Him, and that as a people we have been living so as to receive the fulfillment of those promises and the benefits which flow from them. And there is no doubt in my mind that if the Latter-day Saints will still continue to do as they have done, will be faithful to God, and to the covenants we have made with him, and will persevere in the path which He has marked out and which we have commenced to tread, that we shall still be preserved, that we shall still have our liberty, that our enemies will not have power to disturb or interrupt us to any extent, or to bring down upon us those evils which they have sought after so

diligently.

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I believe that the testimony of the servants of God concerning the condition of the Saints in this Stake, and in other Stakes is true, and that as a people the Latter-day Saints are striving to live nearer unto their God, and to put in practice more perfectly those holy principles which He has revealed unto us. I believe there is more diligence being manifested in the various Wards and throughout the various Stakes than has been manifested in the past. I believe that there is a higher standard of life being sought after by the Latter-day Saints. I believe that the Priesthood themselves are seeking more diligently to carry out the counsels which God has given and to set examples unto the people that they shall imitate, and I know that the Spirit of God rests down upon His servants to make them more rigid in the enforcement of the laws that God has revealed unto us concerning the government of His church, so that there may be more purity, a higher standard of purity enforced and maintained among us than has been in the past.

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We have had from the beginning of this work revelations given to us concerning the lives that we should lead. We consider the Christian world who have this Bible as their guide, very delinquent, because they do not live up to the commandments which are herein contained, because they come short of obeying the requirements that God has made through the gospel as contained in the Bible, the Old and New Testament. But I often think of our own condition. We have in this book, the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, which is the word of God to us, a perfect law. Here are contained the ordinances that God requires this people, called Latter-day Saints, to obey. Now, let me ask you, brethren of the Priesthood, let me ask you, brethren and sisters of the Church, how many of us who are here to-day live in accordance with the requirements of God's word as contained in these revelations? I can truthfully say that as a people we do not live up to the requirements that God has made of us. I can truthfully say that as a people we do not obey God's commands to us – the revelations which are contained in this book, and which we receive as the word of God, not to a past generation, not to a people who lived 1800 years ago, but the word of God to us who live now and who constitute this Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This is our rule of life. This is the law for our guidance. It is embodied in this book. And how many of us, I ask again, live in conformity with it? How many of us have obeyed and do obey the word of God as it is here revealed and as it is here printed and given to us? And yet we condemn the sectarian world – all of us who have gone forth to preach the everlasting Gospel – for not obeying God's word given 1800 years ago, and have said that in consequence of this the gifts and graces and the blessings of the Gospel have been withheld from them. We have thus reasoned, we have thus proclaimed to the people and said to them that the cause of the absence of the gifts, the cause of the disappearance of the power, the cause of there being no faith in the land among the children of men to receive the blessings and the gifts of God, was to be found in the fact that they had not obeyed the commandments of God as revealed to them, or as revealed to the ancients rather, in the New Testament by the Son of God. Yet, I believe, notwithstanding what I now say respecting us, that there is a growing disposition among the people – I can feel it myself among the Priesthood, and I believe it extends to the whole body of the Church – a growing disposition to obey the word of God, as it is given to us in its plainness, in its simplicity and in its fullness, and because of this growing disposition God, having mercy upon us in our weakness and in our infirmities, blesses us as He does, and He saves us from our enemies. But you can readily perceive, if you will reflect a few moments, how much the power of this Church would be increased in the land and before the heavens if the Latter-day Saints were all to obey the word of God as it is given to us in His latter-day revelations. You can readily perceive how united and strong a people we would be, and how much the heavens would be moved in our behalf, the power that would be evoked and that would be brought down to aid us and to deliver us if we only lived in strict conformity to the words of God as they are contained in this book (the Book of Doctrine and Covenants). Each man and each woman can interrogate himself and herself upon this point. Each man can ask himself in the light of the Holy Ghost, how near he comes to fulfilling all the requirements which are here made, or how far he is from arriving at that perfection which these revelations demand, and each woman can do the same, and we can in this mirror of divine truth look at ourselves in our true light and see our reflection by the Spirit

of God as it is revealed unto us in these revelations.

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For one I know that I am far, individually, from coming up to this perfection. Yet it has been the labor of my life to be a Latter-day Saint. It has been the strongest wish of my heart all my days to be a Latter-day Saint, to be a perfect man if I could be before the Lord. Yet when I read these revelations; when I see the requirements which God has made of us as a people, I bow myself before the Lord and confess in His presence that I am far from being that which I should be, and it may be said that the same is the case with the Church.

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Now God designs that we shall be just such a people in every respect as these revelations describe. God did not give us these revelations in vain, they were not spoken idly, they were not given through the prophet of God without a purpose. There was a design on the part of God in giving them, and when you come even to the very weakest, it may be said, of the revelations, or that which is the least obligatory upon us, that which was given merely as a word of counsel – the Word of Wisdom I refer to – we can judge of the rest by the manner in which that is observed among us as a people – a matter which pertains to our bodily life and health, and which is so simple that the weakest can receive and obey it. There will be a people raised up, if we will not be that people – there will yet be a people raised up whose lives will embody in perfection the revelations contained in this book, who will live as the doctrines here taught require, as the laws here revealed show unto us, and they will be raised up, too, in this generation, and such a people will have to be raised up before Zion can be fully redeemed, and before the work of our God can be fully established in the earth. In this book, as I have said, is the pattern of the Zion of God. Here are embodied the doctrines, precepts, laws, ordinances, – everything in fact that is necessary in order to make us a perfect people before the Lord.

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The perfection that we have arrived at to-day is due to these revelations. The organization of this people is such as is not to be witnessed anywhere else on the face of the earth. You may travel from one end of the land to the other; you may travel from the equator to the poles, and in no land and among no people will you find such an organization as that which we have in this land, or rather that which belongs to this Church. And it is due to the fact, that God gave commandments through His servant Joseph Smith, by which we have been organized upon a principle and a platform that is superior to anything known among men. There is nothing to equal it. This church in its organization is adapted to a branch, to a small handful of people. It was well adapted to the condition of the six persons who composed the Church on the 6th day of April, 1830. It is as well adapted to the condition of the Saints to-day, covering hundreds of miles of territory, as it was to the six persons who composed the Church at that time. It will be as well adapted to the government and organization of the people when the Church of Christ shall extend itself throughout the earth, and when the whole people will become the people of God, when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ – just as well adapted then as it is now. God organized it; God has prepared the way for it; and when Zion is organized properly, it will be found to be as admirably adapted to the wants of the children of men as the organization of the Church is to-day to the wants of the people. There will be nothing lacking. In every particular it will be found adequate to the wants of humanity. The evils under which mankind groan to-day, are attributable to the false organization of society. The evils under which we groan as a people and from which we suffer are not due to any lack of knowledge as the method or the means that will correct these evils, but they are due to the fact that we ourselves fail to conform to the organization which God has prescribed, which God has revealed.

[JD 24:144 – p.145, George Q. Cannon, May 6th, 1883](#)

I wish we could all understand this; but it is true, it is as true as God lives, that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is admirably adapted, in fact, perfectly adapted to save man from every evil under which he groans to-day. What has it done for us? Why, as far as it has gone it has saved us; it has saved us from every evil so far as we have gone. And as for adultery, to which allusion has been made, and fornication, there are no people on the face of the earth that will be damned with a greater damnation for that sin than we, if we be guilty of it. Why? Because there is no necessity for it. The necessity that men may plead as an extenuation for their practices with the opposite sex in the world ceases to exist in the midst of the Latter-day Saints. What necessity has any man to meddle with any woman that does not belong to him? In other lands the laws make men adulterers in many instances. That is a hard saying, but it is a true one. Men are driven by their passions, very frequently, because of unjust laws, to commit crimes that their souls revolt at. But is it so with us? No. God has given unto us a more perfect law. He has commanded us to marry, all that can marry; and there is no man among us that can plead that which others may in a different state of society; no man can do that amongst us; and therefore I say that those men and women among us who commit adultery and fornication will be damned with a deeper damnation than any other people, because there is no necessity for it. If a man wants a wife he can get one among the Latter-day Saints. You organize society aright, as God contemplated in these revelations, and those evils under which we now groan – this dishonesty and this disposition to take advantage of each other – will be done away with. God has devised a plan and has revealed it, that in its operations will relieve mankind from those evils and the commission of those sins to which they are now subject. When we are organized properly theft will cease among us, for the temptation to steal will be removed. Organize us properly, and the temptation to take advantage of our neighbor will cease, because there will be no profit in it or connected with it. And it is all contained in this book. God has revealed it fifty years ago in plainness to this church, and we for fifty years have been crawling along at our slow gait without obeying the word of God, that is so plainly revealed, and that might relieve us, if we did obey it, from all those evils.

JD 24:145 – p.146, George Q. Cannon, May 6th, 1883

Now, my view of the Gospel is, that when it is obeyed by mankind the power of the devil will cease. That is my view respecting a part of the power that will be brought to bear to bind Satan. Satan will be bound because he will not have power over the hearts of the children of men. Why? One reason will be because they will have obeyed the more perfect law which will have relieved them from his power. You take the majority of the Elders of this Church, who are faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and Satan has but little or no power to tempt them to commit adultery, to commit sin with their neighbor's wife or with the opposite sex; they are to a great extent relieved from that, and so far as that crime is concerned Satan has but little power to tempt them, because they have obeyed a more perfect law. In the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as God has revealed it unto us, there are laws so perfect that when this people called Latter-day Saints shall obey them they will be so far lifted up above the power of Satan that he will have but little power to tempt them. But we never shall be emancipated from the power of Satan until we do obey these laws of God. An obedience thereto will bring emancipation to us and to every human being on the face of the earth, and it is upon no other principle that emancipation can be brought. It will not be as many suppose by our being withdrawn, without volition on our part, from the influences of Satan; but it will be by our obedience to the laws of God, by our conforming to the requirements which He makes of us, by our putting into practice all those higher laws which God has revealed, and which He designs we shall practice. Any soul that is waiting for some outward deliverance, waiting for some time to come when by some extraneous means, and independent of our action and the exercise of our agency, deliverance will be brought, he will wait in vain, I am afraid. Not that I would convey the idea that God is not going to help us, that God is not going to do it by His power; I would not convey any such idea, because I know and you know that without God's help all our efforts are powerless, and it is vain to seek to do anything in and of ourselves; we cannot do it. Human nature is too fallible to do anything of this kind; but we must exercise the powers God has given to us by obeying His law, by conforming to His requirements. In this way we will be emancipated through the blessing and aid of God upon us, and in this way the earth will be redeemed from the power of Satan. The more people obey the laws of God, as God has revealed them, and as they are embodied in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the nearer they approach unto God, the more they become like Him, the more power they get over themselves and over the adversary. If there could

be a man or a community found who lived in strict obedience to all the laws taught in this book, [Doctrine and Covenants] you would find almost a perfect people; you would find a people in the condition of the people of Enoch – that is, they would be approximating to that perfection which he and his city obtained, and which caused them to be translated.

JD 24:146 – p.147, George Q. Cannon, May 6th, 1883

When God revealed the Gospel, He designed that we should obey these laws. He taught us in the first place that it was necessary to have faith in Jesus Christ, then to be baptized for the remission of sins, then to have hands laid upon us for the reception of the Holy Ghost. Then the people that were scattered were taught to gather out from the nations of the earth. Every law that they obeyed brought salvation. Every time they bowed in obedience to the requirements of God, they brought, by their obedience, salvation to themselves and to their families, so far as their families conformed to the requirements. When they got to Zion, if they obeyed the law of tithing, it brought salvation. And so with every other law that God has taught in the revelations that have been given unto us, and the men, as I have said, who have the most faithfully complied with those requirements have emancipated themselves, through the blessing of God, the most perfectly from the power of Satan. I look upon the men and upon the women who have entered into the new and everlasting covenant concerning patriarchal marriage as being more advanced than their brethren and sisters who have not obeyed that law. And if a community were found who would enter upon the order of Enoch as God has revealed it and who would hold themselves and their property subject to that law, I should look upon them as still more in advance and still nearer to that perfection which God designs to bring about in Zion among the Latter-day Saints. It should be the aim of every man and every woman in this Church to thus conform to the law and to the will of God, because by so doing they bring salvation to themselves and to their children, and if they persevere in doing so, God will bless them in all their efforts, and they will eventually be brought to live with Him and to dwell in His presence, and to receive the exaltation and glory that He has in store for them. Now, I have obeyed those laws thus far, because I know they have these effects. I obey the Word of Wisdom – or try to obey it – because I know it brings a blessing. And in like manner I obeyed the ordinance of baptism; in like manner I submitted to have hands laid upon me for the reception of the Holy Ghost in like manner I pay my tithing; in like manner I have gone on missions and done that which God has required of me, because in each and every act of this kind I knew that God intended to bring salvation to me if I would be obedient. And I obeyed the doctrine of patriarchal marriage, upon the same principle, because I knew that it was a principle of salvation and of exaltation, and that if I would be exalted in the presence of God I must obey the law. So it will be with other laws which are yet in the future, and which God will reveal to us as we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. He will continue to give revelation upon revelation, precept upon precept, and He will reveal unto us more light and more knowledge and give unto us more power and more of the gifts and graces of the Gospel as we become more perfect in keeping the laws He has already revealed.

JD 24:147, George Q. Cannon, May 6th, 1883

It has been said – and I think all who have had any experience know that it is true – that in families where the Word of Wisdom is obeyed there is greater faith in administering the ordinances of the house of God unto those who are sick. We have a Bishop in Salt Lake City who, I believe, took an account of the number of those who were sick in his Ward, and he brought a statement to the President's office to the effect that in the families where the Word of Wisdom was strictly observed fewer deaths had occurred than in families where the Word of Wisdom was not observed. Diphtheria or some other disease was raging at that time in the city, and in his ward in particular, and his mind was turned to this matter, and after making inquiries he satisfied himself that there were more cases of healing and restorations to health through the administrations of the Elders by the laying on of hands in families where the Word of Wisdom was observed than in families where it was neglected, and that deaths were more frequent in the latter.

JD 24:147, George Q. Cannon, May 6th, 1883

[President Taylor: There were none died in the families where the Word of Wisdom was observed.]

President Taylor says there were none died in the families where the Word of Wisdom was observed. Is it not natural that this should be the case? Have we not as Elders proclaimed to the world that the sectarians do not have the gifts and graces of the gospel because they do not keep the word of the Lord, do not keep the commandments of God? Has not this been our testimony to the nations of the earth? Yes, all of us who have gone forth to proclaim the word have thus testified time and time again. Will not that rule apply to us as a people? Certainly it will. The men who obey the laws of God most perfectly, and the women who do so, have the greatest faith, and God will bless them in proportion to their faith; He will bless their families according to their faith; the gifts of the Spirit will be manifested more in their behalf than upon those who deliberately violate or are careless concerning the word of God. This is certainly true. So it is with every law that God has given. The nearer we approach unto God the more perfect we live in accordance with the revelations He has given, the more faith undoubtedly we will possess, the more God will hear us, the nearer the heavens will draw to us, the more the heavens will be opened to us to hear our cries and to answer our petitions. And, as I have said, the day will come, if we obey the laws that God has given, that Zion will be redeemed and the adversary will not have power over us to tempt us, and try us, and to afflict us as he does at the present time.

JD 24:147 – p.148, George Q. Cannon, May 6th, 1883

It may be thought I am enthusiastic in thus speaking, but I think I am not; I do not think I am the least enthusiastic on this point – that is more than I am warranted in being from that which God has said unto us as a people. I do not expect any salvation or redemption for Zion upon any other principle than this I speak of. I do not expect that Satan will be bound in any other way. Of course God will bring His power to bear; He will do it. God will have the glory of it, because it cannot be done by man. Man's power is insufficient to accomplish it. It must be done by man's obedience, by man's submission to God's law, by man's continually doing that which God commands him and requires of him, and in this way alone can it be brought about.

JD 24:148, George Q. Cannon, May 6th, 1883

It may be said, as has been said, that the seed of the righteous shall multiply and increase in the land and possess the land. But supposing we do not marry, supposing we remain single, can that blessing be brought about? In our case, certainly not. It requires obedience to law on our part to bring about the fulfillment of that promise. We must marry as a people. Men must take wives. The daughters of Eve must marry the sons of Adam in order to bring about the fulfillment of that promise. But supposing this people were to refuse to marry, neither this prophecy nor promise could be fulfilled through them; it would have to be fulfilled through some other people. Obedience is necessary on the part of the people to bring about the fulfillment of this prediction, and so also respecting the binding of Satan. God bestows the gifts and graces of the Gospel according to their obedience, and it should be the aim of every man in this Church not to rest satisfied with his own condition until he has bowed in obedience to the laws of God. If a man had but one wife, and the Spirit of God moved upon him to take more than one, should he refuse to obey the promptings of God in that respect? Not to gratify lust, not to gratify any improper passion, but to obey the law of God, because if he did not obey that he could not receive the blessing. So with all the laws in this book which are yet unfulfilled. If there be a law that we have not fulfilled, it should be the aim of every individual in this Church to prepare himself to fulfill that law as fast as he can. I look upon this as an obligation devolving upon every man, woman and child in Zion; not upon the First Presidency alone, not upon the Twelve alone, not upon the Presidents of Stakes alone, not upon the High Councilors alone, but upon every man and every woman in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; going on from the first principles to perfection, carrying out in our lives all the laws that God has revealed to us, until Zion shall be fully redeemed, and the way be prepared for the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

JD 24:148 – p.149, George Q. Cannon, May 6th, 1883



It is very wonderful to me what God has done and is doing with us as a people. When I look at this work; when I contemplate how the Prophet Joseph commenced it and how it has grown; when I see this immense congregation assembled here this morning, I cannot help thinking that if the Prophet had lived to behold such a scene, his heart would have been filled with gladness. There has been no word, no promise given unto us by the servants of God from the beginning that has not been thus far fulfilled, and the remainder will be fulfilled. God is carrying forward this work with an irresistible power, and those who will not obey the law of God will be left behind. This is an awful thought to me, there is something awful in the reflection. When I read the history of the Church and see the names of many men who have been prominent in it, I ask myself, where are these men to-day? Where is their posterity to-day? Men who in their day and generation were mighty in this work, who helped to establish it, who helped to spread it. And they have disappeared. Their names are lost from among the Saints of God. Their families have disappeared – gone into oblivion. When I think of it the thought is almost too awful to contemplate – the idea of being lost in connection with this work, this work in which all our hopes are centered, and which is dearer to us than life. Who is there among us to-day, who has the Spirit of God, who would not rather be taken out and shot on this public square than lose the spirit of this work, than be separated from the church and lost to all hope, all the promises, and all the glorious prospects of our salvation and redemption? Why, it is the most awful thought I can contemplate. The thought of it fills the soul with horror. But there is only one way in which we can remain connected with this Church, and that is by keeping step with it, by marching onward, obeying the counsel that God gives through His servants, and by being pure in all our thoughts, in all our words, and in all our actions. In no other way can any human being – however great the blessings he may have received, however great the promises which have been given unto him – ever remain connected with this work.

[JD 24:149, George Q. Cannon, May 6th, 1883](#)

Therefore, let us be obedient. Let us correct our lives if we are in fault. Let us repent of our sins and put them far from us. If we have sinned let us humble ourselves before God, and in the very depths of humility ask forgiveness of our transgressions, and let us lay ourselves and all we have – everything that God has given to us, every faculty of our mind, every power of our body, everything that God has placed within our control, all the property and everything that he has placed in our stewardship – let us hold all subject to His will and to His counsel, willing to go, willing to come, willing to give, willing to withhold, willing to do everything that God requires of us with glad hearts, for in doing so we secure unto ourselves our salvation and exaltation.

[JD 24:149, George Q. Cannon, May 6th, 1883](#)

My brethren and sisters, you who have tasted of this precious word of God; you whose souls have been filled with the Holy Ghost; you who have felt its joy, its peace, and the glorious feelings that it produces in the human heart – would you forego this for anything else upon the face of the earth? Would you exchange it for anything else? No, you would not. You have seen the time – every one of you who have had the Holy Ghost resting down upon you – when you have felt as though you would rather part with your lives than you would part with that spirit.

[JD 24:149, George Q. Cannon, May 6th, 1883](#)

Well, now, be entreated of me, a humble servant of God, this morning, to repent of your sins and put them away from you; repent truly and sincerely of your follies, hardness of heart, rebellion, stubbornness – repent, I say, in the name of Jesus, and bow yourselves before Him, and entreat Him for the outpourings of His Holy Spirit until your hearts are filled therewith and you have receive a forgiveness of your sins. And then when you have done that, go forward, seeking diligently to comply with all the requirements of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as it has been revealed unto us, until we shall be brought back into the presence of our God and be crowned with glory, immortality and eternal lives, which I ask in behalf of all, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

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Joseph F. Smith, December 3, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Provo City,

Sunday Afternoon, December 3, 1882.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

INTEREST IN THE WORK OF GOD – FAITH IN THE DESTINY OF THE PEOPLE – "MORMONISM"

A "KNOTTY PROBLEM" – NO FREEDOM FOR THE SAINTS – GOOD EFFECT OF SIFTING –  
GROWTH

OF THE KINGDOM – COMMANDMENTS TO THE SAINTS – TRAVELS OF THE SAINTS  
COMPARED

WITH JOURNEYINGS OF ANCIENT ISRAEL – INSPIRATION OF PRESIDENT YOUNG.

[JD 24:150, Joseph F. Smith, December 3, 1882](#)

I am deeply interested in the welfare of Zion. There is nothing that tends to benefit the people of God in the least degree in which I have not a deep and abiding interest. My feelings and desires are interwoven and centered in this latter-day work. I should have no other interest, desire, or feeling, and so far as I know I have not. I am thankful for this, because it does not seem to me to be any task to do, so far as I am capable, whatever the Lord calls me to do in the work of the ministry, or in the building up of Zion. I am proud to say this comes natural to me. I have no praise to bestow upon myself for it, and I ask none. I have no credit to claim on that score. I have this disposition and desire and I thank God for it. I feel that if Zion prospers all is well, and if Zion does not prosper, then my own happiness and prosperity is in jeopardy. For I expect nothing outside of the Gospel. I expect to gain no favors of the world. I do not court nor expect the love or sympathy of the ungodly. I do not care for their favor. I do not seek nor desire their society any further than it may be possible to do some good. If I am sent to preach the Gospel to them I am willing to go and labor among them and do all the good I can; but when I get through with the labor that devolves upon me, by virtue of that calling and appointment, I feel – and I speak from experience when I say this – like other missionaries, most grateful for the privilege of getting home. I never was particularly pleased to go away. I went on a mission when I was quite a boy – some 25 years ago – and I have been engaged in missionary duties and labors more or less ever since. I have never been out of the harness, nor laid my armor on the shelf, nor have I sought to be released from that day to this. I have always been on the altar, so to speak, ready and willing to do whatever is required of me to the best of my ability. I am just as willing to-day as I ever was in my life. I expect to become more and more willing as I gain experience, as I get older – that is, if it is possible to advance in that direction, and I presume it is.

[JD 24:150 – p.154, Joseph F. Smith, December 3, 1882](#)

I have great faith in the destiny of this people. I never had any doubts or fears in regard to the destiny and final triumph of the people of God. I can remember the time when I was quite a little boy, when we were hurried

very unceremoniously across the river Mississippi from the city of Nauvoo just previous to the bombardment of the town by the mob. I had a great anxiety then – that is for a child – to know where on earth we were going to. I knew we had left home. We had left it willingly – because we were obliged to – we left it in a hurry, and we were not far away when we heard the cannonade on the other side of the river; but I felt just as certain in my mind then – as certain as a child could feel – that all was right, that the Lord's hand was in it, as I do to-day. My feelings have been the same from that day to this. I know that Zion is onward and upward. I know that God has charge of His great latter-day work; that His hand is extended over His people for good; that He will work out their deliverance; that He will bless them and increase them upon this land until they shall become powerful and terrible to the wicked nations of the earth. We are now, it would appear, becoming troublesome to the nation of which we form a part, so much so that one of the greatest men of the nation, feeling unable to deal with this question of "Mormonism," this "knotty problem," actually called upon the government of Great Britain to help to stop the progress of this work. You know what Secretary Evarts did a few years ago – he actually appealed to the several European governments to pass laws, or do something else to prevent the "Mormons" coming from their respective countries to this "asylum for the oppressed, this land of liberty." I am happy to say, however, that the wisdom exercised and manifested by some of the notable ones of Great Britain was greater than that exercised by some of the notable ones in our own land. They had sense enough to know that they had no business to deal with any such question, and they rather snubbed the poor deluded Secretary, and through him the Government of the United States, by telling them that it was a matter over which they had no control. There – in the "effete governments of the old world" – a man might worship God, the devil, or a yellow dog, and it would be all right; but in the United States – the much-vaunted "land of liberty" – while a man might worship the devil, or a yellow dog, he must look out and be very chary how he undertakes to worship the true and living God; for if he undertakes that he will have trouble on hand the first thing he knows. The Methodists may worship a God without body, parts or passions, who sits on the top of a topless throne, and the Government will say nothing about it; but as sure as you undertake to worship the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Jesus and the Apostles, they are after you with "sharp sticks" in the shape of inimical laws, unconstitutional enactments, missionary judges, governors, marshals, etc. We have proven this, and we know it is true. It is not because we have not the truth; it is not because we have not revelation; it is not because we have not Prophets, Apostles, and inspired men; it is not because we have not the Priesthood; because if we had not these we would be like the rest of the world, and they would be no more concerned about us than we are concerned about them. Why are they not as troubled over the rest of mankind as they are over us? Simply because they have nothing to fear from them; they are all sailing in the same boat, all going down the same stream; they are all "birds of a feather," if you please. But here is something that is opposed to that downward tendency; here is something that is going up the stream, something that is going in an entirely different direction from the rest of mankind. And they howl about it, and say, "If we let this kind of thing go on we shall lose our place and nation." Something has got to be done, they say, to stop the onward progress of this abominable "Mormonism." Now, mark it – this abominable "Mormonism!" If a man is a thief in Utah, it is because he is a "Mormon." If he is a liar, it is because he is a "Mormon." If he commits adultery, it is because he is a "Mormon." If he commits murder, it is because he is a "Mormon." It is not because he is an adulterer; it is not because he is a murderer; it is not because he is a liar; it is not because he is a thief, that he does these things, but it is because he is a "Mormon!" Now, why is this? Is it because the world do not know to the contrary? No, it is not, for they do know better – that is, the great majority of mankind that know anything about us. I acknowledge that there are a great many in the world who do not know anything about us; they simply believe the slanders of a few malicious scribblers concerning us. But it is not the ignorant and deceived that are seeking to bring trouble upon this people, but the crafty, whose crafts are in danger. They cry out, "delusion! delusion!" in order to distract attention from their own delusions, from their own sins and corruptions. They try to scare the people away from their own infamies, and turn them upon the Latter-day Saints. But it is a poor miserable dodge and will not succeed. Their crafts are not only in danger, but they are doomed to fall. But the truth is not in danger, and it is destined to continue until it accomplishes its mission. This is my testimony, and I predict this without any fear of being a false prophet. I do not fear to prophesy this, because the Lord God Almighty has foretold it. God has declared it by his own voice, and by the voice of angels, and of Prophets, and I believe their testimony. I know by the Spirit of God in my own heart that their testimony is true; I know that the kingdom of God will succeed and finally triumph.

While I say this, I do not say we will not have to pass through tribulation, that we may not have to be scourged for our weaknesses, follies and shortcomings; for I do not know any more effectual way in which the Lord could bring us to our senses, that the chaff, the smut and the refuse may be sifted out and the wheat preserved, than to suffer to be scattered among us the influences of the world, the leaven of unrighteousness, that that which is no part of the body of Christ may be separated and the good perfected, cleansed and purified. Those who are corrupt do not belong to the body of Christ's Church; it is only that which is pure and holy that can have a part therein. We have all got to be fashioned, modelled and reformed, before we can become like unto our Savior. A man who is deformed by iniquity, lack of faith, by wicked and unrighteous practices, can never reflect the image of his Creator, until that deformity is removed. We must purify ourselves before God, and this is what the Gospel of the Son of God – by some called "Mormonism" – teaches us to do. We say that "Mormonism" is onward and upward, and as I have said, I have never had any fears as to the ultimate triumph of the kingdom of God. Upon what are our hopes based? What is the foundation of our expectation in regard to this matter? Is it that all the people will do right? Do we expect or hope that all the people will be saved with a full salvation? Do we expect or hope that all the people that are now numbered among the Latter-day Saints will be true and faithful to the end? No; we may justly fear that many will fall by the way. But there will always be a sufficient number of this people, and of their children and children's children, and of the honest in heart who are at present in darkness but who will yet come to a knowledge of the truth, who will be sufficiently faithful to the covenants that they make with God, that the Kingdom will never fall or be left to another people. I judge this from the history of the past. It has been so from the beginning until now, and this is a glorious assurance to me, besides the testimony of the Holy Spirit in my heart, that this will be the case in the future. Notwithstanding many have fallen by the way and have manifested intense hatred towards the work of God in which they were formerly engaged, and have done their utmost to destroy it, notwithstanding all opposition of this character, the Kingdom has grown steadily and unmistakably from the day it was organized, April 6th, 1830, until the present moment, and it will never cease to grow. We may be brought under affliction, if not under bondage. Now for my own part I do not care to be brought under greater bondage than I am under at the present time. I feel in my heart as though I was under as much bondage as I care to bear with out some more help from the Lord and from my brethren. When I am restrained by unjust laws or bills or attainder from exercising the rights of citizenship, from worshipping God according to the dictates of my own conscience, and openly practicing the principles of my religion, which are in strict accord with the holy Scriptures, the Bible; when I am legislated against contrary to the constitutional law of the land, and my rights interfered with and trampled upon without a cause, I feel that is about as much bondage as a free born American citizen, never convicted of any crime, ought to submit to. That is the case at present to a certain extent; but we are not yet very much hurt. It cools our affections a little for "Uncle Sam," or the administrators of government, but draws us nearer to God and closer to the precious principles of the Constitution, and excites our sympathy for our misruled country. But all the powerful engines that have been framed for the destruction of the liberties of the Latter-day Saints have hitherto proven in the main failures. The framers of these engines of destruction, and base plots, have not been able to accomplish by them the objects for which they were intended. In consequence of this, our enemies are dissatisfied with themselves and with the Government because of their failures. It is not because we have opposed them; it is not because we have used any violence; it is not because we have resisted any wicked and corrupt law, for we have said but little; we have simply let them do as they pleased, knowing that they are in the hands of the Lord, who will suffer them to go just as far as will subserve His purposes, and when they have gone that far He will say to them, as He says to the mighty deep, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." They can go no further than He permits them, and inasmuch as we do right and keep the commandments of God, we need have no fear; but if we play into their hands, cater to them, encourage them, and give them of our strength and support, then we may some day expect to be caught in the meshes, for as Paul says: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey." When we become servants of the enemies of the people of God, we will find we have got unmerciful masters. We have come to these mountains to serve the Lord. We have not come here to serve ourselves, nor to serve man, nor to serve Babylon. The voice of God has been to us, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." And, furthermore, it is said, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And

what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." This is the call that is made upon the Latter-day Saints. Now what will it avail us if we come out from Babylon and bring the customs of Babylon with us? What will it avail us if we come out from among the nations of the earth and mingle with the ungodly, the infidel worship idols, and do all manner of evils? What good will it do? I can tell you what harm it will do. It will just add that much more condemnation to those who have been called to be not unequally yoked with unbelievers, etc.; they will be held that much more culpable before the Lord; "for unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom the Lord has committed much, of him will men ask the more." We know what is good, and if we do it not, we then are guilty of sin. Much has been given unto us, therefore much is required at our hands. If our righteousness exceeds not the righteousness of the modern Pharisees and Scribes, what better are we than they? We are called to be the salt of the earth. What say the Scriptures? "If the salt shall lose its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? The salt shall thenceforth be good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. I give unto you to be the light of the world; a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. \* \* \* Therefore, let your light so shine before this world, that they may see our good works." That is our calling. We are not called to be infidel to the work God has commenced upon the earth, to be infidel to the truths He has revealed unto us, but we have been called out from the midst of the earth that we may be the servants of the Lord, that we may be His chosen people, that we may raise up a righteous people, and that we may so live that God will acknowledge and own us, and that we may claim Him to be our Father and our God.

[JD 24:154 – p.155, Joseph F. Smith, December 3, 1882](#)

When we came out here we came out from the midst of bondage and very much oppression and tyranny. Some of the brethren were talking to us yesterday about bondage; and it is said in the revelation that "ye must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched out arm." Now, the Lord also promised that He would raise up a man that should lead the people out of bondage; and, further, He promised that when He should raise up that man His angels should go before them and also His presence, not as it was in the days of the children of Israel in the wilderness, when His angel went up before them, but not His presence; but in the last days the Spirit of God and the angels shall go before the people and shall follow after them.

[JD 24:155, Joseph F. Smith, December 3, 1882](#)

There are some wonderful events to transpire in the future, but one of the most wonderful events has already transpired, but that event, I suppose, like that witnessed by the children of Israel in the dividing of the waters of the Red Sea and their pilgrimage to Canaan, will be left to other generations to appreciate. I do not think that the children of Israel thought a great deal about their crossing the Red Sea in the way they did. Perhaps they thought it was done upon natural principles. They probably attributed the separation of the waters to some natural causes, and failed to see the hand or power of God in it any more than the people of Missouri, in 1878, saw the power of God in a cyclone there, which was so powerful that it lifted the water and mud out of a large lake in its course clean to the solid ground or bed rock, leaving a dry pathway from shore to shore about a quarter of a mile wide, carrying away and scattering thousands of fish over the country for miles away, and it was some little time before the water flowed back to its level in the lake. This was accounted for, I suppose, on scientific principles. It was the power of this electric storm that raised the water out of the lake, swept it clean to bed rock, carrying everything before it, and leaving a path upon which people could walk dry shod! They do not think God had any thing to do with it. But by and by their children may think the power of God was manifested even in this. Doubtless the children of Israel learned to thank God for dividing the waters of the Red Sea and allowing them to pass through dry shod, while the Egyptians who were pursuing them were drowned.

[JD 24:155 – p.156, Joseph F. Smith, December 3, 1882](#)

A wonderful event has occurred in these last days among this people, an event many times more wonderful than the marching of the children of Israel from Egypt to the holy land. It is only a short distance from the River Jordan to the land of Egypt – only a few hundred miles – and yet they wandered about for forty years seeking the goodly land, until every last one of them, except two, had fallen asleep because of their rebellious spirit, and only their posterity were permitted to enter the holy land. Now, what has happened in this dispensation? This people have crossed deserts that are beyond comparison with those traversed by the children of Israel. They were not fed by manna it is true, although they were fed with quails in great abundance on at least one occasion, and they performed a journey nearly four times as great as that performed by the children of Israel – which occupied them forty years – in the course of a few months. Now this was a wonderful thing. We had to make the roads, build the bridges, "kill the snakes" and withstand the attacks of the Indians while crossing the trackless deserts. And when President Young first set his foot upon the ground where the Temple now stands in Salt Lake City, by the testimony of the spirit of God that was in his heart, by the inspiration of the Almighty, he exclaimed to the pioneers: "Here we will make our resting place, and here is the spot upon which we will build the Temple." He had before seen an ensign descend and light upon the mountain peak – which is now called from the circumstance "Ensign Peak" – which was an indication to him that this was the resting place God designed for His people. God led this people from the midst of their persecutors, delivered them from prison bars and fettering chains, delivered them from bondage, brought them out here and made them free – as free as any people upon the earth. I am at the defiance of the world to-day, to show me an equal number of people any where that enjoy greater freedom or liberty at this moment than the Latter-day Saints do, notwithstanding the efforts of our enemies to the contrary. It cannot be done. We were led out of bondage by the power of God. The angels of God and the power and presence of the Almighty accompanied us, so much so that notwithstanding the country was covered with sagebrush and crickets, presenting the most forbidding appearance President Young was enabled to point out where the Temple and city would be built. He said: "You may go north and south, east and west, and explore the country all over, but when you have done it, you will come back and say that this is the spot where we are to settle." And that has been the universal experience and unwavering testimony of the people that have enjoyed the spirit of their religion from that day to this. There is no where between here and the Pacific coast, no where between the frozen zone in the north and Old Mexico in the south, where this people could enjoy more liberty or prosper better than we have done and do in the midst of these mountains. Over thirty years experience has proven this beyond the possibility of doubt, and this is an evidence that those who led the people were inspired of God, inspired to teach, inspired to build, inspired to cultivate and reclaim these deserts, inspired to dedicate the land and the waters unto the Lord, that they might have His blessing poured out upon them, that they might be changed from sterility to abundant fruitfulness, and this the Lord has done for the people.

JD 24:156 – p.157, Joseph F. Smith, December 3, 1882

Now, it is quite possible that the Lord will raise up somebody in the future who will be powerful and mighty to lead the people to rebuild the waste places of Zion, but when He does, the power of God which has been manifested in the leading of this people in the past will not be forgotten nor despised, but will be more apparent to future generations than to this, and will be regarded quite as remarkable and as wonderful as anything that will occur in the future to them that participate in the scene. When God leads the people back to Jackson County, how will he do it? Let me picture to you how some of us may be gathered and led to Jackson County. I think I see two or three hundred thousand people wending their way across the great plain enduring the nameless hardships of the journey, herding and guarding their cattle by day and by night, and defending themselves and little ones from foes on the right hand and on the left, as when they came here. They will find the journey back to Jackson County will be as real as when they came out here. Now, mark it. And though you may be led by the power of God "with a stretched out arm," it will not be more manifest than the leading the people out here to those that participate in it. They will think there are a great many hardships to endure in this manifestation of the power of God, and it will be left, perhaps to their children to see the glory of their deliverance, just as it is left for us to see the glory of our former deliverance from the hands of those that sought to destroy us. This is one way to look at it. It is certainly a practical view. Some might ask, what will become of the railroads? I fear that the sifting process would be insufficient were we to travel by railroads. We are apt to overlook the manifestations of the power of God to us because we are participators in them, and

regard them as commonplace events. But when it is written in history – as it will be written – it will be shown forth to future generations as one of the most marvelous, unexampled and unprecedented accomplishments that has ever been known to history.

[JD 24:157, Joseph F. Smith, December 3, 1882](#)

I believe with all my heart that President Brigham Young was a man mighty and strong whom God Almighty raised up to lead this people out of bondage. What do you believe about it? And I believe He did it by the power of God and the help of his brethren. I know that he did it, and I know since that event that this people have been comparatively, to a great extent, free from malicious courts, from imprisonments, from chains and fetters, from mobocracy, and from injury by persecution, and they have thriven, prospered, multiplied, built and inhabited, planted and reaped the fruits of their labors and rejoiced in them ever since. And we have never been in bondage since, and we need not have been under what bondage we are if we had only done our duty, kept the commandments of the Lord, followed the counsels of His servants implicitly and without doubt in our minds, we would have been as free to-day as we were the moment we set foot in these valleys.

[JD 24:157, Joseph F. Smith, December 3, 1882](#)

This is my testimony in relation to this matter. God has led His people out of bondage, and he has given them these strong mountain fastnesses for an inheritance. This will be a land of Zion unto us. We shall rejoice in it and prosper exceedingly, if we continue to do our duty. Amen.

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Erastus Snow, June 24th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE ERASTUS SNOW,

Delivered at the Quarterly Conference, Parowan,

Sunday Afternoon, June 24th, 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

LEADERS OF THE CHURCH INSPIRED – MAN'S FREE AGENCY – TRUE INDEPENDENCE –  
JOSEPH

SMITH ON CHURCH GOVERNMENT – FALLEN CONDITION OF MANKIND – GOD'S PROMISE  
TO ABRAHAM – NEW AND EVERLASTING COVENANT – DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SALVATION

AND EXALTATION – TESTIMONY IN REGARD TO PLURAL MARRIAGE – POLITICAL

CRISIS – WHY THE SAINTS ARE OPPOSED.

[JD 24:158 – p.159, Erastus Snow, June 24th, 1883](#)

I want to say to the young men and the young ladies and to all the people – but especially our children, the youths in Israel – that the leaders of this people do not speak of themselves. That which they are striving to

impress upon the people is of the Lord and not of man. The Latter-day Saints have not been gathered from the different nations of the earth, and brought together in these mountains to worship man, nor to serve man, to be their slaves, not to be obedient unto man, and if anybody has such an idea or intention they have got hold of the wrong people. The people who are gathered here are not the people calculated to do such a thing. The faith we teach throws everybody upon their own responsibility; they are at liberty to act and choose for themselves, and all will be held responsible before God for their faith and conduct. The free agency of man is and always has been a prominent doctrine in this Church, and no one advocated it more strongly than the Prophet Joseph Smith. The free agency of man is inseparably connected with intelligence, as the revelations of God in the Doctrine and Covenants plainly and explicitly declare, that all intelligence is independent. Without this agency there would be no self-existence. And because of this agency, which existed in eternity before the worlds were, with intelligent beings, with our spirits when they existed in the spirit world – through the exercise of this agency Satan fell, and all those who clung to him and rebelled against our Heavenly Father. Brother Cannon has impressed us with the idea that obedience to correct principle, believing in the truth and living it and obeying it, is as good an evidence of independent thought and character – and perhaps a little more so – than to be disobedient; that no man, woman or child will be more independent by rejecting the truth, by disobeying correct laws and correct principles, than those who receive and obey the truth with contrite hearts. Now, what say you, you must all judge for yourselves, and choose what you will be. My experience and observation of the Latter-day Saints is that they are the hardest people I know anything about to either drive or lead in a wrong direction. Brother Cannon speaks of President Young and President Taylor, and other good men, our leaders, being led, as it were, by a hair in obedience to the Priesthood, which implies simply obedience to truth and to correct doctrine, and to righteousness. This is the explanation the Prophet Joseph Smith gave to a certain lawyer in his time who came to see him and his people and expressed astonishment and surprise at the ease with which he controlled the people, and said it was something that was not to be found among the learned men of the world. Said he: "We cannot do it. What is the secret of your success?" "Why," said the Prophet, "I do not govern the people. I teach them correct principles and they govern themselves." I have been young, now I am getting old and expect to pass away soon, as well as all those who have been for many years before the people serving the Lord, and laboring to promote the welfare of the people; but from my youth up I have observed the dealings of God with the Latter-day Saints. I am pretty well acquainted with them. They are pretty well acquainted with their leaders. They are pretty well acquainted with the voice of truth, and they know it when they hear it as a rule – that is, all those who are humble and prayerful and who love the truth and the voice of the good Shepherd, they know it when they hear it, and when principles are taught that are good, that come from God, they comprehend them and receive them. But as Paul said in one of his epistles to the ancient Saints: "There is a law in our members, warring against the law of the spirit and bringing our bodies into bondage to the law of sin and death." That is, the lusts and desires of the flesh and the pride of life which we have to war against. And this warfare commences as soon as we begin to grow up to maturity. It is this that lays the foundation for rebellion. As soon as this begins to manifest itself in us, in our youth, so soon we need to begin to curb it. And here comes in the duty of parents in their Priesthood and calling, to watch over those children that are given them of the Lord and the ways of the righteous, and to restrain them from passions, from anger, from strife, from contention, from envy, from jealousy, from disobedience; to impress them with the necessity of doing right and repenting of wrong whenever they do it, that they may hold in check the passions that are common to our nature; and to show them how to enjoy all that the Lord has designed for our happiness in this world and our exaltation in the next without excess, without allowing our tabernacles to be used as instruments of sin and wickedness.

[JD 24:159 – p.160 – p.161, Erastus Snow, June 24th, 1883](#)

We have heard during this conference – and especially this forenoon from President Taylor – some very important principles advanced for our government as individuals and as communities, principles which we are to observe and which are essential to our purity and progress as a people, and as individuals, and our exaltation in the eternal world. For the law of the Lord is strict unto those who are instructed and have opportunities to observe it, and far more so with us as Latter-day Saints than with the Gentile world. The Lord will make greater allowance for the Gentile world than He will for us, and He has had compassion upon us and made greater allowance for us in the days of our ignorance than He will do for us in the future; for He



expects us as a people to profit by our experience and our instruction and the opportunities afforded us, and to improve our condition, to purify our persons, our families, and our communities, and to purge evil from our midst. And touching moral purity and the intercourse of the sexes and the objects and purposes of this intercourse, God has revealed to the Latter-day Saints, as He also revealed unto our fathers, that He has a great and glorious and grand object in view in placing us here upon the earth, male and female, and commanding us to multiply and replenish the earth. His purposes in these things are from eternity to eternity. They reach back into our first or former existence, and consequently will reach forward through this our second, and into our next estate, and through all eternity. And we need a correct understanding of the proper use of the privileges and blessings that are given unto us. On this depends the glory and exaltation of ourselves and our children for evermore. The Lord is striving to educate a people that will properly understand these things and appreciate them, and that will not trifle with the fountains of life and with those choice blessings that are placed within their reach. When we look abroad into the gentile nations at the present time, those who are acquainted with their condition are constrained to acknowledge that we live in a wicked and adulterous generation. Adultery, whoredom and lust have cursed the gentile nations, and the wicked portion of all mankind, we may say, from time immemorable. But with the seed of Abraham, the children of Israel – who were called an holy nation, a peculiar people – God has sought to regulate, by His laws, those things, and to teach the people so that they may raise up unto Him a holy nation, a peculiar people, a royal priesthood. He chose Abraham from among the nations and blessed him. He promised to multiply his seed like the stars in the heaven or the sands of the sea shore for number. He tried and proved him well as we heard this morning. He blessed him and blessed his seed after him, likewise his son Isaac and his grandson, Jacob, and promised that the oracles should remain with him and his seed. Nevertheless, the promises made were general; they were not promises to individuals alone. Yet the promises were conditional. They were given on condition that their posterity should abide in the truth, follow the teachings and examples of their fathers, and prove themselves worthy; for Nephi has said concerning these things in the Book of Mormon that God covenants with none except those that repent and believe in His Son and keep His commandments. But there are special promises to the children of Israel, the seed of Abraham, as a people; for as a people they are the elect of God. But as individuals every one is held responsible for his own sins. No promise of the father can save any individual. Nevertheless, according to the promise made unto the fathers, God makes manifest among the children of Israel the Priesthood and reveals unto them the Gospel, and gives them an opportunity to receive it and obey it and obtain exaltation through it, if they will, and in this respect they are more favored than the gentile nations throughout the whole world, though He has said that whoever fears God and works righteousness is accepted of Him among all nations and all peoples, Jew or Gentile. But the Lord has set His hand to gather His people, and He is selecting them by the preaching of the Gospel to the world by the Elders of Israel. The spirit which accompanies the preaching of the Gospel feels after and searches out and gathers together the seed of Abraham that are worthy to be saved. It gathers together those whom God has called to have part in the latter day work, in the "dispensation of the fullness of times" – the ten thousands of Ephraim and the thousands of Manasseh, spoken of by Moses when he blessed the tribes of Israel.

[JD 24:161, Erastus Snow, June 24th, 1883](#)

Well, now, because the Lord has set His hand to gather out from the nations of the earth the humble and the honest in heart and those that will be obedient and will submit themselves to the truth and to the law of the Lord, therefore He reveals unto them a new and everlasting covenant, the holy covenant of marriage for time and for all eternity, the union of the sexes, the sealing of wives to husbands and husbands to wives, children to parents, etc., the uniting and sealing us in the holy Priesthood unto the fathers and even unto our Lord Jesus Christ, who stands at the head of the kingdom of righteousness, the Chief Apostle and High Priest of our profession; and unto this new and everlasting covenant has the Lord purposed and designed His people to be united and bound together with the Son, our Savior, and through Him unto His Father; for He has said, "Whosoever receiveth me receiveth my Father, and all that my Father hath shall be given unto him."

[JD 24:161, Erastus Snow, June 24th, 1883](#)

This new and everlasting covenant reveals unto us the keys of the Holy Priesthood and ordinances thereof. It is the grand keystone of the arch which the Lord is building in the earth. In other words, it is that which completes the exaltation and glory of the righteous who receive the everlasting Gospel, and without it they could not attain unto the eternal power and Godhead and the fullness of celestial glory. Now, many may enter into the glory of God, and become servants in the house of God and in the celestial kingdom of God, who are not able to abide this new and everlasting covenant; but as we are told in the Doctrine and Covenants, with them there is an end to their exaltation. They may remain in their saved condition without exaltation, but they enter not into the order of the Gods. They cannot progress through the ceaseless rounds of eternity except they abide in the covenant, and abide the law that governs it, and the Lord will not be mocked in these things.

[JD 24:161 – p.162, Erastus Snow, June 24th, 1883](#)

We heard this morning how strict was the law pertaining to these matters. Now we say unto all Israel, old and young, these things are revealed unto us for our good. The strictness of the law may not in times past have been taught us and enforced upon us as we may look for it being taught and enforced in the future. But it behooveth us to reflect upon these things, and while it is our privilege to go forward, earnestly desiring and seeking after all that the Lord has to bestow upon us, yet we must remember that the more we receive and the greater privileges we are permitted to enjoy, the more strict accountability will be required of us, and the more dreadful will be the consequences of transgression or violation of the holy covenants and obligations which we assume.

[JD 24:162 – p.163, Erastus Snow, June 24th, 1883](#)

Now, I wish to say that I realize that there are some in our midst – whether they are in your midst in this Stake of Zion or not, I am not prepared to say with any certainty, for I can only judge of the condition and feeling of the people as I am informed from time to time – I say, there are some whom Satan would stir to disobedience and try to make an impression upon their minds that the system of plural marriage, and those things that pertain to the sealing of men and women for time and for eternity, and the revelation which has been read in our hearing, given through the Prophet Joseph pertaining to this subject – that it was the work of man and not the work of God. We have recently had published in some of the Utah papers some letters on this subject, and one from Joseph Smith, the eldest son of the Prophet, in which a great deal of sophistry is made use of, special pleading, such as the lawyer that he is, seems only capable of using. And the object of this special pleading and the sophistry is to try to leave an impression upon the ignorant, those who know no better, that plural marriage was not introduced and sanctioned and practiced by his father, but that it has been an innovation of man, and does not belong to the system of religion which he believed and practiced and taught the people. And there are some among us who would fain take this view of the subject; not that there are many who believe it, but there are some who would like to believe it. And so there are in the world many people who fear that "Mormonism" as a whole is true and of God; they are very much afraid that it is, but they hope that it is not. They do not want to receive it; they do not want to live it, but they are afraid it is true, and multitudes of people have been convinced of its truth, but have not the honesty to acknowledge it; and many who would acknowledge it for a little season, would afterwards, because of the love of the world, fall away, and thus condemnation has fallen upon the world because they will not obey the truth when they hear it. And so it is with some among the Latter-day Saints. They are pretty well satisfied that this doctrine of plural marriage is true, and that it was revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith, but they would like an excuse for disavowing and rejecting it. And why so? Mainly because their minds are closed up and have not been able to comprehend the principles that are embraced in this doctrine and connected with it. Their minds are contracted and limited. They think more of this present life than they do of the future. They want to lay up riches; they want to gather personal comforts around them; they want to gratify the pride of life and the lusts of the flesh. They do not understand that which is for their real good, their real happiness. But I testify that there is more real happiness in serving God and abiding in His law, and submitting to all its conditions and requirements than there can be in taking an opposite course. This is the testimony of all who receive and abide in the truth, and there is abundant evidence in their lives and conduct to prove that they, in receiving the truth, enjoy more comfort and happiness than those who reject it. And touching our plural families, I will say that, with all the weaknesses

that are common to frail humanity, and that manifest themselves in our midst – the men who enter into this order in the sincerity of their hearts and with devotion to God, and the women who also enter into it in the love of the truth and in the earnestness of their souls, fearing God and desiring to do His will – that with all the weaknesses that manifest themselves, I say there is treble the genuine comfort and happiness in those families who enter into this order and abide in it, than is to be found in the same number of families in monogamy in this Church, to say nothing of the Gentile world. And then we will take the Latter-day Saints as a whole, whether in plural marriage or single marriage, and we will say that there is ten times more genuine happiness and comfort in believing and obeying the Gospel – whether in plural or single wedlock – than is to be found among the same number of people in any part of the world outside of this Church. Now, in this you are all my witnesses. Many of you have been in the world. You know what you were, and how you felt, and how your neighbors felt, and what kind of enjoyment you had before you heard the fullness of the Gospel. You know pretty well the condition of the world now – the condition of those who have not received the Gospel – and you know what your condition is and has been since you received the Gospel. And who among you, Latter-day Saints, would exchange your present condition for the condition of the outside world? Are we not prepared to testify that our happiness is trebled, through having believed and obeyed the Gospel?

[JD 24:163, Erastus Snow, June 24th, 1883](#)

Now, as I said to the Priesthood last night, we are arriving at a political crisis in our affairs. The priests and bigots of Christendom – and of America especially – are driving our law-makers into trying to hedge up our way and to oppress us politically as well as religiously. They are endeavoring not only to deprive us of religious freedom, but to deprive us of political freedom, and to bring us into bondage. Well, now, they will do it as far as the Lord will allow them and no further. He will block their wheels. He will throw obstacles in their way. He will stay their onward progress. But He allows His people to be tried to see whether they will trust Him and have faith in Him, or whether they will deny Him, whether they will deny their covenants and their principles through fear of the power of the wicked, through fear of oppression, through fear of prisons or of death. For we have among us those who will falter, those who will halt between two opinions, those who wish to serve the world, and who, at the same time, would like to serve the Lord a little. Well, can such people always continue in this doubtful and divided condition? No, they can not. They will be tried and proven, and by and by they must take sides one way or another; they must either turn their backs upon the wicked and cleave unto God and His people with full purpose of soul, or they will turn their backs upon God and His people and go down to perdition with the ungodly of the world.

[JD 24:163 – p.164, Erastus Snow, June 24th, 1883](#)

Well, now, in regard to those who are seeking for an excuse to reject plural marriage and are inclined to receive the statement of young Joseph Smith, I wish to say that I know that Joseph Smith is entirely ignorant of what he says, or he is a liar; for I know that he does not speak the truth. How far his mind has been blinded or how he has been influenced to look upon these things as correct, or to think that he speaks the truth, I do not know. But he is woefully in the dark if he thinks he does speak the truth in regard to this matter. I do not wish to accuse him of lying knowingly and intentionally. But there are multitudes of witnesses who know better, and know that when his father was murdered this son Joseph was in his eleventh year, and like other children of that age knew little either of his father's life or his teachings and the principles that governed his life. He knew but little of what was being taught among the people. But there are multitudes of witnesses that were older than he, and that were intimate with the Prophet Joseph, that know better. Now, those who take this other view, and are trying to convince themselves that his is an institution of man and not of God, bring forth the law that was given to the Nephites of old upon the American continent, which was given them by Jacob, the brother of Nephi, and which you can read, as doubtless you have often read, in the Book of Mormon. Jacob arraigned some of the people because the men were giving way to the lusts of the flesh and the pride of life, and whoredoms, and they attempted to justify themselves in their whoredoms by referring to what is written in the Jewish Scriptures concerning David and Solomon and other men having many wives and concubines, which Jacob informed the Nephites was an abomination in the sight of the Lord, and gave unto them a commandment that not any man among them should have save it be one wife, and concubines

they should have none, saying that the Lord "delighteth in the chastity of woman." And in the same connection the Lord said: "For if I will, saith the Lord of Hosts, raise up seed unto me, I will command my people; otherwise they shall hearken unto these things." Now, there was a reason why the Lord gave this commandment to the Nephites. But this reason did not exist when the Lord called Abraham and promised that his seed should be like the sand upon the sea shore for number. He recognized the righteousness of a plurality of wives, and never at any time did he restrict them from the days of Abraham until Christ, so far as we have any record in the Jewish Scriptures. But there were reasons, as I said before, why he restricted the Nephites, but in this restriction He intimated that when the time should come that He should raise up seed unto himself, He would command His people.

[JD 24:164 – p.165, Erastus Snow, June 24th, 1883](#)

Now, when the Lord raised up the Prophet Joseph to lay the foundation of this Church, He found monogamy instead of polygamy to be the rule of Christendom, and He enjoined, in the early revelations to this Church, that every woman cleave unto her husband, and that every man cleave unto his wife and none else, saying that he that looketh upon a woman to lust after her who is not his wife hath committed adultery already with her in his heart. This was the law governing Christendom which had been inherited by the Gentiles for ages past, and introduced among the Roman Empire and perpetuated by the Roman church and the Protestant churches that had sprung out of her, and the Lord in the early history of this people continued this order of things, but revealed unto the Prophet Joseph, nevertheless, that the time would come when He would require His people to enter into plural marriage as He did Abraham and the prophets of old, to bring about His purposes in the latter days. Joseph revealed this unto some of the first Elders of the Church, taking care to enjoin them that they must preserve these things in their own hearts; that the time had not yet come when the Lord required His people to enter into this order, but the time would come when He would require them to do so. This was made manifest in the early stages of this Church, but not until 1843 was this law committed to writing and given to the people. This revelation we find in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants.

[JD 24:165 – p.166, Erastus Snow, June 24th, 1883](#)

Now, Joseph – I refer now to the young man that is alive and who was a mere boy at his father's death, and who with his mother and her children remained behind, though his mother did know for herself that her husband did teach and practice this order of marriage, yet she was not willing to own or acknowledge it to her children, and her children, the oldest of which, as I have said, was only eleven years old when his father was murdered – were studiously kept ignorant of the facts of the case as far as she was concerned, and therefore we can make allowance and excuse in part of what they assert. But there are great numbers that I can call to mind who know for themselves that the Prophet Joseph did receive from the Lord and teach this order to the first Elders of this Church, and did receive and commit to writing this revelation on the subject of plural marriage which is contained in the Doctrine and Covenants, and did teach it and did practice it, and I am one of those witnesses. I know that he taught to me as early as in the spring of 1842 what God had revealed to him on the subject; I know that he gave to me my second wife and assigned his brother, Hyrum, to seal her to me; and I know that he taught this doctrine to quite a good few others – the Twelve Apostles and others of the faithful Elders of Israel – and that very many of the faithful and good women of Israel know and understand and are witnesses of these things for themselves. And we testify of these things, that God has reserved to Himself this right to command His people when it seemeth to Him good and to accomplish the object He has in view – that is, to raise up a righteous seed, a seed that will pay respect to His law and will build up Zion in the earth. And while the wicked are hardening their hearts in sin and giving themselves up to whoredoms and lust, and seeking to prevent the increase of offspring among them, God is impressing upon us the heinousness of these crimes and showing us the beauty and glory of multiplying the families of Israel. When we visit the settlements of the Saints and attend the Quarterly Conferences throughout the land, what do we hear in the reports? We hear that an average of about thirty per cent of the entire population are children under eight years of age, and another one-third between that and twenty, and scarcely one-third of the population are yet old enough to enter into the marriage relation. And what do we hear? Reports from the Relief Societies and the Improvement Associations and the Sunday school teachers and superintendents that are engaged in

instructing them – and what do we year? Why, we hear that the spirit of the Gospel is in them, that faith is in them, and that they possess bright, intelligent minds that are reaching out after knowledge, and hearts that are grasping the things of God. It is this that causes the world to fear and tremble and this is the cause of the opposition waged against us.

JD 24:166, Erastus Snow, June 24th, 1883

Brethren and sisters, let us put our trust in God, who will give us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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John Taylor, May 19, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered at Manti, Saturday Morning, May 19, 1883.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

DUTIES OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS – HOW CHILDREN SHOULD BE TRAINED – AN  
ACADEMY

FOR SANPETE – THE KIND OF TEACHERS TO SELECT – EDUCATION

ADVOCATED – INTEMPERANCE CONDEMNED – SIN TO BE EXPOSED – UNWORTHY

MEN NOT TO BE SUSTAINED IN OFFICE – EXAMPLE OF A DARKENED MIND – PROVIDENCE

OVER THE SAINTS.

JD 24:166 – p.167 – p.168 – p.169, John Taylor, May 19, 1883

The Gospel, it has been said, is the power of God unto salvation; its object is to elevate humanity. There are evils of various kinds existing in the world; and we ourselves are not free from evil in some of its forms, which should not be the case. We are here, as a people, gathered out from the various nations, not to imitate the world, unless it be in that which is good – for there are many good things among the people of the world, which we may imitate with profit – but that we may put ourselves in possession of every truth, of every virtue, of every principle of intelligence known among men, together with those that God has revealed for our special guidance, and apply them to our everyday life, and thus educate ourselves and our children in every thing that tends to exalt man. We, therefore, must avoid the evils of the world, which some of our so-called Christian brethren are striving to introduce into our midst; we must shun those corrupting influences as we would a viper, and we must further use our influence against evil in every form, and in favor of the good. It becomes the Latter-day Saints to cherish in their hearts the spirit of Zion; to live pure lives, that Zion may indeed be Zion to them. We are told that God is love, and that they that dwell in God dwell in love. Love is one of his attributes; another is justice, another is truth; another is integrity, another is knowledge. And we are likewise told that "the glory of God is intelligence." We should seek to know more about ourselves and our bodies, about what is most conducive to health and how to preserve health and how to avoid disease; and to

know what to eat and what to drink, and what to abstain from taking into our systems. We should become acquainted with the physiology of the human system, and live in accordance with the laws that govern our bodies, that our days may be long in the land which the Lord our God has given us. And in order to fully comprehend ourselves we must study from the best books, and also by faith. And then let education be fostered and encouraged in our midst. Train your children to be intelligent and industrious. First teach them the value of healthful bodies, and how to preserve them in soundness and vigor; teach them to entertain the highest regard for virtue and chastity, and likewise encourage them to develop the intellectual faculties with which they are endowed. They should also be taught regarding the earth on which they live, its properties, and the laws that govern it; and they ought to be instructed concerning God, who made the earth, and His designs and purposes in its creation, and the placing of man upon it. They should know how to cultivate the soil in the best possible manner; they should know how to raise the best kind of fruits adapted to the soil and climate; they should be induced to raise the best kinds of stock, and to care for them properly when they come into their possession. And whatever labor they pursue they should be taught to do so intelligently; and every incentive, at the command of parents to induce children to labor intelligently and understandingly, should be held out to them. Again, the subject of architecture should receive attention from you; and your children should be encouraged to improve in the building of houses, and not be satisfied to merely copy after what their fathers did in the days of their poverty. The building rock at your command is of the very best, and it is easily procured; what remains for you to do is to put the material together in such a shape as shall reflect your best judgment and intelligence consistent with due regard to health and convenience. The building of the Temple here will no doubt have a tendency to awaken the desire on your part to improve in this direction. I have noticed that the building of our Temples affords a great many young men the opportunity of learning trades which perhaps, otherwise would not be the case; and by the time such a building is erected they become competent tradesmen, prepared to work in the various branches of mechanism that they learn on these buildings. Improvement in all things relating to our spiritual and temporal welfare should be our aim in life, and we should encourage in our children this desire to improve, and not feel all the time, "come day, go day, God send Sunday." It is highly necessary that we should learn to read and write and speak our own language correctly; and where people are deficient themselves in education they should strive all the more to see that the deficiency be not perpetuated in their offspring. We ought to take more pains than we do in the training and education of our youth. All that we can possibly do by way of placing them in a position to become the equals, at least, of their race, we ought to take pleasure in doing; for in elevating them we bring honor to our own name, and glory to God the Father. To do this requires labor and means, and it also requires perseverance and determination on the part of all concerned. A short time ago a number of our young men left Salt Lake City to go on missions to the United States and to Europe. They were mostly young men that had been trained and educated in the University of Deseret, the Brigham Young Academy of Provo, and the B. Y. College of Logan, and the High School at Ogden. They were fine looking young men, and quite intelligent, and a credit to any community or people. Sometimes the Lord chooses such men as Brother Woodruff and myself to do His bidding, as He in former times called fishermen and others, and inspired them with intelligence sufficient, at least, to cope with and confound the wise. I think there is a Scripture that says that He chooses the weak things of the world to bring to naught the things that are, that no flesh might glory in His presence. That is true, and is well enough in its place; but we cannot expect the Lord to do this always, it is for us to do our part, that is to cultivate our intellectual faculties and to prepare ourselves to be used by Him, having at all times an eye single to His honor and glory. He has shown us how to build Temples, but He does not build them; that is our part of the work. I do not think that Peter or Paul knew much about Temple building, but they knew something pertaining to the ordinances of the Temple, but more especially of the Gospel, for God taught it to them. But we are told to seek for intelligence by study and through faith, and to acquaint ourselves with the laws and governmental affairs of nations, that all may know how to take part in the affairs of the world. God has said that through His people He will teach nations, and "the Gentiles shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising." (Isaiah ix. 3.) He will pour out upon His people knowledge and inspire them with wisdom, so that they will be able to teach all classes and conditions of men. That time is yet to come, but we must prepare ourselves to act in that position, and the way to do it is to commence with our children. I was pleased to hear that President Canute Peterson and other leading men of Ephraim had secured a building, which is at present in an unfinished condition, with the intention of converting it into an academy.

You need such an institution, and by right you ought to have one in all your larger towns; and our school teachers should be the best you can get. They should be men of faith in God; men who believe in and have a knowledge of the Gospel; men capable of imparting true and correct ideas with regard to God and His works, and the laws that govern them, as well as being able to impart a regular scholastic education. I would advise Brother Peterson and those associated with him in this enterprise, to carry on to completion the work they have begun; and I would say to you here in Manti, bestir yourselves in the same direction. Whatever you do, be choice in your selection of teachers. We do not want infidels to mould the minds of our children. They are a precious charge bestowed upon us by the Lord, and we cannot be too careful in rearing and training them. I would rather have my children taught the simple rudiments of a common education by men of God, and have them under their influence, than have them taught in the most abstruse sciences by men who have not the fear of God in their hearts. As God is the fountain of all light, all truth and all intelligence, and He has organized matter and made what we term the laws of nature, and in the study of His laws is discovered the highest and most intellectual development – as "the glory of God is intelligence," the more we appreciate and comprehend those principles the nearer we approach to the intelligence developed by the All-wise Creator; the acme of scientific development in the world is predicated upon a knowledge of the laws of nature in multifarious forms. We need to pay more attention to educational matters, and do all we can to procure the services of competent teachers. Some people say, we cannot afford to pay them. You cannot afford not to pay them; you cannot afford not to employ them. We want our children to grow up intelligent, and to walk abreast with the peoples of any nation. God expects us to do it; and therefore I call attention to this matter. I have heard intelligent practical men say, it is quite as cheap to keep a good horse as a poor one, or to raise good stock as inferior animals. And is it not quite as cheap to raise good intelligent children as to rear children in ignorance.

JD 24:169 – p.170, John Taylor, May 19, 1883

There is another thing I wish to speak of. Sometimes we bear too much and too long with the workers of iniquity. For instance, I heard of a certain Bishop whose First Counselor was in the habit of drinking, and his second Counselor also drank occasionally. The Bishop in excusing the weakness of his Counselor would say that he had a great many good traits, that he was a good meaning and kind hearted man, and that he wanted to save him if he could; and the man was permitted to indulge his appetite. Time passed on and the man apostatized, which he was sure to do if he kept on long enough. In sending in his resignation, he said he had had enough of "Mormonism," which I have no doubt was really the case; I have no doubt either but that long before that "Mormonism" had had enough of him. The Bishop had tried to save the man, but what of the people? how about the Teachers? Could they, or could the Bishop himself preach against a practice that the Counselors were guilty of? If he or they were to do so, it would not amount to much while the evil was being winked at in high places. By means such as this, evil and a loose morality may be introduced into a settlement because of a laxity by men in authority, in the performance of their duty. When I heard of this I inquired why the President of the Stake did not see that the Bishop did his duty inasmuch as the Bishop omitted to act in the matter. What right have these men in authority to overlook such things? I tell you, they have no right at all. And what is the result? It began gradually to be a question with a great many of the people in that neighborhood whether this really was the work of God or not; the spirit of doubt and carelessness found place among them, and this because the presiding authority declined to purge out iniquity from their midst. Then if a man repents, some say they do not know whether it is best to expose such things or not. Yes, drag them into daylight all the time, and let every man be known for what he is; for no presiding officer can afford to take the responsibility upon himself of tolerating the defalcations of those who are violating their covenants and trampling under foot the laws of God. In saying this I would not ignore another principle that is mentioned in the law of the Lord:

JD 24:170 – p.171, John Taylor, May 19, 1883

"And if he or she do any manner of iniquity, he or she shall be delivered up unto the law, even that of God. And if thy brother or sister offend thee, thou shalt take him or her between him or her and thee alone; and if he or she confess, thou shalt be reconciled. And if he or she confess not, thou shalt deliver him or her up unto the Church, not to the members, but to the Elders. And it shall be done in a meeting, and that not before the

world. And if thy brother or sister offend many, he or she shall be chastened before many. And if any one offend openly, he or she shall be rebuked openly, that he or she may be ashamed. And if he or she confess not, he or she shall be delivered up unto the law of God. If any shall offend in secret, he or she shall be rebuked in secret, that he or she may have opportunity to confess in secret to him or her whom he or she has offended, and to God, that the Church may not speak reproachfully of him or her."

[JD 24:171, John Taylor, May 19, 1883](#)

Further, I wish to say something in regard to adultery. We are told in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, (sec. xiii, ver. 24, 25, 26.)

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"Thou shalt not commit adultery; and he that committeth adultery, and repenteth not, shall be cast out; but he that has committed adultery and repents with all his heart, and forsaketh it, and doeth it no more, thou shalt forgive; but if he doeth it again he shall not be forgiven, but shall be cast out."

[JD 24:171, John Taylor, May 19, 1883](#)

This was in the early ages of the Church, in February, 1831. But who is here referred to? Is it a man who has entered into the new and everlasting covenant, and has been sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, and by that covenant has been united to his wife for time and all eternity, and his wife to him? No, it refers to those who have not entered into this covenant, who have not taken upon themselves obligations of that nature in a Temple or Endowment House; to the latter class who shall be found guilty of this sin, the word of the Lord comes unqualifiedly, they shall be destroyed. The Lord does expect us to be a pure people, a virtuous people, a people whose bodies and spirits are pure before Him. If wrong doing be practiced in our midst, the Lord expects His Priesthood to ferret it out, or He will hold them responsible. We cannot commit sin with impunity. We cannot violate the laws of God and enjoy His Spirit; nor can we permit the laws of God to be trampled upon and still receive His approbation.

[JD 24:171, John Taylor, May 19, 1883](#)

Quite recently a certain Bishop wrote me, stating that one of his Counselors dabbled in astrology; that he had been known to consult it in reference to the sick. He wanted to know what I thought of it. I told him to drop that counselor, that he was not fit to be a Bishop's Counselor, nor to hold the holy Priesthood. We must not permit such practices to exist among us; and if that Bishop declines to do his duty, I shall be in favor of removing him, for not carrying out the law of God. Again, we hear of fraudulent acts sometimes, and we permit them to be passed over. What are laws for? What are Bishops' Courts and High Councils for? That when men transgress the laws of God, they shall be tried according to the laws of the Church, and if found guilty, and are worthy of such action, they shall be cast out; that the pure and the righteous may be sustained, and the wicked and corrupt, the ungodly and impure, be dealt with according to the laws of God. This is necessary in order to maintain purity throughout the Church, and to cast off iniquity therefrom. For the Spirit of God will not dwell in unholy temples. You fathers, look after your sons; you mothers, look after your daughters; see that they grow up in purity and righteousness.

[JD 24:171, John Taylor, May 19, 1883](#)

There was a very painful circumstance occurred in my office a day or two ago. A certain man had apostatized – indeed, he had been an apostate a number of years; he had two wives, both of whom applied to me to be divorced from their husband. I asked them why they desired to be divorced, and they answered that their husband had apostatized from the Church, and to all appearance would remain in that condition. The husband expressed his sorrow at having to part with his wives, and said he could not help his faith. I told him I did not wish to interfere with his faith, nor the religious views of any man; but that I would much rather see him a



believer than a disbeliever. But I explained to him the position that his wives occupied. Said I, when you married them you were a member of the Church, in full fellowship; you believed in God and the order of His holy house. Yes, he said, that is so. I then said, Let me tell you another thing, I have heard Joseph Smith say, and I presume you have – he was an old member of the Church – that in this world we may pass along comparatively unknown, but when we appear behind the veil, we shall have to pass by the angels and the Gods, and this can only be done by the righteous and the pure. He stated that he had heard the same thing. I said further, you are the head of this family, and as such you ought to take the lead; but can you lead your wives past the angels and the Gods? No, (I said) you cannot do it, for unless you change your course you will not be there; you have trifled with the things of God, until, as you now see, a serious crisis is commencing to overtake you. The result was, he and they parted by signing the divorce. He said in a feeling way, "I cannot forget my wives, they are dear to me;" and again excused himself on the ground that he could not help his faith. But he might have helped it if he had kept the commandments; but having trifled with the things of God, the Holy Spirit gradually withdrew, at last leaving him to himself. I really felt sorry for the man, and he too felt the position keenly. In parting with him I took him by the hand and said to him, "You have put yourself in this position, and I cannot help it. No, he said, you have treated me right. But (I continued) if the time ever comes that I can be of use to you in leading you back in the paths of life, I shall be happy to serve you. He thanked me, and left.

[JD 24:171 – p.172, John Taylor, May 19, 1883](#)

I mention this that you husbands, may be impressed with a sense of the responsibility that rests upon you, and that you may be careful of your acts and walk in life. God expects you to be true to your vows, to be true to yourselves, and to be true to your wives and children. If you become covenant-breakers, you will be dealt with according to the laws of God. And the men presiding over you have no other alternative than to bring the covenant breaker to judgment; if they fail to do their duty we shall be under the necessity of looking after them, for righteousness and purity must be maintained in our midst.

[JD 24:172, John Taylor, May 19, 1883](#)

I am pleased to say that I perceive an increasing desire on the part of the people to recognize and stand by the right; and I attribute our late deliverance from the hands of our enemies to this fact. When there was one of the greatest furores ever gotten up against us, He turned their wrath, and the remainder He restrained. A certain gentleman well acquainted with railroad matters, referring to our political situation at that time, summed it up like this: That we, numbering only a hundred and fifty thousand in the Territory, were confronted by fifty millions of people; that the conflict appeared to him like two trains, a large one and a small one, traveling in opposite directions on the same track and about to come in collision; and as a matter of course the small train would be demolished. It was very natural, of course, that he as well as the world generally, should regard it in that way. But I told him that I thought that God could and would take care of His people. Happening to have some communication with this same gentleman some time afterwards, I told him that the large train had been shunted off on to a side track, and the Democrats had provided them the switch, while the small train was still moving on its course uninjured. And if we will continue to do right, keeping ourselves pure and unspotted from the world, and the officers of the Church will see that purity is preserved in the Church, and evil of every kind rooted out, God will direct our course and deliver us from the evil that wicked men design to bring upon us, and no power will be able to move us out of our place. Amen.

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Joseph F. Smith, April 8th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

Delivered at the General Conference, Salt Lake City,

Sunday, a.m., April 8th, 1883.

PROSPERITY OF THE SAINTS – DANGER TO BE AVOIDED – HOW BLESSINGS ARE TO BE  
OBTAINED – FREE AGENCY – TRIUMPH OF THE WORK OF GOD TESTIFIED OF –  
"MORMONISM"  
NOT EASILY DESTROYED – PROPHECIES TO BE FULFILLED – SELF-DENIAL REQUIRED  
OF THE SAINTS.

[JD 24:173, Joseph F. Smith, April 8th, 1883](#)

There never perhaps was a time since the Church was organized when the people of God were more prosperous or so numerous as they are to-day, notwithstanding all the efforts that our enemies have directed against us. But while we have triumphed over opposition and all the forces of the wicked that have been exerted against us by newspaper and pulpit and the power of Congress, it is meet that we should acknowledge the hand of God in all our victories. It has certainly not been by the wisdom, power or intelligence of man, that we have been delivered until now, but by the favor and blessing of God in our behalf. And we are to day a living monument of God's special mercy, favor and protection. He has not only blessed us with the privilege of becoming acquainted with His laws, and with the plan of salvation, but He has gathered us to a goodly land; and notwithstanding its former sterility, barrenness and forbidding aspect, He has modified the elements, blessed the earth, and has made these valleys desirable as a home for the Saints. And He has blessed us with an abundance of earthly things besides bestowing upon us the richest of all blessings that man can enjoy in this life – the Holy Spirit and a knowledge of the new and everlasting covenant.

[JD 24:173, Joseph F. Smith, April 8th, 1883](#)

We should have the utmost confidence in the power and wisdom of the Almighty to consummate the work which He has begun, from our experience and knowledge of the past. This is no day for trembling or fear; it is not a day for doubt or misgiving; God has demonstrated His power and superior wisdom in so many ways and at so many times, during the history of this people, in delivering them from the grasp of their enemies, that for us now to doubt Him, whatever the position in which we might be placed, would be an indignity to our Great Preserver, an insult to God. It seems to me impossible for any Latter-day Saint, in the face of all the Lord has done for this people, to doubt for a moment His ability or intention to frustrate the designs of wicked, ambitious men, and to continue His work in the future to ultimate victory and triumph over every obstacle or opposing foe.

[JD 24:173 – p.174, Joseph F. Smith, April 8th, 1883](#)

the only real danger that I foresee in the path of the Latter-day Saints is in the results which naturally follow the possession of wealth – pride and vanity, self-indulgence and forgetfulness of God, and a disregard of the sacred obligations and duties that we owe to Him and to one another; and this because of the abundance of earthly blessings which He in His goodness has bestowed upon us. It is said that in adversity we are inclined to feel after the Lord, but that in prosperity we remember Him not. It appears to me that in this lies the greatest danger that threatens us to-day. This does not apply to the whole people perhaps, for we are not all rich in this world's goods, but to individuals, and they are not a few, but many, who are being blessed – if it proves a blessing – with an accumulation of wealth, and I am sorry to say that many seem to be indulging in speculation to that extent that their whole souls appear to be wrapt up in the love of the world. It is very

evident that some of us are yet "of the world," for like them, "the more we get of it the more we want;" and it does seem impossible to satisfy the cravings of such minds for the perishable things of time. As individuals gather around them riches and become engrossed with the care that naturally attaches to them, they are prone to forget the "pit from which they were dug," or the "stone from which they were hewed" – to forget God upon whom they are quite as dependent when possessed of wealth as when in the most abject poverty. For wealth does not make men independent of God, neither does it relieve them from the obligations that they owe to each other. The rich are as dependent upon God for the light of His Spirit to guide them, and for the blessings and ordinances of the holy Priesthood as are the poorest of the poor. The Lord, in this regard, is "no respecter of persons." The station or worldly condition of man is not regarded by the Almighty. It is man's righteousness and humility; it is the willing mind and the obedient heart that is acceptable to Him, and unless we are righteous and humble, willing and obedient, He will withdraw His Spirit from us, and we will be left to ourselves, as others have been before us, "to reap what we sow." If the time should ever come, (which I do not anticipate) when the majority of this people will be swallowed up in the cares of the world, I know of no remedy to check the evil and thus prevent the destruction of the Church more effectually than to be subjected to the power and persecutions of our enemies, to be driven and smitten perhaps until we shall be humbled and brought to a sense of our obligations to the Lord Almighty, and learn wisdom by the things we have to suffer.

JD 24:174 – p.175 – p.176, Joseph F. Smith, April 8th, 1883

There are blessings which pertain to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to the world to come, which cannot be secured by personal influence nor be bought with money, and which no man by his own intelligence or wisdom can obtain except through compliance with certain ordinances, laws and commandments which have been given. And it is well, in my judgment, for the Latter-day Saints to continue to bear in mind that the inestimable blessings of the Gospel have been bestowed upon them through their faith, that a remission of sins has been obtained by baptism and repentance, and that it is only through continuing faithful that they can retain the gifts and blessings which pertain to eternal life. There are many blessings, however, which are common to the human family, which all enjoy, without regard to their moral status or religious convictions. God has given to all men an agency, and has granted to us the privilege to serve Him or serve Him not, to do that which is right or that which is wrong, and this privilege is given to all men irrespective of creed, color or condition. The wealthy have this agency, the poor have this agency, and no man is deprived by any power of God from exercising it in the fullest and in the freest manner. This agency has been given to all. This is a blessing that God has bestowed upon the world of mankind, upon all His children alike. But He will hold us strictly to an account for the use that we make of this agency, and as it was said of Cain, so it will be said of us: "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." There are, however, certain blessings which God bestows upon the children of men only upon the condition of the rightful exercise of this agency. For instance, no man can obtain a remission of his sins but by repentance and baptism by one having authority. If we would be free from sin, from its effects, from its power, we must obey this law which God has revealed, or we never can obtain a remission of sins. Therefore, while God has bestowed upon all men, irrespective of condition, this agency to choose good or evil, He has not and will not bestow upon the children of men a remission of sins but by their obedience to law. Therefore the whole world lies in sin and is under condemnation, inasmuch as light has come unto the world and men will not avail themselves of that light to put themselves in a proper position before the Lord. And this condemnation rests with tenfold force upon all those that have yielded obedience to this law, and have once received a remission of their sins, but have returned unto sin, and have forgotten or disregarded the covenants they made in the waters of baptism. All men are blessed with the strength of their body, with the use of their mind, and with the right to exercise the faculties with which they are endowed in a way that seemeth good in their sight, without regard to religion. But God has not and will not suffer the gift of the Holy Ghost to be bestowed upon any man or woman, except through compliance with the laws of God. Therefore, no man can obtain a remission of sins; no man can obtain the gift of the Holy Ghost; no man can obtain the revelations of God; no man can obtain the Priesthood, and the rights, powers and privileges thereof; no man can become an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ, except through compliance with the requirements of heaven. These are universal blessings, they are great and inestimable privileges which pertain to the Gospel and to the plan of life and salvation, which are open and free to all on certain conditions, but which no creature beneath the heavens can

enjoy, but through walking in the channel that God has marked out by which they can obtain them. And these privileges and blessings when obtained may be forfeited, and perhaps lost for all eternity, unless we continue steadfast in the course that is marked out for us to pursue. It is well, in my judgment, that the Latter-day Saints do not lose sight of the great privilege that has been bestowed upon them. No man can become a citizen of the Kingdom of God but by entering in at the door: there are thousand and tens of thousands, aye millions of people who will never become citizens of the Kingdom of God in this world, because they fail to exercise the agency and the power that has been given to them in the right direction. Nevertheless, they enjoy many of the blessings that are bestowed upon the world in common. The sun shines upon the evil and the good; but the Holy Ghost descends only upon the righteous and upon those that are forgiven of their sins. The rain descends upon the evil and upon the good; but the rights of the Priesthood are conferred, and the doctrine of the Priesthood distills as the dews of heaven upon the souls of those only that receive it in God's own appointed way. The favor of heaven, the acknowledgment of the Almighty of His children upon the earth as His sons and His daughters can only be secured through obedience to the laws which He has revealed. Riches or the wealth of the world cannot purchase these things. Simon Magus desired to purchase the power to cast out devils with money, but Peter said unto him, "Thy money perish with thee." These blessings, powers and privileges are not to be purchased but by the atonement of Christ; they are not to be obtained by personal influence, wealth, position or power, or in any other way but the direct way in which God has decreed that they should be obtained. Now, so long as the Latter-day Saints are content to obey the commandments of God, to appreciate the privileges and blessings which they enjoy in the Church, and will use their time, their talents, their substance, in honor to the name of God, to build up Zion, and to establish truth and righteousness in the earth, so long our heavenly Father is bound by His oath and covenant to protect them from every opposing foe, and to help them to overcome every obstacle that can possibly be arrayed against them or thrown in their pathway; but the moment a community begin to be wrapt up in themselves, become selfish, become engrossed in the temporalities of life, and put their faith in riches, that moment the power of God begins to withdraw from them, and if they repent not the Holy Spirit will depart from them entirely, and they will be left to themselves. That which was given them will be taken away, they will lose that which they had, for they will not be worthy of it. God is just as well as merciful, and we need not expect favors at the hand of the Almighty except as we merit them, at least in the honest desires of our hearts, and the desire and intent will not always avail unless our acts correspond. For we are engaged in a literal work, a reality; and we must practice as well as profess. We must be what God requires us to be, or else we are not His people nor the Zion which He designs to gather together and to build up in the latter days upon the earth.

JD 24:176, Joseph F. Smith, April 8th, 1883

I am aware that this is the last day of Conference, that there are many to speak and much to be done, therefore brevity is desirable. I find, too, that it is difficult for me to speak loud enough to be heard by this vast assembly.

JD 24:176 – p.177 – p.178, Joseph F. Smith, April 8th, 1883

I rejoice in the work of God. I have never seen a moment since I became acquainted with the principles of the Gospel when I had the least doubt in my mind of their truthfulness. I have never feared, and do not know what the feeling of fear is as to the result of this work. I know that God is able to bear it off, and that He will do it. I fear often for mankind and for myself, knowing my own weaknesses, better, perhaps, than any living being except God. I often have fears and trembling for myself when I am made to feel my own weakness and see myself as I am seen by the Lord. But as to the work of God, it cannot fail, for God has decreed its consummation; and whilst man may oppose it and his efforts fail, the work of God will never fail. Now mark it! As I have often said, the most favorable opportunity that the adversary of men's souls ever saw to destroy this work was on or before the 6th day of April, 1830; but failing to accomplish it then, notwithstanding the efforts that were put forth in this direction, failure to do so in the future must only be the more apparent. There is more to grapple with now than then. "The kingdom" has taken deeper and stronger root in the earth, and its branches have expanded and spread out into many lands. There are more people to kill off now than ever before, and we are rapidly increasing. There is no use of thinking this work will be destroyed by martyring a

few of the people, although they might be our leaders. "Mormonism" is a living principle in the hearts of all true Saints, every soul of whom must be destroyed before it can be wiped out. It has been, through the overruling providences of the Almighty, allowed to grow until it has attained strength and power in the earth: and thanks be unto God the Ruler and Maker of heaven and earth, I feel it in my very bones, that the Kingdom of God is beyond the reach and power of the devil or his agents. And in this condition it will remain, ever advancing, inasmuch as the Saints keep the law of God. If we should become corrupt and wicked, He has said that we shall be removed out of our place, and every individual who will not keep His commandments will fail. For no man can stand in this Church but upon the foundation of righteousness and truth; and whenever we undertake to build upon the foundation of error and falsehood, selfishness and sin, that moment our foundation will crumble beneath our feet; the sands will be washed away, and we will fall. But so long as this people continue faithful, God will be their friend, and He, be it remembered, is the Almighty, and this is His work. The stone representing this latter-day work, has been cut out of the mountain without hands, and will roll forth according to the decree, and no power will be able to stop its onward march. I do not feel to boast only in the strength of our God; and I do feel from the inmost recesses of my heart to praise His holy name, and to thank Him that I have been permitted to see the Kingdom where it is to-day. And those who come after will live to see the consummation of the prophecies that have been uttered concerning it by ancient and modern Prophets verified and no one word will fall to the ground unfulfilled. Not one jot or tittle will pass from the law or the Prophets; but all will be fulfilled, and I am as sure of it as I am that I live. What would you or I take in exchange for this knowledge, this witness of the Spirit? Nothing could be offered that would be an equivalent; it is worth everything else in the world. It is a stay, an anchor to the soul, a comfort and a joy to the heart for ever. It is with me, as it is with every man and woman that has received the knowledge of God, through the operations of the Holy Spirit, and that is true to the same – the kingdom of God or nothing; I have no more interest in the kingdom of God than any individual member of the Church. In other words, there is not a man in the kingdom of God that is capable of attaining to the glory of the celestial kingdom but has a great interest in the welfare of this work, in the consummation of the purposes of the Almighty, as I have myself, or as Brother Taylor, Brother Cannon, Brother Woodruff, or any of the members of the Quorum of the Twelve. We are all interested. Every man should feel that it is his work, his kingdom, his church, and that the principles of the Gospel are his principles, for he has embraced them and espoused them, or at least unless we have embraced the Gospel and received the principles thereof in our hearts that they have become a part of us, that we might become identified with the designs and purposes of the Almighty in the earth, we are not converted, nor are we worthy to be saved in the kingdom of God. It is written – and it is as true as that the sun shines – that expect a man is willing to sacrifice every earthly tie or consideration for the Gospel's sake, he is not worthy of the kingdom, nor of Christ. This is according to the declaration of Jesus while He was upon the earth. It is the testimony of Joseph Smith, and that of all the holy Prophets since the world began, who have said anything upon this subject, that any man who is not willing to sacrifice everything else for the Gospel's sake is not worthy of it, and the day will come when he will come short; so that the sooner we are converted to the truth, the better for us and our posterity. They will receive inheritances, and the blessings of God will follow upon them through us, just as they follow upon the seed of Abraham, because of the blessings and promises bestowed upon their father Abraham. The promises were made to Abraham, and the blessing followed upon the heads of his children, and will continue unto the last generation, because the promise was made to Abraham who was worthy of it, and he will claim the promise for his posterity. So it will be with you and me. The blessings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have been conferred upon us, and they will be inherited by our posterity if we prove worthy of the privilege, and live for it.

[JD 24:178, Joseph F. Smith, April 8th, 1883](#)

May God bless and help us to learn the truth and abide in it forever, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus, Amen.

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George Q. Cannon, July 15th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEO. Q. CANNON,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, July 15th, 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

NEED OF INSPIRATION IN PREACHING – GROWTH OF THE WORK OF THE  
LORD – DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSIBILITY – SELF-DEPENDENCE NECESSARY – THE CAUSE  
AND THE PEOPLE ARE BEING TESTED – EXISTENCE OF THE WORK A PROOF OF ITS  
DIVINITY – ITS COMPLETENESS – A POWERLESS CHRISTIANITY – SENTIMENTS OF THE  
SAINTS IN REGARD TO MORALITYTES.

[JD 24:179 – p.180, George Q. Cannon, July 15th, 1883](#)

In standing up to address you this afternoon, I desire an interest in your faith and prayers, that I may be led to speak upon those subjects that will be best adapted to you and your circumstances. I believe it to be our privilege when we come together, as we have this afternoon, with our hearts united, desirous before God for His blessing, that the very things – that is, the very doctrines and instructions and counsel that are needed by us, and that are best adapted to our circumstances and condition, will be given unto us by the Holy Spirit. It is for this purpose we meet together. I never did feel satisfied in attending meetings and listening to instructions, and going away feeling unrefreshed and without being edified and strengthened in the principles of the everlasting Gospel; I do not think that it is right that we should thus meet and thus separate. God has made promises unto His people. If His people do their part He will fulfill those promises; He will give that portion of His Spirit that is necessary to impart unto them everything that their circumstances may require. I think it wrong that men should prepare themselves before-hand to speak to the people. I believe that God has given unto us the correct rule, the rule that He gave to His ancient disciples – "to take no thought beforehand what ye shall say, but treasure up in your minds continually the words of life, and it shall be given you in the very hour that portion that shall be meted unto every man." When the time should come for His servants to address the people, He would give unto them the very things that were needed. How do I know, how does any other man in this congregation know the thoughts and the fears and the wants of you who are here to-day? There may be souls here hungering for the word of God, tried and tempted in many directions, annoyed and perplexed with the cares of life and with those anxieties that are connected with our earthly existence. Who shall tell these souls that which they need? Can any man out of his own wisdom, from the depths of his own thoughts, give the needed strength and comfort to those hungry souls? It is impossible. God must do it. God must pour out His Holy Spirit. God must help as he has promised to do, and we His children must put ourselves in a position to be helped so that we can claim the blessing.

[JD 24:180, George Q. Cannon, July 15th, 1883](#)

These people continually need strength from the Lord. There has never been a day, nay, not an hour, from the commencement of this work upon the earth in these last days that the Latter-day Saints have been destitute of the counsel of heaven, of the word of God, and of the guidance of that Holy Spirit that God has promised to bestow upon His faithful children. Having thus been led in the past it is still essential that we be thus led in the

future, that we may live by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God – not that proceeded from His mouth 1,800 years ago, but that proceeds from His mouth to–day, in this year of our Lord 1883. And we need it just as much to–day as we ever did. We need the direct interposition of God's providence in our behalf, and we need the assistance of His Holy Spirit; we need His word, and His blessing, and His power, and His direct intervention in our behalf as much to–day as this Church did fifty years ago, or as the Church did 1850 years ago. It is indispensably necessary for our progress, for our advancement in the things that pertain to righteousness, in the knowledge of God, that we should be thus assisted and upheld and inspired.

[JD 24:180 – p.181, George Q. Cannon, July 15th, 1883](#)

This great work with which we are connected is becoming so extensive, is spreading out in so many directions, that it needs more of the manifestation of God's power and greater faith on the part of the people to carry it forward in the earth. It needs greater faith on the part of those who bear any portion of the responsibility of the Priesthood of the Son of God, because they have now to act in capacities that heretofore they did not act in. It seems only a little while ago that we had but one Stake of Zion. We had but one High Council, and the Presidency of the Church presided over that High Council. Every matter of moment, every case of importance, came directly before the First Presidency of the Church. In fact, affairs of the most trifling importance – or at least that which we would now consider of trifling importance – had to be submitted to them. Upon their shoulders rested the responsibility of directing everything connected with the work of God in its minutest details. But this has changed. Instead of one High Council, instead of one Stake, there are at least twenty–five. Instead of the First Presidency of the Church presiding over High Councils, there are Presidencies of these various Stakes and upon them rest the responsibilities which formerly rested upon the First Presidency. There are stakes now in Zion, the number of whose members far exceeds the number of members in the Church in those early days. For years after we came to these valleys – or for some time at least – the whole Church in these mountains did not number as many souls as are now comprised within Salt Lake Stake. The responsibility, therefore, is being divided. It rests upon a great number of men, and as the people increase this responsibility becomes more and more divided. It is an impossibility now for the First Presidency to attend to anything but general matters of business, giving general instructions, and they find themselves under the necessity more and more of dividing this, laying it upon the shoulders of other men, calling helps from various quarters, to labor in various directions, and to perform the work which in former times was deemed especially their province. The Saints themselves find themselves under the necessity of depending more upon themselves than they did formerly. They cannot, in the multiplicity of cares and labors which devolve upon leading men – they cannot expect that help, that attention to minor affairs, that they formerly received.

[JD 24:181, George Q. Cannon, July 15th, 1883](#)

Hence, my brethren and sisters, it is necessary that every man and woman and child, connected with this work should learn as rapidly as possible the habit of self–dependence – to exercise faith before God for themselves, so that each one in his place or in her place, will be able to perform his or her part to the acceptance of our God, and in such a manner as to bring to pass their own salvation. This is much more easy at the present time than it was in the past, from the fact that doctrine is becoming better understood, the principles of the Gospel are more thoroughly disseminated by the aid of all the various agencies that are at work in our midst. Our children now receive in the Primary Associations – as soon as they are able to comprehend principle – such instruction as is adapted to their dawning intellects, and from that to the Sunday school, and from the Sunday school to the Young Men's and Young Women's Associations, and in the case of the boys to the various councils of the Priesthood, and in the case of the girls to the various Relief Societies. They are led along step by step until they become thoroughly indoctrinated in principle, and comprehend in the broadest sense the character of the work with which they are identified. Only this morning I had an opportunity of testing this to some extent. My frequent absences from home give me but few opportunities to meet with my children. But I said to them this morning: "Instead of you going to Sunday school, I will have Sunday school at home." I wanted to talk to them, to inquire of my little ones concerning their knowledge of the principles of the Gospel, and I was somewhat surprised at the replies which were made to my interrogatories concerning this work,

concerning its character, concerning its doctrines and the principles that are taught by the Elders. I presume that it is the case with all our children, and I have no doubt from my observation, that at the present time there are children quite small who are capable of giving replies to questions which a few years ago many of our Elders could not answer. I am pleased with this. I think it right.

JD 24:181 – p.184, George Q. Cannon, July 15th, 1883

As I have said this work is spreading to so great an extent that responsibility must rest upon individual members. The Presidency of the Church, the Twelve Apostles, the various presiding authorities, can no longer do as they have done in years past – carry the people along. The people themselves must learn to walk, to bear their own burdens, to perform their own duties, and to take such a course as will result in their own development, and in the advancement of this great work that God has established upon the earth. I would not give much for us, nor for our work, nor for our future, if the individual intelligence of the people should not be developed. It would be an impossibility for this work to achieve the high destiny in store for it, and concerning which we have indulged in so many glowing anticipations upon any other principle than this. We are told that intelligence is the glory of God, and it certainly is the glory of man. And with the obstacles that have to be overcome, that confront us every step in our progress, there must be knowledge developed among this people; there must be the highest attainment and grade of intelligence developed among us. Upon no other principle can we stand. Upon no other principle can we progress. Upon no other principle can we accomplish the great results that we have before us. It is true we testify that God has restored the everlasting Gospel in its primitive simplicity, purity and power. We bear this testimony; but the restoration of this alone, in and of itself, will not accomplish that which we have before us, unless we avail ourselves of the advantages which its restoration affords. We must put in practice and carry out practically in our lives its principles. We must be a people who are not only hearers of the word, but doers of it also. It will not do for us to have a form of godliness without the power thereof. We must have the power of the work that God has founded. We must put ourselves in a position to receive the blessings and advantages connected with this work, and to have these we must be a pure people – pure in thought, pure in word, and pure in action. God through us is founding a new order of things in the earth. The axe is laid at the root of the old tree, and sooner or later it will be hewn down. The restoration of the everlasting Gospel, the restoration of the powers connected therewith, of the gifts, of the blessings, and especially of the union and the peace that characterized it in ancient days, is bound eventually to produce wonderful results in the earth. Already it is conceded that it is a marvelous work and a wonder, just as the Prophet Isaiah said would be the case. This must spread. From the nature of things it must spread. It must continue to grow, to increase. The more obstacles it has to contend with the better its power is developed, the better its strength is exhibited. I am thankful myself for the difficulties we have had to contend with. I am thankful that we have a hard pathway to tread. I am thankful that we have opposition of so serious a character. Without this we could not be developed. Without this we could not be thoroughly tested, nor our principles be proved. It is by such ordeals as these that man exhibits his divine origin, and the qualities that he inherits from his divine Father. It is by such ordeals as these that systems are tried, and that principles exhibit their force and power to mankind. We are being tested as no other people upon the face of the earth are being tested. The principles that we have espoused and that we advocate are passing through such an ordeal as the principles advocated by no other people are subjected to. Every form of opposition is brought to bear; every kind of influence is set in motion, not even stopping at violence itself. If our principles withstand all these shocks and assaults upon them and endure, they will prove to the world far better than our verbal testimony will that they are of divine origin. If the organization of this Church cannot be broken up by the attacks of mobs, by the uprooting of the people, by the driving of them forth into the wilderness, by the attacks of townships, of cities, of counties, of States, or by the adverse legislation of the United States itself, then the world will be more likely to believe that which we solemnly assert, that God is its author, that God laid its foundation, that God has preserved it thus far, and that He will preserve it to the very end. These are proofs of that which we testify. That it has thus withstood all these assaults, we are living witnesses. That we exist to-day in our present organized capacity in these mountains is due to the capacity of the organization to adapt itself to every change of circumstances. Men may sneer, men may deride, men may publish false statements, men may attribute all this to various causes which are untrue; but the fact still remains uncontrovertible and unassailable, that there is a power and a strength and an elasticity about the organization of this Church of



Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that all that is brought against it fails to unsettle or to shiver. Now we have been testifying – that is, some of the Elders have – for these 53 years that this work had this capacity. Joseph Smith stated it in the outset before the Church itself was organized. The first Elders of the Church bore similar testimony when but six members comprised the entire Church of Jesus Christ. They predicted its future. They stated that it possessed these divine qualities. They solemnly declared that God had restored it from the heavens; that it was the old organization brought back again; that it was the old Gospel restored once more to the earth, and that it would win its way in every land and among every people, and that it would accomplish all that God had predicted by the mouths of His holy prophets that it should accomplish. But who believed it? No more believed it then than can be found now to believe our testimony, that which we bear this day, that this work, notwithstanding all the opposition it may have to contend with – notwithstanding it may have every power on earth to oppose it, that it will win its way until it will fill the whole earth. There were probably no more who believed the testimony of the early Elders respecting the growth of the work than are to be found to believe our testimony now concerning its future. But fifty-three years have passed, and in their passage it has been demonstrated that it possesses the qualities and powers that were claimed for it by those who declared the testimony in the beginning. Wonderful it must have seemed in the early days when they all could meet together within a log schoolhouse – wonderful it must have seemed to them when their minds were enlightened by the Spirit of God, and they looked down and saw the future of this work – its growth, development and advancement, and the mighty results it would accomplish – it must have seemed wonderful, I say, to them at that time with their surroundings. But if there is anything that shows clearly how God dealt with this people and how plainly He could reveal His mind and will to them, it is the fact that those who lived in those days, and whose writings have been left, whose testimonies are on record, – saw with extraordinary clearness that which we now behold and the far greater results that are yet to be reached in the future. They saw it with plainness, they saw it with wonderful clearness and predicted concerning it as though they were writing contemporaneous history; and that which they testified to, as I have said, has been proved so far as we have gone.

JD 24:184 – p.185, George Q. Cannon, July 15th, 1883

There has been no lack about this work. Its principles have withstood all that has been brought against them. They stand unshaken because they are founded on eternal truth. The whole clergy of the world may array themselves against them, as they have to a certain extent; they may endeavor to controvert these principles, but they are founded on truth and they cannot be overturned. Not a single principle that has been declared or been testified to by the Elders of this Church from the beginning up to the present time can be assailed successfully by any religionist, nor by scientific men, because they are impregnable, having had their origin in God. And so it is with everything connected with this work. It has never taken a step backward. It never will take a step backward. There are no mistakes to be corrected connected with it, either with its doctrine, with its organization, or, with its movement. Who is there – I speak to you, my brethren and sisters, who have been connected with this Church from the beginning – who is there that can recall a single instance of recantation of any of its principles? Has there ever been a doctrine declared by the authorities of the Church, as a part of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, that they have had to take back or modify? Not one. Has there been anything in the organization that has had to be perfected? No. The organization was as perfect in theory – being revealed of God – 50 years ago as it is to-day in practice, after years of experience, practically carrying it out in these mountains. That constitutes the strength of this work. It is its infallibility. Not that man connected with it is infallible, for he is fallible; but the work itself, its principles, and everything connected with it, is infallible, having a divine origin, being revealed of God. It was a wonderful thing to state, as was stated right at the outset of this work, that it should be preached in every land, that its doctrine should be proclaimed in every tongue throughout the world, and that it should gather from every nation under heaven, men and women who should be numbered as its converts. A remarkable feature, something unheard of, that the principles of this religion when preached should have the effect to gather out from every nation, kindred, tongue and people those who espoused them. Yet every word has been fulfilled. Wherever the Elders of this Church have gone they have gone accompanied by that wonderful power, the power of gathering the people together; not of one race, not of one language, but people of every race and of every language, showing the adaptability of its principles to the people of the frozen north as well as to those of the torrid south. Wherever these principles

have been proclaimed they have gathered out from the nations unto whom they were proclaimed those who have espoused them, and as I have remarked here before, there is no power short of violence that can prevent these people from thus coming together. It has not been the inducement of the Elder; it has not been by persuasion; it has not been any influence of this character that they have sought to wield over the people that has gathered them together. They have come of their own accord. They have forsaken home, friends, old associations, ancestral tombs, and everything of this character that is calculated to bind men to their native land; they have severed all these and have gathered out and cast their lots with the people of their faith in these mountains. And this has been a peculiar feature of this work from the very commencement, and it will continue to be as long as the Gospel is preached. And it is this wonderful union, this Godlike union, that bears testimony that it is from God.

JD 24:185, George Q. Cannon, July 15th, 1883

I do not wish to say anything in relation to other forms of religion; I do not know that it is necessary that I should do so; but no thinking man can admit that Christianity so-called – I call it a false Christianity, untrue to its name – satisfies the wants of humanity at the present time. It is not a religion that satisfies. It comes short in almost every particular. It is devoid of all the powers that characterized it and gave it force in the early days. You look in vain for those features that distinguished it, and that gave it power in the earth, and that made it the foe of Paganism and false religions existing in those days, and which gave it the wonderful success it achieved. It is destitute of these features. It is divided, split into hundreds of sects, without power, having a form of godliness, but lacking the power thereof. It cannot stand; it cannot prevail. Monstrous as its power is, great as its growth is, co-extensive with the world it may be said, it nevertheless is destined to tumble with Babylon the great. It must go down. It has not the elements of strength. And the great cause of its weakness is, that God is not with it. God's power does not accompany it. Men in too many instances are Christian because it is popular to be so. But where is the power of Christianity? Where are the revelations of God? The idea of God having a church on the earth, and never speaking His mind and will unto that church! Why, I will not worship a God who will not speak. He is as Baal of old. I want nothing to do with him. I want the God of heaven, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, a God who can speak and who can manifest His mind and His will, who can guide His people, who can bestow gifts and blessings upon His people, who can hear and answer their prayers when they call upon him. I want a God of that kind if I can find Him, and I thank God that I have found Him, and that He has revealed Himself in these last days, and has established His Church as He did in ancient days, and has endowed it with the same powers that the ancient church possessed, and it has to undergo the same trials and temptations and the same persecution that the ancient church did. The blood of its members has flown. They have been slain for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, for claiming to be Prophets, for claiming to be apostles, for claiming to be servants of God, just the same as the ancient servants of God did. We, to-day in these mountains are here because we have been driven out, not permitted to enjoy those blessings that as free men and free women, born free, we were justly entitled to – that is, the right to worship our God according to the dictates of our own consciences. We are therefore a standing protest against religious tyranny, and while God gives us breath, we shall always be found defending the right of every human being to worship his God or her God according to his or her conscience, without anything to molest or to make afraid, as long as in that worship they do not trespass upon the rights of their neighbors.

JD 24:185 – p.186, George Q. Cannon, July 15th, 1883

Now, my brethren and sisters, as I said in the beginning, there is a great responsibility resting upon us individually. Our children must grow up understanding these principles, willing to endure everything for them, strong in the Lord to bear them off, and to maintain purity in the earth. The devil has raised every sort of cry against these Latter-day Saints, throwing dust in the eyes of the people concerning us, making the world believe that we are unfit to live, that it would be doing God service to kill us off, making them believe that we are the most impure and the most corrupt people on the face of the earth. Why, who has done these things? Men who are steeped in corruption, up to their lips in it, and who cannot comprehend purity. And this has been the cry: "Kill them off, they are unworthy to live; it will be doing God service to destroy them." And yet in these mountains the virtue of woman is held sacred. There was a time when a woman was as safe in our

streets, or in our remote byways, as she would be in a strongly guarded house or castle. A woman could travel from the northern boundary of our Territory to the southern, without hearing a word of disrespect or seeing a gesture or anything of that character that would annoy her. But how has it been of late years? Why, women are unsafe in the streets. There was a time when drunkenness was unknown in this land? How is it now? In spite of our protest, in spite of everything we can do – because we have not the power, being a Territory, to carry out our laws or to maintain them – drunkenness runs riot, and it is the constant effort on the part of every man who has a family, and every leading man, to guard our youth against these devilish influences that are growing on every hand. We say to our boys: it is the worst crime you can commit short of murder, to be guilty of illicit intercourse with the other sex. I would rather carry my son to the grave than that he should be guilty of such a thing. We say: "Marry the sisters, marry the daughters of Eve, take to yourselves lawful wives, but you shall not commit adultery, you shall not commit seduction, you shall not commit fornication; if you do God will curse you, and we will sever you from the Church." We say to our daughters that it is one of the worst crimes they can commit to be guilty of unchastity. We want to raise up a righteous seed in these mountains, pure and virtuous, so that a man will be so virtuous that he may be in the company of an unprotected woman alone for any length of time, and she would be as safe as if she were in heaven, or under the guardianship of an angel, safe from pollution, safe from everything that is vile. We want to teach our children to be sober, to be industrious, to be truthful, to be honest, to love God, and to love their neighbor; for they can best show their love for God by exhibiting their love for their neighbor. If they cannot love him whom they see, how can they love Him whom they have not seen? Let us take these things to heart, and let us be watchful and use all our influence to protect the rising generation against those sins that are sweeping over the earth, and God will bless us in our efforts in so doing. I pray God that He will bless you, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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Joseph F. Smith, June 21st, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH,

Delivered at Ogden, Sunday Morning, June 21st, 1883.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs)

DELUSIVE SPIRITS – PROPER CHANNEL FOR REVELATIONS TO COME THROUGH – THE  
CALLING OF JOSEPH SMITH – INDICATION OF AN IMPOSTOR – PRIVATE ANTIPATHY TO BE  
CURBED AND THE PRIESTHOOD TO BE SUSTAINED – ONLY ONE MAN APPOINTED TO HOLD  
THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM AT A TIME – MEN NOT TO JUDGE THOSE WHO PRESIDE OVER  
THEM – HOW TO SECURE JUSTICE.

[JD 24:187, Joseph F. Smith, June 21st, 1883](#)

There has, perhaps, never been a period in the history of the Church when the delusive spirits that are abroad in the world, deceiving the children of men, were more active than they are and have been for the last few years. I have never, in my recollection heard of so many pretended prophets and revelations, special messages,

missions and manifestations to various individuals, as have come to my notice within the last few months or perhaps years. Some claim that they are in constant communication with angels, others that they have received a direct command from God to accomplish a certain mission, others claim to be Christ, and therefore assume the right to dictate and direct the labors of the Presidency and Twelve, and undertake to correct and set them right and to show them wherein they lack inspiration, etc., and wherein it is necessary that a strong arm should be raised up in order to steady the ark of Zion. There has been a great deal of this kind of spirit manifested of late among men who are and have been in the Church for years; and not only such, but by men who never have been members and who have no knowledge of the character of this latter-day work. Messages from the spirit world, communications from the departed through mediums, people that permit themselves to be used for this purpose by lying and delusive spirits.

[JD 24:187 – p.188, Joseph F. Smith, June 21st, 1883](#)

It has sometimes been sorrowful to see respected members of the Church, men who should know better, allow themselves to become the tools of seductive spirits. Such men seem, for the time at least, to lose sight of the fact that the Lord has established on earth the Priesthood in its fullness; and that by direct revelation and commandment from heaven; that He has instituted an order or government that is beyond the capacity, and that is superior to the wisdom and learning and understanding of man, so far, indeed, that it seems impossible for the human mind, unaided by the Spirit of God, to comprehend the beauties, powers, and character of the Holy Priesthood. It seems difficult for men to comprehend the workings of the Priesthood; its legitimate authority, its scope and power; and yet by the light of the spirit it is easily comprehended, but not understanding it men are easily deceived by seductive spirits that are abroad in the world. They are led to believe that something is wrong, and the next thing that transpires, they find themselves believing that they are chosen specially to set things right. It is very unfortunate for a man to be taken in this snare; for be it understood by the Latter-day Saints that as long as the servants of God are living pure lives, are honoring the Priesthood conferred upon them, and endeavoring to the best of their knowledge to magnify their offices and callings, to which they have been duly chosen by the voice of the people and the Priesthood, and sanctioned by the approval of God, so long as the Lord has any communication to make to the children of men, or any instructions to impart to His Church, He will make such communication through the legally appointed channel of the Priesthood; He will never go outside of it, as long, at least, as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints exists in its present form on the earth.

[JD 24:188, Joseph F. Smith, June 21st, 1883](#)

The Church of God has been organized, the kingdom of God has been established, and the Gospel has been restored to the earth for the last time; and this work which has fairly begun will never cease, but will continue to spread abroad and increase in the earth, and gather to its fold the righteous, the honest, the pure, the meek and the poor of the earth, until "the kingdom" shall be exalted to power and glory in the midst of the world; and it will reign triumphant when Babylon will be broken to pieces, and will fall to rise no more. These are the promises that have been made to us. This fact is indicated by the revelations of God to man through ancient and modern prophets, and through angels that have visited the earth in this dispensation of the fullness of times.

[JD 24:188 – p.189, Joseph F. Smith, June 21st, 1883](#)

It is not my business nor that of any other individual to rise up as a revelator, as a prophet, as a seer, as an inspired man, to give revelation for the guidance of the Church, or to assume to dictate to the presiding authorities of the Church in any part of the world, much less in the midst of Zion, where the organizations of the Priesthood are about perfect, where everything is complete even to the organization of a branch. It is the right of individuals to be inspired and to receive manifestations of the Holy Spirit for their personal guidance, to strengthen their faith, and to encourage them in works of righteousness, in being faithful and observing and keeping the commandments which God has given unto them; it is the privilege of every man and woman to receive revelation to this end, but not further. The moment an individual rises up assuming the right to control

and to dictate or to sit in judgment on his brethren, especially upon those who preside, he should be promptly checked, or discord, division and confusion would be the result. Every man and woman in this Church should know better than to yield to such a spirit; the moment that such a feeling presents itself to them they should rebuke it, as it is in direct antagonism to the order of the Priesthood, and to the spirit and genius of this work. We can accept nothing as authoritative but that which comes directly through the appointed channel, the constituted organizations of the Priesthood, which is the channel that God has appointed through which to make known His mind and will to the world. It was necessary prior to the organization of this Church, that God should select from the inhabitants of the earth some person through whom to reveal His will to mankind; and it pleased Him to select for this purpose the youthful and untutored boy Joseph Smith, as David of old was His choice, but as there was no Priesthood on the earth when Joseph was called, legally constituted by the authority of heaven to officiate in the name of the Lord, it was necessary therefore that some one should be selected as the first Elder for the beginning of this work, for there has to be a beginning, and he was the one foreordained for the position which he occupied and filled. After calling and setting him apart for the work of introducing and establishing this Gospel of the kingdom, the Lord of course recognized him as His mouthpiece, as His authorized agent, if you please, and it would be absolutely inconsistent, unreasonable and absurd to suppose that after God had called one man and appointed him to this work, that He should pass him by and go to somebody else to accomplish the same purpose. No sensible person would accept for one moment such a proposition. To seriously contemplate any such idea would be charging the Almighty with inconsistency, and with being the author of confusion, discord and schism. The kingdom of God never could be established on earth in any such way.

JD 24:189 – p.190, Joseph F. Smith, June 21st, 1883

Through Joseph then, the Lord revealed Himself to the world and through him He chose the first Elders of the Church – men who were honest in their hearts; men whom He knew would receive the word and labor in connection with Joseph in this great and important undertaking; and all that have been ordained to the Priesthood, and all that have been appointed to any position whatever in this Church, have received their authority and commission through this channel, appointed of God, with Joseph at the head. This is the order, and it could not be otherwise. God will not raise up another prophet and another people to do the work that we have been appointed to do. He will never ignore those who have stood firm and true from the commencement, as it were, of this work, and who are still firm and faithful, inasmuch as they continue faithful to their trust. There is no question in my mind of their ever proving themselves unfaithful, as a body; for if any of them were to become unworthy in His sight, He would remove them out of their place and call others from the ranks to fill their positions. And thus His Priesthood will ever be found to be composed of the right men for the place, of men whose backs will be fitted for the burden, men through whom He can work and regulate the affairs of His Church according to the counsels of His own will. And the moment that individuals look to any other source, that moment they throw themselves open to the seductive influences of Satan, and render themselves liable to become servants of the devil; they lose sight of the true order through which the blessings of the Priesthood are to be enjoyed; they step outside of the pale of the kingdom of God, and are on dangerous ground. Whenever you see a man rise up claiming to have received direct revelation from the Lord to the Church, independent of the order and channel of the Priesthood, you may set him down as an impostor. God has not called you to go out to the world to be taught, or to receive revelations through apostates or strangers; but He has called and ordained you and sent you forth to teach and lead people in the paths of righteousness and salvation.

JD 24:190, Joseph F. Smith, June 21st, 1883

It is the duty, therefore, of every Latter-day Saint to seek for the spirit of truth, and to desire with full purposes of heart, and seek diligently for the gifts of wisdom and understanding that will lead and guide into all truth, that will enable us to comprehend the purposes of God, and this most perfect, most harmonious organizations which God has instituted by His own wisdom in these last days for the gathering of Israel, and for the communication of all His purposes as made known through His servants the Prophets. Men may become dissatisfied one with another, they may become dissatisfied towards the Presidency, the Quorum of

the Twelve, or others, and may say in their hearts, "I do not like such an one; I do not believe he is as good as he should be, he has too many faults and weaknesses and, therefore, I cannot and will not acknowledge his authority, as I have not faith in the man." Doubtless there are those, too many perhaps, who feel that way, but the trouble is, and that is the worst of it, just because they have become dissatisfied with the individual and harbored feelings of bitterness in their hearts against their brethren, they lose sight of the designs of the Almighty; they turn against the authority of the Holy Priesthood; and through their blindness, allow themselves to be led astray, and at last turn away from the Church.

JD 24:190 – p.191 – p.192, Joseph F. Smith, June 21st, 1883

Now, how should it be? I will tell you. In the first place every person should know that the Gospel is true, as this is every one's privilege who is baptized and receives the Holy Ghost. A man may be grieved in his feelings because of some difficulty between him and President Taylor, or Cannon or myself; he may have feelings in his heart which lead him to think that he could not sustain us in his faith and prayers; but if this should be the case, what is the course for him to pursue? He should say in his heart, "God has established His kingdom, and His Priesthood is upon the earth; and notwithstanding my dislike for certain men, I know that the Gospel is true, and that God is with His people; and that if I will do my duty and keep His commandments, the clouds will roll by and the mists will disappear, the spirit of the Lord will come more fully to my relief, and by and by I will be able to see – if I am in error, wherein I erred, and then I will repent of it, for I know that every wrong thing will yet be made right." I think all men should feel that way. A man may not have confidence in his Bishop, or in one or both of his Counselors; circumstances might be such that according to his judgment the Bishop or his Counselors might be in the wrong, and his confidence in them, whether right or wrong, would therefore be destroyed; but because he may feel so, would it be right or consistent in him as an Elder in Israel, to set himself up as the judge of the Bishop or his Counselors and the whole Church? If one were to get in a position of this kind he would be like some others I have heard of, John and David Whitmer, for instance, two of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, and Wm. E. McClellan, and William Smith, two of the Twelve Apostles, some of whom are still living, and many others, both living and dead. Do you think you could convince those of this class that they had apostatized from the Church? No; these men are firmly convinced in their own minds that they never apostatized. They stoutly and indignantly deny that they ever apostatized or turned away from the Church, but say that Joseph Smith and the Twelve Apostles apostatized, and all the Church had apostatized and become very wicked, and that God has cut the Church off, but that Brother David Whitmer and Brother Wm. E. McClellan, William Smith, and others are the only members of the Church in good standing, and they are all at variance with each other. If I were to raise my hand against my Bishop, against the Twelve or the First Presidency, because I did not like them, that moment I should place myself in the position that these men now occupy, and that scores of others who have passed away have occupied, and say: "The Church has apostatized, Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, and John Taylor, have apostatized, but I am firm in the faith; all the people have gone astray because they will not acknowledge me." There is where the man is who rebels against the authority of the Priesthood, and at the same time endeavors to hold on to the faith. Never is there but one appointed at a time to hold the keys of the kingdom of God pertaining to the earth. While Christ remained on the earth He held them; but when He departed He committed them to Peter, he being the President or Chief of the Apostles; and it was his right to direct and to receive revelation for the Church, and to give counsel to all the brethren. After Satan and wicked men had prevailed against the Church, crucified the Savior and killed the Apostles, the keys of the kingdom were taken from the earth. John the Revelator describes it most clearly. And from that time until Joseph Smith was called by the voice of the Almighty, and ordained to hold those keys, no man held them upon the earth that we know of. It is true the Lord did appoint other Twelve upon this continent, and His Church flourished and prospered in this land for many years, but the Lord declared that Peter, James and John, and the Twelve that walked with Him at Jerusalem, held the Presidency over them. God may reveal himself to different nations, and establish among them the same Gospel and ordinances as He did anciently, if necessity require, but if these nations should be joined together there would be one head, and all the rest would be subordinate. So that from the time that the keys of this Priesthood were taken from the earth until they were received by Joseph Smith, no man ever possessed that Priesthood, nor the keys thereof, with authority to build up the Zion of God, and prepare a church or people for the second coming of Christ, "as a bride is adorned for the

bridegroom;" unless it may have been among the lost tribes, yet of this we have no knowledge, but if so they would receive those keys necessary to administer in the ordinances of the Gospel for their salvation. We know not of their existence or the condition in which they are placed. The Gospel that is given to them is suited to their needs and condition, and is for their salvation, not ours, and yet it will be the same Gospel. And God will not call one from them to give to us the Priesthood, or to give to us keys and blessings, or to point out the organization of the kingdom of God, because He has established that Priesthood here, and we have it. If He has any communication to make to us He will send His messengers to us. And in this way He will deliver His law and give His mind and will to the people. He will do it through the ordained channels of the Priesthood which He acknowledges and which He has established in the earth. He will go no where else to do it, neither will He send us to them unless they should be without the Priesthood and it becomes necessary to take the blessings of the Gospel to them, and I presume that will be the case.

JD 24:192 – p.193, Joseph F. Smith, June 21st, 1883

When Joseph received the keys of the Priesthood he alone on the earth held them; that is, he was the first, he stood at the head. It was promised that he should not lose them or be removed out of his place, so long as he was faithful. And when he died President Young was chosen by the voice of the people, and sanctioned by the voice of God. He held the Priesthood which was after the order of the Son of God, with the keys which pertain to the presidency of that Priesthood upon earth. He received it from the hands of Joseph, directly from him or by his authority; and he held it until his death. When he died that mantle fell upon John Taylor, and while he lives he will hold that authority inasmuch as he is faithful. So it was with President Brigham Young, he held it on condition of his faithfulness. If any man in that position should become unfaithful, God would remove him out of his place. I testify in the name of Israel's God that He will not suffer the head of the Church, him whom He has chosen to stand at the head, to transgress His laws and apostatize; the moment he should take a course that would in time lead to it, God would take him away. Why? Because to suffer a wicked man to occupy that position, would be to allow, as it were, the fountain to become corrupted, which is something He will never permit. And why will he not suffer it? Because it is not the work of Joseph Smith; it is not the work of Brigham Young or of John Taylor. It is not the work of man but of God Almighty; and it is His business to see that the men who occupy this position are men after His own heart, men that will receive instructions from Him, and that will carry out the same according to the counsels of His will. You may depend that he will see to it, and risk nothing upon this head. Hence you will have no reason to find fault or to rise up in judgment upon President Taylor or upon President Young, or upon the Prophet Joseph Smith, or upon the Twelve Apostles. We have no right to rise up in judgment upon the President of the Stake, or upon our Bishop, or upon the Priesthood in any shape or form, unless we can do so agreeably to the laws of the Church. If they decide against us inasmuch as God has conferred the keys of this Priesthood upon them, and the kingdom is here, and its authority is here, and the Priesthood is here, and the organization of the kingdom of God is here – and inasmuch as the decision is reached and rendered agreeable to the laws and commandments of God, then it would be our bounden duty to humbly submit, and bow to it and acknowledge it. You or I might think it hard, and possibly feel that it was unjust, but as it would be impossible to make it otherwise, we must submit. "What," says one, "submit to an unjust decision? No, sir!" Who says it is unjust? You or I say it is; but twelve High Councilors and the Presidency of the Stake say it is just, and in holding to our idea of the unjustness of the decision, we put our judgment against that of fifteen disinterested men. Who then is to decide on the justice of the case? They, not me; and it is my business to acknowledge it and yield to it. There is, however, a supervisory authority in the First Presidency; and they may exercise in some degree the pardoning power, for unto them is given power under the laws of God to forgive. "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." President Taylor holds the keys of that authority in this Church. You may appeal then to the Presidency of the Church, and they may inquire into the justice or injustice of the decision and see if the case is entitled to a rehearing. But if the decision of the High Council should be confirmed, then you have no other appeal on earth. And yet God has given to us the broadest latitude peacefully to defend our individual rights, agreeably to just and righteous laws. He permits us first to be tried by the Bishop and his Counselors; and even before that we have the opportunity to settle our difficulties amicably without going to a trial; or if we cannot settle them amicably among ourselves we are permitted to call in our Teacher to assist us if possible to be reconciled to one another; and if that cannot be

done we can then bring the matter before the Bishop to be formally tried. If we have reason to believe the decision to be unjust, we have the right then to appeal our case to the High Council, and then, if the First Presidency so decide, there may be a re-hearing. So that the Lord has given unto us every possible chance to vindicate our rights, defend our causes, and maintain our standing in the Church. No man is asked to bow to unrighteousness; but to say that the decision rendered by the Bishop's Court or High Council is an unjust decision is to say one of two things, namely, that these men, from three to fifteen of them, every one of whom should possess the spirit of the Gospel, and the inspiration of the Almighty, and is quite as likely to understand such circumstances as the litigants are all in error and lack judgment, or that they are wilfully wicked and unjust, while one individual, and he a party to strife, alone is right.

[JD 24:193 – p.194, Joseph F. Smith, June 21st, 1883](#)

The moment a man says he will not submit to legally constituted authority of the Church, whether it be the Teachers, the Bishopric, the High Council, his Quorum or the First Presidency, and in his heart confirms it and carries it out, that moment he cuts himself off from the privileges and blessings of the Priesthood and Church, and severs himself from the people of God, for he ignores the authority that He has instituted in His Church. These are the men that generally get crochets in their heads, that get inspiration (from beneath) and that are often so desirous to guide the Church, and to sit in judgment upon the Priesthood. The only safe way for us to do, as individuals, is to live so humbly, so righteously and so faithfully before God, that we may possess His Spirit to that extent that we will be able to judge righteously, and discern between truth and error, between right and wrong; and then we will know when a decision is rendered against us that in 99 cases out of a hundred we are in error, and that the decision is right; and although we may at the time not be fully able to see and feel its justness, yet will be constrained to say that inasmuch as there are sixteen chances against one for me to be wrong, "I will gracefully and humbly submit." The pith of the matter is, the Lord has established His Church, organized His Priesthood, and conferred authority upon certain individuals, councils and quorums, and it is the duty of the people of God to live so that they shall know that these are acceptable unto Him. If we begin to cut off this one and that one, and set their authority aside, we may just as well at once set God himself aside, and say he has no right to dictate. Amen.

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John Taylor, June 18, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered in the Bowery, Deseret, Monday, June 18, 1883

(Reported by John Irvine.)

SCOPE OF THE GOSPEL – DIFFERENT DEGREES OF GLORY – FREE AGENCY – "LIBERTY"  
WITH A VENGEANCE – TRIALS NECESSARY – FORMER AND LATTER TRIALS – THE SPIRIT OF  
GATHERING ILLUSTRATED – JUDGMENTS PREDICTED – ZION ALREADY ATTRACTING  
ATTENTION – ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE CITIZENS OF DESERET – BLESSINGS INVOKED.

[JD 24:194 – p.195 – p.196, John Taylor, June 18, 1883](#)



I am pleased, as I said last night, to meet with you. I am pleased to talk about the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and also about other matters that some think are not so directly associated with the kingdom of God, and yet they are; for all things temporal and all things spiritual, all things that are associated with our bodies and with our spirits, everything that is calculated to promote our happiness and well-being on the earth and to procure for us an exaltation in the kingdom of heaven, are things that are associated with the Gospel and that belong to us as Latter-day Saints. The God who is the Father of our spirits is He that organized our bodies. The God that made the heavens is He that made the earth, and we are dependent upon Him for every blessing that we enjoy. We had very little to do with our coming here, and now that we find ourselves here, we are incapable of sustaining ourselves. We must be sustained of God. There is not one among you here to-day could leave this place unless God gave you power. We hardly realize these things. In God we live; in Him we move and from Him we have our being. And He has gathered us together, for the purpose of instructing us and preparing us to do a work that He designs to accomplish in the interests of the living and of the dead, in the interests of the whole human family, that exist, or that ever have existed upon the face of the earth. He has gathered us here under the influence and auspices of the Gospel, that we might, under His tuition and guidance, and under the influence of the Holy Priesthood that exists in the heavens and on the earth, bring to pass all things that have been spoken by the holy Prophets since the world was. God is interested in the whole of the human family. He cannot take them all into the celestial kingdom, for they are not all prepared to go there, and you cannot prepare them and He cannot, because they have to be governed by certain laws and certain principles and certain feelings, and if they are not governed by these and will not be governed by a celestial law, they are not prepared for a celestial glory. There are some that may be governed by a terrestrial law, and may be prepared for a terrestrial glory, but not for a celestial glory. Still, they are God's children, and He is doing the best by them He can. Many of you here that have sons and daughters, do the best by them you can. Some of them you cannot do well by, because they will not do right. Now, the Lord had more sons than one. Lucifer rebelled. Adam had more sons than one, and Lucifer came down and operated upon one of them, and Adam could not help himself. He had another son who feared God, and was willing to be guided by the laws of God. Because of this, Cain killed his brother, the same as a great many would like to kill us under the same influence and by the same spirit. Now, as I have said, Adam could not help the action of his son. Cain yielded obedience to the spirit of the wicked one, and he became a man that fostered every kind of evil. He loved Satan more than he loved God. He loved the works of darkness more than he loved the light, and that spirit has existed in the world through all the ages that are past. It existed before the flood and it came down through the flood. It existed among the ancient inhabitants of this continent. It existed among the sons of Lehi. And if you read the Book of Mormon you will find the same principles – one party in favor of right, the other in favor of wrong; the one in favor of obedience to the laws of God, and the other in opposition to the laws of God. The Scriptures say that it must needs be that there be an opposition in all things; and Jesus said it must needs be that offences come, but woe to them by whom they come. This principle of opposition was manifested in the heavens. Satan was a personage there who had peculiar ideas, very singular ideas. He wanted to do the same as many men want to do to-day – to take away the free agency of man. Some men would like to take away our free agency and tell us how we must worship and what we must worship. Because Satan wanted to deprive man of his free agency, he was cast out of heaven and he came to the earth to teach that principle, and it has prevailed more or less in every age and under every government. We sometimes hear it said that we are living under the most liberal government there is on the earth. I sometimes say, God save the mark! God save the mark for that liberality that will not allow men to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, that will enact laws to prevent men marrying wives, while men having many mistresses are sustained. The men who comply with the laws of God are prohibited from voting, while the licentious, the adulterer, the whoremonger, the brothel keeper, the pimp, the procuress and the prostitute have this privilege, and are protected by law and sustained by lawgivers; while they profess to be shocked at our supposed immorality they foster and encourage by their enactments every kind of licentiousness and crime. Such principles as these are from beneath and not from God, no matter under what government they exist. We do not want to proscribe any man in his religious faith. It is none of our business. God did not interfere with Cain. He put a mark upon him. He deprived him of blessings and exaltations. He could not have him associate with the Gods, for He had cast Satan out of heaven who was Cain's instructor. Cain was the son of Adam. He listened to the teachings of Satan, and he became what is called the great "Master Mahon," full

of wickedness and full of evil. He killed his brother for two reasons: one was that he did not like his religion, and another was that he wanted his property, the same reasons that influence people against us; and then there is not much love lost between us, for we do not admire their religion. But we do not want their property, their houses and their lands, nor anything that they have, only as we obtain such blessings properly, consistently, honorably and justly, and that is the kind of feeling we ought to have.

JD 24:196 – p.197, John Taylor, June 18, 1883

But why is it that these things exist? There is a place that some of us hope to inherit, which is called the Celestial kingdom of God. There is a certain class of people who will obtain a seat in that kingdom, and there are millions and millions who will not. Jesus in speaking on this subject said: "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there are that find it." Now, then, in reference to celestial glory, it is necessary that men should be tried here upon the earth, for men upon other earths have been tried as we are being tried. And it was necessary, too, strange as it may appear, that Jesus should be tried. Yes, for it is written, "It became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering." What! make Him perfect through suffering? Yes. What! had He to be tempted of the devil? Yes. Was He not tempted of the devil in the wilderness? Yes. Did not the devil come and offer Him all kinds of inducements as he does to us? Yes. And did Jesus maintain his integrity? He did. There is a scene that John the Revelator saw upon a certain occasion. He was caught away in the Spirit and he saw an innumerable throng. They were clad in white raiment, and they sang a new song. And he was led to inquire: "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" And he was answered: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God and serve Him day and night." Well, how did the world treat such people? It generally treated them very scornfully. Paul tells us, that by faith Moses endured, as seeing him who is invisible; by faith women received their dead raised to life again; by faith men wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, (of whom the world was not worthy); they wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. Now, why was it that men that were aiming at an exaltation among the Gods should be so persecuted and cast out by men? For instance I might mention a few of them. I might refer to Job and the kind of trials he passed through; I might talk about Abraham and the trials he was called upon to pass through; I might mention Moses and the trials he had to endure; I might bring to your minds many other prominent men of God, but I will come to Elijah, who was a man that feared God and wrought righteousness. The people had departed from the Lord and trampled under foot His precepts, etc. So much so that Elijah was obliged to flee and hide himself in a cave away from the face of man. While in the cave the word of the Lord "a still, small voice – " came to him saying, "What doest thou here Elijah?" And he said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenants, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away." Well, it was a critical position to be in, but it was just as critical for many others who lived in ancient times. And this spirit of murder and persecution still exists. It was exhibited in the mobbing and drivings of our people from Ohio, Missouri, Illinois, and other places, in the martyrdom of Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum in Carthage jail, more recently in the assassination of Elder Joseph Standing, and again only a few days ago in an attempt to murder Brother John T. Alexander, one of our Elders in Georgia, the particulars of which you have doubtless read in the newspapers. In the face of such diabolical outrages as these, there is not much room to boast about our liberties. But I merely refer to these things to show that the spirit that actuated men in former times is at work to-day; irrespective of times, forms of government, places or circumstances.

JD 24:197 – p.198, John Taylor, June 18, 1883

Nevertheless, as I have said, it is necessary that we pass through certain ordeals, and that we be tried. But why is it that we should be tried? There is just the same necessity for it now that there was in former times. I heard the Prophet Joseph say, in speaking to the Twelve on one occasion: "You will have all kinds of trials to pass through. And it is quite as necessary for you to be tried as it was for Abraham and other men of God, and (said

he) God will feel after you, and He will take hold of you and wrench your very heart strings, and if you cannot stand it you will not be fit for an inheritance in the Celestial Kingdom of God." Some people have wondered why so many of the Twelve fell away. God tries people according to the position they occupy. Joseph Smith never had many months of peace after he received the truth, and finally he was murdered in Carthage jail. I was with him on that occasion, and therefore know a little about it. And as I told this young man whose life had been attempted in Georgia; said I, "Brother Alexander, they shot at you and didn't hit you, but when they shot at me they hit me; so that you got off a little easier than I did." But all these personal things amount to but very little. It is the crowns, principalities, the powers, the thrones, the dominions, and the associations with the Gods that we are after, and we are here to prepare ourselves for these things. We are after eternal exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom of God. And we want to feel that this is the main object of existence, that this is why we were born, and that God has revealed Himself from the heavens, restored the Holy Priesthood and gathered us together in order that we might form a nucleus through whom He could communicate His will; through whom He could accomplish His work upon the earth and introduce the Gospel of the Son of God to the nations of the earth and gather together His elect from the four quarters of the globe; through whom He could introduce upon the earth the principles that exist in the heavens, that we might be taught to do the will of God on the earth as it is done in the heavens, that we might be a pure people, a virtuous people, a holy people, free from the vices and corruptions of the world, and that we might learn the laws of light, truth and intelligence from the fountain of all intelligence, for we are told the glory of God is intelligence. This is why we have been gathered together. It is rather a singular thing to see a host of people gathering here from all the nations of the earth. You cannot prevent people from gathering here. They are brought under the influence of the Gospel and they cannot help themselves. They have to come.

[JD 24:198, John Taylor, June 18, 1883](#)

Now, I will here relate a circumstance associated with the gathering, that took place in Liverpool, I suppose, about 43 years ago. We had just been driven out of the State of Missouri, and were in the midst of very hard times. You sometimes think you have hard times now. Why, you do not know anything about it. They tell us they persecute us for polygamy now. What did they persecute us for when we had no polygamy? Yet we were driven from our homes, and many of our people – some of them old revolutionary soldiers – were shot down like dogs in many instances. We were driven from pillar to post, from one place to another, robbed, pillaged and despoiled of everything we had. There are many of the brethren and sisters here, I presume, who are acquainted with these things.

[JD 24:198 – p.199, John Taylor, June 18, 1883](#)

Well, the Twelve were told to go to the Far West, some 200 miles distant from Quincy, Illinois, where many of the Saints were then staying. We did not have railroads then whereby we could travel as we do now. We had to go with our teams, and we had to go among a people that would kill everyone of us as quick as they would rattlesnakes. We were told to go and lay the foundation stone of the Temple, and thus fulfill the revelation that had been given on the subject. Arrived at the spot we prayed and sang hymns. We had with us a man to lay the foundation stone, the man that was appointed by revelation for that work – Alpheus Cutler, Bishop A. A. Kimball's grandfather. The stone was duly laid according to the order which was designed, after which – right upon the foundation stone – Wilford Woodruff and George A. Smith were ordained into the Quorum of the Twelve, and Norman Shearer and Darwin Chase into the Seventies. Chase apostatized and was afterwards with the soldiers under Col. Connor's command who had a fight with the Indians on Bear River a number of years ago, where he was mortally wounded. Many people declared that this revelation would never be fulfilled. But it was fulfilled; and we took our departure for Europe.

[JD 24:199, John Taylor, June 18, 1883](#)

Now, it was not a nice thing, after being pillaged, robbed and driven from our homes to leave our families and proceed on a mission to Europe. But the Twelve had to do it, and they did do it. There were two that did not go – John E. Page and William Smith, and both of them apostatized. The wrench that the Prophet Joseph

spake about was too much for them. But the rest went. They felt it was an honor to go on that mission even under such unpropitious circumstances.

JD 24:199 – p.200, John Taylor, June 18, 1883

The Prophet Joseph told us just before we left that we must not preach the gathering to the people, because at that time there was no place to gather to. "Preach the first principles of the Gospel," said he, "but do not say any thing about the gathering." We did as he directed us. The principle of gathering was not preached; but a great many came into the Church – a great many thousands were baptized. Myself and an uncle of Brother Joseph F. Smith – that is, his mother's brother – ministered in Liverpool; we raised up a Church there; I remember on one occasion a certain sister came to me and said: "Elder Taylor, I have had a singular dream, and I do not know what it means." We had not preached, as I have said, the principle of gathering, because Joseph told us not to preach it. "What is the nature of the dream?" I enquired. "I thought," said she, "there were a number of Saints standing on the pier head, (the place where the vessels start from), and they seemed as if they were bound for somewhere. They said they were going to Zion, and they sang the songs of Zion; and you were with them. Now, can you interpret the dream for me?" "I guess I could," said I, "but let it alone for the present." We could not prevent people from being impressed in this way, we could not help the Lord giving them dreams, neither could Joseph Smith. It was the privilege of the Saints to have revelation for themselves. John the Baptist had appeared to Joseph Smith and conferred upon him the Aaronic Priesthood, and he conferred it upon others. Peter, James and John came and conferred upon him the Melchizedek Priesthood. Then Moses, among others, appeared to him, and bestowed upon him the keys of the gathering, whereby Israel should be gathered from the four quarters of the earth, including also the ten tribes. Joseph had conferred this upon the Apostles, and the Apostles had conferred it upon others, and when they laid their hands upon the people and told them to receive the Holy Ghost they received it. Joseph Smith might tell us it was not wisdom to preach the principle of gathering; but we could not help the Lord revealing that principle through the medium of the Holy Ghost, which was to teach us all things. The Holy Ghost had operated upon this woman – and upon many others at the same time – in this way. Afterwards we received a letter from Brother Joseph stating that we might teach the principle and instruct the people to gather to Nauvoo. Now I could interpret the dream. I could have done so before had I not been prohibited. What, then, is it that makes people desire to come here? Here are people from Germany, Scandinavia, England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and from different parts of the United States – what in the name of common sense made you desire to gather here? Why, men that held the Priesthood of the Son of God had, among other things, been instructed to teach this principle, that it was a gathering dispensation, the keys of which had been conferred upon Joseph Smith, he in turn had conferred the power upon others, and the Elders went forth and preached this Gospel with the power associated therewith. That is the great secret why people gather here. We have come here in order that we may fulfill the will of God, and the word of God, and the law of God. We have come out of Babylon. We have come out of confusion. There is confusion in the world everywhere; confusion amongst religionists, politicians, infidels; and there is no one anywhere, outside of this Church to say, "thus saith the Lord." Men do not know how to approach God, and none are willing to listen to His teachings but the Latter-day Saints, and it is sometimes hard work for them to do it. Men teach their own theories, ideas and opinions, and hence confusion and disorder prevail in the world. Hence, in order that God may have a people who will carry out His designs and accomplish His purposes, He has introduced the Gospel, and under its influence people have been gathered together to this land, as we see them here to-day, and as they are to be seen throughout the length and breadth of this Territory. The world, as I have said, is full of confusion, and there will be worse confusion by and by. We had a great war upon this continent some years ago; but there will yet be wars pass through these United States, and through other nations, until it will be mournful to hear the report of the bloodshed, the sorrow and trouble that will be caused thereby, as also by pestilence, famine and earthquake, and the waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds, and storms and tempests, etc., etc. We have been gathered together from among the nations of the earth in order that God might have a people who would obey His law; who had been baptized into one baptism; who had all been partakers of the same spirit, and who had, as I said before, learned to approach the Lord in the proper way; for there is a medium opened out whereby men can approach God and learn His mind and will.

Did God place in the Church in former times Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers and Evangelists for the perfecting of the Saints, for the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ? He has in these last days done the same thing, only more perfectly, because the dispensation with which we are associated is "the dispensation of the fullness of times." It is a dispensation that embraces all other times.

JD 24:200 – p.201, John Taylor, June 18, 1883

What, then, have we to do? To preach the Gospel to the nations of the earth? What else? To gather the people together, all those who have made a covenant with God by sacrifice. They were to come from the east and from the west, and from the north and from the south. They were to be gathered one of a city and two of a family, and brought to Zion that they might be taught and instructed in the principles of eternal life. And I want to say that God having gathered us together, and we having entered into a covenant with Him, He expects us to obey His law, and be governed by the principles He has revealed. We are here to build up the Church of God, the Zion of God, and the kingdom of God, and to be on hand to do whatever God requires – first to purge ourselves from all iniquity, from covetousness and evil of every kind: to forsake sin of every sort, cultivate the Spirit of God, and help to build up His kingdom; to beautify Zion and have pleasant habitations, and pleasant gardens and orchards, until Zion shall be the most beautiful place there is on the earth. Already Zion is attracting the attention of the people of the world. I have all kinds of people calling on me – Lords, Admirals, Senators, Members of the House of Representatives, Members of the Parliament of England, of the Reichstag of Germany, and the Chamber of Deputies of France – all classes come and they say, "You have a most beautiful place here!" Why, yes. And by and by the kings of the earth will come to gaze upon the glory of Zion, and we are here to build it up under the instruction of God our Heavenly Father. Zion shall yet become the praise and the glory of the whole earth, and, as I have said, kings and princes shall come to gaze upon her glory, and we shall be able to teach their senators wisdom, and their philosophers intelligence; for we shall be all taught of God. God has called upon us to do this work, and He expects us to do it. We must preach the Gospel, and we will preach it; and if we have to meet with opposition and with death staring us in the face, all right. We are for God and His kingdom, and for the principles of truth and righteousness. We need not trouble ourselves about the outside, for God will take care of them and of us. He will say to the nations of the earth – to this nation and to other nations – as was said to the waves of the mighty ocean: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."

JD 24:201 – p.202, John Taylor, June 18, 1883

I will tell you a feeling I had some years ago. I was over at Fillmore. From there you can see right on to this desert. And I thought – as I looked across this immense valley – if there was only water there, what a magnificent country that would make! I remember I thought thousands and tens of thousands could inhabit that land if it only had water. I did not then know the position of things. I have now had an opportunity of visiting Deseret and looking at the river, and am pleased to find you have such an abundant supply of water. An immense population could be sustained with the amount you have. I suppose the river shows its best now; the water is high; but if that water could be properly manipulated, it does seem to me – provided you can conquer the mineral in the soil – that a vast amount of land can be put under cultivation and an immense population sustained. I am told that you are troubled with saleratus in the land, but I am also informed that you are learning to conquer that by flooding the land instead of making furrows for irrigation. Already, in some places, where they have been troubled with saleratus they have the richest and most productive soils. Those lands where not too much saturated with the mineral are in many instances the most fertile that we have in the Territory. You certainly have a fair opportunity for development; having a large area of land, which I am told is productive, and with the proper application of the water, and a concentration of effort I can see no reason why this can not be made a very flourishing, beautiful and populous place.

JD 24:202, John Taylor, June 18, 1883

President Taylor next proceeded to counsel the Saints in regard to sundry local affairs. He appreciated the difficulties they had had to encounter in that region owing to the nature of the soil and the giving way of the dam on one or two occasions. He complimented them, however, on what they had been able to accomplish in spite of all difficulties, and counseled them to persevere, promising that their efforts to subdue and conquer the land would be blessed of the Lord. He also counseled them to come closer together. At present, it appeared to him, they were scattered over too much ground. It would be better to get together and begin building a nice little town on each side of the river, (if that suited them), than to be scattered as they are now. In this way the place could be made attractive. Good buildings of all kinds could be erected. Trees could be planted in the streets. Gardens and orchards could also be planted in the various lots. And in this manner Deseret might be made a very desirable place.

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He concluded as follows:

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God bless you. God bless your lands, that they may be fruitful and that the labors of your hands may be blessed; and God bless the waters, that they may be nourishing and strengthening to your lands, and be pleasant to use for drinking and for culinary purposes; and God bless your gardens and your orchards – that is, when you get them – that fruitfulness may rest upon them; and God bless the President of your Stake and his counselors, and Brother Lyman and his brethren of the Twelve who labor among you from time to time; and God bless your Bishop here, and all the Bishops of this Stake and their counselors, that the Spirit of God may rest upon them, the spirit of truth and intelligence, to enable them to carry out all things they desire in righteousness, that this land may be blessed of the Lord; and God bless your wives and your children and all the people, that salvation may flow unto them, and that they may walk in the paths of life; I ask my heavenly Father to seal upon you these blessings, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY ELDER CHAS. W. PENROSE,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

May 18th, 1883.

(Reported by Gibbs and Irvine.)

PROPHECIES RELATING TO OUR DAY – APOSTASY FORETOLD – GOD'S WORK

RE-ESTABLISHED – RESTORATION OF THE GOSPEL – MODERN REVELATION OPPOSED BY

PREACHERS – UNWARRANTED IN DECLARING THAT THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE IS

FULL – MAN BY SEARCHING CANNOT FIND OUT GOD – BUT ONE TRUE GOSPEL – EFFECT OF

THE GOSPEL IN THE DAYS OF THE APOSTLES – HOW THE GOSPEL WAS RESTORED – HOW IT  
IS BEING PREACHED – A GATHERING DISPENSATION – OPPOSITION TO THE WORK OF  
GOD – DESTINY BEFORE THE SAINTS.

[JD 24:203 – p.204, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883](#)

We are living in the latter days, at a time which all the prophets of God, who lived upon the earth in former times looked forward to with anticipation. The servants of God whose writings have been handed down to us in the book called the Bible, were all blessed in their day and generation with some foresight in regard to the last great dispensation of God's mercy to man. The Spirit of God opened up to them views concerning the great latter-day work, which God should perform, in which He would consummate His purposes, in which He would perfect His work, in regard to the people of this earth. And they were strengthened in the performance of the duties devolving upon them by glimpses of the latter-day glory. They were called to pass through very trying circumstances. As the Apostle Paul says: "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." Generally speaking, the prophets of God were rejected by the majority of the children of men. By the spirit of prophecy which rested upon them, they could perceive how small would be the impressions which they would be able to make upon the people who lived in their day, and they saw also that although they might be able to accomplish some good in the name of the Lord, yet the adversary would come in like a flood, so to speak, and overwhelm the influences which they were able to bring to bear. They saw that the work which they were engaged in could not continue, but for a little while. But they looked down to the last days when the kingdom of God should be established on the earth, when it should not be prevailed against nor be overcome, but should remain and continue to grow and increase and spread forth, until its influence should extend to the uttermost parts of the earth, until all things should be subdued unto the Lord, until the wicked should be destroyed, until misrule and tyranny and oppression and falsehood and false doctrine and the powers of evil should be banished from the earth, and the light of God should stream forth to lighten every land, and the kingdoms of this world would become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ, and He should rule from pole to pole and from shore to shore. In this they rejoiced exceedingly, and they were encouraged to perform the work entrusted to them, by the foresight that God gave to them of the great latter day work. The Apostle Paul referred to this dispensation in these words: "Having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure, which He hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth." By this we see that the Apostle Paul – and he was imbued with the same spirit and understanding as his brethren of the Apostleship – looked forward to another dispensation than that in which they labored, which is generally called the Christian dispensation, because it was introduced by Jesus who was the Christ. Paul called the dispensation that was to come after His day, "the dispensation of the fullness of times," and declared in that dispensation God would gather together in one all things in Christ; not only the things in the earth, but also the things in the heavens – they should all be gathered together in one.

[JD 24:204 – p.205, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883](#)

Now, the Apostle Paul, and others in his time – like those ancient prophets to whom I have referred – had the understanding that the work in which he was engaged, although it would accomplish that whereunto it was sent, would only make its impression for a time and for a season; that the time would come when darkness would come in again; when false doctrine would prevail; when the servants of God would be taken from the earth and false prophets and false teachers would arise who would, (to use the Apostle Peter's own words) "bring in damnable heresies;" who would turn away the hearts of the people from the truth. The Apostles saw that the time would come when the people would be "heady and high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof;" when false teachers would arise and "make merchandise of the souls of men, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon

themselves swift destruction," "and many," we are told, "shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." John, the beloved disciple, wrote a glorious vision that God gave to him when he was upon the Isle of Patmos, being banished there for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus, and in that vision the Lord showed to him that a spurious church should arise which would have influence over all the earth. It was pictured to him in the form of a woman sitting upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, and upon her forehead a name written, "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of Harlots." And he saw that she held in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication, and he beheld that all nations were made drunk with the wine that was in that golden cup. It was not merely to be partaken of by a few, but by all nations. He also saw that the time should come, – foreseen by Isaiah the prophet – "When darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people." When Jesus was upon the earth He told His disciples that the time would come when false Christs and false prophets would arise, and when because of the iniquity that should abound, the love of many would wax cold. And we find by searching both the Old and New Testaments that the prophets of God who lived in former times and had dispensations committed unto them, saw that the time would come when the work which they performed would seem to be lost from the earth; apostasy would ensue; people would go after other Gods; they would transgress the laws, change the ordinances, and break the everlasting covenant. But the ancient prophets had a glimpse of what God would do in the latter days. They saw the time when He would establish His work in the earth no more to be thrown down forever; when He would establish His kingdom not to be left to another people, not to be overcome, not to be trampled under foot, but to arise and shine and the light thereof go forth to all the world that kings might come to its light and the gentiles to the brightness of its rising.

[JD 24:205, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883](#)

Now, my brethren and sisters, we are blessed with the privilege of living upon the earth in the latter days, in the time to which all the prophets looked forward with pleasure, with rejoicing and with thanksgiving; the time just preceding the coming of the Son of man, not as the babe of Bethlehem, not to be born in a stable and cradled in a manger, not to be "despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," not to be lifted up on the cross and His life's blood poured out because of the wickedness of men, but as King of Kings and Lord of Lords; to come vested with all power on the earth and in the heavens; to "sit upon the throne of His father David," and to "reign from the rivers even unto the ends of the earth;" to subdue all things unto himself; to abolish wickedness, to banish evil, to bind Satan and his hosts, and to fill the earth with light and glory and the power of God; that the lion and the lamb may dwell together; that enmity may depart between man and man and between man and beast; that nation may not lift up sword against nation, and that people may study the art of war no more; but that peace may be ushered in, and that the power of God and the Spirit of God may be poured out upon all flesh, and all nations be influenced thereby. We are living upon the earth in the time preceding these great events – in the latter days, in the last dispensation.

[JD 24:205 – p.206, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883](#)

The question may arise, is this great dispensation which the prophets foresaw, and which Paul spoke of, already ushered in? has the dispensation of the fullness of times been introduced for the benefit of the children of men? or are we still under the old dispensation opened up by the Savior and carried on for a time by the Apostles? That is a serious question, though if left to the Latter-day Saints to answer, one that would be settled in a very short time; for go where you might in this Territory, and ask the Latter-day Saints concerning it, and they would answer, I know the dispensation of the fullness of times is ushered in; I do not merely believe it, but I know it as well as I know that I live." And if you were to ask them how they know it, they would answer, "By the revelations of the Holy Ghost." They would tell you they know that God has again spoken from the heavens, that angels have descended from the courts of glory and communicated with man, and that through the direct agency of divine and holy beings, this great and last dispensation of God's mercy to man has been opened up. They would tell you further, that they know it will remain and prevail; that all that has been designed must be accomplished under its auspices; and the work which has been begun must continue and grow – because it is the work of God – even until the whole earth is subdued unto Him, and all things are prepared for the coming of Him whose right it is to reign; and that no man or nation or government



or influence or society, or all combined, can have the slightest influence or power to stop its onward spread.

JD 24:206 – p.207, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883

It would be interesting perhaps to consider how the dispensation of the fullness of times was to be opened up. We read that the works of God are one eternal round, "He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever;" without variableness or any change whatever. As He acted in ancient times, then, so may we expect Him to act in latter times. That if He has a work to perform amongst men, He will commence and carry it out in the same way that He did formerly. Whenever darkness has covered the face of the earth, and the people have gone astray, we find, by reading the Bible, that God spoke from the heavens, that He sent heavenly messengers to some man or men whom He, not the people, chose, to whom He communicated His mind and will, and whom He authorized to preach to the rest. They went with "the burden of the word of the Lord," they did not go forth preaching for doctrine the commandments of men. They did not aim to please the eyes or the ears of the people. They did not as a general thing possess much learning; in fact, they were to some extent ignorant, that is, they were not versed in the learning of the world. "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the earth to confound the things which are mighty." But have we any intimation in the Scriptures that God would act like that in the last days? If we had not we might reason from what He has done to what He will do. But we have any amount of testimony in the Scriptures, written in both Testaments, as to what He will do in the last days. In the first place we read that "God will do nothing except He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets." And we are told in the revelation from which I quoted concerning the general apostasy, when all nations shall become drunken from drinking the contents of that golden cup in the hands of the mother of abominations, an angel should come and bring to the earth again the everlasting Gospel. You will find what I refer to in the 14th Chapter of Revelations, and the 6th and 7th verses. John says, "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of water." And after this he declares that there followed another angel, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornications."

JD 24:208, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883

Some one may enquire, Did the things that John saw in the vision signify events that had taken place already, or were they to take place in the future? That can be easily settled by reading the 1st verse of the 4th chapter of that book, which reads as follows: "After this I looked, and behold a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show these things which must be hereafter." And in the 14th Chapter he says that he saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven "having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." So this Gospel that John saw the angel bringing to earth was for the benefit of generations to come, for the Christians as well as those who are termed the heathen. We who are styled "Christians" are in the habit of calling all other nations heathen; I am inclined to believe that there are a great many people who are "christian" heathen.

JD 24:208 – p.209 – p.210, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883

This revelation that was given to John will seem very strange to a great many people, who are under the impression that the everlasting Gospel has been upon the earth ever since it was taught by Jesus Christ and His Apostles. But if that were so, what need would there be for the Lord to send an angel with it? As I before explained, John saw the time when the whole earth would be under the influence of that wicked power which he saw sitting on a scarlet colored beast, and out of the cup which she held in her hand, all nations were to drink – not merely the heathen nations, but all the nations of the earth without exception. I am well aware that this will not sit very comfortably on the bosoms of some of our Christian friends. But what we are after, or should be after, is truth; and we should be desirous to obtain the truth notwithstanding that it may come in

contact with our preconceived notions. John saw that the whole earth would go astray; and all the Apostles spoke more or less of the time when people would depart from the Church, when they would "not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts they would heap to themselves teachers having itching ears;" and says the Apostle, "they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned into fables;" their teachers shall "preach for doctrine the commandments of men;" and the Apostle might have added, that if they did not preach to suit the people, they would discharge them and hire others. The time was to come when "darkness would cover the earth, and gross darkness the people," but preceding the destruction of Babylon the great archangel was to come to earth with the everlasting Gospel to preach to all nations; and the burden of his message was to call upon the people with a loud voice, saying, "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come; and worship Him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of water," signifying that the people had gone astray and were worshiping some other god or gods.

JD 24:210, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883

It is the general view that after the days of Jesus and the Apostles there were to be no more angels to visit the earth. This has been taught to the people diligently. What for? Because the men who teach this doctrine do not receive any visitations from heaven themselves. They have no communication with the powers on high. The heavens to them are indeed as brass. They pray, but they do not expect to receive any answer to their prayers, except in some mystical fashion which neither they nor anybody else can understand. They do not expect to receive answers to their prayers as the prophets of old did. And they have taught the people for hundreds of years that there is to be no more communications from heaven. And why? Because they pretend to greater light; because they claim to live in an age of gospel blaze, and christianity, as they term it, has attained such a high standard of excellence that they need no divine revelation. And yet when you investigate their condition, you will find they do not comprehend the Gospel; they differ amongst themselves, they contend with each other even on fundamental principles. They have no positive knowledge in regard to the things of God. Some of the clergy teach what they believe, and others teach what they do not believe, being infidel at heart. It is true there have been sincere men who have labored for the benefit of humanity, and who have done a great deal of good; and they will be rewarded by the Almighty for all the good they have accomplished. But wherein they have presumed to minister in the name of the Lord when He never authorized them to act for Him, they have run before they were sent, and will have to answer to Him for their presumption. Wherein men have administered in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and at the same time acknowledge that they have had no communication with those higher powers, declaring that the Holy Trinity has ceased to speak to men, they show by their own words and make actual confession that they have no authority. They could not possibly have any, because there has been no communication from those individuals who alone had the right to give it, and wherein they have presumed to act in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost without authority, they must give an account when they appear before the bar of God. But the ministers who have preached religion for hundreds of years have no definite knowledge in regard to these matters and have to tell what they think and what their opinions are, and they disagree with each other in regard to their opinions. Yet they tell the people there is no need now for any revelation from on high; that there is no need for angels to come to the earth and make plain the way of life and salvation, because, forsooth, they know so much. The canon of Scripture they say is full; and God ceased to speak after He gave that revelation to John on the Isle of Patmos.

JD 24:210 – p.211, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883

"Well," some one perhaps will say, "does not the book itself say so?" No, it does not, but these ministers have taught that it does. In the last chapter of the Book of Revelation are we not told that, "if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book?" Yes; but we are also told that, "if any man shall take away the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." The angel merely told John what God told His servants in former times, that when He gave a revelation, man should not add to it. He told the same thing to Moses – "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it." That is quite right. But man is prone to do that which is forbidden. When

God reveals anything, some one is sure to add to or take away from it, and try to "improve" it or make it void. Hence the angel told John that no man was to take away from the words of the book of this prophecy. What book? The book that John was writing – the Book of Revelation. It does not refer at all to the Bible. There was no such book as the Bible then. Those books that are now compiled in the Bible – and a great many more that are not there – were scattered abroad, and hundreds of years after that, they were hunted up and examined; those that we now have were selected from a great mass of manuscripts and compiled; others were thrown away as non–canonical. The canon of Scripture was not made up by John, but was made up in the way I have described; and there is no intimation anywhere from God to man that He would give no more revelations; but the whole Bible from beginning to end proves the contrary. We are told to fear God and work righteousness, and call upon His Holy name and He will be nigh to answer, "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and the door shall be opened unto you; for everyone that seeketh findeth," etc. That is the word of the Lord. It does not say that God would not give any more revelation; but it does say that man shall not add to that which God does give. In that very revelation we are told that an angel came to John and gave him a little book and told him to eat it. He ate the book as he was told. Then the angel said to him in explanation: "Thou must prophesy again before many people, and nations, and tongues, and kings." If John was to prophesy to nations, and people, and before kings, would not that be the word of the Lord? Yes, just as much as that which he wrote in the book. So it does not follow that there was not to be any more revelation. The injunction is that man shall not add to or take from any revelation that God gives, and that has been a standing rule in all generations.

[JD 24:211 – p.212, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883](#)

But if this passage in the last chapter of the Book of Revelations could be so construed as to make it appear that there was to be no more revelation, such a construction would conflict with what we find in the 14th chapter of Revelation to the effect that an angel was to come "having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred, and tongue, and people." And if we turn back to the writings of the old prophets we find that they looked forward to the time in which you and I live; to the time when this work should be consummated; to the time when no one should need to say, "Know ye the Lord? for they shall all know Him even from the least unto the greatest of them." Why? Because "they shall all be taught of God." They looked forward to the time when "the Spirit of God shall be poured out upon all flesh;" so that all mankind shall feel the influence and be brought into union and harmony and communion with the Great God, the author of their being. That spirit will measurably rest down upon the brute creation. "The lion and the lamb will dwell together, and the little child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den." The earth itself shall feel the influence of that divine spirit, and cease to bring forth thorns and briars, and in the place thereof "shall spring up the fig and the myrtle tree;" and "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God, as the waters cover the sea."

[JD 24:212, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883](#)

How can man know God without revelation from God? "Man by searching cannot find out God." Wise men have been seeking to find out the secret of Deity for hundreds of years, and the more they study, the more they ponder, the less they know about Him. God is not to be found out in that way. Man cannot find out God, but God can manifest Himself to man. The only way that the Lord can be made manifest to man is by revelation. Jesus Christ thanked His Father, when he was praying, that God had "kept those things hid from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes." "Even so, Father:" said He, "for thus it seemed good in Thy sight. And no man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." That is the only way.

[JD 24:212 – p.213, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883](#)

Now, according to the Scripture I have quoted to you, an angel was to come to the earth and bring back the Gospel! – the Gospel that had been lost, the everlasting Gospel, the Gospel preached by Jesus and His disciples, the Gospel preached of old; for we read that it was preached to Abraham, and that it was preached to

the Jews before the law of carnal commandments was given, and then God gave them a lesser law because they would not receive the greater. When Jesus appeared He merely came to bring to the earth that which was lost. He came to restore the Gospel that was preached in the beginning to the patriarchs, that was believed in by Abraham, and by receiving which he was able to commune with the Father, who called him His friend, and who said: "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord." So we read in the 18th chapter of Genesis. The same Gospel that Abraham received; the Gospel preached to the people before Abraham's day; the Gospel preached to the Jews before the law of carnal commandments was given; the Gospel Jesus and His disciples preached, and of which John the Baptist came as the forerunner, baptizing people for the remission of their sins in the River Jordan – that same Gospel has been restored in the day in which we live. There is but one everlasting Gospel. There are a great many so called gospels that men have made, but they are not the true, everlasting Gospel; for as the Apostle Paul says: "though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." There is but one straight path to the celestial city. There is but one gate into the kingdom of God, and "he that tries to climb up some other way will be accounted a thief and a robber." So said Jesus. This everlasting Gospel then was to be brought to the earth by an angel, and was to be preached to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

[JD 24:213 – p.214, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883](#)

Now, when Jesus, the Son of God, was upon the earth, after His resurrection from the dead He appeared to His eleven Apostles – for one had apostatized, having sold his Master for a few pieces of silver – and gave them a commission. He said: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." And the disciples went forth according to His word and preached, and God confirmed the word with signs following. Wherever they went they preached this one Gospel, and God blessed those that received their testimony. The Holy Ghost accompanied their preaching, and bore witness to the hearts of the people, and all who obeyed the Gospel were made of one heart and one mind – Greeks, Romans, Jews and Gentiles, bond and free, Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Herodians, etc., people from all the various sects, and some that did not belong to any sect, infidels also, when they accepted the testimony of the Apostles and were baptized, and had hands laid upon them, received the Holy Ghost, and were made of one heart and one mind; they had one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one hope of their calling. And we read in the New Testament that when they met in their assemblies one would speak in tongues, another would interpret, another would prophesy, etc. The Lord poured out His Spirit upon the people and gave them visible manifestations of His power, in addition to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost which made them all see and comprehend alike, and which bore witness to the divine mission of Christ and to the mission of the Apostles whom He had sent forth. These signs were seen in their midst, which comforted and made them strong. But after a time the people began to go astray. Wicked men took the Apostles and put them to death. Some were cast unto wild beasts; some were thrown into caldrons of boiling oil; some were crucified; others were tormented in various ways, persecuted and afflicted and slain. Then others began to depart from the faith, bringing in damnable heresies. Others began to preach for hire and divine for money, making merchandise of the souls of men. And thus the apostasy went on until darkness covered the minds of the people, and paganism was introduced into the Christian church. And the time came when that wicked power spoken of in the Revelation overcame the saints. The Spirit of God left the polluted church. The body became dead. Just as when the spirit of man leaves his body, the carcass begins to crumble; every particle seems desirous to get away from every other particle. So it was after the time that the Apostles fell. The Holy Ghost left the church. The spirit of revelation departed from the body and dissolution set in. Darkness ensued. Apostasy prevailed. In one of the homilies of the Church of England it is declared that: "Clergy and laity, men, women and children, of all ages, sects and degrees of whole Christendom (a most horrible and dreadful thing to think) have at once been buried in the most abominable idolatry, and that for the space of 800 years or more." This was because there had been no

Holy Ghost in the church, no revelation from heaven, no real communion with the powers on high. Instead of true worship there was idolatry. People had gone into darkness, and it had covered the earth – all nations and sects and parties, "clergy and laity, men, women and children of whole Christendom." From that time to the present, sect has multiplied upon sect, and creed upon creed, but there has been no uniting power. The Holy Ghost not being in the church, the body has been segregated, every part separating from other parts, like the toes which Daniel saw composed part of iron and part of clay, the one refusing to mingle with the other.

JD 24:214, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883

In this generation came forth a young man bearing the testimony that the Lord had sent an angel from heaven to reveal the everlasting Gospel; and he bore testimony that the angel had appeared to him, and conversed with him in a heavenly vision. And he testified further that a servant of God who had once lived upon the earth, who was no less a personage than John the Baptist, had come to him and ordained him and Oliver Cowdery to the lesser Priesthood; that he had come as a forerunner of Christ, that the way might be prepared for His second advent. He still further testified that Peter, James and John appeared to him and ordained him to the same Priesthood which they themselves held, namely, the higher or Melchizedek Priesthood, committing unto him the Keys of the Apostleship and of the dispensation of the fullness of times, the dispensation when all things are to be gathered together in one, including the gathering of Israel, and the bringing back of the lost ten tribes, and the gathering of the elect of God from the four quarters of the earth, that they may be assembled in holy places so that they may not be moved when the judgments of the latter days are poured out, and that they may be prepared for the building up of the latter-day kingdom. It was very easy for the young man to say this, but what evidence is there to substantiate the truth of his assertion? The evidence is here. This young man claimed to hold this divine authority to preach the same Gospel that Jesus preached, promising the same testimony, the same signs and the same power that attended the ministrations of the servants of God in olden times. Now, an impostor could bear testimony that he received this communication, but an impostor could not draw down the Holy Ghost upon the people; an impostor could not open the heavens; an impostor could not cause these blessings and signs to come, convincing believers of the divinity of the work which he represented.

JD 24:214 – p.215, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883

The facts are these: People began to believe in his testimony because they found that he taught the same doctrines as those contained in the Scriptures; some went forth and were baptized. And upon all that yielded obedience to the requirements of the Gospel he laid his hands, and the Holy Ghost descended upon them. Some received visions; some received the gift of healing, and others the gift of prophesying, etc. – the same powers which were enjoyed by the primitive Church were enjoyed by the Church established by the inspiration of God, through Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer of the 19th Century. He, under the divine command, ordained men to go forth and preach this Gospel. Some went to England, some to Scotland, some to Wales, others to France, to Germany and Scandinavia, and to different parts of Europe, while others preached extensively through this nation; and wherever they went and the people believed their testimony and were baptized for the remission of their sins, and submitted to the laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost, they all bore testimony that God Almighty had revealed to them by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, that He had in very deed sent his angel from heaven and opened up the dispensation of the fullness of times.

JD 24:215, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883

Here we have a people dwelling in these mountain valleys who have been gathered from the different nations under this influence. Our Elders go out, not to entice the people to leave their homes; they do not go as "emigration agents," as some people allege they do, but they go to preach the everlasting Gospel, and they do it as did they ancient servants of God; they are not paid for preaching, but they pay their own way, as a general thing, to their fields of labor, and then travel "without purse or scrip." I have traveled extensively myself, as have many of the men within my hearing, without purse or scrip preaching the Gospel of Christ;

and wherever the people received my testimony I baptized them and laid hands upon them, and they testified that the Holy Ghost came upon them, the gifts of that spirit were bestowed, and the sick were healed, in many instances instantaneously, by the power of God. I speak of this, not as a personal matter, but because this is the universal testimony of my brethren, wherever they have been sent among all nations.

JD 24:215 – p.216, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883

This is not the work of man; it is the work of God, and it is God that bears witness to it. This is why this people are here. They have not come for gold or silver; they have not come simply to better their temporal circumstances; but they have gathered here "as the elect of God," the voice of God having gone forth in connection with this Gospel. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues; for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." And the time is nigh at hand when the other angel will proclaim, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen." This is the time that Jesus said His angels should go forth to gather His elect from the four winds, previous to His coming. And said He, "then shall this Gospel of the kingdom be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." The testimony of our Elders who go forth is that this is "the Gospel of the kingdom," and this is "the dispensation of the fullness of times;" and that the period has come for the establishment of the latter-day kingdom; when the people of God shall be gathered from the four winds previous to the destruction of the wicked, the breaking up of the kingdoms of this world, as Daniel saw them in his vision, that they may pass away and be found no more, and that "the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdom of our God and His Christ."

JD 24:216 – p.217, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883

The people who dwell in these mountain valleys labor to build up homes, to redeem the land and make it a desirable place to live in; but they are here chiefly, and as their primary object, to serve God and learn of Him. They are here in fulfillment of predictions made by Micah, Isaiah and Daniel. Isaiah declared, "It shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the tops of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in his paths," etc. The prophecies of these ancient men of God are being fulfilled literally; and this people called Latter-day Saints have come here to learn of the ways of the Lord. They learned something of his ways in the lands where they were born, and the word tasted sweet to their souls; communion was opened up between them and the heavens, and they received a testimony for themselves. They did not have to depend upon the testimony of Joseph Smith, or of Brigham Young, or of John Taylor, or of the Apostles whom God has called in our day, but they obtained one for themselves. They were all baptized with one spirit into one body, and all received of the same influence; all obtained a similar testimony; and the gifts and graces of the everlasting Gospel are enjoyed by them, according to their several faiths and desires for God and the truth. This, therefore, is the beginning of the great latter-day work, the restoration of the Gospel, the opening up of the dispensation of the fullness of times. The work now is to gather the Saints of God. First of all the Gospel is to be preached to the Gentiles and then to the Jews. "The fullness of the Gentiles" has not yet "Come in," but the time is close at hand when it will come in. After that the Lord will say, "Turn ye to the Jews also." The servants of God are going out among the Gentile nations preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and bearing testimony that it is His cause; not preaching what they think, or giving expression to any opinions they may have formed, but from knowledge of the will of God through the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy which they obtained by bowing in obedience to the ordinances of the Gospel. They know what they preach. They do not go out with the "enticing words of man's wisdom," but to preach the everlasting Gospel as God has revealed it, as He has manifested it from on high. They are not sent to preach to please the popular ear, but to deliver in plainness, as the Spirit shall give them utterance, the message of salvation, whether the people believe it or not. And our missionaries find that the same spirit exists to-day that the servants of God had to meet and contend with anciently. The wicked oppose the message of truth they bear; and the most vehement opponents to it are those who profess the most piety. They have it in their hearts to destroy or bring trouble upon this people. Why? They do not know why

themselves. It is because they shut their own hearts to the truth like the Pharisees of old, who made long prayers that they might be heard and seen of men, and not entering the kingdom themselves, they will not suffer those who would, to enter therein. They have the same spirit in their hearts that slew the prophets and put Christ to death. When our Elders go out, instead of meeting them with argument, these men stir up the people to oppose them by force. They have stirred up Congress to pass inimical laws to oppress the "Mormons," to deprive them of the commonest rights of citizens, to take their leaders and put them to death. This is the spirit that has been arrayed against this Church from the beginning. Joseph Smith and Hyrum his brother, were slain in Carthage jail. What for? For the word of God and the testimony of Jesus; because they taught the truth as it came from God and claimed to have divine authority, to have received power from on high. They could not oppose the testimony of these men by truth, nor by Scripture, nor by argument, neither could they overcome them by law. But as the mob said that put these servants of God to death: "The law cannot touch them, but powder and ball shall." This is the spirit by which the prophets of old were put to death. This is the spirit by which Christ was crucified on the cross. This is the spirit by which Peter was crucified head downward. This is the spirit by which others were thrown unto wild beasts and some were cast into caldrons of boiling oil. And this is the spirit that is exhibited in the latter times by some who claim to be ministers of the Gospel.

JD 24:217, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883

The work of gathering has commenced, then. That is part of the work of the dispensation of the fullness of times, the gathering of the people of God in one. The Saints of God will be gathered. The wicked may do what they please. They may pass laws; fulminate decrees; send circular letters to the governments abroad to prevent "Mormon" emigration; but as God lives and rules and reigns on high, this is His work and He will bring it about in His own way and time and there is no power on the earth that can thwart His purposes. His people will come from the east and gather from the west. The Lord will say to the north, "Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." And they will gather to Zion as the prophet foretold, and build up temples to the living God, that His ordinances may be performed therein, and that they may learn of His ways and walk in His paths. Then the Gospel, as I before remarked, will be preached to the Jews. The way is now being prepared for this. The work is moving on for the gathering of the Jews to their own land that they may build it up as it was in former times; that the temple may be rebuilt and the mosque of the Moslem which now stands in its place may be moved out of the way; that Jerusalem may be rebuilt upon its original site; that the way may be prepared for the coming of the Messiah, who shall be seen in the midst of those whose ancestors nailed him to the cross, and who, when they see the marks in His hands, shall say in answer to their inquiries, "These are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends."

JD 24:217 – p.218, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883

This is only a small part of the latter-day work that is to be performed. We are just in the beginning of it. The Gospel has to be preached. The Saints must be gathered. The ten tribes must be brought from the north. The Gospel must be preached to the Lamanites, those red men of the forest, who are a branch of the house of Israel, whose forefathers came from old Palestine to this continent. The Lord is working among them by visions and dreams and by the manifestations of His divine power. What else? Why we are building temples in this land. We have built one in St. George, and have others in course of construction in this city, in Logan, and in Manti. Some people say: "What are you spending so much money for in building temples? Why don't you put it to better use?" People who talk thus do not understand our position. This is part of the work we have to perform. We have temples to build, that the Lord may reveal many more things to His people concerning this latter-day work, and we are building them according to the pattern He has revealed, that we may attend to ordinances that He has made manifest; ordinances for the living and also for the dead; that we may be baptized for our dead, so that the spirits who have been preached to in prison may be brought forth, and that ordinances they can not perform for themselves in the spirit world may be performed for them here in the houses we are building. There are many more things connected with this great dispensation that I have no time to refer to – and would not if I had time – because they belong only to the people of God, to those who

have entered into the everlasting covenant, to those who have received the Holy Ghost, and who understand the things of God; for "no man knoweth the things of God, but by the Spirit of God." But this work will go on; the Saints will be gathered, and temples will be built, and Israel will be redeemed, and the kingdoms of this world will become more and more divided; and the sects and parties of Christendom will become more and more contentious even than they are to-day. Infidelity will increase, for the Spirit of God is being withdrawn from them, because they receive not the truth when it is presented to them. And nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and people against people. War will be poured out eventually upon all nations; the only place where there will be peace and safety will be in the Zion of God. The judgments we read of in the revelations will all be poured out just as the Prophets have predicted and just as John the beloved has declared. All the woes that John saw are bound to be poured out upon the inhabitants of the earth; every word will be fulfilled, not one jot or tittle will pass away without its fulfillment.

JD 24:218, Charles W. Penrose, May 18th, 1883

We are here in these mountains that we may escape these troubles; that we may not partake of the sins of Babylon, that we may not share in her plagues. God has called us out from the world that we may be different from the world; that the object we live for may be different from the object which men have in view in the world; that we may not live for worldly gain, but live for God, for humanity, for the spirit of the Gospel; live to gather Israel, live to build temples, live that we may attend to the ordinances pertaining to our own salvation and exaltation, and those that pertain to the salvation of our dead. That the word of God may be fulfilled; that His kingdom may be established upon the earth no more to be thrown down forever. That the light of God may go forth from Zion and His name be honored in all the earth, and that He may reign from pole to pole and from shore to shore for ever and ever. Amen.

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George Q. Cannon, June 20, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEO. Q. CANNON,

Delivered in the Meeting House, Beaver,

Wednesday Afternoon, June 20, 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

OBEDIENCE TO THE PRIESTHOOD OBJECTED TO BY THE WORLD – WISDOM IN THE COUNSEL  
OF THE PRIESTHOOD – PROSPERITY OF THOSE WHO HAVE OBEYED – TEMPORAL AND  
SPIRITUAL WEALTH – EFFECTS OF THE PRIESTHOOD'S INFLUENCE – LOYALTY OF THE  
SAINTS – RESPECT FOR LAW AND HATRED OF OPPRESSION AND MOBOCRACY – DESTINY OF  
THE SAINTS – THEIR CAPACITY FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT – CHARACTERISTIC  
VIRTUES – TREATMENT IN REGARD TO SEXUAL CRIME – HONOR IN DEALING – DUTIES



## TOWARDS FAMILIES.

JD 24:219, George Q. Cannon, June 20, 1883

I am greatly pleased at having the opportunity of meeting with the Latter-day Saints in this place, and I trust that our meeting will be profitable to all. It is a most excellent thing to come together as we have done to-day, and as we shall do tomorrow, and have an interchange of views and partake of that spirit which is accessible to all of us – that is, to all those who have placed themselves in a position to receive it, by keeping the commandments of God.

JD 24:219 – p.220, George Q. Cannon, June 20, 1883

We have had from Brother Lyman much good instruction, and if it is remembered and carried out practically in our lives it will be of great profit to us. There is one thing that suggested itself to me in listening to his closing remarks, and that is, that if there are any strangers here – I suppose there may be – I am not so well acquainted with your people as I might be – they will imagine that we are dwelling considerably on this idea of listening to the counsels of the Priesthood. If there is anything more objectionable than another in the eyes of those who are opposed to this work called "Mormonism," it is that feature of it. I do not think there is any feature that is so much disliked and so much found fault with as that peculiar feature of our religion which requires us to listen to the counsels of the Priesthood. In this respect we differ from every other people upon the face of the earth. It may be said that the Catholics take the same view that we do about listening to the Priesthood. But then the Catholics are not gathered together as we are, and are not combined as we are, and are not, therefore, in the opinion of those who are opposed to us, so much a menace to others as we are because of that feature of their religion. Nevertheless, though this doctrine is so distasteful, we have to preach it. It is the burden of the Lord upon us, and it would be woe to us unless we did preach this very doctrine, with all our zeal and all our power. I can readily understand why this doctrine is so much disliked, and why men find so much fault with it; because if that peculiarity were to disappear from among us, and we ceased to listen to the voice of God, as we believe it to be manifested, through those whom He has chosen to be His servants, this great latter-day work would amount to nothing in the earth; it would soon melt away and be like the sectarian systems from whence these Latter-day Saints have been gathered out.

JD 24:220, George Q. Cannon, June 20, 1883

God had a purpose in revealing the Gospel in these days and in restoring the everlasting Priesthood, and that was to prepare the earth for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is an important work, to prepare the earth and the inhabitants thereof for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, I think that every one who ever believed in Him, or that ever believed in God, will admit that when Jesus comes, everybody will listen to Him, and will do as He requires; for it is written that every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that He is the Lord. He will be accepted as the King of kings and Lord of lords, and the ruler over the whole earth; and it is the constant prayer of those who are most devoted upon the subject of religion that the Lord Jesus may come and reign king over the whole earth as He does in heaven; and, of course, if He does that it will be expected that He will sway a sceptre that will not be disputed, and will exercise a dominion that will not be questioned.

JD 24:220 – p.221, George Q. Cannon, June 20, 1883

Now, the first announcement that was made concerning this work of our God in these last days was, that the object in its restoration was for the purpose of preparing the way for the coming of the Son of Man. That was the announcement that was made. And when the Priesthood was restored it was told to those to whom it was restored that it should not be taken away from the earth again until the sons of Levi should offer an acceptable sacrifice unto the Lord; and they were also assured that it never would be taken away from the earth again, but that it should continue until it accomplished all that God designed for it. In the organization of this people, in the settlement of these valleys, in the framing of our first provisional form of government, in the enactment of

our laws, in the building of our settlements, and in the polity that has distinguished this people from their first settlement until now, the wisdom of God manifested through the Priesthood which He has restored to the earth, has been plainly discernible. Though these are civil matters, its influence, through the knowledge and power which it possessed, has been most beneficent. I think that if there is any people upon the face of the earth who should listen to the Priesthood and to the counsel of God's servants, it is the Latter-day Saints; and I think if there are any men upon the face of the earth that can claim loyalty from the people and allegiance to the Priesthood, it is the men who have borne it and who have exercised its authority from the time we settled these valleys until now. I think they can do so with the best possible grace, for the best of possible reasons; for when ever their counsel has been listened to it has always been attended with unquestioned success, and when it has been disobeyed it has always been followed by disaster. The Latter-day Saints are the witnesses of this themselves. We can appeal to them with the utmost confidence upon this point, because they know, they have had experience; they have tested these things for themselves, and they know that these are not idle statements; they know they are true and well-founded; and that God has, in His mercy and kindness, confirmed the labors of His servants and the counsels they have given by bestowing prosperity and blessing upon all those who have accepted their counsels and have carried them out in the spirit in which they have been given. The Latter-day Saints themselves are living witnesses to this.

JD 24:221 – p.222, George Q. Cannon, June 20, 1883

The men who followed President Brigham Young and the Twelve Apostles over whom he presided when they left Nauvoo and came across to Iowa and followed the Indian trails to the Missouri River and built Winter Quarters, and then in the spring of 1847, traversed the plains, the untrodden – that is, to them they were – wilds, of which they knew nothing – people who followed him and them to Salt Lake Valley, and laid the foundation of Salt Lake City, they have been the people who have been the most blessed of God and most prospered; they have prospered in their religion, they have prospered in temporal things, and they have been blessed with peace all the day long; while the men who disobeyed that counsel and concluded that they had had enough of this work and of following the counsels of the leading men of this Church, have had sorrow and difficulty and have not prospered. God confirmed the leadership of these men by bestowing His blessing upon them and upon those who followed their counsels. He delivered them from perils, He delivered them from Indians, He delivered them from famine, He delivered them from pestilence, and prosperity attended their labors, and every settlement that has been formed in these mountains from the day Salt Lake Valley was reached has been attended with similar prosperity. The men who have gone forward and listened to the counsels of God's servants have been the men who have been blessed; they have been the men who have had influence, while the men who have taken a different course are the men who have not. Where is there any apostates from this work that have influence in the earth? A few have had temporal prosperity. But is that all prosperity consists of? Is that all success consists of? To have a little of this world's goods, – and there are very few of them that even have that. There is something else. There is the blessing of God; there is the peace of heaven; there is the joy of the Holy Ghost; there are the gifts and blessings that attend the faithful servants and handmaidens of Jesus Christ, in addition to temporal prosperity, before which temporal prosperity fades. I am speaking now of money and that which perishes with money. I have seen the richest people living in the lowliest homes. Why? Because they were rich in their feelings. I have seen the richest men who were poorer than the poorest of earth's sons. Why? Because they did not have that rich feeling. Such a feeling does not belong to riches and earthly prosperity. It comes from the blessing of God. In this respect the Latter-day Saints may be said to be the richest people on the face of the earth. They are rich in that glorious feeling that God gives. You may strip them, as I have seen them stripped, of earthly possessions, and turned loose in a wilderness without a place of security and not knowing where they would find a resting place, and yet they were as happy a people as I ever saw in my life. Destitute of many things that men and women consider essential to earthly comfort, yet they had that which is above price, and which riches cannot bestow, namely, the peace of heaven, the peace of God resting down upon them. And they have been a rich people from that day to the present. If they have not glad hearts and cheerful countenances it is their own fault. But this is one of their characteristics. They do have glad hearts and cheerful countenances. Wherever you go you see them. They may not have rich surroundings, an abundance of this world's goods, elegant houses, nor elegant furniture for their houses; but when they have this spirit they are happy and they are full of peace and joy.

Those who have listened to the counsels of God's servants have had this blessing. But, as I have said, where is the apostate, the man that has denied his God, broken his covenants, dissolved his connection with the Church, turned his back upon the people with whom he was formerly associated, that can lay claim to this? It may be said that this is all delusion; but if delusion brings happiness, then delusion is a blessing. And is it not better to know and feel as we do respecting a future, to feel that there is a future before us that is bright and glorious, than it is to have our mind a blank in regard to a future, to be without hope, looking as it were into a horizon that is darkened by the densest clouds, which are impenetrable to our gaze and beyond which we can not see? Certainly it is. Certainly it is better to have this hope that God has given us. We know that it is of God. But our enemies say it is a delusion; but if this delusion brings peace and joy and happiness and certainty, and all those feelings that fill our soul with inexpressible delight, why, then we are in a better condition than those who are not thus deluded. But we know that we are not deluded. We know that when a wife is sealed to us by the authority of the holy Priesthood, that that ordinance is binding as eternity if we are faithful. We know that when we have children born to us in the everlasting covenant and death takes them away, we are comforted with the assurance that though they be consigned to the silent tomb, we shall yet have them in eternity. Thus the sting of death is taken away, and the grave has no victory. Death does not fill us with gloom and apprehension and doubt and uncertainty. We know as well as we can know anything of that character that when time ends we shall be united with our children and dwell with them eternally. We know also that when a man buries his wife, the faithful partner of his life, if she were married to him by the holy Priesthood, he knows when he lays her away in the grave that that is not an eternal separation, but that they will again be united. And so with the wife when she lays away her faithful husband, she knows as well as she knows she lives that they will be united, and that they will dwell together throughout eternity, if she continues faithful to the truth.

JD 24:223, George Q. Cannon, June 20, 1883

It is the Priesthood that has brought unto us these blessings. There is not a thing connected with our existence in these valleys that I do not in my feelings give credit for, under God, to the Priesthood. Do we have peace in our hearts? Do we have order in our settlements? Do we have good order throughout these mountains? Yes, we have, and it is due to those men whom God has inspired to lead the people. This good order is due to the Priesthood. We cannot give any credit to anybody else, however much we might be inclined to do so. We have had Judges here; we have had Governors here, some of them men of ability; but we cannot in honesty and truth give them credit for any of the blessings we enjoy. On the contrary many of them have been our worst enemies, and if they could have had the power they would have destroyed our peace and introduced strife and disorder and confusion and war and bloodshed in our midst; and that these things do not exist is due to the Priesthood, and to the people also, who have listened to their counsels and been guided by them.

JD 24:223, George Q. Cannon, June 20, 1883

Now, it is our duty to honor our God, and in honoring God we do not show dishonor to others. Because I feel in my heart to honor the Priesthood that God has restored to the earth, I do not therefore mean nor do I feel any sentiment of dishonor towards anybody else. It does not make me any the less a loyal citizen or a true man because I do this; not in the least. On the contrary, I am a better citizen for this, because I am more peaceful, I am more easily controlled, I maintain good order, or endeavor to do so. The influence, therefore, of the Priesthood upon me, as upon all the rest of the community, has not the effect to make us disloyal to our trust, nor to make us any worse citizens of the government of which we form a part. On the contrary, there is no more loyal men to be found within the confines of the Republic than are to be found in this Territory; no men more true to the Constitution, or who love it with more devotion, or who are willing to make greater sacrifices for it, than are to be found in this Territory, and I think I am in a position to speak understandingly.

JD 24:223 – p.224, George Q. Cannon, June 20, 1883

I say there are no people who will do more to maintain true republican government than the people who form the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I would shoulder my gun to defend an Episcopalian against a mob, and I would do the same to defend a Methodist, or an infidel. I would do as much to maintain the rights of all men and all women under this form of government as I would those of my own faith. I would consider myself unworthy of my position if I did not have that feeling, and this is the feeling, I am sure, of this entire people called Latter-day Saints. They hate oppression, they hate it in every form, and they will fight it as long as it exists upon the face of the earth, until it is stricken down, and until it ceases to exist. They are bound to do that. The principles of their religion compel them to do it. To resist tyranny in a governor who may be sent here? Yes, if he comes here and exercises unjust rule. And the same with a Judge. Because a man is sent here as a Governor or a Judge does that make him a king, or give him the authority to trample upon the rights of his fellow citizens, or upon the Constitution, and the laws of the land? Not by any means. And are we disloyal because we reject his claim to that authority, and the claim of others who band themselves together and say, "Oh, you poor Mormons, you poor, miserable wretches – you have no rights here?" No, we are not. They may try to usurp this authority, but they will always find us in their path under the Constitution, and under the laws; not by force of arms, not by violence, not by lynch law, not by mobocracy; but contending in the right place and under the right circumstances for those liberties that God has given to every human being and especially guaranteed to us as free men who were born free and who live under a free form of government. Mobocracy, from the bottom of our hearts, we hate every form of it, and every form of violence. Where men take the law in their own hands and seek to redress their own wrongs, it is abominable, and should be frowned upon every where. Better for us to suffer any number of wrongs than that we should resort to violence. It would not be right for us to do so, however just our cause may be. We must maintain law and good order, and we must frown down and put down every form of mobocracy and lynch law, and this disposition to execute vengeance outside the pale of the law. It is just as wrong for us to indulge in that spirit as it was for the mobbers of Missouri when they drove us from our homes there, or those in Illinois when they drove us from there. We should learn a lesson from these things; we should profit by this experience and stand up steadily and maintain constantly the rights of man, no matter who the man might be. He may be our enemy; he may be opposed to our principles; but that should make no difference in our determination to execute justice and right.

[JD 24:224 – p.225, George Q. Cannon, June 20, 1883](#)

Now, God has blessed us wonderfully in this land since he led us here. I can see a great improvement here in your place. In fact I see this in all the settlements. God is blessing this people. He is causing them to increase, and He is giving us a firmer foothold. I am glad of it. I want to see this work increase, because I love it, and because I love every thing connected with it. It is not a partisan feeling. It is not a selfish feeling that a certain portion of people may be blessed more than other people. I do not believe that Latter-day Saints entertain any such feeling. But I take delight in this work. I consider everything connected with the future growth of the human family is connected with the growth and development of this people. I know this is saying a great deal, but nevertheless it is true. And as God lives the day will come that constitutional government and the rights of man will have to be maintained by the Latter-day Saints, and that at a time when there will be no other power upon this land that will be able to make headway against the tide of evil that will flood the country. And it will be due to our organization that we shall be able to stem it. God has given us an organization that is magnificent, as our enemies freely admit. We are a consolidated power. And when anarchy reigns, as it will do, for it is coming, and every man that opens his eyes to see the evils that abound – if he does not persistently resist the truth – must have a secret dread of it in his heart; when that comes, there will be no power upon this continent that will be able to stem it, except the organization which God has given to us. We have shown our capacity for self-government ever since we came here, from the very fact that we had no government except that which we framed. We had to form our own government and make our own laws. We have had Governors who have fought our laws even when our Legislature has enacted them unanimously. So that that which we have to-day in the shape of good government is due to ourselves, under God. It is due in Beaver to the Latter-day Saints under God. If we have maintained order and resisted anarchy in Salt Lake City, it is because of this man [President Taylor] and the man that preceded him in his office, controlling and guiding the people all the day long; to them, under God, the credit is due. So it may be said with reference to our entire Territory. We have shown our capacity in the midst of all the obstacles that have been thrown in our way, and in the face

of all the attacks that have been made upon us in various forms and from various quarters – we have been able to withstand these and maintain good government. That power we still retain. We are gaining experience day by day. God is training us in this way. We are receiving a training such as no other people receive. Men are being made statesmen in spite of themselves. Such men as John R. Murdock, and others around him, have been compelled to learn these things. So with others. They have had to acquire a knowledge of practical statesmanship, that they might preserve the liberties of this people. And God has given us the necessary wisdom to do it. I thank Him for it. He has given us this wisdom, and he will continue to bless us in this way. And the day will come when we will exercise this authority in a far wider sphere than in this limited Territory. The same wisdom that has maintained the organization of this people, and that enables us to withstand attacks that would swamp any other people, will enable us to act in a far more extended sphere.

JD 24:225 – p.226, George Q. Cannon, June 20, 1883

We have had conspiracies against our liberties from every quarter; we have had conspiracies of every conceivable character; you cannot conceive of anything scarcely in the shape of conspiracy that has not been formed against us, and yet we live and are a free people to-day. In many respects there are no freer people in the United States than we are. But our enemies do not deserve any credit for it. To God the credit is due, and He gets it, I believe, from all the Saints. But He has given the men whom He has chosen the wisdom to govern and control this people, and to point out the path of safety. And I predict that we will be just as prosperous in the future as we have been in the past, and more so. God will always prepare a way of escape for His people. Even if everything should be as dark as it was fourteen or fifteen months ago, when it seemed as though the whole heavens were covered with the blackest clouds, with no ray of light to break the darkness, and when it seemed as though overwhelming destruction was about to come upon us – even under those circumstances God will prepare a way of escape, He will open out the path and make it plain, and we will emerge from the difficulty stronger than we were before, and be full of additional thanksgiving unto God our heavenly Father, for His goodness and kindness to us. This will be the result in the future just as it has been in the past, and it will continue to be the result. For I tell you there is a great future before this people. We have all the elements which are necessary to make us a great people, and we cannot be deprived of them. We are a united people to begin with. And then we are a temperate people, we are a frugal people, we are a loving people, we are a virtuous people, we are a brave people. Yes, we are a brave people; for it takes courage to be a Latter-day Saint. A man that is a coward cannot be a Latter-day Saint. A woman who is not a heroine cannot be a Latter-day Saint. It requires just that kind of courage which is so rare in the world to be a Latter-day Saint – the courage to maintain one's convictions. This famous young lady – Belle Harris – has given us an exhibition of it. She preferred to go to the Penitentiary rather than answer the questions propounded to her. Such an exhibition of courage must have a wonderful influence. There is something about it, even if the cause were a bad one, that is admirable. Men admire that quality wherever they see it. There is nothing so admirable as courage of that description. It impresses even our enemies. "Why," they say, "if this girl can do such a thing, what shall we do with a people of that kind?"

JD 24:226 – p.227, George Q. Cannon, June 20, 1883

Well, courage is a quality that this people have always manifested. They have submitted to wrongs, it is true; but their having done so is not an indication of a want of courage. On the contrary, it is sometimes an evidence of the highest and the purest and the best courage, to be willing to suffer wrong rather than take a course that could not be approved of to resist it, and these qualities in the struggle that lies before us will tell. You find a people who are frugal, who are temperate, who are industrious, who are united, who are loving, and who increase as we do, and they will make their mark on the earth. Such qualities always did tell in the struggle for existence among men from the earliest days. The nations that have possessed the qualities which our people possess have always been the honored nations. They have been the nations that have won their way to power and have compelled admiration even from their enemies. These qualities we possess, and we mean to cultivate them. We mean to train our children in these virtues. We mean to make them a virtuous people above every thing else. That is the most desirable quality in this age of sin and corruption, when women, in many instances, are unsafe in the society of men. I want to see it in our country that our young ladies in the

company of our young men, in any place and under any circumstances, in the darkest hours and in the most unprotected situations, will feel as safe as if they were in their mothers' bed chambers so far as anything wrong from the opposite sex is concerned. I would rather see men punished with death – which we believe is a law that should be put in force against any man who ruins woman – than that there ever should be a time in our country when corruption and wrongs of this character should run riot and be unchecked. Virtue lies at the foundation of individual and national greatness. No man can amount to much who is not a virtuous man, who is not strong in his virtue, I do not care who he is. He may be as talented as Lucifer; but if he is not a virtuous man his greatness will not amount to much. Virtue lies at the foundation of greatness. We mean to promote it and encourage it in the rising generation. In order that the rising generation should have it, the mothers must have it, and feel its importance, and the fathers also. And then we must teach all those other virtues that belong to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our religion is admirably adapted to every circumstance of life. We can carry it with us every day. It is not like our Sunday clothes – to be worn on the Sunday and laid away on Monday. It is an eminently practical religion, and is adapted to every day alike and not for special occasions alone. I like it on that account. I am very much pleased with it, always have been, and with those virtues that it instills, the every day virtues of life.

[JD 24:227, George Q. Cannon, June 20, 1883](#)

If I am a Latter-day Saint, as I should be, I am an honest man. If I were to trade I would trade honestly, or else I am not worthy of the name of Latter-day Saint. If I had a wagon to sell I would tell what sort of a wagon it was and not cheat the party to whom I was selling, or say that he must judge of the article by his own eyes, that his own eyes must tell him if there is anything wrong. I do not consider that good Latter-day Saint doctrine. If I have a horse to sell to my neighbor and he asks me if the animal has any defect, I ought to be willing to tell what it is. And so with everything else. We must be an honest people; for I tell you those who are not honest cannot retain the Spirit of God. God wants an honest people, a truthful people, a people whose word can be relied upon, a people whose word is as good as their bond. I do not know whether you all do or not, but if not, you ought to cultivate this quality of honesty. It is always profitable for a man to be honest. Let him get a credit of that kind and it will bring him profit; but if he deceives then confidence is gone and people will shun him. I never trade with a man that tricks me more than once. I do not say much. I suppose everybody has the same kind of feeling. I never quarrel nor find fault, but then I think a great deal, and I suppose most of the people have a good memory for these sort of things.

[JD 24:227 – p.228, George Q. Cannon, June 20, 1883](#)

As Latter-day Saints, we should be honest, truthful, frugal and economical, and do every thing we can to improve our condition. Every man that has a poor house should seek to get a better. When I started out in life I attached little importance to the matter of a house. For many years I was in the missionary field. Fifteen years of my early experience in life was spent in the missionary field. I was only some nine months at home during that period, and I attached little importance to a house. But I soon found out that my folks did not take the same view that I did about it. I have learned this, that a woman looks upon a house as a matter of much more importance than a man does. It is her home. And when I see wives in houses of a poor class when their husbands might build better, I think their husbands do not understand woman's nature as they should do. Women with families should have good houses, and husbands should labor to get them, and then leave them to adorn them and make them comfortable and desirable. Children like to have a nice house, because they can invite their companions to it. Men should strive to make their families comfortable in this way. It is their duty to do so. I was very much delighted with some remarks President Taylor made on this subject. He told the husbands to court their wives over again, to cultivate the feeling they had when they started out in life, when they were everything to each other, and when they could not do enough for each other. That is a feeling that should be cultivated. Men should never treat their wives with disrespect. They should manifest a feeling of love for them, and more especially when they become advanced in years. There is nothing that will excite love in a man's heart so much as to see a wife as willing, even in her advanced years, to sacrifice her own comfort for his sake as she was when they were first married; and I am sure it must have the same effect upon a woman – to have the husband, when her charms are fading and she is growing old, and perhaps not so

attractive as she was – to have the husband tender and kind and loving, not forgetting her good qualities, nor what she has done. When a woman sees a husband manifest that feeling towards her, she in return will manifest her kindness and love for his thoughtful attentions.

[JD 24:228, George Q. Cannon, June 20, 1883](#)

These are little things, but how much they contribute to our happiness and to our peace! We should therefore cultivate these qualities ourselves and teach them to our children. Our children should be made to feel that we love them and that we are disposed to treat them with proper respect. When we ask a child to do a favor, we should ask it as though he were a gentleman, or if a girl, as though she were a lady. A man should never talk to his children as though he were a tyrant. He should address them in kindness, and as though they were gentlemen and ladies, and they will grow up with that feeling and treat others with the same respect. Why, I would not ask my children to do me a favor without thanking them, any more than I would ask any grown person. Neither would I ask a favor of a hired hand without doing the same thing. I have been in such positions myself and know the feelings that such people have. I know that their feelings are tender and that in their position they appreciate kindness. And people who are young are more sensitive than older persons of more experience in life, and we cannot be too careful about their feelings. We should treat one another with the utmost respect and the utmost kindness. Women should talk to their children in kindness; not harshly, and not in a spirit of scolding. It is a dreadful habit this habit of scolding. A man or a woman who is always scolding, loses influence with children and with everybody else.

[JD 24:228, George Q. Cannon, June 20, 1883](#)

I pray God to bless you and fill you with the Holy Ghost, in the name of Jesus, Amen.

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## John Taylor

PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR'S RECENT TRIP TO BEAR LAKE.

Selections from his Discourses delivered in the Various Settlements.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

THE WORK OF GOD – THE EVENTS OF THE TIMES – GATHERING – TEMPLE  
ORDINANCES – THE OBJECT OF MARRIAGE – PLURAL MARRIAGE – A TERRIBLE  
LESSON – LAWS OF GOD MUST BE ENFORCED – THE PRIESTHOOD – PARTIES,  
CLIQUES, RINGS, MURMURERS – GOD IS ON THE SIDE OF ISRAEL.

[JD 24:229, John Taylor](#)

We are occupying a position which is different from that of any other people upon the face of the whole earth. We have a great work to perform, and there are duties and responsibilities resting upon us that rest upon no other people. There is no man living or that has lived that could have organized and set in order the work in which we are engaged. There are no men living, unaided by the Almighty, who are able to carry out this work

to its consummation. All that have operated in it have had to trust in the living God for instruction, guidance and support, and all that will hereafter operate in it or that are operating in it now will have to trust to the same source. This work is one which is associated with the purposes and designs of God which He contemplated and planned from before the foundation of the world. The day in which we live has been spoken and prophesied of by all the Prophets that have existed since the world was, and it is in the Scriptures emphatically denominated "the dispensation of the fullness of times," wherein God will gather together all things in one, whether they be things on the earth or things in the heavens. Neither Joseph Smith, nor Hyrum Smith, nor Sidney Rigdon, nor Brigham Young, nor myself, nor anybody associated with the Church at the present time, have had anything to do with the origination of these things. This work was commenced by the Almighty; it has been carried on by Him, and sustained by His power, and if it is ever consummated it will be by the power, and direction and sustenance of the Lord Jehovah, of Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and then through the medium of the Priesthood here upon the earth. These things originated in the heavens, in the councils of the Gods; and the organization of the Priesthood and the power thereof, and everything pertaining thereto, has been committed from the heavens through Joseph Smith, principally, and through others who have been associated with him in this great work.

JD 24:229 – p.230, John Taylor

The times in which we live are pregnant with great events, and there will things come to pass that will affect all people – wars and rumors of wars, pestilence, earthquakes, the waves of the sea lifting themselves beyond their bounds; these and other judgments will go forth among the nations of the earth until, as the Scriptures say, it will be a vexation to hear the report thereof. I would simply remark, however, in relation to these things, that they are the decrees of the Almighty. They are not anything which has originated with us. We find them referred to in the Holy Bible, the record of the Jews; we find them referred to in the Book of Mormon, the record of the Nephites, and also in the revelations given unto us from the Lord through the Prophet Joseph Smith; and there are many now living that know that these events will transpire by things that have been manifested unto them.

JD 24:230 – p.231, John Taylor

Associated with this great work of God is the principle of gathering, and the labor of building temples. We have been gathered from the different nations of the earth to the land of Zion that we might be taught of God, and be subject to the will of God, the word of God, and the law of God. A temple was built in Kirtland, Ohio, at a very early stage in the history of the Church, in the year 1836, or six years after the organization of the Church. Some of the ordinances of God's house were revealed and practiced therein, and many revelations, visions, and great manifestations of the power of God were given unto the people. Afterwards there was a temple built at Nauvoo, wherein further developments were made, and other and more advanced ordinances were revealed and administered. It was by a great struggle and indomitable energy that these things could be accomplished at all. Previous to the completion of the latter temple, Joseph and Hyrum were killed. But finally the temple was finished and dedicated to God, and a great many principles that had been revealed to Joseph Smith – and which he communicated to the leading authorities of the Church previous to his death – were there carried out and administered in by the Holy Priesthood. We are now building other temples. There is one that was completed several years ago in St. George, and many thousands of people have been administered to and for in that temple, pertaining both to the living and the dead. We have another temple in Logan, also another in Manti, both of which are progressing very favorably, as well as the one in Salt Lake City. Now, in regard to the use of these temples, neither we nor anybody else living had any idea until it was revealed to us from God – just the same as the first principles of the Gospel were revealed, for they were nowhere to be found on the earth. Joseph Smith said to the Twelve in my hearing prior to their departure for Great Britain, "If you come across a people who have even the first principles of the Gospel of Christ correctly you need not baptize them, for the possession of those principles will be a sign that they have some portion of the Holy Priesthood." And to this the Apostle John bears testimony when he says, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." But I never found anybody – and I have traveled many thousands of



miles – who had even the first principles of the Gospel correctly, nor did any of my brethren – the Twelve, Seventies, Elders, High Priests, etc., ever meet with such a people. We knew nothing about these things ourselves until they were revealed from the heavens unto Joseph Smith. No people outside of the Latter-day Saints know how to build temples. The world would not know what to do with them to-day if they had them. Neither religionists, scientists, politicians, statesmen, philanthropists, nor any others would know how to administer in those temples if they had them. They would know no more how to administer therein, than this table that stands before me; and then we should be just as ignorant on this subject as they, only for the intelligence imparted unto us by the Almighty. But He has given us revelation in relation to this matter; He has told us what to do and how to do it, and what will be the result of our action in the performance of these ordinances.

[JD 24:231, John Taylor](#)

But the world are ignorant in regard to a great many other things; they do not know anything even about marriage nor the object of it. What do they know about eternal union? Nothing. Is there any man living outside of this Church who will have a claim upon his wife on the other side of the veil? No. Why? Because in all their marriages, no matter by what church or denomination they are celebrated, the ceremony distinctly states, "until death do you part." This is the acme of perfection in the Christian world in relation to this matter! Nothing else can be found anywhere, among any of the professed religionists of the world; the nearest approach can be found, not among ministers, but in the yellow-backed literature of the period, for they do sometimes refer to the prospect of "eternal unions" hereafter, while the churches recognize no such principle. God has revealed, through His servant Joseph Smith, something more. He has told us about our associations hereafter. He has told us about our wives and our children being sealed to us, that we might have a claim on them in eternity. He has revealed unto us the law of celestial marriage, associated with which is the principle of plural marriage. I will speak a little upon this subject. It is very seldom that I refer to it, but there is need for it occasionally. I speak of it as that law given to us of God. I do not know, but I have been informed that there are those who seem to be opposed to this law in one or two places where we have been traveling. Now, I dare not oppose anything of the kind. I dare not violate any law of God. And I will tell you what Joseph Smith said upon the subject. He presented this principle to the Twelve, and called upon them to obey it, and said if they did not, the kingdom of God could not go one step further. Why could it not go one step further? Because we had a religion to live by, but none that placed our associations upon eternal principles or gave us a claim upon each other in the family relations in the eternal worlds. But through this principle we could be sealed to one another through time and eternity; we could prepare ourselves for an exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom of God. It is one of the greatest blessings that ever was conferred upon the human family. It is an eternal law which has always existed in other worlds as well as in this world. I will here call your attention to the revelation itself, which reads:

[JD 24:231 – p.232, John Taylor](#)

"Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you, my servant Joseph, that inasmuch as you have inquired of my hand, to know and understand wherein I, the Lord, justified my servants Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; as also Moses, David and Solomon, my servants, as touching the principle and doctrine of their having many wives and concubines:"

[JD 24:232, John Taylor](#)

"Behold! and lo, I am the Lord thy God, and will answer thee as touching this matter:

[JD 24:232, John Taylor](#)

"Therefore, prepare thy heart to receive and obey the instructions which I am about to give unto you; for all those who have this law revealed unto them must obey the same."

This you will see is strictly in accordance with what I have told you Joseph Smith told the Twelve – that if this law was not practiced, if they would not enter into this covenant, then the kingdom of God could not go one step further. Now, we did not feel like preventing the kingdom of God from going forward. We professed to be the Apostles of the Lord, and did not feel like putting ourselves in a position to retard the progress of the kingdom of God. The revelation, as you have heard, says that, "all those who have this law revealed unto them must obey the same." Now, that is not my word. I did not make it. It was the Prophet of God who revealed that to us in Nauvoo, and I bear witness of this solemn fact before God, that He did reveal this sacred principle to me and others of the Twelve, and in this revelation it is stated that it is the will and law of God that "all those who have this law revealed unto them must obey the same." And the revelation further says:

JD 24:232, John Taylor

"For behold! I reveal unto you a new and everlasting covenant; and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned." Think of that, will you. For it is further said: "no one can reject this covenant, and be permitted to enter into my glory."

JD 24:232, John Taylor

There are many people who try to excuse themselves in this matter, and who essay to do as they please, but as the Lord God liveth, He will not excuse them. He expects those who profess to be his people to carry out that law. The revelation continues to say:

JD 24:232, John Taylor

"For all who will have a blessing at my hands, shall abide the law which was appointed for that blessing, and the conditions thereof, as were instituted from before the foundation of the world;"

JD 24:232, John Taylor

"And as pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant, it was instituted for the fullness of my glory; and he that receiveth a fullness thereof, must and shall abide the law, or he shall be damned, saith the Lord God."

JD 24:232, John Taylor

I thought I would have a little of this revelation read. The whole revelation is quite lengthy. But it goes to say that all covenants heretofore entered into amount to nothing, and that they will be of no benefit to people beyond the grave.

JD 24:232 – p.233, John Taylor

Now, as I have already said, the reason was very obvious why a law of this kind should be had. As a people we professed to be Latter-day Saints. We professed to be governed by the word, and will, and law of God. We had a religion that might do to live by, but we had none to die by. But this was a principle that God had revealed unto us, and it must be obeyed. I had always entertained strict ideas of virtue, and I felt as a married man that this was to me, outside of this principle, an appalling thing to do. The idea of my going and asking a young lady to be married to me, when I had already a wife! It was a thing calculated to stir up feelings from the innermost depth of the human soul. I had always entertained the strictest regard for chastity. I had never in my life seen the time when I have known of a man deceiving a woman – and it is often done in the world, where notwithstanding the crime, the man is received into society, and the poor woman is looked upon as a pariah and an outcast – I have always looked upon such a thing as infamous, and upon such a man as a villain, and I hold to-day the same ideas. Hence, with the feelings I had entertained, nothing but a knowledge of God, and the revelations of God, and the truth of them, could have induced me to embrace such a principle as this.

We seemed to put off, as far as we could, what might be termed the evil day. Some time after these things were made known to us, I was riding out of Nauvoo on horseback, and met Joseph Smith coming in, he, too, being on horseback. Some of you who were acquainted with Nauvoo, know where the graveyard was. We met upon the road going on to the hill there. I bowed to Brother Joseph, and having done the same to me he said; "Stop;" and he looked at me very intently. "Look here," said he, "those things that have been spoken of must be fulfilled, and if they are not entered into right away, the keys will be turned." Well, what did I do? Did I feel to stand in the way of this great, eternal principle, and treat lightly the things of God? No. I replied: "Brother Joseph, I will try and carry these things out," and afterwards did, and I have done it more times than once; but then I have never broken a law of the United States in doing so, and I am at their defiance to prove to the contrary.

[JD 24:233 – p.234, John Taylor](#)

I have related this to show why these eternal covenants are entered into; and that man among you who would seek to pervert these things and teach them to others and seek to frustrate the designs of God in regard to them, I tell you God will lay His hand upon him unless he repents, and speedily takes another course. I don't know when I have talked so plainly as I have done to-day; but these are the feelings of my heart and they are true. It is for us to magnify our callings and not to tamper with the things of God. We must sustain and maintain the principles that God has committed to us inviolate. And about this nation and its ideas and feelings, we ask very little of unreasonable men who are not acquainted with the principles of which they speak. This nation will have enough to do by and by without troubling itself about us. It is for us to learn the ways of God and to place ourselves in subjection to His law. And then it is not enough for men to be married to wives and be sealed according to the order of God, they must treat them aright when they have them; they must treat them as they would treat angels of God; they must be full of kindness and mercy and long-suffering; they must provide for them and make them happy and comfortable, and take care of the families they have by them, and in this way gain the favor of God, and the respect of all honorable men. The laws of heaven must not be violated. We must keep sacred the holy covenants we have entered into. I will here relate a circumstance that came under my notice a short time ago, which will serve to show the terrible consequences following a violation of the law of God.

[JD 24:234, John Taylor](#)

A certain Bishop wrote to me to know what should be done in the following case: A man had been away from home on a mission, and during his absence his wife had committed adultery. I replied that the woman would have to be severed from the Church; but requested that the aggrieved husband should call upon me. He did so, bringing with him his delinquent wife and three beautiful little boys – three as beautiful little boys as I ever saw. He also brought with him the villain who had done the damage. But I told him to take him away, I would have no communication with such a contemptible wretch. The husband explained that he wished to talk with me in the presence of his wife, if it was agreeable. He wanted to know what was to be done in the case. I told him I should be under the necessity of confirming the Bishop's decision in the case, but I will have read to you what the law says upon the subject. George Reynolds, who is one of my secretaries, was present, and I asked him to read certain portions of the revelation on celestial marriage; for they had been married according to that order. That revelation states that, "If a man receiveth a wife in the new and everlasting covenant, and if she be with another man, and I have not appointed unto her by the holy anointing, she hath committed adultery and shall be destroyed." And in another place it says, "they shall be destroyed in the flesh, and shall be delivered unto the buffetings of Satan unto the day of redemption, saith the Lord God." Now, said I, I did not make that law. I find it in the word of God. It is not my province to change it. I cannot make any change. I am sorry for these little children. I am sorry for the shame and infamy that has been brought upon them; but I cannot reverse the law of God. I did not commit this crime; I am not responsible for it; I cannot take upon myself, the responsibility of other peoples' acts. Well, it made my heart ache. The husband wept like a child, so did the woman; but I could not help that. I speak of this for the purpose of bringing up other things, and of presenting them before the people. And the principle I desire to impress upon their minds is, that we have no right, any of us, to violate the laws of God.

The President of a Stake has no right to violate these laws; his Counselors have no right to do it; the Bishops have no right to do it; the Priests, Teachers and Deacons have no right to do it. God has called us to stand in holy places, and has placed upon us the responsibility of the Priesthood. He expects us to be as true to that Priesthood and to the administration thereof as the Gods are in the eternal worlds. We may think we can do this, that and the other irrespective of the word of God, but let it be understood that we cannot hide anything from the Lord; the Scriptures say, "hell and destruction are before the Lord: how much more then the hearts of the children of men." We may succeed in hiding our affairs from men; but it is written that for every word and every secret thought we shall have to give an account in the day when accounts have to be rendered before God, when hypocrisy and fraud of any kind will not avail us; for by our words and by our works we shall be justified, or by them we shall be condemned. It is for us to walk uprightly before God. And it is for the Priesthood – the Presidents of Stakes, Bishops, Priests, Teachers and Deacons – to be governed by the law of God, and to see that there is no iniquity prevailing in the Church, and if there is, it must be dealt with according to the law of God, and not according to the notions and opinions of men. We have no right to condone this and to change the other, and to think that we are going to save men by permitting all kinds of iniquity to abound. It is the duty of those in authority to see things straightened out. Matters are sometimes allowed to go on to that extent that hard feelings, division, contention and strife arise, and all this because Teachers, Bishops and others do not do their duty. In our Bishops' Courts, and in our High Councils, we must be governed by the law of God, and not by our notions and sympathies, or anything of that kind, and not because it is somebody's son, or somebody's brother, or somebody's relative. If I have any sons, brothers or relatives, and they do something wrong, bring them up and adjudge them according to the law of God, and do the same with me and with everybody else. We sometimes think we will bear with this, that and the other thing. Perhaps a man may be a drunkard, and being a pretty good sort of a fellow, we think we will bear with him. I tell you he ought to be dealt with according to the law of God, and the same for Sabbath breaking, adultery, and other violations of His laws. The Saints cannot violate any of the laws of God with impunity, and the officers of the Church ought to see that they do not do it. We must not be governed by sympathies. My sympathies in the case that I related were very strong; but I must not be governed by sympathies – I must be governed by the law of God.

JD 24:235, John Taylor

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." God has organized His Church after the pattern that exists in the heavens, and has given us laws for the government thereof, and placed at the head of it the holy Priesthood, which is after the order of Melchizedek, which is after the order of the Son of God, and which is after the power of an endless life, and then He has also introduced the Aaronic Priesthood as an appendage to the other. And what are these Priesthoods? The Priesthood is the rule and government of God as it exists, whether in the heavens or on the earth, and wherever that Priesthood is introduced, and the Gospel is introduced, life and immortality are brought to light; so that men can be placed in communion with God; so that by the spirit of light, truth and revelation, they can roll back the mists of darkness, gaze down the vista of future ages, and contemplate the purposes of God as they roll forth in all their majesty, power and glory. This is the position that we as Priests of the Most High God ought to occupy. We should feel that we are not living for ourselves, but that we are living for God – living to accomplish His purposes. We are here to build up His Church and to purify it from all evil, that it may be presented before the Father as the bride, the Lamb's wife without spot or wrinkle. We are here to build up a Zion unto the Lord of Hosts – a Zion, which signifies the pure in heart – a people who will be prepared for the great events that are about to transpire upon this earth, and who will be able to stand the convulsions that will overthrow the world – and He has given us the Priesthood for that very purpose.

JD 24:235 – p.236 – p.237, John Taylor

But there are those in our midst, who, although they have a name and a standing in the Church, disregard the authority of the Priesthood, both local and general. I hear sometimes of parties, and of cliques, and of rings in

our midst. What! what, a party in the Church and kingdom of God? What! rings associated with the principles of eternal truth – associated with the celestial law that emanates from our Heavenly Father? The devil got up a ring and was cast out of heaven for getting it up, as also a third part of the spirits who associated themselves with him. They were cast out because they devised principles that were in opposition to the word and will and law of God, and every man who follows in their footsteps, unless he speedily repent, will be placed in the same position – will also be cast out. The law of God must be put in force against the transgressor. No man who professes to be a Latter-day Saint can transgress with impunity. The Priesthood of God cannot be disregarded with impunity. We have men in our midst who are not afraid to speak against the authorities of the Church in the localities in which they live. Jude, in his general epistle, refers to such men. He alludes to them as "filthy dreamers who defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. Yet," he says, "Michael, the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. But these speak evil of those things which they know not \* \* clouds they are without water, carried about of winds \* \* wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouths speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage." So also Peter speaks of such characters, "But these as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption." Now, we have such men as these up and down. I think Brother Hosea Stout describes them as "smart Alocs." They think they are wiser and better than other people, and they want to regulate the affairs of God, when God has given them no authority to do it. But it is woe to those who fight against the authorities of the Church of God. Let such be brought up before proper tribunals; for no back-biting, nor anything of that kind can be sanctioned in the Church and kingdom of God. These are things that prevail more or less in various parts of the Territory. I suppose we have them to meet. They have always been, to a greater or less degree, mixed up with the Church and kingdom of God upon the earth; but it is for the authorities to purge the Church of all such things, and to have a people who will be united, who will be one, and who will be governed by the law of God. If I violate any law of the Church, bring me up for it; if any one else does, bring him up for it; but don't go sneaking around back-biting and misrepresenting. Let us act as men, at least, if we won't be Saints; but we should be true to our calling and profession, and honor our God. There is nothing new in all this. The spirit of rebellion has gone on ever since the devil and his angels were cast out of heaven. He and they have been making war against the Saints, and will continue to do so; but Satan will finally be over come. Before that, however, Satan will be bound for a thousand years, and during that time we will have a chance to build temples and to be baptized for the dead, and to do a work pertaining to the world that has been, as well as to the world that now is, and to operate under the direction of the Almighty in bringing to pass those designs which He contemplated from the foundation of the world.

JD 24:237, John Taylor

It is for us to live holily, justly, purely and righteously before God, that we may have a legitimate claim upon Him. If we will do this, then I tell you, in the name of Israel's God, that you shall call upon the Lord and He will hear and answer you; that you shall draw nigh unto Him and He will draw nigh unto you, and will pour upon your heads blessings that it has not entered into your hearts to conceive of; and if all Israel will do this, and fear God and work righteousness before Him, there is no power in existence can injure the Saints; for God is on the side of Israel, and He will put a book in the jaws of our enemies. And I will say here, woe to them that fight against Zion, woe to them that plot against Zion, for God will fight and plot against them! And woe to the hypocrites in Zion and those that profess to fear God and are wallowing in transgression; God will be after you, for ere long the sinners in Zion will be afraid, and fearfulness will surprise the hypocrite. Now, let us purge ourselves from unrighteousness, for God is going to roll forth His work, and whether you or I do right or not, it will make no difference, the work will go on: it is onward, onward, onward, and will continue to be onward, until the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ, and He will reign for ever and ever.

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Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT WILFORD WOODRUFF,

Delivered at the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, July 20, 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

OBJECT OF MEETING TOGETHER – OUR DEPENDENCE UPON THE SPIRIT OF THE  
LORD – CERTAIN RIGHTS WHICH BELONG TO ALL MANKIND – UNPOPULARITY OF GOD'S  
SERVANTS IN ALL AGES OF THE WORLD – A MAN MUST BE BORN AGAIN BEFORE HE CAN  
UNDERSTAND THE THINGS OF GOD – THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY  
SAINTS – THE GOSPEL THE SAME IN ALL DISPENSATIONS – HOW THE GOSPEL WAS  
RESTORED – THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST – UTAH BUILT UP BY THE POWER OF  
GOD – JOSEPH SMITH RECEIVED ALL THE KEYS OF THE PRIESTHOOD BY THE  
ADMINISTRATION OF ANGELS – FULFILLMENT OF REVELATION – THE  
PRIESTHOOD – PLURAL MARRIAGE.

[JD 24:238, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

We meet here upon the Sabbath day for the purpose of partaking of the sacrament, the emblems of the Lord's body and blood which were broken and shed for us, and also to give and receive instruction as we may be led by the Spirit of God.

[JD 24:238 – p.239, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

It is well known to the Latter-day Saints – though perhaps not to strangers – that no Elder or member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who enters into this Tabernacle knows who is going to be called upon to speak to the people. Hence no man spends a week, a day, an hour, or a moment to prepare a discourse to deliver unto the people. We are all of us dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord, upon revelation, upon inspiration, upon the Holy Ghost, in order to be qualified to teach the people before whom we are called to speak, and if the Lord does not give me the Holy Spirit this afternoon, I promise you all you will not get much out of Brother Woodruff, whether they be Saints or strangers. I have never seen a day since I have been a member of this Church, that I have felt that any man was qualified to teach saint or sinner, Jew or Gentile, the inhabitants of the earth abroad or at home, only as he was moved upon by the power of God. I have never believed any man was qualified from the days of Father Adam to our day to go forth among the inhabitants of the earth with the declaration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in a way and manner to convince them or teach them the Gospel in its truth and purity, and in the power of God, only by inspiration. I have never believed that any man was qualified in any age of the world to build up the kingdom of God, or do the will of God only

upon that principle. And I have felt, both while abroad in the world, as well as at home, that when called upon to teach the Latter-day Saints or anybody else – I have felt as though my lips ought to be touched with a live coal from off the altar, and my heart filled with inspiration from Almighty God. When I think upon the day and age in which we live, when I think upon this day and dispensation in which the God of heaven has set His hand to carry out the fulfillment of the mighty prophecies contained within the lids of the Bible, the Old and New Testaments, the stick of Judah, I realize that in order to comprehend these things a man must be in possession of the Spirit of the Lord day by day. In the words of the Savior as recorded in St. John's Gospel, "This is eternal life, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent."

[JD 24:239, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

I say many things when I am called upon to speak in the presence of strangers that I do not confine myself to when addressing the Saints, because the latter are acquainted with our principles, while the former are not.

[JD 24:239 – p.240, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

As Latter-day Saints we respect the rights of all men. We believe that all mankind, men and women, in this and every other dispensation and generation, have certain rights; that God has created all men with an agency, I care not in what kingdom, empire, republic or place they dwell. They have a right to enjoy their religion. They have a right to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. "But," says one, "do you mean that in empires where an emperor holds the rights and destinies of his subjects in his hands?" Yes. I mean there is no emperor who breathes the breath of life who has the right to deprive one of his subjects of the freedom of his religion. I will tell you why. No emperor, no king, no president, no ruler of any nation under the heavens has ever given his subjects life. Their life has come from God, and God has granted them their agency and the right to worship Him according to the light and knowledge they have. This is the view entertained by the Latter-day Saints. And I have heard Joseph Smith say that if he were emperor of the whole world, holding the destinies of all men in his hands, he would defend the religious rights of every man, whether his religion was right or wrong. And especially ought this to be the case in this American nation, the constitution of which guarantees to all people the right to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience. This is the broad platform upon which our government has been founded. I have looked upon the Constitution of the United States as one of the best instruments ever devised by man for the government of the inhabitants of the earth. I look upon it as such to-day. And while we are willing to allow the Methodists, the Baptists, the Presbyterians, the Catholics, and every sect under heaven, the right to enjoy their religion undisturbed, yet we claim the same privilege as a people, as a church, as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and hence, in expressing myself here this afternoon with regard to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, or the kingdom of God, if I differ from any of this congregation, I have a right to differ; the congregation has a right to differ from me; and no man has a right to say, Why do you so? The destinies of the whole human family are in the hands of God. I shall be held accountable before the God of heaven – and so will all men – for the course I pursue in this life.

[JD 24:240, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

There is one very peculiar feature with regard to the followers of Jesus Christ, or those that have attempted in other dispensations to obey the law of heaven, and that is, their unpopularity in the world from the days of Father Adam to the present time. Trace it through from the beginning, and you will find that men who were inspired by Almighty God to go forth and proclaim any message to the inhabitants of the earth, have been most unpopular in their day and generation. You will find it has been so in the whole history of the world. You may go back, for instance, to the days of Noah. Noah was a preacher of righteousness. He was called of God. He was warned of God, and told what to do to save himself and family. The world had become terribly corrupt, and it was necessary that the people be called upon to repent. To this end God Almighty raised up a prophet. That prophet was Noah. He went forth as he was commanded and preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ in its purity and truth. He was commanded to build an ark on dry land. The people laughed at him and would not believe his testimony. For one hundred and twenty years he warned the inhabitants of the earth of

the coming flood; but all that he could save were the members of his own family, some eight souls. The flood came, and all the inhabitants of the earth, save those who had entered the ark, were drowned. Their spirits were shut up in prison in the spirit world, and they remained there until after the death of Jesus Christ; and while His body lay in the tomb three and a half days He went and preached to those spirits in prison, where they had been shut up for thousands of years.

[JD 24:240, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

As it was with Noah so it was with other Prophets who lived in ancient days. You may trace the history of Daniel, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the rest down to the days of Jesus Christ, and you find they were all unpopular in their day and generation. In consequence of the wickedness that prevailed in the world, those Prophets were moved upon to prophesy concerning the destruction of Babylon the great, Ninevah, Tyre, and many other ancient cities; they declared the word of the Lord to the inhabitants of these cities, but their testimony was not believed; and because of their unpopularity, the Prophets were put to death. Nevertheless, not one jot or tittle of their predictions fell to the ground unfulfilled.

[JD 24:240 – p.241, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

Then, again, you come along down to the days of Jesus Christ. You trace His life from His birth in a stable to the tomb. Was ever a man on the earth – a good man like the Savior – so persecuted, opposed, ridiculed and derided as He was by the Jews, Pharisees, Sadducees, and the different sects of that day? No matter what He did it was attributed to him for evil. If He cast out devils it was attributed to the power of Beelzebub. If He restored the blind to sight, they were ready to cry out, "You give God the glory, this man is a sinner." And so in all His works was He opposed, persecuted and derided. And His Apostles shared the same fate. Every soul of them – with the exception of John – had to lay down their lives and seal their testimony with their blood. Some were beheaded, some were sawn asunder. Even in the case of John they sought his life, but it was decreed that he should live, and he remains on the earth to this day – although probably there has been a change in his body – and will remain until the Son of Man comes in the clouds of heaven.

[JD 24:241, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

I speak of these things to show that men of God in all ages of the world have been unpopular. Jesus warned His disciples with regard to this opposition. He said to them: "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Why didn't the world love the Prophets and Apostles in their day and generation? Why does the whole sectarian world rise up against Prophets and Apostles in this day and age of the world? Simply because in former ages they rebuked sin, and in this age they do the same. They have been plain-spoken men. They have gone forth and declared the word of God as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost.

[JD 24:241, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

Now, with regard to the day and age in which we live. The Saints are acquainted with our history as a people. They have a testimony to bear that the world knows not of. A man must become acquainted with the Lord, acquainted with the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and receive them before he is qualified to understand the work of God, or the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. We read of a man named Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night. Said he: "We know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto Him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of the water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." This is the principle that has been connected with the Gospel of Jesus Christ in every dispensation of the world.



As an organization, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been in existence now for 53 years. It was organized in the first place with six members on the 6th day of April, 1830 – organized by a Prophet of God, a man raised up by commandment of God, by inspiration, by revelation, and by the administration of angels. Every step that he took was taken by commandment and revelation. He was given to understand by the angels of God who administered to him that there had been a falling away from the ancient order of things, and that now the full set time had come when the God of heaven would again establish His kingdom on the earth and call forth His Church out of the wilderness of darkness and error and establish it upon the foundation of the ancient Apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone.

JD 24:241 – p.242, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883

Now, any man acquainted with the Scriptures can clearly understand that there is but one true Gospel. There never was but one Gospel. Whenever that Gospel has been upon the earth it has been the same in every dispensation. The ordinances of the Gospel have never been changed from the days of Adam to the present time, and never will be to the end of time. While there were many sects and parties in existence in the early times, Jesus gave his disciples to understand that there was but one Gospel. He told them what it was. He declared unto them its ordinances. He commissioned them to preach the Gospel to every creature. In the first place they were to preach faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; next, repentance of sins; next, baptism for the remission of sins. Baptism was an ordinance taught by the Savior himself. We find, too, that He obeyed this ordinance, being baptized in the river Jordan by John the Baptist. Why? To fulfill all righteousness. It was a righteous law, and it was a type of baptism to be followed by the whole human family. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Such was the declaration of the Savior to the twelve Apostles. People were to be "buried with him by baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." What next? Men bearing the Melchizedek Priesthood – Apostles and Elders – had the authority to lay hands upon baptized believers for the reception of the Holy Ghost, which they received and which led them to prophesy of the things of the kingdom of God; and the signs followed those that believed. These were the first principles of the Gospel. And Paul the Apostle, makes this declaration: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." He repeats this, and goes on to tell us what the Gospel is, and what the Church of Christ is, and what it always has been. In the Church were Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers, Evangelists, etc., and these were "for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." The Lord never had – and never will have to the end of time – a Church on the earth without Prophets, Apostles, and inspired men. Whenever the Lord had a people on the earth that He acknowledged as such, that people were led by revelation. No man can find anything contrary to this. When the Gospel was given to the Jews, all the gifts and graces and powers thereof, accompanied it. It was accompanied by the Eternal Priesthood – which is after the order of the Son of God, without which no man can administer in the ordinances of life and salvation. The Savior was a Jew himself. He came to His own father's house, but they rejected him and put him to death. The Gospel was then taken from the Jews and carried to the Gentiles. Paul warned the Gentiles to take heed lest they too fell into unbelief. But the Gospel was delivered to them with all its blessings and powers, and remained with them as long as there was a man upon the earth that had the power to administer in its ordinances.

JD 24:242 – p.243, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883

Now, have the Gentiles had that church and kingdom of God in their midst since the ancient Apostles were put to death? I think not. At the present time there are some six hundred three score and six different religions – different roads to heaven and to hell – in the world; but none of these bear much resemblance to the Gospel as taught by Jesus Christ and His Apostles. The whole Christian world to-day rises up against these Latter-day Saints because they profess to believe in revelation, in Prophets and Apostles. This has been the

case ever since the organization of this Church. Do we teach anything that is contrary to the laws of God? We do not. Do we believe anything that is contrary to the Gospel as taught in the days of the Apostles? We do not. "But," says one, "how did you come by this Gospel?" We came by it through the administration of an angel from God. John the Revelator, in speaking of the last day – the opening of the seals – the blowing of the trumpets – and all that should transpire before the second coming of the Son of Man – said he saw (among other things) "another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come." When the angel of God delivered this message to Joseph Smith he told him the heavens were full of judgments; that the Lord Almighty had set his hand to establish the kingdom that Daniel saw and prophesied about, as recorded in the second chapter of Daniel; and that the Gospel had to be preached to all nations under heaven as a witness to them before the end should come, and that, too, in fulfillment of the revelation of God, as given here in the Old and New Testaments. Joseph Smith never attempted to organize this Church until he received commandment so to do from God. He never attempted to baptize a man until he received the Aaronic Priesthood under the hands of John the Baptist (who was beheaded for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus). He never attempted to officiate in any of the ordinances of the Gospel until he received the Apostleship under the hands of Peter, James and John. These men appeared to him. They laid their hands upon his head and sealed the Apostleship upon him with all the power thereof. And these angels told Joseph Smith to go forth himself and to call upon other men to go forth unto the world and preach the Gospel as taught by Jesus Christ and the Apostles, and the Lord would back up their testimony; that when they laid hands upon those who had been baptized for the remission of sins, and who had received their testimony, they should receive the Holy Ghost. This was the proclamation to Joseph Smith 53 years ago.

[JD 24:243 – p.244, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

Now, I want to ask this assembly, strangers and Latter-day Saints alike, what position the Elders of Israel would have been in when they went forth and made this promise to the inhabitants of the earth – the promise that if they would receive of our testimony, repent of their sins and be baptized for a remission of them, and have hands laid upon them, they should receive the Holy Ghost – I want to ask, gentlemen and ladies, how long those Elders would have taught this principle in the nations of the earth if God Almighty had not backed up their testimony? How long would it have been, in the absence of this backing, until they would have been found out to be deceivers? Not a great while. Is there another set of men on the face of the earth to-day, that dare to go forth and make that proclamation to the world? No; because unless they were called of God to make it, He would not back up their testimony, and it would be known who they were. We have labored upon this principle for 50 years. You cast your eyes and you see a tabernacle in the desert; you see a city; and you may travel for a thousand miles and you will find this Territory filled with cities, towns, and villages. By what power have these things been accomplished? I came here on the 24th of July, 1847, with a little handful of men as pioneers. What did we find? A barren desert, as barren as the desert Sahara. No mark of the white man here. No outward sign that a white man could live here. How has this desert been made to blossom as the rose? Why this body of people from almost every nation? I will tell you. We carried the Gospel to Europe, the Islands of the sea, and the different nations of the earth; we offered them the Gospel, and a class of men and women – two of a family, and sometimes a dozen of a city – received our testimony, and when we laid hands upon them they received the Holy Ghost. That Holy Ghost has remained with them: it has instructed them and inspired their hearts, and to-day you see Utah as it is. If the Lord Almighty had not backed up the testimony of the Elders of Israel as He has done, Utah to-day would have been as when we found it 36 years ago.

[JD 24:244, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

This is the condition of the Latter-day Saints. Joseph Smith received these keys, this Priesthood, this power, this Gospel by the administration of angels from God, and this testimony is true. He also received a record called the Book of Mormon, which is a record of the ancient inhabitants of this continent. That record is true; as also the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, a code of revelations given through the Prophet Joseph Smith. These revelations are true and faithful, and they are being fulfilled as fast as time will admit. I bear my

testimony of these things to the world, for I know they are true.

[JD 24:244, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

I traveled thousands of miles with Joseph Smith. I knew his spirit. Many of the revelations given through him have been fulfilled. I myself wrote the revelation that was given through him concerning the war that would take place in this country between the north and south. That revelation was published to the world for twenty years before the war. It broke out just as predicted, and I refer to it because it is one of the revelations that is fulfilled. To-day we are still preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Lord Almighty has set His hand to establish His Church and kingdom on the earth, to build up Zion in the mountains of Israel.

[JD 24:244 – p.245, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

Now with regard to the Priesthood. We have been found fault with sometimes because we profess to have the Priesthood. Let me say to this congregation that our Heavenly Father performs all His works – the creation of worlds, the redemption of worlds – by the power of the Eternal Priesthood. And no man on the earth, from the days of Father Adam to the present time, has ever had power to administer in any of the ordinances of life and salvation only by the power of the Holy Priesthood. You will find this to be the case in the whole history of the Prophets of God. When Aaron was given the Priesthood he was called by revelation. "No man taketh this honor unto himself but he that is called of God as was Aaron." Jesus Christ himself had to be called of God. He was a High Priest. He left the Priesthood on the earth with his Apostles. They officiated in it until they were put to death. It is by that power that we administer in this day and generation. The Church and kingdom of God has continued to grow from its first organization. It is true we have been called to pass through many afflictions in our day and time. Nevertheless, the Lord has preserved His people, and they still live here in the valleys of the mountains.

[JD 24:245, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

We have an anxiety to honor God and keep His commandments, and to honor our country and the Constitution of our Government. That Constitution we believe was given by revelation, and whatever laws are passed agreeable to it we desire to honor. It guarantees to all men the right to enjoy their religion, to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience.

[JD 24:245 – p.246, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

"But," says one, "I would like to know how many wives you have. That is a matter you have not said anything about." Well, now, I will tell you a little anecdote in connection with Sidney Rigdon. The circumstance took place a great many years ago, in Kirtland. A young Elder just come in met President Rigdon on the street one day in the vicinity of the Temple. Said the young man: "President Rigdon, will you please tell me the meaning of the horns of the beast John saw?" President Rigdon, drawing himself up, looked at the young man, and replied: "My dear brother, there is a great deal between you and the beast that John saw," and walked away. Well, I sometimes think it is so with this generation. There is a great deal between the people of this generation and the plurality of wives. There are a great many principles that God has revealed in these last days that it is necessary for us to understand before we come to that principle. But as I have brought the subject up I will say a few words upon it. The Lord has revealed to us that no kingdom, no king, no prince, no president, no ordinance of marriage, no ordinance performed by any man from the days of father Adam, will have any power or force after death, except those ordinances are performed by men holding the Eternal Priesthood. Is there a king, is there a prince, is there a queen, – will either when they pass the other side of the veil, find a throne there? Would the Czar of Russia, who was assassinated by the hands of the ungodly not long ago, when he went into the Spirit world find a throne there? No. Why? Because the kingdom of the Czar of Russia belonged to time. When he went into the Spirit world that was the end of his kingdom and power. His kingdom had not been sealed upon his head by any man having the power and authority of the Eternal Priesthood. So in regard to all kingdoms and thrones. You may take Her Majesty Queen Victoria – who has

reigned a long time, and who is perhaps as good a sovereign as has reigned since the days of William the Conqueror. When she passes behind the veil she will find her kingdom at an end, because it was not sealed upon her head for time and eternity by any man having the authority of the Holy Priesthood. So I will say to our friends here – the strangers within our gates – that any man that marries a wife by any other authority than the authority of the Holy Priesthood is simply married for time, "or until death do you part." When you go into the Spirit world you have no claim on your wife and children. The ordinance of having them sealed to you by one having the authority of the Holy Priesthood must be attended to in this world. Father Abraham obeyed the law of the patriarchal order of marriage. His wives were sealed to him for time and all eternity, and so were the wives of all the Patriarchs and Prophets that obeyed that law.

[JD 24:246, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

I desire to testify as an individual and as a Latter-day Saint that I know that God has revealed this law unto this people. I know that if we had not obeyed that law we should have been damned; the judgments of God would have rested upon us; the kingdom of God would have stopped right where we were when God revealed that law unto us. Why have we obeyed it? I obeyed it because I want my wife or wives with me after death; I want my wives and children with me in the morning of the resurrection; I want my wives and children organized in the family organization, that I may dwell with them and they with me, throughout all eternity, as well as with Father Abraham and other men who honored and obeyed that law. This is the position we occupy. We have obeyed the law because God has commanded us, and I bear record of its truth; and so far as I am concerned, if I can have my wives and children with me in the morning of the resurrection, so that I can dwell with them and with those Patriarchs and Prophets who obeyed that law, it will amply repay me for the trials and tribulations I may have had to pass through in the course of my life here upon the earth. Many men suppose that we have obeyed that law to gratify the lusts of the flesh. Bless your soul, if that had been our object, we might have followed the example of the people of the Christian world – committed whoredom and adultery – without bringing upon ourselves the cares, pains, and penalties that we have to bear by obeying this law. But let me tell you that the Latter-day Saints look upon adultery as one of the greatest crimes any man can commit in this world. It is next to murder. No, this people have not obeyed that law because of a desire to gratify the lusts of the flesh; they have observed it in obedience to the command of God, and because it will have power and effect after death.

[JD 24:246, Wilford Woodruff, July 20, 1883](#)

I pray God to pour out His Holy Spirit upon us, that our ears may be open to hear and our hearts to understand the things of the kingdom of God, which is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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Joseph F. Smith, August 19, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH,

Delivered in Paris, Idaho, Sunday Morning, August 19, 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

THE HATRED OF THE WORLD TOWARDS THE PEOPLE OF GOD – THEIR ACCUSATIONS  
AGAINST THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS – THE TRUTHFULNESS OF THE ACCUSATIONS

REFUTED – THE LATTER–DAY SAINTS WILL COMPARE FAVORABLY WITH ANY OTHER  
PEOPLE

ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH – WHY, THEN, ARE THEY PROSCRIBED? – BECAUSE THE  
WORLD HATE THEM – PERSECUTION THE LOT OF THE SAINTS – PAST PERSECUTIONS AND  
THEIR RESULT – THE "MORMON PROBLEM" STILL UNSOLVED, AND MORE DIFFICULT OF  
SOLUTION THAN EVER – LET THE SAINTS LIVE THEIR RELIGION AND THE LORD WILL  
BRING THEM OFF TRIUMPHANT.

[JD 24:247, Joseph F. Smith, August 19, 1883](#)

I have been extremely interested this morning in listening to the very excellent remarks of Brother Cannon. I feel that in answer to the desires and prayers of the congregation the Lord has blessed Brother Cannon in his remarks, and that through him He has made plain many very important truths and principles, upon which it will be well for the congregation to reflect and to treasure up in their hearts.

[JD 24:247 – p.248, Joseph F. Smith, August 19, 1883](#)

My mind was led to reflect, while Brother Cannon was speaking upon the inconsistency, harshness and unreasonableness of the world in their attitude towards us as a people, and upon the manner in which they have sought to deal with what they term "the Mormon Question." The words of the Savior in relation to the hatred of the world towards the people of God flashed through my mind: "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore, the world hateth you." Jesus and His disciples were every where spoken against. Everybody, almost, reviled them. When Jesus cast out devils, it was said to have been done by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of devils; that He healed the sick by the same power; that He restored the sight of the blind by the same power; and all the works of mercy and charity which He performed were attributed to the power of Satan. It is very much the same in this dispensation. No matter how good you may be – you who profess to be Latter–day Saints – no matter how virtuous you may be, you are set down by the world as adulterers. No matter how honest you may be, you are called dishonest. No matter how innocent you may be of all the crimes that are known, the sectarian world declare you are unfit to live because of your corruptions and abominations. No matter how charitable you may be, they claim that you lack the elements of charity and of mercy. Consequently they think it behooves them, and "the powers that be," to move against you for your destruction. It was for this reason that the Congress of the United States, a little while ago, was compelled, by an influence and a power that it could not, or dare not resist, to pass a most unconstitutional, a most unjust and wicked act for the purpose of depriving an innocent and unoffending people of their legitimate rights – rights that belong to them under the constitution of our country.

[JD 24:248, Joseph F. Smith, August 19, 1883](#)

Have we sought to injure anybody? Have we sought to deprive any people of their rights? Have we sought to tear down or to destroy any part of the earth? Are the vile charges that are made against us true? No, they are not. You know they are not. There is not a man or a woman under the sound of my voice this morning but know as they know they live, that the charges that are made against the Latter–day Saints are false. They say that we have been, in years past, in the habit of committing murder! We are charged with having murdered strangers that came amongst us! We are charged with having murdered apostate Mormons because they had apostatized from us! We are charged with oppressing the people, and with keeping them under tyranny! And those who make these charges claim that it is because of their influence in Utah – the influence of the world – of the public press – the presence in our midst of officers of the law who have been sent by the President of

the United States to rule over us; that this murderous propensity, and this power for evil that has heretofore been exhibited by the Latter-day Saints, have been checked!

JD 24:248 – p.249, Joseph F. Smith, August 19, 1883

Now, who is there that is acquainted with the history of Utah, or with the history of this people, but know that all these things that have been villainously charged against this people are libellous and as false as hell. Who does not know that such a reign of terror never did exist in Utah or among this people anywhere? I came to Utah in 1848; I have been a resident among this people from my childhood; I have been cognizant of nearly everything that has transpired of a public character among the Latter-day Saints for the last 30 years, and I am a witness and can and do bear my testimony that all these charges are false, and that the people to-day are a fair example of what they have always been from the beginning. Who of you are murderers? Who of you, professing to be Latter-day Saints, are thieves and robbers? Who of you, professing the same thing, are adulterers and whoremongers? Who of you, professing to be Latter-day Saints, curse and swear and blaspheme the name of God? Who of you would oppress your neighbor or would rob him of his rights? Who of you, professing to be Latter-day Saints, would not be ready to protect the rights and to maintain the liberties of the stranger within our gates as you would to protect your own rights or those of your neighbor? Is not this the case to-day? Yes. Was it ever different to this? Was there ever a different condition of things existed in the midst of this people? You very well know that there never was. Men who have done wrong in times past have been held accountable for their acts to the law by the officers of the law. Men who to-day are ungovernable and commit crimes are amenable to the law and must answer for their crimes. This has always been the case. The Gospel net has gathered of every kind. But is a whole community to be held responsible for individuals whose propensities lead them to commit crimes? If we are to be judged upon that principle, who will be exempt from the same judgment? If God should judge the world in this manner He would execute the whole world – none would be exempt. I think as a community or as communities, we will compare favorably with any on the face of the earth. I think there will be found far less crime among the Latter-day Saints than may be found in other communities of like numbers anywhere else. I believe there is less crime, less wickedness, less drunkenness, and fewer offences of any kind among the Latter-day Saints than can be found among any other people of equal numbers in the world. And in saying this I am not boasting of the Latter-day Saints; for, surely, if we are Latter-day Saints, crime and wickedness should have no part in us. No man professing to be a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints should be guilty of any thing that would cause the blush of shame to appear in the face. On the contrary we ought to live above suspicion; we ought to live free from crime, free from wickedness and sin of every description. Therefore, to say that the Latter-day Saints are the best people I know of in the world is not saying any thing more than should be said and can be said honestly and truthfully. We ought not to be guilty of sin. The teachings of the servants of God have been toward righteousness, honesty and virtue, and towards every thing that is calculated to elevate and ennoble mankind. This has been the burden of the teaching of the servants of God from the day that the Church was organized until the present time; and if the Latter-day Saints are not the best people upon the earth, it is because they have not hearkened to the counsel that has been given them.

JD 24:249 – p.250, Joseph F. Smith, August 19, 1883

Why, then, should we be proscribed? Why, then, should the people of the world malign us and seek to blacken our names and our characters? Why should they seek to bring persecution and evil upon us? The answer is to be found in the words of the Savior. "I have chosen you out of the world. And therefore the world hate you." So long as you maintain the principles of the Gospel; so long as you defend and practice the principles of virtue, of truth and of righteousness; so long as you stand by the doctrines of Christ, which have been revealed through Joseph the Prophet, through Brigham Young, the Prophet, and through President Taylor and the oracles of God; so long the world will be arrayed against you, so long they will hate you and will seek to bring evil upon you unless they repent. There is no question about it. Many people will not be convinced. Brother Cannon has alluded to people who visit us. They may be favorably impressed upon some points; but still they retain in their hearts a prejudice they have received concerning us, and they carry it away with them notwithstanding what they see. This is according to what Jesus said. They have eyes, but they see not; they

have ears, but they hear not; they have hearts but they do not understand. It is also said that "there are none so deaf as those who will not hear, and none so blind as those who will not see." Many of those who visit Utah, come filled with such an amount of prejudice that they will not allow their senses to be convinced of the truth. Hence they go away as prejudiced as when they came. Nevertheless, when men come with their minds divested of prejudice, who can see and are disposed to see, and are liberal-minded enough to look at things in their true light, they do in a measure get correct views and ideas in relation to us. A few such men have come to Utah, and gone away enlightened, and have told the truth to the world. But notwithstanding they tell the truth they are generally disbelieved as we are when we tell it. We would naturally suppose that a man like Judge Black, who on legal matters was an authority in the world, would be believed; but the moment that man, with all his talent and prestige, stood up in the halls of Congress and undertook to reason upon the constitutional rights of the people called the Latter-day Saints, he was denounced and the soundness of his conclusions questioned by judges, lawyers and statesmen. He was held up to ridicule because he dared to discourse upon the constitutional rights of the people called Latter-day Saints. And it has been so with everybody else that has dared to speak a word in favor of the people of God having their rights. It was so with those who dared to speak in favor of the Son of God and His disciples. Those who dared to do so were considered unworthy of being believed on oath; their testimony could not be received; they were partial. And it has become so in relation to this people. Let any man lift up his voice in the defense of the people of God, and he will at once be denounced by a certain influential class and his influence among that class of people who seem bent upon persecuting the Latter-day Saints will wane, no matter how much they may have honored his counsels prior to that.

[JD 24:250 – p.251, Joseph F. Smith, August 19, 1883](#)

Will this continue to be the case? Yes, more and more; for as we increase in union, in faith, intelligence, and in political and religious influence, the hatred of the wicked will increase against us. Then will the heathen rage and the wicked imagine a vain thing; and their efforts to destroy us will proportionately increase. But will they succeed? Will they accomplish their desires? Just in proportion as they have done it hitherto, and no more. When they drove the Latter-day Saints out of Missouri, and had the Prophet and his companions confined in Liberty Jail, the world rejoiced in the belief that the backbone of "Mormonism" was broken. But they had reckoned without their host. They had not based their calculations upon the facts. The sequel proved that they had committed a grand mistake. Notwithstanding that General Clark, on the square in Far West, said to Joseph and his companions, that their doom was sealed and their die was cast, they were reckoning without their host. They had not calculated upon the power of God in these matters. They simply thought they had Joseph Smith in their power, and that by destroying him they would destroy "Mormonism." But the Lord delivered him from his enemies. And from Missouri he came to Illinois. "Mormonism" – as it is called in the world – from being a village grew into a city – the City of Nauvoo, one of the most beautiful cities in the west of America. We became possessed of chartered rights, and wielded an influence which controlled the county of Hancock, in the State of Illinois, and which materially affected the political status of other counties surrounding. We grew from a handful to an armful, and then the rage of the enemy was again stirred up until they finally succeeded in taking the lives of the servants of God, Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum. At this they rejoiced and congratulated each other, and concluded that they had done a good thing. "Mormonism" would now cease to trouble the world? But again they had reckoned without their host. Again they had based their calculations upon false premises. They had not considered the power connected with this work. They had not contemplated the nature of the power of God. From Nauvoo we were thrust out into the wilderness, but we sought out and located in Utah by the guidance of the Almighty. As Brother George A. Smith used to say, "We came willingly because we were obliged to." We had no other place to go to. But so far as accomplishing the object they had in view – the destruction of "Mormonism" – we know that they failed. From a city we have grown to a Territory in the United States, and we have been able to honestly control the Territorial government despite the desires, the cunning, the craftiness, and all the fraudulent efforts of our enemies.

[JD 24:251, Joseph F. Smith, August 19, 1883](#)

Now, if it was difficult for the world to deal with the question of "Mormonism" in 1838, it was still more difficult for them to deal with it in 1844. If it was difficult for them to deal with and handle this "Mormon Question," as they call it, in 1846, when the people were made wandering outcasts upon the desert; I say, if it was a difficult thing for the Government of the United States and for the enemies of this people to deal with the "Mormon Question" then, is it not a far more difficult question for them to deal with to-day? As they turn over the wall, lo! it becomes higher and broader than it was before. As they kick the mustard plant? lo! the seed is scattered, and it takes root and springs forth and increases on every hand. Every effort of our enemies has utterly failed. Let them continue their efforts. Let them do their worst. God Almighty is at the helm, and if they can succeed in turning over the wall again they will find that it has grown larger since they last tipped it over. But they do not want us to grow in political power. They do not want us to be, religiously or otherwise, a separate and distinct people from the rest of the world. They want us to become identified and mixed up with the rest of the world, to become like them, thereby thwarting the purposes of God. They hate our union; but they apparently do not sense that persecution has a tendency only to make us more united.

JD 24:251 – p.252, Joseph F. Smith, August 19, 1883

Well, it is for us to live our religion. Let us attend to our duties as Latter-day Saints. Let us continue to be humble and faithful before God. And if the time should ever come when the Lord will see fit to allow our enemies to drive us from our present homes, the result will be similar to what it was when they drove us out of Nauvoo. They will drive us from the Territory of Utah into a half a dozen of States, and we may possibly take possession of them all. They won't believe me, and they won't believe the Elders of the Church when they tell them these things plainly. They won't believe us any more than they would believe Joseph Smith in his day, or Brigham Young in his day. But what these inspired men said is coming to pass. Every word that they uttered in relation to the building up of Zion, and to the progress of the kingdom of God upon the earth will be fulfilled, and not one jot or tittle will fail. You and I as individuals may fail, but the work of God cannot fail. It is His work. He hath decreed its consummation, and no power on earth or in hell can alter the decree. The work is marching forward, and if we do not keep pace with it, we must eventually be left behind. Better far for us to keep up with the rank and file, and to walk shoulder to shoulder with the authorities of the Church; with those who have the spirit of the Gospel in their hearts; with those in whose bones burn the fire of truth and the testimony of Jesus Christ, who are continually exhorting the people to be diligent in keeping the commandments of God. We should do what is right. We should be virtuous, honorable and charitable, and we should be liberal in our hearts to all mankind. We can afford to be liberal. We have received that which pertains to eternal growth, to eternal increase, to eternal happiness; we have received that which pertains to dominion, and power, and glory and to thrones and principalities. Freely we have received, and freely we can afford to give; for in giving we do not diminish our own store. We can afford, therefore, to exclaim, (in relation to our enemies) "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." We can afford to have sympathy for them, to beseech God in the name of Jesus, to have mercy upon them, for they know not the consequences of their acts. It is for us to work righteousness; for, as President Young remarked in the Temple at St. George, in 1877, the more righteous we are, the more united we are; the more diligent we are in keeping the commandments of God, the less will be the power of our enemies; their power will diminish in proportion to our faithfulness. Yet our enemies will rage and their anger will increase against the work of the Lord; and I presume it is a true saying, that "whom the gods would destroy they first make mad." The heathen – the so-called Christian nations – will become mad with rage against the Latter-day Saints; and thus the world will go on until they are ripened for destruction. We can afford to be calm and patient and await God's deliverance; for we know that He is our friend; that He is on the side of the righteous; and that he will bring them off triumphant if they continue faithful, which may the Lord grant in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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George Q. Cannon, August 19, 1883



DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEO. Q. CANNON,

Delivered in Paris, Bear Lake County, Idaho,

Sunday Morning, August 19, 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

THE SPIRIT OF GOD NECESSARY FOR OUR GUIDANCE – FAILURE OF THE MEASURES OUR ENEMIES HAVE ADOPTED AGAINST US – THE OBJECT OF THE EDMUNDS LAW – WHY ALL SUCH LAWS ARE FAILURES – THEY ARE FOUNDED UPON FALSEHOOD AND BRING DISAPPOINTMENT TO THEIR FRAMERS – THE EFFORTS OF OUR ENEMIES PROVE THE GROWTH OF THIS WORK – NECESSARY TO PASS THROUGH TRIALS – GOD WILL ALWAYS DELIVER HIS PEOPLE – A KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORK OF GOD IS BEING DISSEMINATED – TWO INFLUENCES AT WORK – MANY OF THE DOCTRINES TAUGHT BY JOSEPH SMITH NOW BECOMING POPULAR.

[JD 24:253 – p.254, George Q. Cannon, August 19, 1883](#)

In arising to address you this morning, my brethren and sisters, I trust we shall have the presence and assistance of the Spirit of God, to lead our minds to those subjects that may be most appropriate to you and to your circumstances. It is very desirable that we should have that Spirit to be with us, desirable both for the speaker and for the hearers, that our meeting may be mutually profitable. Our condition as a people is such that we cannot make the progress that is designed by God for us, unless we have His Spirit given unto us. We are assailed from many quarters. We have so much to contend with, that it requires the wisdom of God to direct us, and it requires His Holy Spirit constantly to be with us to enable us to perform our part in this great work. Others may get along after their fashion without direct revelation from God, but we cannot do so. It would be impossible to build up this work, and to guard ourselves against the attacks of our enemies and perform the labors that devolve upon us, unless God should be with us and manifest His power and make known His mind and His will unto us. This far we have been thus guided through all the difficulties that have arisen. Through the aid which God has rendered we have been prepared for them, and we have been extricated from them, and so it will be from this time forth, if we live as we should do and avail ourselves of the promises which He has made. I am always filled with amazement when I contemplate the wonderful deliverances which God has wrought out for us. To see us as we are to-day, dwelling in peace, and free from molestation, enjoying liberty, notwithstanding all that has been done against us with a design to disturb and break us up, is to me marvelous. I think that our whole career, in fact, is marvelous; but if there be anything connected with our present position that calls forth more wonder than any other, it is the fact that we are to-day surrounded by such peaceful circumstances.

[JD 24:254 – p.255, George Q. Cannon, August 19, 1883](#)

Our enemies have felt serenely confident that the measures they had adopted against us would result in the overthrow of this system called "Mormonism." In a conversation which I had with Senator Edmunds, of about two hours duration, we went over this whole subject – I arguing from my standpoint and he from his – and he

seemed to be very confident that the bill which he had introduced, which afterwards became law, would be effective in accomplishing the desired end. It was, as he told me, to be one of a series of measures looking to the final overthrow of our system. It was supposed by him and by others that if they could succeed in having a law enacted which would disfranchise men who were living in plural marriage, and exclude them from office, the effect would be such as to make them so unpopular that they would lose their influence and be degraded in the eyes of the most of the "Mormon" people. It was anticipated that there were a great many "Mormons" who were secretly opposed to the domination of the polygamists, as they were called, and who would breathe more freely if their power should be taken away from them, and who would vote, as they would say, more independently, and probably unite with the apostates and the gentiles, and by that means overthrow the existing rule in the Territory. Now, I am satisfied beyond any doubt that it was anticipated that by the combination of these elements – the disaffected "Mormons," the apostates and the gentiles – the supremacy of this country – that is, of Utah particularly, and of course the influence would extend into your Territory – that by the combination of these elements the supremacy of the Territory would be wrested from the control of those who had had it in their hands, and that "Mormonism" would be dealt a deadly blow, and the beginning of the great work of destroying this organization would be effected. Now, you can imagine how great the disappointment has been at the results. It was plain to me – and I guess it was to most of our brethren who reflected upon this subject – that the measure would be ineffectual. I took the liberty of telling the advocates of the Edmunds Bill so, but they did not believe what I said. They felt that they understood it better than I did, and to-day, the men who were the most in favor – that is, in Salt Lake City – of the enactment of the Edmunds law, are the men who are the most dissatisfied with the results which have been achieved by its passage; illustrating most perfectly the oft repeated statement on our part, that our enemies can do nothing against the work of God, but that every thing they do will contribute to its advancement and success. We have said this repeatedly. The experience of 53 years has proved to us that this is the universal result of measures concocted for the destruction or overthrow of this work. God has stated it, and has made promises concerning it, and this incident is but another illustration of the perfect truth of the promises of God concerning His work. Instead of being to-day in bondage, we are as free as we ever have been. Instead of our enemies having control of our country, we still retain control of it. Now, what new measures will be adopted remains to be seen. Our enemies are tireless in their efforts. They will not give up this contest, they will not vacate the field, they will not consent to our living in peace, but they will continue their efforts, they will continue their attacks upon us. There is this advantage, however, that we always have – we have always had it in the past, we shall have it doubtless in the future – that the lies that are told concerning us are believed by our enemies, and accepting these as true, they frame their measures against us upon that basis; and that being the fact they always fail, because they do not have a true conception of the actual condition of affairs. Hence, if there were no other cause, that of itself is sufficient to foil them in their expectations. They are deceived concerning us by the many falsehoods that are told; but, as I say, they accept these as true and frame their measures upon these misconceptions and the result is always disappointment, and it always will be.

JD 24:255 – p.256 – p.257, George Q. Cannon, August 19, 1883

There is this that I am thankful for, connected with this whole affair. There was a time when the efforts of those who were arrayed against the work of God, were confined to a limited circle or sphere. In the beginning it was a neighborhood, and gradually extended until townships took the matter in hand, and from townships it extended to counties, and from counties to States, and we were told as long ago as I can recollect, and it has been declared from the beginning that it would be the case, that as this work grew, so opposition should grow against it, enlarging its circle, extending its influence in proportion to the work of God, until, we were told, States would array themselves against this work. We have seen that fulfilled. We came here, not because the United States had taken steps against us, but because Illinois and Missouri had expelled us from their borders, and we could secure no redress for the wrongs that had been inflicted upon us. But we were told that after a while the United States itself should oppose the work of God, and in a national capacity enact measures against it, and that then it would not be confined to that alone, but that all the nations of the earth, sooner or later, would array themselves against the work of God. I am thankful that there is this testimony given unto us concerning the growth of this work. It is no longer a county, it is no longer a State, but it assumes now national proportions. The nation itself, under the influence of bad men, of unwise legislators, under the

pressure of priestcraft which is brought to bear from all quarters of the land upon the Congress of the United States – in consequence of this influence we have now the Edmunds law following the Poland law, and it following the law of 1862, and probably to be followed by other measures of an equally proscriptive character, if the majority in Congress can be secured to pass such laws. God, however, will hold our enemies in check, and will restrain them, and will not suffer them to go beyond certain limits; so that we shall not be overwhelmed, but that we shall have the strength necessary to withstand the assaults that are made upon us or shall be made upon us. It is a wise dispensation of His providence that this should be the case, because if it were not so, with the power that is arrayed against us, we should be overwhelmed. God, however, tempers these matters according to our strength and ability to bear them or to withstand them, and as we grow, so grows the opposition; as we gain strength, so the opposition to us gains strength; as we gain experience and knowledge, we become more capable and achieve a higher position, and we will continue to do so until Zion will be the head, just as the prophets have predicted. But it is necessary that we should pass through this school of experience to test us, to try us, to give unto us the necessary confidence in ourselves as well as in our God and in His unfailing promises. Had we been called in the beginning to pass through such ordeals as we have had of late, it is doubtful if we could have endured them, unless God had endowed us with an extraordinary amount of His power. But they have come upon us gradually. We have met one difficulty after another, one assault after another, until we have gradually acquired confidence in our ability to withstand these assaults and to meet them as well as confidence in our God. Our faith has been increased, and through the increase of faith we have been enabled to overcome, and thus it will be unto the end. There will be times, as there have been, when it will seem as though there is no possible way of escape, when it will seem as though everything is blocked up before us, and as though we are about to be swallowed up or destroyed; and the faith of the people will be tested in this manner, doubtless, many times in the future, as it has been many times in the past; but when it will seem the darkest, when the clouds will seem the most impenetrable, when there will be not a ray to illumine the pathway of the Saints of God, then God will be near to us to deliver us, and at the very darkest hour He will dispel the clouds and provide a way of escape that will excite our wonder, our admiration and our praise. It was so last year – I mean 1882, before the passage of the Edmunds law and afterwards. It seemed as though the spirits of evil had poured out of hell and they had come upon the earth and were operating against the work of God. In all my experience I had never met a stronger feeling than prevailed. It seemed as though the whole nation was aroused from the center to the extremities. Almost every church in the land, every priest and every religious organization, was stirred up, banded together and their influence combined against the work of God to destroy it. Congress was being pushed forward by a power which the Members could not resist, and it seemed as though there would be no stopping place short of our destruction. I expect you felt it here as the Saints felt it in Utah, and as I felt it in Washington. The papers, as you will remember, were full of threats against us. It seemed as though a crisis had arrived in our affairs. It seemed as though there was no way of escape. But God still reigned. He comforted the hearts of His servants, and I was filled with thanksgiving to see the spirit which rested upon President Taylor and the brethren at home. When I received their letters I saw that notwithstanding the darkness of the hour and the threats of our enemies, their hearts were undismayed, and their confidence in God as unflinching as ever. God was with His people. He had not forgotten His promises. And it seemed as though by one blow or one move, the whole of this opposition was dissipated. It fell to the ground, the whole fabric of it, and, like a baseless vision of the night, it melted away and the sunshine came out; the sun, as glorious as ever, shone down upon us, and every cloud was removed, apparently, from the heavens above, and our pathway was bright and clear without obstruction, and it has been so until the present time.

[JD 24:257, George Q. Cannon, August 19, 1883](#)

Will there be times again of this character? Yes, undoubtedly. It is necessary in the providences of our God, concerning this work, that this should be the case, in order that the faith of the Latter-day Saints may be tested, and that they may be led to put their trust in God, who alone can save us in such hours of extremity and trial. We need not expect that it will always be sunshine; we need not expect that the heavens will always be free from clouds, or that our pathway will never be obstructed or darkened. On the contrary, we shall have these things to contend with, in order that we may, by contending with them in the faith and power of God, obtain knowledge concerning His work and His providences.

In the meantime the knowledge of this work is being disseminated. With it, however, there goes forth a spirit of falsehood. It would seem as though, with the means of advertising we now have, and with the opportunities that are presented to men to visit us, a better understanding concerning us would be reached by thinking men. Undoubtedly this is the case to a certain extent. But my observation tells me that with the increase of information there is also a proportionate increase of misrepresentation and falsehood. The adversary is more industrious, if possible, in beclouding the minds of the children of men concerning us and concerning this work and the objects we have in view than he ever was. We become more advertised, it is true; but while we are advertised it is not always in the direction of removing error and giving correct ideas concerning us. It is a strange fact that many people who visit Salt Lake City, and visit our Territory, notwithstanding that which they see, notwithstanding all that is before them, are deceived respecting us; they do not get a correct idea concerning our motives nor the objects we have in view, nor the character of our organization. They look at us through spectacles that distort us. You have seen, probably, glasses that change the appearance of things. It is so with their views. They cannot look at these things as we look at them. From such individuals the power of correct observation seems to be taken away by the power of darkness and the effect of falsehood upon their minds. This is a remarkable fact. I have been struck with it very much of late. Many intelligent men and women visit us, and they mingle among us; but at the same time they have ideas in their minds concerning us which seem to deprive them of the power of judging of us correctly, and they go away convinced on some points, but still retain many of the old ideas that have been implanted in their minds by falsehood concerning us. Of course, there are many from whose minds prejudice is removed and whose feelings become friendly.

JD 24:257 – p.258, George Q. Cannon, August 19, 1883

We need not expect, however, that we can escape the power of prejudice; for the reason that there are two influences at work – the power of God and the power of Satan. Satan is as busy darkening the minds and beclouding the understandings of the children of men as he ever was, and the inhabitants of the earth having rejected the truth, being unwilling to receive the Gospel of the Son of God when it is presented to them, are left a prey to other influences and to the spirit of darkness; therefore, they are incapable of judging concerning the work of God. Will this continue to be the case? Undoubtedly it will. There will be no change in this respect. The work of God will be accomplished on the earth, it will roll forth, the predictions of the prophets will be fulfilled, and men will see their fulfillment. Yet, notwithstanding this, they will reject the testimony of the servants of God. It is very remarkable that this should be the case with the evidences there are, which are so plain and palpable and indisputable to us.

JD 24:258, George Q. Cannon, August 19, 1883

It was only a few days before I left home that some Members of Congress, with whom I was acquainted, came to the city. One very intelligent man and his wife were among them. I took them around, showed them our public buildings and other places of interest, and in conversation concerning the Temple, when I was showing them that structure, I explained to them to some extent its character and the objects for which it was being erected. I called their attention to the fact that while we had believed for forty years and upwards that there was a space between death and the resurrection, and that in that space there were opportunities for men and women to hear the Gospel of the Son of God, and to accept it, not, however, the purgatory of the Catholics – that while we had believed that for forty years and upwards, God having revealed it unto His servant Joseph Smith, the world was just beginning to entertain the same belief, and popular preachers were beginning to advocate the correctness of the idea or of the doctrine that there was a chance for repentance beyond the grave. These people with whom I conversed were intelligent, and they were of a religious turn of mind and familiar with religious affairs. They stated that they had heard such doctrines lately advocated. I then explained to them about the millions of the dead, of the pagans and others who had died in ignorance of the Gospel. "Now," said I, "how can you understand, upon any other principle than this, the justice of our God towards them? They have been dead for hundreds of years in entire ignorance of the name of Jesus, the only name given under heaven whereby man can be saved. Shall they be consigned to endless torment, because of

their lack of opportunity? Would that," I asked, "be consistent with our ideas of justice?"

JD 24:258, George Q. Cannon, August 19, 1883

They admitted that it would not.

JD 24:258 – p.259, George Q. Cannon, August 19, 1883

"Well," said I, "upwards of forty years ago, the Prophet Joseph Smith had revealed to him from God, this principle, that there were opportunities beyond the grave for men and women to learn the plan of salvation, and we are building temples for the benefit of these dead, as well as the living." I then explained to them the doctrine of the baptism for the dead – what Paul had said concerning it. To them it opened a new field of thought and reflection; and it is a remarkable fact that at the present time the religious world, the orthodox religious world, are beginning to entertain some of the views that Joseph Smith preached and advocated upwards of forty years ago, concerning these matters. There are popular ministers who do advocate the idea contained in the epistle of Peter, where he speaks about Jesus going and preaching to the spirits in prison, and they see nothing unreasonable in this doctrine; on the contrary, it comports with their ideas, and with the justice and mercy of our God. The world are gradually adopting many of the views that the Latter-day Saints have entertained. There are many doctrines that we have taught that were very unpopular in the beginning that they now receive. Why, there are Elders in this congregation who can well remember that it was a common belief, when they preached the Gospel to religious people, that the world was created out of nothing. That was a commonly received idea. Joseph Smith taught the eternal duration of matter. He taught the doctrine that matter was indestructible; that it never had a beginning; that it never could have an end; that it might undergo chemical changes, but that it was indestructible, and that the elements of which the earth is composed were eternal – never had a beginning and never would have an end. The whole religious world were shocked at such an idea, and so in regard to the time occupied in the creation of the earth. But Joseph taught the true principle connected with this. He said the days mentioned as occupied in the creation were not our days of twenty-four hours' length, but were periods of time. Now, that is a commonly received doctrine, although it was sneered at and rejected by religious men at the time it was taught by the Elders of this Church. And so it has gone on. I might enumerate a great many doctrines that God revealed, that the world has gradually adopted, which at some time they rejected, rejecting entirely the source whence they came, rejecting God as the author, and rejecting His Prophet as the medium through which these doctrines have been received and taught. It is only a day or two ago that I saw a book published by Josiah Quincy, a relative of John Quincy Adams, in which he relates an interview he had with the Prophet Joseph, at Nauvoo. He relates in that interview, that the Prophet Joseph stated to him his proposition for the emancipation of the slaves, and he (Quincy) declares that it was worthy the consideration of all Christian statesmen. Ralph Waldo Emerson – the philosopher of Concord – eleven years after this, not acknowledging that Joseph had made a similar proposition, threw out the same idea, but that was at a time, as Quincy says, when men's minds were stirred up on this question of slavery. "But," says he, "what shall be thought of the man who, eleven years previous, when no one was disturbed about the question, made such a proposition; and which he made not only to me verbally, but which he published and advocated?"

JD 24:259, George Q. Cannon, August 19, 1883

To my mind this is strong testimony concerning the wisdom that God had given to the Prophet Joseph, which was so far ahead of that generation that they could not comprehend nor receive it.

JD 24:259 – p.260, George Q. Cannon, August 19, 1883

Thus the world are gradually acknowledging the wisdom that God has given to His servants. Thus they are adopting the truths that are revealed. Thus the influence of this work is being felt throughout Christendom, and its effect is more marked than many of us imagine. We cannot comprehend to the full extent the effect that the work is having upon the world, and what God is doing through us, although we are but a feeble

people. The influence of this work is spreading. Why, it is now a very common thing for people to believe in the sick being healed by the prayer of faith. You see allusions to it in the public newspapers of the day, and there are other evidences which go to show the influence that this work and the teachings of the Elders of this Church is having upon the nations of the earth. And so it will be in all matters pertaining to government. Every day we are growing in strength, every day we are growing in influence, every day our influence is becoming more potent and wide reaching in its effects, and the people of the nation of which we form a part are becoming cognizant of it. Leading men admit it. They are conscious of it. They will not admit it in words to the fullest extent. But their movements against this work bear testimony that they, in their secret souls, feel that there is a power, an influence, and a might connected with this work that are sooner or later to make themselves felt. A people such as we are, men can readily see, must have a great influence in the affairs of the nation. We are possessed of every qualification that makes a people great. We are destitute of no single qualification that contributes to true greatness in an individual or in a nation; and a people possessing these qualifications will make themselves felt in the struggle for existence with other powers.

[JD 24:260, George Q. Cannon, August 19, 1883](#)

Another thing. While there are people belonging to our nation and to other nations who are fading away because they destroy the fecundity of their females and take no delight in posterity, in the midst of these mountains every married woman deems it an honor to be a mother, and feels it to be a deprivation not to bear the souls of the children of men.

[JD 24:260, George Q. Cannon, August 19, 1883](#)

I pray God to fill you with His Holy Spirit, and fill those who speak unto you with His power, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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John Taylor, June 24th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered at Parowan, Sunday Morning, June 24th, 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

TRUTH ALWAYS THE SAME – DUTIES OF THE SAINTS – OFFICERS PRESENT – WHERE THE  
PRINCIPLES OF THE GOSPEL ORIGINATED – CHARACTER OF ABRAHAM – HOW HE WAS  
TRIED – HIS PROGENY – DUTIES OF THE PRIESTHOOD – TRIALS OF THE SAINTS – CHARITY  
REQUIRED – HOW TRANSGRESSORS SHOULD BE DEALT WITH – EXHORTATION TO  
RIGHTEOUSNESS.

[JD 24:261, John Taylor, June 24th, 1883](#)

Elder George Reynolds, at the request of President Taylor, read Christ's "Sermon on the Mount," after which,  
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President Taylor spoke as follows: I have had a long discourse read over in your hearing. I do not know that we can listen to anything better than to instructions given by the Savior; and in that discourse is a great amount of intelligence, wisdom, thought, reflection, principle and doctrine presented to our minds. It is full of thought, full of intelligence, and presents to us principles that connect earth with heaven, man with God, and with which are interwoven all our best interests in time and throughout eternity. It is well, therefore, to reflect upon these things – upon the doctrines, teachings and instructions given by our Savior and by ancient men of God, who were under the inspiration of the Almighty, and who spake as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. For if the principles which were enunciated by our Savior in His day, were correct, they are just as true and correct to-day as they were then, and they are quite as applicable to us as they were to the people to whom He addressed Himself; for they are general principles, and some of them refer to things that are personal, that are associated with our every-day life, and with the spirit and feeling that we ought, as Saints of the Most High God, to be in possession of. Indeed I very much question whether we could find in the same space as comprehensive an exposition of ideas or principles enunciated by any person that ever spake, as are found in this sermon which was delivered by Jesus upon the Mount. We should have esteemed it a great privilege to have listened to the Son of God, yet we can read His words to-day, and the principles He taught, as I have said, are just as true and important now as they were then.

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I desire to speak a little this morning upon some of the duties and responsibilities which devolve upon us as Latter-day Saints, and I feel that – as I often hear the Elders say – I would like to have an interest in your faith and prayers. I like to have the prayers, the faith and confidence of good men and good women, and I feel this morning that I am among good men and good women who are desirous to do the will and keep the commandments of God our heavenly Father – that is, this is the general feeling.

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I will say I have been pleased to meet here and greet some of our Presidents of Stakes and other brethren from a distance. Here is Brother McAllister from St. George, and some others who have accompanied him from that region. They have traveled over a hot, sandy desert, quite a long distance to meet with us and to meet with you. Again, here is another President of Stake – Brother Crosby – who has come over these big mountains from Panguitch and I think some of his folks have come with him from that Stake. Then again, here is Brother Murdock, who has come 35 miles with us, and then you might double that distance by two or three times, for he was at Milford to meet us, and some of his folks are also with us. Then we had the President of Millard Stake – Brother Hinckley – who was with us for several days. It gives me great pleasure to meet with these my brethren of the Priesthood, especially with the Presidents of Stakes and their Counselors, because they hold important positions in the Church and kingdom of God, and I greet you and bless you in the name of the Lord. There is a spirit exhibited which shows that the brethren feel interested in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and that of all others is the thing in which we ought all of us to be interested. [President Cannon: We have also with us Brother Erastus Snow and Brother Jacob Gates.] President Taylor: Oh, yes. We expect them to be everywhere, as we are. We have specially dedicated ourselves to God, as active servants in His vineyard; we have dedicated ourselves to do the will of God, and to assist in carrying out His purposes, and we feel quite happy in the labor. And I should have been very much pleased, and so would Brother Cannon – and I do not know but what he wants me to say something about him being here – (laughter). [Brother Cannon: Oh, no.] – we should have been pleased to have stayed in the country a few days longer, but we cannot do so; that is, we have other duties devolving upon us, and we ought to be in Salt Lake City on Tuesday next. At one time we could not very easily have done this, but we have found out the way – at least, there is a way provided. The Lord has blessed us with many blessings. He has caused us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. He has granted unto us His Holy Spirit to enlighten our minds, and to teach us the principles of righteousness. He has called us to do a great work. How great, could I tell you? No. Could you understand if I did? No, you could not. But He has called us to do a great work – a work in which God

our heavenly Father is interested, a work in which Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant is interested, a work in which Adam is interested, a work in which Seth, Methuselah, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and the Prophets are interested, a work in which the Apostles that officiated on the continent of Asia are interested, a work in which the Apostles that officiated on this continent are interested, as well as Lehi, Nephi, Moroni, and others, who operated here in the cause of God, and who sought to carry out His purposes in this land. It is a work in which all men that have ever lived upon the face of the earth are interested. It is a work in which the Gods in the eternal worlds are interested. It is a work that has been spoken of by all the holy Prophets since the world was. It is called the "dispensation of the fullness of times," wherein God will gather together all things in one, whether they be things in the heavens or things in the earth. It is a dispensation in which all the holy Prophets that ever lived upon the face of the earth are interested. They prophesied about it as the grand and great consummation in the accomplishment of the purposes of God; purposes which He designed before the morning stars sang together, or the sons of God shouted for joy, or this world itself rolled into existence. It is a work in which we, our progenitors and our posterity are especially interested. And we are gathered together from among the nations of the earth in order that we may be taught of God, that we may understand the law of God, and the principles of life and salvation; a salvation that extends not only to ourselves, but to all mankind. We are gathered together here that we may be placed especially under the tuition and guidance of the Lord, that we may feel and realize that which the ancient Israelites expressed when they said, "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king" – and He shall rule over us, and we will be his people; and we His latter-day Israel, will acknowledge Him in all things; for we are a chosen people, a royal Priesthood, selected by the God of Israel for the accomplishment of His purposes, for the organization and purification of His Church, for the establishment of His Kingdom, and for the building up of His Zion on the earth. We are indebted to God for the revelation of all those principles that we to-day possess, whether they relate to the Church of God, to the Zion of God, or to the kingdom of God; so far as any principles thereof have been made manifest and developed unto us they are truly, positively and unequivocally the gift of God our heavenly Father. They did not originate with us. They did not originate with any man that lived on the earth, for no man knew them. They did not originate with Joseph Smith, or with Brigham Young, or with myself, or with the Apostles, or with any class of men in this Church. They are the gift of God to His people, to His children who dwell upon the earth. He has offered these principles freely to the nations of the earth. Thousands and millions of people who have heard them have not received nor obeyed them; but you have – that is, I speak generally, not individually, for some have not obeyed them. Many Latter-day Saints do not comprehend their position. They do not understand the relationship that exists between God and themselves. They do not understand the responsibility of the position that they occupy; some such hold the Holy Priesthood, and others are not in the Holy Priesthood. After so many years of teaching and instruction, and the many opportunities that we have had, we come far short of comprehending the principles of life, truth and intelligence which God has seen fit to make manifest to us, and the world do not comprehend them at all. And why cannot they? Because Jesus said very positively in His day, that except a man was born again he could not see the kingdom of God, and unless he was born of the water and of the Spirit, he could not enter into the kingdom of God, and they do not understand it. We cannot help that. But if we could comprehend our own positions and realize the blessings that we have enjoyed, and do now enjoy, and the prospect that lies before us in consequence of God having inclined our hearts to yield obedience to the Gospel of the Son of God, we should call upon our souls and all that is within us, to bless His holy name. We should thank God from morning till evening, that we have the privilege of being Latter-day Saints. We should thank Him for the light and intelligence that we have already received, and we should seek for a closer communion with Him that we might comprehend more fully the duties that devolve upon us, and feel in our hearts to do the will of God on earth, as angels do it in heaven. We should do this if we could comprehend our true position, and some of us do comprehend it in part. We see in part, we understand in part, we prophesy in part, etc., but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part will be done away with. The Lord has gathered us together, and is seeking to introduce among this people the principles of Zion, that we may be pure in heart, pure in spirit, pure in our actions, and that we may all of us feel like saying: "O God, search my heart, and try my reins, search me and prove me, and if there is any way of wickedness within me, bid it depart; show it to me that I may overcome it, that I may gain the victory, that I may be worthy to be thy son, that I may be worthy to have Thy blessing and Thy Spirit, and the intelligence that dwells with Thee



imparted to me; that I may walk according to Thy laws and fulfill the various duties and responsibilities that devolve upon me." That is the kind of feeling we should have if we could realize and comprehend our position. We would seek after the Lord.

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In the discourse read by Brother Reynolds, this morning, it says, among other things: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." I also read with regard to Abraham: He was a man of God, and he tells us in his history that he was a follower after righteousness; that he desired to obtain more righteousness, and that upon examining into the history of his fathers, he found that he had a right to the Priesthood and sought ordination, and he received that ordination. He was ordained by Melchizedek, who was prince of Salem, and a servant of the Most High God, and held the Priesthood called after his name. It is the Priesthood which is after the order of the Son of God, a Priesthood which possesses the power of an endless life. Abraham received a knowledge of these things; and when he obtained the Priesthood what did he do? Did he, after the manner of some religionists, "sing himself away to everlasting bliss?" No, he did not. What then did he do? He kept seeking after more righteousness. Jesus recognized that principle in his sermon – "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." Abraham sought the Lord diligently, and finally he had given unto him a Urim and Thummim, in which he was enabled to obtain a knowledge of many things that others were ignorant of. I think the meaning of the name of this instrument is Light and Perfection, in other terms, communicating light perfectly, and intelligence perfectly, through a principle that God has ordained for that purpose. Did Abraham stop there? No; he did not rest until he could communicate with God Himself. Jesus says: "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." The Lord appeared to Abraham, and told him many things. And in proportion to the blessings which He conferred upon him, the Lord exacted from Abraham strict obedience to His law, to His word, and to His will, and He tried him to the uttermost. He gave unto him a son. Sarah laughed at the idea when the Lord told her she would have a son. At her time of life – she was 90 years old – it did look a little odd. The Lord asked her what she laughed at. She denied that she had laughed, but He said, "Nay, but thou did'st laugh." There were to be certain blessings associated with this son. The Lord also told Abraham that He would bless him exceedingly, and make him a great man upon the earth. Finally, this son was born. But there came, after a time, a time of trial of Abraham's faith. In substance the Lord said to him: "Now, Abraham, take thy son Isaac. You received him from me," the same as we all do, if we could understand it, but we do not – he was a son of promise – a great many people are not sons of promise, but still are no less the children of God, for God is the God and father of the spirits of all flesh – "Take thy son and offer him up as a sacrifice." "What!" said Abraham. No; I do not believe that He said that; but I will suppose what He might have said: "Why, Lord, did you not tell me that you would establish your covenant with Isaac, for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him, and that I should become a great and mighty nation, and that all the nations of the earth would be blessed in me?" "Yes." "And now you tell me to offer my promised son as a sacrifice? What are you going to do about it?" "You have got to obey me, that is all." Abraham did not begin to question the Lord if He could find a precedent for such a thing in the Scriptures, or whether such a thing had ever taken place anywhere else. No; he proceeded to carry out the commandment of the Lord. I fancy I can see Abraham undergoing this trial. I wonder what his feelings were. What would your feelings be if you were commanded to sacrifice your promised son? Well, Abraham took his son into the mountain. They built an altar. And finally Isaac said to his father: "Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" What would you have thought if you had been in Abraham's place? Yet Abraham was a righteous man and sought after righteousness, sought after God, and God had talked with him, and blessed him in a very remarkable manner, and given him a son where there was no prospect naturally of his wife Sarah having one. How would you have felt, you fathers here, if you had been placed in the same position? But Abraham nerved himself up and said: "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering – thou thyself art that lamb!" He thereupon bound Isaac, and laid him on the altar. He lifted the knife, and was about to strike the fatal blow, when the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven and said, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns, and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead

of his son." And the Lord said, "Because thou hast done this thing and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed, as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

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I speak of these things to show how men are to be tried. I heard Joseph Smith say – and I presume Brother Snow heard him also – in preaching to the Twelve in Nauvoo, that the Lord would get hold of their heart strings and wrench them, and that they would have to be tried as Abraham was tried. Well, some of the Twelve could not stand it. They faltered and fell by the way. It was not everybody that could stand what Abraham stood. And Joseph said that if God had known any other way whereby he could have touched Abraham's feelings more acutely and more keenly he would have done so. It was not only his parental feelings that were touched. There was something else besides. He had the promise that in him and in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed; that his seed should be multiplied as the stars of the heaven and as the sand upon the sea shore. He had looked forward through the vista of future ages and seen, by the spirit of revelation, myriads of his people rise up through whom God would convey intelligence, light and salvation to a world. But in being called upon to sacrifice his son it seemed as though all his prospects pertaining to posterity were to come to naught. But he had faith in God, and he fulfilled the thing that was required of him. Yet we cannot conceive of anything that could be more trying and more perplexing than the position in which he was placed.

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Now, although I have said considerable in regard to Abraham, yet I will say a word or two more. God said that in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed. Who was Isaac, and who was Jacob? Heirs with him to the same promise. Who was Moses? A man that was raised up to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. Who was he? A descendant of Abraham. Who were the Prophets from whom we receive the Bible? The seed of Abraham. Who were the prophets from whom we received this Book of Mormon? They were the seed of Abraham. Who was Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant? Of the seed of Abraham. Who were the Apostles? Of the seed of Abraham. Who were the people that came to this continent? The seed of Abraham. Who were the Apostles that were raised up here? They were the seed of Abraham. Who was Joseph Smith, the Prophet of God, raised up in these last days? He was a descendant of Joseph, the son of Jacob, and his father's name was Joseph, as had been anciently prophesied should be the case, when the work he should perform was being referred to. Who are this people? A great many are of the seed of Abraham. And what is God doing with us? Has He raised us up to injure mankind? No. For what are the Twelve Apostles appointed? To preach the Gospel to all mankind. What are these 76 Quorums of Seventies for? Here is one of their Presidents. What are those quorums for, Brother Gates? [Brother Jacob Gates: To preach the Gospel to all the world.] Yes; to preach the Gospel to the nations of the earth – messengers of Jehovah, to communicate the glad tidings of salvation to a fallen world, to declare that the heavens have been opened, that God has spoken, that the eternal principles of life have been revealed, and that we are commissioned to make known unto the nations of the earth the glad tidings of salvation which God has ordained. Again, what are the Elders for? The same thing. Then come other principles. We are gathered together here that we might be taught of God, that we might be placed under His tuition, under His guidance and under His direction. As it is written: "They shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them." We are here to learn of His ways and to walk in His paths.

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We are living, as I said, in "the dispensation of the fullness of times," when God will gather together all things in one, whether they be things on the earth or things in the heavens, whether they appertain to Adam, or Seth, or Enos, or Mahalaleel, or Methuselah, or Noah, or Abraham, or Isaac, or Jacob, or the Prophets, or Jesus, or the people that have lived in the different ages who have possessed the Gospel of the Son of God; people on this continent or any other continent. They are all interested in this work. All heaven is engaged in carrying

out the work that we are engaged in to-day. They are looking upon us and watching our acts, and are interested in this great work. And God will say, to-day, as he did in former times: "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." And I say woe to them that lift their hands against the anointed of God, for God will be after them. We have a work to perform. We have to build up the Church and kingdom of God, and to see that the principles of purity and the law of God are enforced. Let me speak upon this. The Scriptures say: "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." Again, the Scriptures say: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." Being gathered together as we are, and having our organization of the First Presidency, of the Twelve Apostles, of the Presidents of Stakes and their counselors, of the Bishops and their counselors, of High Councils, of Priests, Teachers and Deacons, and of all the associations and organizations of the Holy Priesthood, according to the pattern that exists in the heavens – God having placed us in this position, He expects that every one of us will fulfill the duties devolving upon us. If the Presidents of Stakes do not do their duty aright, it becomes the duty of the First Presidency to call them to an account, and if the First Presidency do not do their duty, it becomes God our heavenly Father, or Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, to call them to an account, and it is woe to those men if they do not perform their duties aright. Then it becomes the duty of the Twelve to fulfill the callings and responsibilities devolving upon them, and to carry out and fulfill the word, the will and law of God. And who has a right to depart from that? God has introduced laws into His Church for the purification of His people. How was it formerly? God placed in His Church Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers, Evangelists, etc. What for? To be so many dummies? No. But for the perfecting of the Saints. What else? For the work of the ministry. What else? For the edifying of the body of Christ. How long? "Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, into a perfect man, into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things." In other words, that we may be one with Christ as He is one with the Father, and operate together every man in his place, and then God for us all. Hence it is for us to purify ourselves as God is pure.

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I have heard sometimes that you have had struggling in some of these southern countries, especially a little further south. I presume you have. I presume you have difficulty sometimes in making both ends meet. But we won't cry about it after all. We might be a great deal worse off, and I have seen the time when we were a great deal worse off than we are to-day. Have not you? [Several voices: "Yes."]

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You are all well clad. You do not look as if you were starved to death, or anything of that kind. We want to cultivate the principles of life, to train up our children in the right way, and to place ourselves in a proper position to fear God and to carry out His laws. And about our riches or about our poverty it will not make much difference not a great while hence. It will not make very much difference whether we are poor or whether we are rich. But it will make a great difference whether we are honorable or not; whether we are men and women of virtue or not; whether we are free from covetousness or not; and whether we keep the commandments of God and live our religion or not; it will make a very great difference whether we do these things or whether we do not. And did you ever think that it became necessary in times past, so we read in the Bible, – for the Lord to allow the Philistines and the Midianites and others to become thorns, as it were, in the side of the children of Israel, in order to bring them to righteousness. Did you ever read of such things? I have in my Bible. And if the Lord suffers us to be tried we will be tried; and we will say, "lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." We will pray as Jesus taught His disciples to pray. We will say: "Our Father who art in heaven; O, God, my Father, O Thou that art the Father of my spirit and of my flesh, and that watchest over me and art interested in my welfare, let me reverence Thy holy name. If Thou conferest upon me the good things of life, I will thank Thee for them. Give me my daily bread. Forgive me my sins as I forgive those that sin against me." I see people sometimes full of wrath and indignation against their

neighbors, and they sometimes say, "I will never forgive them as long as I live." Then you will never be a Saint as long as you live. I have heard our sisters say such things. You would not think it of them, but it is true. God teaches us to pray for a forgiveness of our sins, as we forgive those that trespass against us. Is not that the principle laid down? Yes. "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?" enquired Peter of the Savior. "Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times; but until seventy times seven" – that is if he repent. Well, I have seen such folks. They are all the time sinning and all the time repenting. We look upon them as "weak sisters." But we can perform our part with them. For if we forgive not men their trespasses, how shall God forgive us our trespasses? "Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom." What? "For thine is the kingdom." What, God's? Yes. What kingdom? In Him pertains all the powers, and kingdoms, and authority over the whole earth. But who acknowledges His authority? We see kingdom against kingdom, nation against nation, power against power; confusion, disunion and anarchy everywhere prevailing. Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come." What is implied in this expression? What is meant by a kingdom? It signifies power, rule, authority, dominion. Whose kingdom was it to be? God's kingdom. What! God to bear rule and have dominion over the earth? So it is said:

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"There was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

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And it is elsewhere said:

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"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the Saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him."

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And what else? The gold and the silver are God's, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. All that we possess is the gift of God. We should acknowledge Him in all things. We sometimes talk about men having this right and the other right. We have no rights only such as God gives us. And I will tell you what He will show to the Latter-day Saints. He will yet prove to them that the gold and the silver are His, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, and that He gives to whom He will, and withholds from whom he pleases. He will yet show you this is a matter of fact. Our safety and happiness, and our wealth depend upon our obedience to God and His laws, and our exaltation in time and eternity, depends upon the same thing. If we have means placed in our hands, we will ask our Father to enable us to do what is right with it, and, as I have said, we will ask Him for our daily bread, and thank Him for it; just the same as the children of Israel did. They had manna brought to them from time to time by the angels. I do not know what kind of mills they had or who were their bakers; but they brought the manna. "He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack." I think that is the case sometimes with us. The angels do not feed us exactly with manna, but God does take care of us, and I feel all the day long like blessing the name of the God of Israel: and if we fear God and work righteousness, as I told you yester day, we, the people of Zion, will be the richest of all people.

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What then shall we do? We will fear God, keep His commandments, and observe His laws. We will not seek to do our own will, but the will of God our Heavenly Father, and if we do the will of God our heavenly Father,

we have to be taught what that will is. And then we have to be taught it, too, through the proper channels. You may every one of you, ask God to guide and direct you, and He will show you the right path. But we have to be obedient to the authorities of His Church. You have a President of Stake here, and ought to be obedient to him. You have Bishops, and you ought to listen to their counsel. You have teachers, and they ought to perform their duties faithfully and diligently, and you ought to be subject to their counsels. And we ought all of us to seek to fear God, keep His commandments, and obey His laws, and God will bless us.

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There is another principle I desire to speak about. We have no right to condone the sins of men and pervert the order of God in His Church. Now, I want you Presidents of Stakes and you Bishops to listen to this. If men transgress the law of God, it is your duty to see after it, and to call upon them to repent, and if they do not repent, they ought to be removed out of the Church. For it is only he that doeth righteousness that is righteous, and God has instituted laws and expects us to be governed by them. We are not to be harsh masters. I will have read something on this subject from the Book of Doctrine and Covenants.

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"Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen?"

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And why are they not chosen?"

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"Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson –

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"That the rights of the Priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness. \* \*

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"No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the Priesthood, only by persuasion, by long suffering, by gentleness, and meekness and by love unfeigned," etc., etc.

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There is no authority associated with the Holy Priesthood except on the principle of persuasion, and no man has a right to plume himself upon any position he occupies in this Church, for he is simply a servant of God, and a servant of the people, and if any man attempts to use any kind of arbitrary authority, and act with any degree of unrighteousness, God will hold that man to an account for it, and we all of us have to be judged according to the deeds done in the body. We are here as saviors of men, and not as tyrants and oppressors. But at the same time if men do not and will not yield obedience to the laws of God, then it becomes the duty of those who preside over them to see that the law of God is carried out, and that these unrighteous men are severed from the Church. We have had adulterers among us, and wherever I have heard of them I have directed that they be severed from the Church. Why? Because I cannot permit it, and God will not permit it. Who is it that will be outside of the Eternal City by and by? The liar, the hypocrite, the whoremonger, the sorcerer, and the adulterer – they shall be with the dogs outside of the city. Now, I do not want to try to drag such men in. We have no right to tamper with these things. God expects us to begin to walk up to the line, and to perform the several duties that devolve upon us. We must honor our God, and purge the Church from

unrighteousness. I have had cases come before me in regard to adultery. There is a law in relation to that – that is, when they have not entered into the new and everlasting covenant, and taken upon themselves obligations associated with the celestial law – that if a man commits adultery he shall make an acknowledgement of it before the Church – that is, if it is his first offense, and he has not sinned in this wise before. If it is his first offense, and he repents, he shall be forgiven, but if he does it a second time he shall be cast out. But when we come to other things – things that are more serious – when men have entered into covenants associated with the celestial law and taken upon themselves obligations pertaining thereto, it is a different matter. I will read a little from the revelation:

[JD 24:271, John Taylor, June 24th, 1883](#)

"And as ye have asked concerning adultery – verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man receive a wife in the new and everlasting covenant, and if she be with another man, and I have not appointed unto her by the holy anointing, she hath committed adultery and shall be destroyed.

[JD 24:271, John Taylor, June 24th, 1883](#)

"If she be not in the new and everlasting covenant, and she be with another man, she has committed adultery.  
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[JD 24:271, John Taylor, June 24th, 1883](#)

"And again, as pertaining to the law of the Priesthood. If any man espouse a virgin, and desires to espouse another, and the first gives her consent; and if he espouse the second, and they are virgins, and have vowed to no other man, then is he justified; he cannot commit adultery for they are given unto him, for he cannot commit adultery with that that belongeth unto him and to no one else.

[JD 24:271, John Taylor, June 24th, 1883](#)

"And if he have ten virgins given unto him by this law, he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him, and they are given unto him, therefore is he justified.

[JD 24:271, John Taylor, June 24th, 1883](#)

"But if one or either of the ten virgins, after she is espoused, shall be with another man, she has committed adultery, and shall be destroyed."

[JD 24:271 – p.272, John Taylor, June 24th, 1883](#)

Here is a principle – and the same principle applies to the man – that if a man commits adultery, he also shall be destroyed. Can I change that? I did not make the law. Have I the right to change it? "But," says one, "does it not say that what you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and what you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven?" Yes; but I have to know if it is the mind and will of God that it shall be so. The law says, "they shall be destroyed." What else? "And shall be delivered unto the buffetings of Satan unto the day of redemption." That is the law. Can I change it? Can you? I speak now to Presidents of Stakes and Bishops. We are told that we are not to be partakers of other men's sins. Now, you send men with recommends to me to have me pass upon them. I trust to you. I suppose you are acquainted with these things. I suppose you act intelligently and understandingly. But if people do not fulfill the requirements of the Gospel, you have no right to recommend them to the house of the Lord. They do not belong there. People who do not observe the laws of the Gospel and live their religion, should not receive recommends, and if you do recommend such you will be held responsible, for I will not. I receive them upon your authority, and trust to your judgment. I have known cases where wicked and corrupt men have gone into the house of God. The parties administering did not know it, but nevertheless it was a fact. And what has become of them? They have come to me feeling as

though they were in hell. They wanted to know what they could do. I told them I did not know; perhaps the Lord would indicate by and by. I say to all, you had better, unless you determine to fear God and keep His laws, quit at once, for God expects us to do right, and will hold us to an account for our acts. And I say to the Bishops, purge your Wards from all iniquity, and have no fellowship with adulterers and adulteresses. Adultery is the curse of the nations to-day, and it is corrupting, corroding, and eating out the very vitals of the people among the nations. They are over-run with it. God has set us apart to do His will and to build up His Kingdom and His Zion. Zion means the pure in heart, and we have to be pure in heart and pure in life. We have to be honest. We must not steal. What, do Saints steal? I hope you have no thieves among you here. And then there are covetous men, men who conceive all kinds of plans to get possession of other people's property. Such are not going to get into the Kingdom of God, unless they repent and do right. Who will inherit the earth? Those who despoil their neighbors? No. Who will they be? Jesus said in His sermon, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth;" not the covetous, sorcerers, adulterers, liars, hypocrites, and those who bear false witness against their neighbors; all such characters will not have a place there. It is for us who hold the Holy Priesthood to be pure. "Be ye pure that bear the vessels of the Lord." It is for each of us to be pure, and then say to others, "follow me, as I follow Jesus." It is for us to live our religion and obey the laws of God, and perform the duties that devolve upon us, and I tell you, if we do this, I will risk all that the nations of the earth, or that this nation can do. If we will only fear God, build up Zion, and work righteousness, God will put a hook in the jaws of our oppressors. We may have to suffer for a little while, but we will overcome. This kingdom will not be given into the hands of another people, for God is with Israel, and Israel will triumph. And if we will continue to do right – and whether some of us do right or not; those that do not do right will be cast out of their place; but if we continue to do right Zion will increase and grow until the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ, and until every creature in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth will be heard to say, blessing and honor and might and power and majesty and dominion be ascribed to Him that sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb forever.

JD 24:272, John Taylor, June 24th, 1883

God bless you, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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George Q. Cannon, August 12, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEO. Q. CANNON,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Logan City, Sunday Morning, August 12, 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS ASPIRE TO CELESTIAL GLORY – ALL OUR POSSESSIONS  
PLACED IN OUR HANDS MERELY AS STEWARDS – IS IT APPROPRIATE TO MAKE  
SACRIFICES IN VIEW OF GLORY AND EXALTATION WE ASPIRE TO, AND TO HOLD ALL  
THINGS SUBJECT TO THE DICTATION OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD? – OBEDIENCE  
TO THE PRIESTHOOD, AND THE RESULTS FLOWING THEREFROM – THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

SEEN IN THE SELECTION OF ALL HIS SERVANTS – TEMPLES, THEIR OBJECT, AND  
THOSE WHO ARE ENTITLED TO THE BLESSINGS TO BE MANIFESTED THEREIN – OBEDIENCE  
TO THE PRIESTHOOD A VITAL TEST.

JD 24:273, George Q. Cannon, August 12, 1883

I have listened – as no doubt all have – with great interest, to the remarks which have been made by Brother Joseph F. Smith, and I can bear testimony to their truth, that they are profitable to us, and should be treasured up in our hearts and made practical in our lives.

JD 24:273 – p.274, George Q. Cannon, August 12, 1883

While he was speaking, this reflection forced itself upon me: What other people upon the face of the earth aspire to the same glory and the same exaltation that the Latter-day Saints do? What other people have the same hopes respecting eternity and their condition in eternity, and the glory they are to receive if faithful in keeping the commandments of God, that the Latter-day Saints have? My acquaintance with mankind, so far as it goes, teaches me that of all people now living, either in Christendom or heathendom, the Latter-day Saints excel them all in their hopes, in their anticipations, in the character of the glory that they are to receive, and in the promises which are sealed upon them. There is not a man in this room who has a proper conception of the Gospel, and of the rewards attached to obedience to it, who does not at least hope that he will attain unto celestial glory, (which means the Godhead, to be an heir of God, and a joint heir with Jesus Christ); that he will enter upon a career of exaltation that shall not terminate throughout the endless ages of eternity, and that will place him in the company of Him concerning whom it is said "of the increase of His kingdom there shall be no end." And there is not a woman in this congregation who has a proper conception or knowledge of the promises associated with the Gospel, and with obedience thereto, who does not indulge, when she thinks upon these matters, in similar hopes, and would be very unhappy if she thought she should be deprived of that which she anticipates – I mean of being one with her husband as a wife and as a queen and as a priestess throughout eternity, and stand with him at the head of their mutual posterity.

JD 24:274, George Q. Cannon, August 12, 1883

This being the case, is it any wonder that God makes requirements of us, and expects a perfection on our part that is not looked for nor expected of the rest of the world? We were told this morning – and the truth cannot be too often repeated in our hearing – that God, our Eternal Father, has placed all these possessions and blessings – that is, the possessions of the earth and the blessings connected with the earth – that He has placed them in our hands merely as stewards, and that we hold them subject to Him, in other words, in trust for Him, and that, if He calls upon us to use them in any given direction He may indicate, it is our duty as His children, occupying the relationship that we do to Him, and with the hopes in our breasts that we have, to hold them entirely subject to Him. There is not another people upon the face of the earth that I know anything about who are taught such ideas and doctrines as these. I do not think that any other denomination of people, either religious or secular, have such doctrines as we have heard this morning taught to them respecting their duties and their obligations to God. Of course you will very frequently hear in sectarian churches, many things connected with this subject; that it is the duty of the rich to help the poor and to be benevolent and to hold all things in a way that will please God; but to bring this down to what we would call practical consecration, to practically consecrate their wealth, and hold it as though they would have to practically consecrate it at any time, is a doctrine that I do not think is taught in any other church, or so-called church, nor is it believed in by any other people. There are, it is true, people who indulge in very wild vagaries about property, such as communists and others, but they have no system of religion, they do not believe in God, they do not believe in the principles that He teaches and which we accept. They would not carry them out on any such basis.

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Let me ask you, my brethren and sisters, is it not appropriate that we should be required to make – I was going to say sacrifice. Well, that is a word that is so commonly used, that I suppose I could not use any other that would convey the idea to your minds clear enough. I will use it, therefore. Is it not appropriate to make sacrifices of this character, considering who we are and what we are? If we are expecting to reach a glory and an exaltation such as we think about and talk about and pray for, it seems to me that there should be something to be done on our part commensurate with the expectations and hopes and desires that we entertain, and I do not know myself any better test that can be brought to bear upon human beings than this test to which allusion has been made this morning, the test of holding ourselves – that is our individual persons, with our time and the ability that God has given unto us, our wives, our children, and the possessions that God has placed in our hands to control – to hold all these subject to His dictation and to His approval.

[JD 24:274 – p.275, George Q. Cannon, August 12, 1883](#)

"Now," says one, "I am quite willing for that; I would be quite willing to receive all that doctrine and to believe it if God himself were to come and make the requirement of me. I am quite willing that God should dictate to me about my wives and children; and if He wants me to use my talents and give up my life or to yield up my property – I am quite willing to do all these things if He will come and tell me himself, or if He will send an angel to tell me. But I look upon my brethren who preside over this Church, and I see that they are mortal men, and I see that they do many things that mortal men do, and I have not quite confidence enough in them to dispose of my property as they may dictate. They are mortal, they are like I am, and I do not know whether they will do the right thing or not. I have some doubts about that. I have not got confidence in their management as business men. I do not know but I have better business qualities myself than they have, and I can manage my own affairs to better advantage than they can. I am not willing, therefore, to do as my fellow men dictate."

[JD 24:275 – p.276 – p.277, George Q. Cannon, August 12, 1883](#)

Now, let me ask is not that the secret thought of many minds? I am sure it is. And yet the same men who entertain these thoughts, and the same women, will go into this Temple when it is completed, and will ask at the hands of the servants of God blessings that are far beyond all price when measured by earthly substance, by gold or silver, or that which men consider valuable. It is a strange thing; it is a strange feature in the human character; it is exhibited everywhere; it is not confined to Latter-day Saints alone; that mankind are very willing to trust men with spiritual things, and to have confidence in them concerning spiritual things, and have little or no confidence in them when it affects their temporal interests. There are men – and there may be some in this congregation – who have been quite willing to submit to the ordinance of baptism and rely upon it as a means of salvation, as a means of remitting their sins, and have also been willing to submit to have hands laid upon them by the same individual, for the reception of the Holy Ghost, who would not listen to his counsel concerning their property. This want of confidence arises in some instances from selfishness or a lack of faith, and in others from witnessing the unwise conduct of Elders in the management of means. There have been Elders who have gone out in the world for the purpose of bringing souls to the truth who have abused their privileges among the people, and have borrowed money and never repaid it. Such occurrences inspire distrust. And such men have transcended the limits of their authority in taking this course. They were not sent out to meddle in this way, in people's affairs, to borrow money, and do things of that character; but were sent to preach the Gospel, and so long as they confined themselves to their legitimate duties, and did those things they were authorized to do, they were blessed, the Lord was with them, and their labors resulted in salvation to the people. Every man who attends strictly to the duties assigned to him, and pertaining to his Priesthood, and confines himself to them, is sustained and upheld of the Lord. The Elders who have destroyed confidence by the methods I have alluded to, transcended their authority. That constituted the difference between their action and the action of the man whom God places to preside over His Church. Can you not see the distinction? I can see that a man that goes out as a missionary, as Elders have done in the past, often acquires great influence with the power of God resting upon him, and through the confidence that power has inspired in the midst of the Saints, I can understand that men have taken advantage of that influence, and have abused the trust of the people, and have done wrong, and have lessened their influence with God, and with man, and

have caused the Spirit of God by that action to be withdrawn from them. There are many such cases to which I could point you, if it were necessary this morning. No man, however, has done that in this Church without losing that power which God gave unto him, and there are men who have apostatized from this Church who brought on that apostasy because of such conduct as I allude to. They were not warranted in doing what they did. They exceeded the bounds of their Priesthood, and in doing so they committed sin. But there is an authority in the Church to whom God has given the right to counsel in the affairs of the children of men in regard to temporal affairs. When Joseph Smith lived upon the earth it was his prerogative to do that. He stood as God's ambassador – not clothed with the attributes of God, for he was a mortal man; but he stood as the representative of God upon the earth, holding the keys of the kingdom of God upon the earth, with the power to bind on earth and it should be bound in heaven. He occupied that position when he lived, and on his departure another took his place upon the earth and stood in precisely the same capacity to us as a people that Joseph Smith did. That was Brigham Young. When he passed away another stepped forward and took the same position, and holds the same keys and exercises the same authority and stands precisely in the same position to us that the Prophet Joseph did, or that the Prophet Brigham did, when he lived upon the earth. Now, was not Joseph Smith a mortal man? Yes. A fallible man? Yes. Had he not weaknesses? Yes, he acknowledged them himself, and did not fail to put the revelations on record in this book [the Book of Doctrine and Covenants] wherein God reprov'd him. His weaknesses were not concealed from the people. He was willing that people should know that he was mortal, and had failings. And so with Brigham Young. Was not he a mortal man, a man who had weaknesses? He was not a God. He was not an immortal being. He was not infallible. No, he was fallible. And yet when he spoke by the power of God, it was the word of God to this people. When he sealed a man up to eternal life, he bestowed upon him the blessings pertaining to eternity, and to the Godhead, or when he delegated others to do it in his stead, God in the eternal world recorded the act; the blessings that were sealed upon that man or that woman, they were sealed to be binding in this life, and in that life which is to come; they became part of the records of eternity, and would be fulfilled to the very letter upon the heads of those upon whom they were pronounced, provided they were faithful before God, and fulfilled their part of the covenant. There is no doubt about it. And so it is to-day. There is but one man, (as you have often heard), at a time on the earth, who holds this authority. There may be others who have this authority also; and I thank God there are many who hold this authority – that is the authority of the Apostleship; but they hold it subordinate to the man who holds the keys, they cannot exercise this authority only as he shall consent or delegate or authorize them to do so. There is but one man who has the power to exercise this authority, to stand, as it were, in God's stead, to be His voice unto the people, and that is the man who stands at the head and who is President, and who holds the keys by virtue of the appointment of God. God places him there. It is not man's act. It is God's providence. God knows the hearts of the children of men. By His overruling Providence He brings this man to the front, or He keeps him in the rear, just as it pleases Him. I believe that His providence is over all of us, and He can kill or remove as He pleases, or He can preserve in life as seemeth good to Him. And he has done so. When the Prophet Joseph was slain, God, by His overruling Providence, brought the man to the front who was His choice to succeed His servant. David Patten was slain at Crooked River, who was the senior of Brigham Young. Thomas B. Marsh lost the faith, also the senior of Brigham Young; but Brigham Young was preserved in the providence of God, and when His Prophet was slain He stepped forward clothed with the eternal Priesthood of God, full of the fire of the Holy Ghost and the power of God, and the whole people felt that they stood in the presence of the man whom God had chosen and whom God had endowed for the position. God qualified him and made him equal to every emergency from that hour until the hour of his death. God was his unfailing friend. He blessed every one who listened to the counsel of His servant. He blessed this entire people, and He blessed this land under his (President Young's) administration. And we know by the outpouring of the power and gifts and graces of God upon us individually as well as an entire people, that he was God's servant, chosen by the Almighty to stand at the head of His Church. Could I not trust that man with anything I had? Why, I would have been an unworthy servant of God, if I could not have done so; I would have been recreant to every principle that I believe in, if I could not have done so.

[JD 24:277 – p.278, George Q. Cannon, August 12, 1883](#)

Now, watch the providence of God in the selection of our present President. At the time Joseph and Hyrum were slain, according to all human appearances he was as unlikely to live almost as they were who were already dead. In the hottest of summer he was shot to pieces. The men who waited upon him had no idea that he would live. But he did. God brought him through. But who thought then that he would be the senior Apostle who would preside over this Church? There were a number his seniors. In consequence of a misunderstanding and his being senior in age, Brother Woodruff's name stood above Brother Taylor's. Brother Woodruff recognized all the time that he and Willard Richards were not his seniors in ordination. President Taylor had been ordained to the Apostleship before them, and when this matter was brought before the President of the Church (President Young) the names were put in proper order. Brother Woodruff recognized this as being correct, and if Willard Richards had lived, doubtless he would have had the same feeling. But then there stood Orson Hyde and Orson Pratt, as seniors in the quorum. Their names preceded his. But had their names the right to stand in that position? No, they had not, for reasons I need not dwell upon here, which ought to be familiar to every Elder in this Church. Therefore, I will merely say this: that President John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and George A. Smith were bearers of the apostleship at a time when Orson Hyde and Orson Pratt did not hold that power. Therefore they were by right their seniors; and President Young providentially, prompted by the Spirit of God, made a ruling which the Twelve accepted – every man knowing the true state of the case – as correct, and placed the names in their order some time before his death, making John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and George A. Smith, seniors of Orson Hyde and of Orson Pratt. In this manner God has brought forward to the front the man whom He chose to be President of the Church. It is His privilege to choose whom He pleases. The man whom He wants preserved is preserved. When the Prophets of God were slain, Brother Taylor's life, by the wonderful providence of God, was preserved, and he has lived among us until this day. He now stands in his place as the President of the Church, holding the keys and the authority as such to manage all the affairs of the Church according to God's mind and will. And shall one who knows this, who knows that God has honored him, that God has chosen him, that God has endowed him, that God has blessed him – shall such a one raise his voice against him, and say that it is not the will of God that he shall control the affairs of this Church? God forbid! God forbid that I or any other man in this Church should do anything of the kind! On the contrary, let us be obedient to the voice of God, and to the will of God. If God, through him, says unto us we must consecrate our property, we must hold everything we have subject to the will of God, if He through him dictates any course of policy, I say it is my duty as a servant of God to submit: it is my duty to carry out faithfully, according to the will of God, that which He counsels, and that which He dictates. If God has confidence in him, shall not I, who am God's servant and God's child, have similar confidence? I believe in God. I believe God manages all the affairs of this Church. I know if I do my duty He will save me, He will exalt me, and I know if you will do your duty, He will do the same for you. And if men whom He chooses are fallible, that is His business. He requires on our part obedience to His will, as it is made manifest through the man whom He has chosen.

JD 24:278 – p.279, George Q. Cannon, August 12, 1883

Now, this is a great point. I look upon it as one of the most vital points connected with our existence in these mountains. I look upon it as a test. It may be said that it will test the Latter-day Saints as they never have been tested – this vital doctrine of obedience to the Priesthood of the Son of God. There is no point to day against which so many assaults are directed by the wicked. They make it the main object of their attacks. They would like to destroy confidence in your hearts in the Priesthood of the Son of God. If they could weaken your confidence; if they could undermine your faith; if they could by any power or means in their possession wean you from the Church, and sow the seed of distrust and suspicion in your minds concerning the Priesthood, or those who bear it, they would attain the object that they have in view. The man who holds the keys is always the object of assault. His life is the life that is most sought after. He is the man they would strike down, if they had the power. They seek to weaken the confidence of the people in him, by all manner of slanders, and by every sort of falsification. It is the main object of our enemies to sow the seeds of distrust and suspicion in the midst of the Latter-day Saints, and to accomplish this they relate all manner of falsehoods concerning those who bear the Priesthood of the Son of God. They contort every act. They misrepresent every word and every counsel that is given. They endeavor to put everything in a false light. And those who read those things continually, begin to believe by degrees, that there is foundation for them, that there is something wrong, that

this man or the other man is not to be trusted, and that they are doing wrong in yielding obedience to the counsels of the Priesthood, and in submitting to its control. You are aware these attacks are constantly directed against the Priesthood, and it is, as I say, the vital point to-day.

[JD 24:279, George Q. Cannon, August 12, 1883](#)

We have this Temple (Logan) nearly completed. That at Salt Lake is progressing very rapidly, that at Sanpete also. And the building of these Temples will bring about, to a certain extent, a change among this people. Blessings are to be bestowed, and power is to be manifested in these buildings in my opinion such as has never been manifested among us as a people before. The question, therefore, will press itself upon our attention – who are going to be worthy to receive these blessings? Who are going to be worthy to enter into these buildings? With my feelings to-day I never can consent for any man to go in and receive a fullness of the blessings of the everlasting Gospel in that building or those buildings, unless I know him to be a man who is willing to yield implicit obedience to the Priesthood of the Son of God. And further, I am not willing, with my present feelings – I do not pretend to dictate in this matter, I am merely stating my own personal feelings – for any man to go into these buildings who is not willing to hold all he has got subject to the Priesthood of the Son of God, and be willing to do with it as that Priesthood shall dictate.

[JD 24:279 – p.280, George Q. Cannon, August 12, 1883](#)

Now, these are two vital points in our faith, and in the requirements of the Gospel, that I believe are obligatory upon us, and we may as well understand our position to-day as to postpone the understanding of this matter for months, or for years, or until it is too late. This may sound like strong doctrine to some of you; but I look upon these things as essentially necessary to make us the people that God designs we shall be. Already things are in contemplation, and are being counselled about, that may bring this matter home to us individually, outside of the Temples of the Son of God. I desire to see the time come when unworthy persons cannot get their endowments and a fullness of the blessings of the everlasting Priesthood. I desire to see some test of faithfulness, some test of growth, and some degree of reward, so that all will not be reduced to one common level, the faithful and the unfaithful, those that are willing to do all that God requires, and those that are not willing – I do not desire to see all endowed with the same blessings. I do not believe that God ever intended this. He has told us there are different degrees of glory, – "one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead." I would like to see some difference here. I believe it will come. I believe God will move upon His servant in His own due time to make the necessary regulations to effect this. There are men who have been faithful all their lives, who have done everything that it is possible for men to do, and there are others who have been indifferent, and who have had their own way, and carried out their own mind, yet all come along and get the same blessings without any distinction whatever. There is not much encouragement, it would seem, under those circumstances, for the faithful. And yet there is, for there are degrees of reward in heaven; but then we may as well begin to have some of them here.

[JD 24:280, George Q. Cannon, August 12, 1883](#)

Now, my brethren and sisters, I feel that it is a matter, as I have said, of vital importance that we should have this that I have spoken of – faith and confidence in the Priesthood of the Son of God, and we cannot build up Zion without we have it, and we cannot build up Zion without we are willing to do all we have been taught by the inspiration of God – I know that as well as I do that I live.

[JD 24:280, George Q. Cannon, August 12, 1883](#)

I pray God that we may have this confidence, which I ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE F. D. RICHARDS,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Saturday Morning, October 6,

(Semi-Annual Conference) 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW OF THE PROVIDENCES OF GOD IN RELATION TO THE  
SAINTS – THE WRATH AND SCHEMES OF MEN TURNED TO THE ADVANTAGE OF GOD'S  
PEOPLE – THE ORDER OF GOD'S CHURCH PERFECT – THE WICKED DISTURBED BY  
JUDGMENTS, WHILE THE RIGHTEOUS ENJOY PEACE – THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAW  
OF GOD IN RELATION TO OFFENCES – SHOULD BE RESIGNED TO THE WILL OF GOD IN  
ALL THINGS.

[JD 24:280 – p.281, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

The Lord be thanked and praised for granting us another so favorable opportunity of meeting together to contemplate the interests of His Kingdom, and our soul's salvation at this Conference. "Day unto day uttereth speech," said the ancient man of God, "and night unto night showeth knowledge." We can say that week after week, and month after month, since our last Conference, we have had renewed occasion for thanksgiving and praise to Him for the many blessings which He has vouchsafed unto His people.

[JD 24:281, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

If we take a retrospective view of His providences to us as a people, especially during the period of our sojourn in these mountains, we shall find that circumstances have occurred at very short intervals, which have kept the people continually awakened to a sense of their liberties, and to a watch care for them, measuring and weighing and noticing the efforts that have been made from time to time to take away our privileges and liberties, and such blessings as were thought could be taken from us which we had entered into the enjoyment of since our location in these mountain fastnesses. Step by step every such instance has been attended, if not with all that gift and abundance of favor and mercy, which we might have desired, and which might not have been best for us, yet with sufficient blessing to manifest the kind care of our heavenly Father continually and unceasingly over us.

[JD 24:281, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

When we came here and first made our laws, realizing that we were far away from the mass of the people of the States, both east and west of us, we found it was with great difficulty that we could avail ourselves of the few blessings which government seemed to tender to us. We could not even obtain the presence of federal officials in our midst, regularly, as was designed by government, and as was needed by the people. Consequently our isolation required our Legislature to confer unusual powers upon our local courts; but it was

not long before the effort was made, and final success was had in taking from our local courts the civil and criminal jurisdiction. Time will not allow me to enter into minute details. Therefore, suffice it to say, that mission judges have come here fully determined to convert us from the error of our ways, as it appeared to them, to the "purity, refinement, and civilization" of the world! After laboring and toiling some years in our midst, finding their decisions frequently overthrown by the decisions of the Superior Court at Washington, our Prophet, who had been illegally imprisoned, released from his confinement, and one thing after another, upset their plans and devices; so that the great changes which had been hoped to be brought about among us, to make us like the people of the world, signally failed, and the end of that effort was, that the poor, miserable man who undertook the job, was carried home in his coffin.

[JD 24:281, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

I must notice one or two other important facts, which have stood out very prominently before us, and they were, that this people who were not of the world, and had no fellowship or love with the world, must be restricted in their civil rights and military duties, for fear that they should do some mischief on a holiday, therefore they were forbidden by Gubernatorial Proclamation, to order out a company of infantry or cavalry, to help to celebrate the Fourth of July, as they and their fathers were wont to do from time immemorial.

[JD 24:281 – p.282, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

One after another, these and similar efforts have been made to take our liberties and privileges away from us, that we might be brought into some sort of contemptible subjection, it would appear. But without stopping to animadvert upon the folly and nonsense of such a procedure, let me inquire what was the result? What followed the proclamation that we should not do military duty as a people, or protect ourselves even from the surrounding savages? Immediately when this occurred, it seemed as if the very heavens were moved in our behalf, all the tribes around us became divested, seemingly, of what hostility they had possessed, and ever since that occurred, we have had the most substantial peace and quiet all around us, among the natives. How kind of Providence, it was, to so completely remove the enmity of the natives, when this circumstance transpired. We are relieved from the unpleasant tax of military duty, and even our adversaries are made to be at peace with us. What a logic of fact, for a contentious world to read.

[JD 24:282, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

During the past year, the great efforts that have been made, have seemed to prove abortive; special efforts and measures have appeared to miscarry; and we have had a law right from the Capital, that seemed as if it must tell on the "Mormons." A class of our people have been temporally divested of the right of suffrage; men and women, who may have violated some law, and many who have never violated any law of Congress, have been deprived of their political rights. But with all this we still seem to live and thrive and prosper faster than we have ever done before. The very step itself, will prove a great blessing to this people by separating a portion of those who have not the highest respect and veneration for all the Laws of God, and enable those who have, to be the wiser counselors and more efficient aids in advancing the interests of the kingdom in the hands of those who may be more acceptable in the eyes of government to wield administration here locally.

[JD 24:282 – p.283, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

But it is a singular fact, a singular circumstance, that a man should come here from the heart of the nation – clothed as was supposed, with every qualification to be a Governor of Utah, – should act as he has acted. He had been through the army in the late rebellion. He was a man capable, as was supposed, of understanding what was right and proper, as between the nation and any other part of the country that might seem to feel in any wise oppressed or limited, and who would administer constitutional rights and executive powers with ability and with skill. He came here clothed with the supreme beauty of the State from whence he came. This man by his excessive propensity for figures, as we all know, made some very strange calculations; and then when one thing didn't work, another seemed to, until our representative in Congress was removed. But by and

by we are blessed with another one in Congress to represent us there. And in a short time we found that, with the special effort that was being made in Washington in our behalf, such a shadow of doubt was cast over a certain portion of the law, entitled the Hoar amendment, when it was thought advisable by the governor to execute some three hundred commissions, more or less, to men whom he appointed to fill supposed vacancies in this Territory, which if carried out would have turned over the local authority of the Territory into the hands of the avowed enemies of this people, but the supposed vacancies did not exist and the offices continued in the hands of the incumbents. After all the election was held during the past season when these offices were filled by the people's candidates. Thus we have occasion again to rejoice that notwithstanding another desperate effort has been made to take away the rule from the hands of the people and put it into the hands of their enemies, and make us an outside Territory, subject to their oppressions, subject to all manner of taxation that they might please to impose upon us – we find that the voice and vote of the people are still triumphant, that their candidates have gone into office and are commissioned, the selections having been made from among those whose rights and privileges have been maintained unto them.

[JD 24:283, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

It is a singular feature in this matter, that the Governor has taken it into his head to leave the Territory just at the time when it was supposed he would be required to execute these commissions. But without going into particulars, persons of ordinary discernment observe that the course he has taken is such that he cannot himself check it to remain and issue the commissions to the properly elected persons to rule in this Territory, indeed it looks as though the dishonorable, undignified course he has taken is just what has driven him from the Territory, to leave his duty, and let the secretary be acting governor. When men come here full of determination to show their bravery, their ability, smartness and competency beyond their predecessors, to capture Utah, and turn her over to the hands of the ungodly; it appears that every one who has made such an attempt has met with very signal defeat. When a man defeats himself as perfectly as this last one has, I think the Latter-day Saints have occasion to thank God and take courage; we have reason to rejoice and praise the Lord in all these matters, for whatever our enemies do He makes it return that, like a boomerang that is thrown out, it comes back and strikes the person that hurled it.

[JD 24:283, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

Well, then, my brethren and sisters, seeing that this is the way that these matters all move, the way they all operate, should it not inspire in us the most profound gratitude toward God for these manifestations of his mercy, goodness and blessing unto us. He has made our fields to bound with plenty. He has favored us with blessings innumerable and incomprehensible. We have a peace, a joy and a satisfaction at heart which those men who make these desperate laws cannot contemplate. We rejoice in the blessings that heaven is bestowing upon us. Is it not, then, our bounden duty to testify to God, the angels, and those that attend upon the covenant people of God, that we are determined to love Him more and serve Him better? I was pleased to hear the remark made by one of my brethren yesterday, that he felt on returning here, after an absence of five or six years, that there was an improvement in the spirit and feelings of the people. This is very manifest to those who observe and notice it. But we think there should be a very much greater improvement. Many of us have been very careless of some of the commandments: words of wisdom which the Lord has seen fit to give to us. We have not used that care, that caution, and that sound discretion in our daily lives before Him, that it is becoming we should do. I propose, brethren and sisters, in view of this matter, that we take these things to heart, and see if we can and ought to draw nearer to God, while He is willing to draw nearer to us, and thus more fully sense His blessings, His mercies, and his loving kindness unto us.

[JD 24:283 – p.284, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

This institution, – which President Taylor so beautifully reviewed yesterday morning in the Assembly Hall, noticing the varied authorities of the Church and their multifarious duties – sets forth to every discerning mind that the order of God's government presupposes and contemplates the strongest possible form of government that has ever been known on the earth. Men have come here in years past, and in speaking of President

Young, they have said that he had a strong government here in Utah; and later on, in speaking of President Taylor, that he had a strong government in Utah, and also that men coming here from abroad to govern the people, simply governed the outsiders, and that the President of the Church governed the Latter-day Saints. This is the way the ungodly speak about it. Latter-day Saints know that the order of God's Church is the perfect order. They know that it is the one intended to give a people strength in the earth, and that strength is in their righteousness, in their virtue, in their purity, and in their union and fellowship with the Spirit, with each other, and with the heavens.

[JD 24:284, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

These principles are very dear and very glorious, and we ought to rejoice above all men in the earth. We may look to the east, to the west, to the north and to the south, and we see all governments, all peoples, all nations, all kindreds and tongues, stirred up with an activity, a spirit of strife and ambition to superiority, and we see that there is continual commotion among them in their political affairs, and in their civil relations. There are a great many disturbances continually going on, and many of the nations are really on the verge of bankruptcy, through the vast debts created to maintain their numerous armies even in the time of peace; while here among this people, though our liberties are menaced and threatened, and our peace would be sometimes disturbed, if we would allow it, yet, by the blessing of God, we enjoy peace in our hearts, such peace as the wicked cannot give to us, nor take from us. The voice of Him that spake to the waves of Gennesaret, and commanded them to be still, speaks to us, and while dark clouds and the thunderings and lightnings roll over the political horizon, yet in the hearts, in the homes, and in the habitations of the just there is peace, such as the wicked know not of, and it bespeaks the truth of the revelation which says, that not long hence, the people of Zion shall be the only people that will not be at war among themselves, and that the day will be when they who will not take up the sword against their neighbor, will have to flee to Zion, of which this is the embryo.

[JD 24:284 – p.285, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

Look abroad and see what the Lord is doing in the way of judgments. There has scarcely been a year for many years past, when they have seemed to be so terrible as they have been during this present year, so far. Think of one portion of the world where islands of the sea have been sunk, and 100,000 people reported destroyed by earthquake and volcanic eruptions. And another where it is said some 15,000 or 20,000 were likewise destroyed. Think of it! And yet the Lord has preserved us in these mountains – in this region of country that might scientifically be called one of the most volcanic portions of the whole earth. The very face of the earth tells us its character by its extinct volcanoes, its silent craters, and numerous hot springs. Look at the strata of the earth's crust in these canyons, and see its nature. Also the Lord has manifested His judgments by cyclones, etc. The words of the Prophet Joseph, have been and are being verified, those words he uttered before he went to Carthage. Said he: "I call for the four winds of heaven, the thunderings, lightnings, earthquakes, whirlwinds, the hailstorms, pestilence, and the raging seas to come forth out of their hiding places and bear testimony of the truth of those things which I have taught to the inhabitants of the earth as is promised in the revelations that have been given." These were some of his last words among the people. And what have we seen? Scarcely a week last summer without a cyclone or hurricane happening somewhere in the States, destroying towns and villages, or parts thereof.

[JD 24:285, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

We live in times that if we only considered the matter and looked upon it as we should do, that should cause us to draw near unto the Lord, and to live up to every word that proceedeth from His mouth.

[JD 24:285, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

I wish to bear testimony that this Gospel and this order of government which I have been alluding to, is that which brings down the blessings of heaven upon this people. Besides peace and good order, it brings the gifts and blessings of the Gospel, the gift of healing to those who are afflicted and wounded and who are walking



upon the borders of the grave; such are restored and healed by its divine power exercised in the prayers and faith of the Saints.

[JD 24:285, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

The fact of the matter is, those things which are held out as menaces to us, are the things that preserve us from the hands of the wicked, and keep us from forgetting God in the time of prosperity. It is one of the greatest blessings to us, that we are kept continually on the alert, diligently seeking after Him, putting our trust in Him, and then to find how successfully and perfectly He leads us to triumph over our enemies, and makes the mischief they would bring upon us, recoil upon their own heads. Saints find it good to trust in Him.

[JD 24:285, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

The great work that is now upon us – to build temples and to labor in them, calls upon us to perform our duties faithfully; calls upon Presidents of Stakes and Bishops of Wards, that they look well among their peoples, and see if they are not taking upon themselves the responsibilities of other people's sins. Presidents, High Councilors and Bishops, should seek diligently the Spirit of the Lord to know how to deal with and decide between the righteous and the wicked; to know how to pull up the tares without pulling up a great number of the roots of the wheat. When a man has given himself up to be a drunkard, to dishonor the cause of God, and to be picked up in the streets and to become a reproach, until people say, "that is one of your Mormons," it is time the Bishops or Elders, or whosoever's duty it is, were looking after him to see that this evil is put away, and to see that his wife, who may be the deepest mourner over this whole matter, and his children, clothed in sorrow over his conduct, to see that they are cherished and sustained and preserved, lest while pulling up the tares you pull up the wheat also. It requires the skill and wisdom of the Holy Spirit in all of these things to know how to deal in the right way, to save those that can be saved, while those who will not work righteousness, may be known as transgressors, and that we may no longer carry them upon our faith and become partakers of their sins.

[JD 24:285 – p.286, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

In the late organization of 1877, a score of Stakes were organized, a great many more Wards were instituted, many men were called and ordained to be Bishops in the Church who had never given their attention to consider carefully the duties of the bishopric. In view of the responsibilities of this calling, it may not be thought strange that some brethren holding this high and holy office are so afraid that they would do wrong, that they even durst not do right! Now, this is true whether you believe it or not. A great many men hold these important offices, who are so timid and so fearful lest they should do wrong, that they are slow and backward in doing the thing which is right. Now, what is it that makes a man useful and strong in his calling and labor? Is it not his constant labor, and the diligent, actual performance of his duties? What is it that makes the blacksmith's right arm stronger than any other man's? It is because he is all the time using it, and in this way his arm acquires that practice which gives it the greatest attainable strength. If the brethren standing in these responsible places, whether they be Presidents of Stakes or Bishops of Wards, see anything wrong in their Wards, it is their duty to get after it. And it is notably the duty of a teacher to be conversant with the people, and to see that there is no iniquity in the Church. Instead of hardness of feeling or division of sentiment, or mischief of any kind being allowed to exist in your Stake, until it produces party strife, and people take sides with one and sides with another, it is far better to get after the mischief at once, find out where it is, root it out, and set matters right before the peace of families, of neighborhoods, and perhaps the Ward is disturbed. I wish the brethren in authority would heed this matter and wake up to their duties, and not act merely as figureheads, but more like men of God clothed with authority and power. When men standing in such responsible positions are so backward in their duties, they don't know the power of God, nor the spirit of their callings, but the moment they step forward and take hold with a prayerful heart, coming from their closets clothed with the Spirit of God, they find they have the power to make peace and restore union, fellowship and love in the midst of the people, and the people would love and bless them in return. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

We need a great deal of missionary service at home. We need a deal of labor in all the spheres of life – in the families, in the wards, and in the Stakes of Zion, which are organized and are being built up in the Church in these latter times. The work is constantly spreading. Stakes are being organized in different parts of the country, and the work of God is prospering. Our enemies "can do nothing against the truth, but rather for the truth;" for God will sanctify their evil designs, and their wicked and ungodly purposes, to bring to pass His ends, and to magnify His name and to honor him in the earth.

JD 24:286 – p.287, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883

Let us humble ourselves before the Lord, let us keep His commandments, and teach our children so to do. Let us teach them the principles of purity and righteousness, so that they may go to the house of the Lord, pure as they were born, free from sin, and wholly there to enter into covenants with God that shall abide and stand and endure while time shall last and eternity endure; that they may live, grow and increase, as Abraham grew and increased, become as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore for multitude. For the blessings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have come down upon us. And they that are the children of Abraham will do the works of Abraham. Let us not forget it; that they that would inherit the blessings of Abraham must do the works of Abraham, to entitle them to these blessings.

JD 24:287, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883

Let us draw near to the Lord with our households and strengthen ourselves in the truth. "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."

JD 24:287, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883

We ought to be more careful concerning the observance of the Sabbath. We talk of the great things of the laws of God, such as adultery, and those greater crimes, and murder, which are less frequently committed, but which are most terrible in their effects upon those who do, and are terrible also in their effects upon those who are surrounded and are connected therewith; but let us attend also to the Sabbath, to keep it holy, and go to our meeting and be more dutiful in that respect, and not go to the canyons, or hunt stock, and attend to a multitude of things, which otherwise might be avoided. Let us avoid, if we are going a journey, starting on a Sunday, "just to save one day more for business." Let us undertake no manner of business on that day. Let us reverence the Sabbath as God has commanded us in the revelations of the last days. It is one of the ten commandments: "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, etc." The Lord has been particular. He is going to be particular again. We have been in circumstances where we were rudely dealt with. We have had to travel over the plains, but even there we revered the Sabbath. We stopped our teams, and let the cattle rest, and attended to our duties. Now we have come into a country where we have hardly had to buy land save at a nominal Government figure. Here we found a new world, a place in which we could make a living; and cannot we afford to take time to serve the Lord? to rest our bodies and refresh our spirits, by a study of His holy word increasing our faith also?

JD 24:287 – p.288, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883

Another thing, we ought not to run after doctors as much as we do. "But," says one, "if we have a bone broken we must have somebody to set it." Yes, that is true, but we need not take all the nostrums they can think of. We ought first to go to the Lord and exercise our faith as far as we can make use of it in that direction, and we will make fewer blunders than we do in placing implicit confidence in the medical and surgical professions. When we do this we are certainly sure of one thing – we secure the help of God and the help of angels; and if we are appointed unto death, we want to go. We ought to want to go. Our prayers and supplications should be always conditional – that is, if not appointed unto death that he or she should be raised up. And if the heavens want a man to labor there in any sphere, there is where he should be. If a man is wanted to be on a mission in

Europe, in Germany, or in the States, and he stays at home, he is not where he ought to be. He ought to be where God would have him, there the Holy Spirit will labor with him and help him. But for us to importune the Lord to heal those whom He has appointed unto death is just like asking – as we do once in a while – a man to go on a mission, and we get a long petition saying that he is such a blessed dear good man, or he has been such a good school master, "Do, pray, President let him stop." Now, when the Presidency want a man to go on a mission, he ought to go. It is best for that man that he should go. It is best for all concerned that he should go to the place he is sent, and labor with all his heart. Just so with us. Here we are on a mission in the world. The matter of death is a very small matter. It is a matter of life or death to be sure; but if the Lord does not want us here, and we are taken away, His will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

[JD 24:288, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

I do not wish to occupy more time for fear of infringing upon the rights of others.

[JD 24:288, Franklin D. Richards, October 6, 1883](#)

I pray the Lord to still bless Israel, to bless us with humility, and with faithfulness in the keeping of His commandments; then we shall see more and grander things accomplished on His part, just in proportion to the faithfulness with which we perform the duties devolving upon us. May the Lord help us to do this; and to walk in the way of life, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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John Taylor, October 7, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

With some Remarks by President George Q. Cannon,

delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday Afternoon, October 7th,

Semi-Annual Conference, 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

THE PRESIDENT FEELING A LITTLE WEAK IN BODY ASKED THE CONSIDERATE ATTENTION  
OF THE CONGREGATION – GOD INTERESTED IN THE WELFARE OF ALL THE HUMAN  
FAMILY – THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH, AND THE RESPONSIBILITY RESTING UPON  
THE PRIESTHOOD – GOD HAS GIVEN TO EVERY ONE A PORTION OF HIS SPIRIT – THE  
PROMPTINGS OF THAT SPIRIT – THE WICKEDNESS OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH  
IN THE DAYS OF NOAH – WHY THE FLOOD CAME – THE ANTE-DILUVIANS WOULD NOT  
REPENT – THE GOSPEL AGAIN PREACHED AS A WARNING – PERSECUTION – OUR

## RELATIONSHIP

TO THIS NATION IN A POLITICAL POINT OF VIEW – A COMMONWEALTH HAS BEEN BUILT UP IN THESE MOUNTAINS BY THE "MORMONS" UNDER THE BLESSING OF GOD – UNFAIRLY TREATED AS A PEOPLE BY THE PARENT GOVERNMENT – THE LATTER–DAY SAINTS HAVE RIGHTS WHICH THEY WILL SEEK LEGALLY TO MAINTAIN – CONCLUSION.

[JD 24:289, John Taylor, October 7, 1883](#)

Permit me to say that in consequence of the immense multitude that has assembled on this occasion, it will be absolutely necessary that the strictest order and quietude should be maintained, in order that all may hear; for it is a great labor to address so many thousands of people. As I feel a little weak in body I hope, therefore, you will give me your quiet and considerate attention.

[JD 24:289, John Taylor, October 7, 1883](#)

We have listened to a great many interesting principles since the commencement of this conference.

[JD 24:289, John Taylor, October 7, 1883](#)

We occupy to–day a very peculiar position, and it is proper that we, as Latter–day Saints, should comprehend that position and our various responsibilities in relation to the world in which we live, the nation with which we are associated, and the duties and responsibilities which devolve upon us as messengers of salvation to proclaim the Gospel to mankind. It is further necessary that we should comprehend the past, that we should comprehend the present, and that we should also – under the influence and by the direction of the Spirit of the living God – comprehend the things of the future; for we, as Latter–day Saints, have to do with the past we have to do with the present, and we have to do with the future.

[JD 24:289 – p.290, John Taylor, October 7, 1883](#)

In relation to the inhabitants of the world generally, I sometimes think that we entertain very erroneous notions concerning them – that our ideas are too narrow and too contracted, that we do not comprehend the relationship in which they stand to God our Heavenly Father – and we are apt to fall into an error which was indulged in by the Jews in former ages, and to cry out, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we." Because God has conferred upon us light and intelligence, and revealed His will unto us, we are too apt to look down upon the rest of mankind as aliens and undeserving of Divine regard; but we are told that God has made of one blood all the families of the earth, and that He has given unto them a portion of His Spirit to profit withal. We are also informed, that God is the God and Father of the spirits of all flesh. We are given to understand that He feels interested in the welfare of all the human family, for it is written that they are all His offspring. Therefore, we as Latter–day Saints, ought to feel towards the world and the inhabitants thereof, as God our Heavenly Father feels towards them; for we are told that God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son to atone for their sins, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish, but have everlasting life, and if this is the feeling of our Heavenly Father towards the inhabitants of the earth, we ought to entertain the same sentiment. When Jesus was on the earth, when He established the Gospel upon it, as it has been established in these last days, He said: "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." And when He commissioned His Apostles, His command was: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." The damnation or condemnation of the people who rejected the Gospel He could not help; He offered unto them the words of life, and according to eternal laws that exist in the heavens, men must be governed by certain principles, if they desire to associate

with the Gods, and if when the Gospel was preached they did not receive it, the condemnation rested with them. And the condemnation grows out of this: that light had come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

[JD 24:290 – p.291, John Taylor, October 7, 1883](#)

The Lord Jesus has given us a commission of the same kind to the world of mankind, and you have heard during this Conference of the manner in which these things were introduced, so that it is unnecessary for me to repeat them. Suffice it to say, that they were introduced by the opening of the heavens, by the appearance of God our heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ, by the administering of holy angels, by the restoration of the Priesthood, and by the revelation of His will to man. You comprehend very well the nature of the organization, and the duties devolving upon certain individuals and quorums in this Church. The Twelve are set apart as special witnesses to the nations of the earth, and are empowered and authorized to open up the Gospel, to introduce it, and to turn the keys thereof to all people, and the word to the Apostles – and to others associated with them – to the Elders of Israel generally is, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned." This is just as it was in former ages. To assist the Twelve in the labors in which they are engaged, are the Seventies, who are called as special witnesses to the nations of the earth. What for? Who organized these Seventies, and these Twelve, and who dictated their duties and responsibilities? The Lord. Why did He do it? Because, as in former ages, He felt interested in the welfare of the human family, and it is not and never was the will of God, that mankind should perish, but that they all might be brought to a knowledge of the truth, and to an obedience thereof, if they saw proper, and if not, when the Twelve, the Seventies, the Elders, and the various officers who have been ordained and set apart to preach the Gospel, have fulfilled their missions to the nations of the earth; they have done just what the Lord has required at their hands, and no more. I further wish to state to the Twelve and to the Seventies, and to the Elders, that they are not responsible for the reception or the rejection by the world of that word which God has given to them to communicate. It is proper for them to use all necessary diligence and fidelity, and to plainly and intelligently, and with prayer and faith, go forth as messengers to the nations, as the legates of the skies, clothed upon with authority from the God of Heaven, even the authority of the Holy Priesthood, which is after the order of the Son of God, which is after the order of Melchizedek, which is after the power of an endless life. He has endowed them, as you have heard, with authority to call upon men to repent of their sins, and to be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins, and then He has told them to lay hands on the people thus believing, and thus being baptized, and to confer upon them the gift of the Holy Ghost, and when they have performed their labors, and fulfilled their duties, their garments are free from the blood of this generation, and the people are then left in the hands of God their Heavenly Father. For the people, as before stated, will be held responsible to God for their rejection of the Gospel, and not to us.

[JD 24:291 – p.292, John Taylor, October 7, 1883](#)

I will talk a little further about the people of the earth, who have in their midst Christianity, and other religious professions. I have quoted what is stated in the Scriptures – that God has given to every man a portion of His Spirit to profit withal. But that has nothing to do with the Gospel particularly. It is a principle which is implanted in the heart of every human being outside of the Gospel; and under its influence there are and have been many great and good principles in existence on the earth and among the peoples thereof. All men almost everywhere, possessing any degree of intelligence, feel that it is right to be honest; and all civilized nations, influenced by that feeling, pass laws to punish the thief, the rogue, and the man who possesses himself of other people's property in any unjust manner, and these feelings and principles are generally sustained by the honorable of all countries, and operate more or less among all nations. Chicanery, deception and fraud are looked upon as evils in the moral world; and men influenced by that principle – which, as I stated, is planted in the bosom of every individual – feel to abhor acts of deception and fraud of any kind, although some people practice them to a very great extent. Men under the influence of this spirit in the mercantile world, for instance, consider it a disgrace not to keep their engagements, not to pay their honest debts, and laws are made to reach offenders in those cases. So strong is the feeling of honor among many, – in this nation, in England,

in France, in Germany, and in other European nations, – that very many of those people who would be esteemed honorable in their feelings and instincts, if calamity overtake them and they are unable to meet their liabilities, very frequently commit suicide, wrong though it be; they would rather die than be dishonored. Now, these sentiments of honor are good so far as they go; but this is outside of the Gospel. There are, of course, many dishonest merchants and men of large means, who use their talent and wealth for the purpose of taking advantage of the unwary, and oppressing the poor; and in this and in other countries, annually filch thousands of millions of wealth from the unsuspecting and poor by their questionable acts and insatiable greed; carrying poverty, sorrow, misery and distress to millions of the honest laboring classes. As God has planted a portion of His Spirit within them, He will hold them, and not us, responsible for their acts; and instead of possessing riches and honor their names will become infamous on earth and hereafter. And instead of wallowing in their ill-gotten gains, they will find themselves with Dives, calling upon their victims for a drop of water to cool their parched tongues. Gospel or no Gospel, honorable men cannot condescend to chicanery and deception; and while following the lead of that inward monitor, they could not yield themselves to those heartless and cold-blooded practices. Again, there is a horror in the minds of men generally, about shedding innocent blood, and laws are passed to prevent crimes of that kind and to punish the offender. Where do all these things come from? From that spirit which God has planted in the bosom of all men. You may take the lowest and most degraded of men, some of the greatest criminals perhaps, and they will say, if they see an honorable man, a virtuous man, a kind hearted and generous man, a man who acts uprightly – "We respect that man, we honor him, we respect him for his virtues; we cannot imitate him, we are sorry to say," and in this way they will acknowledge that which is good and feel that they themselves are doing wrong. These are some of the principles that exist in human nature. They are so far good. At the same time there is another sentiment prevails – that is, to protect virtue and chastity. It is not practiced as extensively as it ought to be; a great amount of hypocrisy exists on this subject. But nevertheless it is implanted in the hearts of millions of the human family; and they look upon the seducer of woman and the defiler of himself, and upon those who practice crimes associated with these matters, with disgust. The nations to-day, however, are wallowing in rottenness and corruption in regard to these matters, yet there are thousands and millions of men and women who abhor impurity and vice, and cannot sanction licentiousness in any of its disgusting forms. All these things are good in their place; but this alone is not the Gospel.

[JD 24:292 – p.293, John Taylor, October 7, 1883](#)

Now, in former times, in the days of the flood, for instance, the people became very corrupt, so much so we are told, that the imaginations of the hearts of men were only evil and that continually, and the Scriptures say it repented the Lord that He had made man because of his corruptions and wickedness; but some tell us that it repented Noah that man had been made because of the abominations and evils that he witnessed in his day. God destroyed the wicked of that generation with a flood. Why did He destroy them? He destroyed them for their benefit, if you can comprehend it, but I very much question whether all of you can or not. Let me explain a little. We are told, as I have already said, that God is the God and Father of the spirits of all flesh. We are further told that Jesus the Son of God, existed before the worlds were. It is also stated that He is our elder brother, and that we pre-existed also – that is, our spirits did. When Satan had gained an ascendancy over the inhabitants of the earth so far that they had departed from God, and violated His laws, what would be the feelings of those spirits in the eternal worlds? Let me ask all intelligent people, would they not be apt to turn to their Heavenly Father and say: "Father, look down upon those corrupt inhabitants. Do you see them?" "Yes, I see them and I know them." "Is it just that we, thy children, should be doomed to inhabit those filthy, corrupt bodies, and thus be subjected to Thy wrath and indignation, and it may be thousands of years before we can come back again into thy presence?" "No, it is not just," and on this principle the Father destroyed them with a flood, and recommenced peopling the earth with the seed of a righteous man.

[JD 24:293 – p.294, John Taylor, October 7, 1883](#)

But, let me ask, what did the Lord do before He sent the flood? He sent Noah among them as a preacher of righteousness; He sent Enoch; He sent many Elders among the people, and they prophesied to them that unless they repented, judgment would overtake them; that God would overwhelm the earth with a flood and

destroy the inhabitants thereof – that is, those who would not listen to the Gospel of the Son of God; for the Son of God was in existence then, not personally on earth, but existed in the spirit, and the promise to them was that He should come and atone for the sins of the world. They were taught these things, but they rejected them, that is the great majority of the did so. We are also told that Enoch walked with God, and that he had a city which they called Zion, and people gathered to Zion then, as we gather the people to Zion in this day. Enoch walked with God, and was instructed by Him, and he instructed the people of Zion. There is a very short account of it in the Bible. There we are simply told that "Enoch walked with God and was not; for God took him." It was not thought necessary to say more upon this subject; but the facts were that Enoch and the people of his city, having been taught for upwards of 300 years in the principles of the Gospel before the judgment overtook the world, were translated. Thus the people in that day, had had fair warning, but only a very few paid any attention to it. We are told concerning the Book of Enoch that it is to be testified of in due time, and then we shall know more about these things than we do now. But what of those who were disobedient? They were thrown into prison. How long did they continue there? Until Jesus came. What then did He do? He went and preached to the spirits in prison. He was "put to death in the flesh," we are told in the Bible, "but quickened by the spirit: by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah." Is that in the Bible? inquire the Christians. Yes, that is in your Bible.

[JD 24:294, John Taylor, October 7, 1883](#)

Thus we see the dealings of God with those people. Noah had nothing to do but to preach the Gospel, and obey the word of the Lord. We have nothing to do but attend to the same things. We then leave the inhabitants of the earth in the hands of God. It is not for us to judge them; for the Lord says: "judgment is mine and I will repay." When men have offered unto them the words of life, and they reject these words, they then become amenable to their God, and the condemnation is, as I stated before, that light came into the world; but men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. Men persecute the Elders when they go forth to preach. They persecuted Jesus. They persecuted His disciples. Men, in many instances, even in this nation – a nation that is emphatically called the land of the free, the home of the brave, and the asylum for the oppressed – have put to death some of our Elders, because of the testimony they have borne to them. This, however, is all in accordance with the predictions of Jesus. He told His disciples that, "if the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." In other words, the Savior said, "If they love me, they will love you; if they receive me, they will receive you; if they reject me, they will reject you; if they persecute me they will persecute you." And He further said – and it is singular that He should have to say it to His disciples, men who were good, virtuous, pure, upright, and desirous to promote the welfare of humanity – it is singular that He should have to say: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you." Were these men the enemies of mankind because they told them the truth? All intelligent men would say, No. Are those Elders who go forth to proclaim the Gospel to-day, the enemies of mankind? All intelligent men will say, No. Well, would you try to coerce men? No. Why? Because God does not do it, and He does not want us to do it. I would not use any influence but that of truth to lead any man to a knowledge of the truth. Any other influence, any other power, any other spirit is not of God. There is a species of false Christianity that thinks it is right to persecute people because of their religion, but those possessed of that spirit, whoever they are, are of their father the devil, because his works they do. God believes in the freedom of mankind, and Satan was cast out of heaven because he sought to take away the free agency of man. In various ages of the world, under various guises, the same thing has been attempted. Sometimes political, sometimes religious, and sometimes other pretexts are introduced to oppress mankind, and to deprive them of that liberty which it is their birth right, and which all men have a right, under God's law, to enjoy.

[JD 24:294 – p.295, John Taylor, October 7, 1883](#)

Now I come to talk of our relationship to this nation in a political point of view. We are here in this Territory of Utah. We were told to gather here by the Lord, and we have obeyed His command, just as they did, as I

before stated, in the Zion of Enoch in his day. When we came here we brought our bodies with us. It is not a spiritual thing, for we are all of us very literal and very temporal. We have arms and legs, eyes and ears, like other people – we are the children of our Heavenly Father as others are. He has introduced the Gospel, as I have before said, and one of the principles thereof is that of gathering, and we have gathered together. I need not quote to you the Scriptures in the Bible on this subject, for you know them, and I need not occupy time in quoting them to-day. We are here. Who came in the first place? A number of people from the eastern, western and southern States, who believed the Gospel and obeyed it. It is not necessary to go into our history, and dwell on events as they transpired in Ohio, in Missouri, or in Illinois. Let all those things pass. You can read them in our history. But as I have said we are here. Under what auspices? According to the laws and usages of the United States we settled cities, towns and villages; we settled on farms, etc., which we had a right to do. We purchased and paid for the property that we possess as other citizens do.

JD 24:295, John Taylor, October 7, 1883

At this point, President Taylor, feeling weak, requested President Geo. Q. Cannon to talk a little on the subject.

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### George Q. Cannon, October 7th, 1883

President Cannon said: President Taylor is suffering from fatigue and will take a little rest. We have gathered here, as he has said, and have built up a commonwealth in these mountains – a commonwealth which, if it were not for the prejudice that we have to contend with, would be the admiration of mankind. The despised "Mormons" stripped of their properties, driven out into the wilderness as outcasts, as unfit for the society of their fellow citizens; having been treated in this manner because of alleged crimes – that at least was the justification that was offered for the treatment of the Latter-day Saints – because they were such a wicked people that they deserved to be treated by mob violence, and the whole world, it may be said, acquiesced in the verdict that had been pronounced upon us, or at least there was not sufficient manhood and courage in the nation to raise the voice against it, though thousands of people felt that it was an outrage. Driven into the mountains in this manner, stripped of our possessions; some of us coming into these valleys bare-footed, with scarcely enough clothing to cover us for the succeeding winter, God has blessed the people, and through the wisdom and the power and influence that He has given to this people, they have built, as I have said, a commonwealth in these mountains, that is the admiration of every unprejudiced man. These so-called "Mormon thieves," these "Mormon outlaws," these people who were considered unworthy to live in Illinois and in Missouri have come here, and we behold to-day hundreds of settlements, hundreds of cities, built in the most admirable manner. A government exists here for the protection of the poor as well as the rich; and I have often said, that when we take into consideration the fact of the poverty of the people, that we have had an influx every year of about 3,000, on an average, of foreign immigrants, unacquainted with our methods of living, not familiar with our climate, coming here stripped – that is, coming here with very little to aid them – it is one of the most wonderful things that a community like this can absorb so many people annually, and show no evidences of pauperism. We have no paupers.

JD 24:296 – p.297, George Q. Cannon, October 7th, 1883

Now, my brethren and sisters, these results – and I think them under the circumstances significant – are due to the blessing, wisdom, power and guidance of our God. We have been sustained here by His arm. Yet at the same time we have been treated like a step-child by our parent government. Loyal as we are to the core; believing as we do that the constitution of our country is inspired of God; looking upon this form of government as God-given, and as the best possible form of human government; notwithstanding we entertain



these views, we have been treated from the beginning as though we were aliens, and as though we were a step-child, instead of one born legally, and entitled to the blessings that the rest of our brothers and sisters in the compact of the Union are entitled to. We have had this sort of treatment from the beginning. Every act of ours has been viewed with jealousy. Nevertheless, we have prospered. God has been with us. His blessing has been upon us. We have maintained good order in these mountains, not because governors have been sent here not of our choosing; not because federal officials have been sent here in whose selection we have had no voice; not because for several years back, it has almost been deemed a qualification for officers to hate the "Mormon" people among whom the federal officials were going to serve; but because there has been a union in the midst of the people, there has been a wisdom, there has been a power in the government which God has given. God has developed true statesmanship in the midst of these Latter-day Saints. There are hundreds of men in this community who can take a body of people and go into these desert wilds and build up a city, or a number of cities, and govern and control them in a manner that if the whole world were governed in that way would produce the grandest and happiest results. We have demonstrated our capacity for self-government, and it is inherent, it may be said in the people, springing, as I believe, from the wisdom and blessing that God has bestowed upon men. There is no community to-day, within the confines of these United States, that can furnish so many practical men of this character as can the Latter-day Saints, and the evidences of it are to be seen in the good order that prevails throughout these mountains from north to south, and from east to west, wherever the Latter-day Saints live and have influence. I praise God for it. I claim no credit for man in this matter. It is the divine blessing, and it is in accordance with the plan that has been pre-arranged in the heavens. Why, the very fact that we were permitted to be driven to these mountains, shows us the hand of God in it. There was no room for expansion in our old position. We could not have grown; we could not have developed. But our enemies were determined to make us great, and they thrust us out, and sent us into a land which God evidently had designed to be settled by just such a people as ourselves. There is no such land under the sun to-day. It is the habitat, the true habitat of the Latter-day Saints, admirably adapted in every feature of its climate, of its conditions, of its mountains, of its valleys, of its crystal streams, and the scarcity of water making it admirable for settlement by a sparse people, a people such as we are. No dense populations could live here.

[JD 24:297, George Q. Cannon, October 7th, 1883](#)

President Taylor, at this point, again took the stand and said: I have felt the exertion almost too much for me. I am not very strong in body at present, but I will continue.

[JD 24:297, George Q. Cannon, October 7th, 1883](#)

We consider as Latter-day Saints, that we have rights here, and although we have been dealt with, as we would call it, rather scurvily by the government that ought to foster us, yet at the same time we have strictly adhered to the letter of the law, even in the face of the assumed purity those people (our enemies) profess to attach to themselves. We have not resisted any of these things, but have treated those men who came as our oppressors, if you please, with kindness and due respect, notwithstanding they have introduced many things in our midst, at variance with the laws and constitution of the United States, and with our rights as American citizens. We have yielded for the time being, but we purpose in behalf of ourselves, of our children, in behalf of the institutions of this nation, and of thousands of honorable men in it, to test these things to "the last bat's end," and see, legally and constitutionally, whether this nation will sustain these acts or not, and then if they do we will leave them in the hands of God, and pursue our course, trusting in Him. But one thing I will say, and that is that this cause is onward; and as my brethren have said, so say I, that God has commenced it, and He will take care of it. I know what I am saying. I know when I am speaking that I am speaking not only to you, but to the whole world; for it will be published to the world. And I tell you Latter-day Saints not to fear, not to have any trembling in the knees, for the God of Israel is on the side of Israel, and hosts of angels also. There are more for us than there can be against us; and God will sustain the right and take care of, and preserve His people, if they will only do right.

[JD 24:297 – p.298, George Q. Cannon, October 7th, 1883](#)

We have embraced the Gospel. We have placed ourselves in another position from that of the world. We have entered into sacred covenants with the Lord, and He expects us to fulfill our covenants, and those who do not fulfill them will be condemned. There are certain rules and regulations that exist in the heavens, as well as on the earth. We are told that before we can enter into the celestial kingdom of God, we shall have to pass by the angels, and the Gods, and if the Latter-day Saints aim at a celestial exaltation, they must live and abide by the celestial law, or they will not get it, any more than the Gentiles will. Hear it, ye Latter-day Saints! God expects you to be pure, virtuous, holy, upright, prayerful, honest, obedient to His law, and not to follow the devices and desires of your own hearts. God has revealed many things to you, and He will reveal many more. He expects you to abide His law, and those who do not want to abide it, had better quit to-day, the sooner the better, for God expects us to do His will in all things. If we are Seventies we have to go to the nations of the earth. If we are members of the Twelve, we have also to go to the nations and preach the Gospel, or see that this work is done. If we are Presidents of Stakes, we must do our duty, draw nigh to God, and seek for the revelation of His will, that we may know the things we do, and the things whereof we testify. If we are Bishops, we must perform our duties, or we will be moved out of our place. I do not care who it is these words may effect; for God is building up a Zion, and that Zion means pure in heart, the honorable, the upright, the virtuous, and those whose sympathies extend to the promotion of the welfare of the human family. He expects us to operate in behalf of the interests of a fallen world, and to bring all to a knowledge of the truth that will listen to it and obey it. He then expects us to build temples as we have been and are doing. And here permit me to say that I commend the Latter-day Saints for the energy they have displayed in these things. And it is for us to honor our God, and to obey all just and constitutional laws, and to be quiet and peaceable, and operate for and be the friends of mankind, but do not condescend to their pernicious, corrupt, and damnable practices, or God will judge you as He will judge them. It is for us to do right, and work righteousness, and God will bless us. We need have no fear pertaining to the future; and when we have completed these temples, we will go and administer therein the sacred ordinances of God's house, and the Spirit and blessing of God will rest upon us, and we will stand, as the Scriptures say, as saviors upon Mount Zion, and the Kingdom shall be the Lord's; and woe! to them that fight against Zion. Amen.

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Moses Thatcher, April 6th, 1883

REMARKS BY ELDER MOSES THATCHER,

Delivered at the General Conference, Saturday Morning, April 6th, 1883.

Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs and John Irvine.

A FEW QUESTIONS EVERY LATTER-DAY SAINT CAN ANSWER FOR

HIMSELF – THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT – THE PROPER USE OF

RICHES – NO COMPARISON BETWEEN EARTHLY WEALTH AND ETERNAL

RICHES – PRINCIPLE MUST NOT BE SACRIFICED FOR

RICHES – CONSECRATION – SATAN REBUKED – WE OUGHT TO CULTIVATE THE FRUITS

OF THE SPIRIT – THE WORK OF GOD ONWARD AND UPWARD – THE FATE OF THOSE

## WHO SACRIFICE PRINCIPLE AT THE SHRINE OF GREED – CONCLUSION.

[JD 24:299, Moses Thatcher, April 6th, 1883](#)

The thought frequently arises in my mind, are we as a people honest and sincere in the professions we make? Do we prove by our dealings, our acts and conversations, that we sincerely believe in all of the principles of the Gospel which we have been willing to preach to others; or do we sometimes in our weakness, preach one thing and practice another? Do we manifest more of the fruits of the flesh than of the spirit? Do we manifest greater love for the things of this world, and the honors of men, than we do for eternal riches and the honor of God? These are questions every Latter-day Saint ought to be able to answer for himself.

[JD 24:299 – p.300, Moses Thatcher, April 6th, 1883](#)

We are bidden of Paul to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and to be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. The purpose that the Lord had in view in gathering us to this land, is at least partly reflected in this language of Paul, namely: that we may sanctify the body by developing the fruits of the spirit. Honesty and sincerity are fruits of the spirit; to be true to God and each other are manifestly fruits of the spirit; purity of thought and action is fruit of the spirit. Injustice, unrighteousness, dishonesty, intemperance, impurity, insincerity and hypocrisy are fruits of the flesh. All these are sometimes manifested in man's undue love for the things of the world, and in his contempt for the things of God. Those who live for eternal riches are thoughtful, devoting time and reflection and study to the word of God; they are the people who desire the Lord to search and prove them, and know their hearts, and see if there be any wickedness in them. You see true religion manifested in such people by their attention to the sick, by their administering to the orphan and widow; you see them friends to God's poor. You see them opposed to oppression of every form, opposed to the encroachments of those who would do the people harm. You see them urging the people to works of righteousness not only by precept but by example also. You see them, as Elders of the Church, willing to go to the ends of the earth to preach the Gospel abroad, or to devote their time and talent to the education of the youth at home. They are earnest and sincere; they live in the light of the Spirit, doubting not the principles of eternal truth. They are not filled with doubt and apprehension, but are full of faith and good works. They desire to see the people advance and prosper, securing temporal wealth while seeking earnestly to obtain the greater riches, the riches of eternity. They are they who appreciate the authority and power of the Priesthood, the efficacy of prayer, through which the sick are healed. To be worthy instruments in the hands of God, to administer in His name is more gratifying to them than are the riches of the world.

[JD 24:300, Moses Thatcher, April 6th, 1883](#)

During the short time I may speak I desire to direct my remarks especially to the young upon this point, for here as elsewhere we are subject to laws producing constant changes. To-day, the Latter-day Saints are far more prosperous in the things of this world than they were a few years ago; and it is right and proper they should be. The Lord desires to bestow these things upon His people. There is no harm in the possession of properly acquired riches; there is no harm in wealth. God created the riches of the earth; He created the ability of the mind, the intellect and faculties of the man which enables him to accumulate wealth. But the love of riches is dangerous. Excessive love for the things of time has led men in all ages to forget their God, and indulge themselves in things wherein there is no profit. This is what we, as individuals, and as a whole people, should avoid. Excessive love of riches, an unnatural desire to accumulate wealth at the sacrifice of principle – and at the expense of God's honest and deserving poor – produces a gulf of separation over which preaching can never throw a bridge. We should realize that God being the Father of us all, loves the humble and deserving poor as much as He loves the rich who are alike worthy. We should realize that all are friends and brethren equally, if equally worthy, able to approach the throne of God.

[JD 24:300 – p.301, Moses Thatcher, April 6th, 1883](#)

I have heard expressions from some young people recently to the effect that, "The theory of the Gospel is all right, and while it is beautiful, we cannot deny the fact that even in Israel there is great power in wealth." Of course there is. There always has been and probably always will be, because the possession of wealth produces power. We see this manifested everywhere, in the history of every nation; but when we contrast the power of earthly wealth with that of eternal riches, there can be no comparison, the one being transitory, the other eternal; the one is measured by time, the other by eternity. A man may be true and honest before the Lord, and yet be rich in the things of this world. God has had servants in time past who were wealthy, and yet devoted as any could be. Abraham, Job and David for instance. It is true the subsequent fall of the latter might be traceable, to an extent, to indulgences and luxuries resulting from his use of wealth. But I contend the riches of the earth belong to the Lord, and He can bestow them upon whom He pleases, and it will be His good pleasure to bestow them upon His people when they are in a proper state to receive and use them to His honor and glory. But it is a mistake for our young people to imagine that it is better to lay aside the work of God, to refuse to go on missions, labor in the ministry at home, or act as teachers in the Sunday Schools – it is a great mistake, and I will tell you why. Riches unless they have been acquired under the approbation of God, will not produce happiness. The possession of riches may give influence, power, fame, adulation, even among us, but unless those who possess it are men of God, unless they are men of faith, believing in the atoning blood of Jesus, unless they believe in the Priesthood of God, and its right to direct in matters both spiritual and temporal, they are not happy, they do not possess the riches that will guide them safely through the veil into the presence of God. They may believe all the ordinances that faithful men believe; they may have their wives sealed to them over the holy altar of God; may have their children married according to the new and everlasting covenant; come to conference meeting; pay their tithing; and finally consecrate all their goods; but if their hearts are not converted, if they are not free with the freedom wherewith Christ once made them free, if they have gone back into the bondage of the world, they have lost their golden opportunity. As they die without faith, so will they rise without faith. If they have been infidel to principle, slow to hear, if their hearts have been hardened, and they have fought secretly or openly against the principles of the Almighty, when they wake up behind the veil they will find that in their love for the things of this world they have lost that which it may take ages to regain.

[JD 24:301 – p.302, Moses Thatcher, April 6th, 1883](#)

I bear my testimony that these things are true. And while there are wealthy men in this Church whom I respect and who I believe to be good men, yet it is a dangerous thing for our young people to conceive the idea that they must sacrifice principle at the shrine of policy, and be hypocrites in order to advance their interests and wield the influence and power of wealth in the midst of this people – such an idea is dangerous, and it is a thing that we, as Elders in Israel, should guard against. Give me the influence, give me the faith and prayers of a man who is willing to go to the ends of the earth for Christ's sake, and has healing virtues in him, power to comfort, bless and heal the sick, bind up the broken-hearted and lead to eternal life, rather than the influence of any man without these, though he may be as rich as Jay Gould. It is proper and right to use the wealth of this world in beautifying Zion, for the benefit of those worthy who need it – for the widow and the orphan, and for the benefit of honest industries and righteous poor who need assistance. A man should be as willing to financier for the good of the whole people as for himself in the same capacity. The same energy should be displayed in the one case as in the other. We should learn to do for the people of God that which we are anxious to do for ourselves. We should learn that the Spirit and power of God will lead unto all righteousness, but that a man cannot be dishonest and enjoy that Spirit; that he cannot monopolize the natural avenues of wealth, depriving the poor of their rights, and enjoy the spirit that comes from heaven. Greed often pushes men beyond legitimate acquisition into respectable robbery. If there are such in our midst, when trials come, when dark days approach, there will be shaking in the marrow of their bones; and faith will decrease as wealth wrongfully acquired increases; and as such come to their end darkness will be before their eyes they will fear the things that are beyond the veil; their faith will waver; they will not know whether the atoning blood of Jesus Christ will reach beyond the grave or not, but if it should they will not know whether they will be able to stand in the presence of God, without a blush. I bear you my testimony that men who devote themselves to the riches of this world at the sacrifice of principle, will rise in the resurrection poor, miserably poor! They will be in greater poverty than the poorest in all the House of Israel.

We had better think of the revelations of Jesus Christ. We have talked a little about co-operation in the past. We have sometimes alluded to consecration. I heard a story in regard to a brother in Farmington, a few years ago. The question of gathering the poor Saints from England came up in an evening meeting. The brother had two cows, and he donated one for the purpose mentioned. In going home a spirit of darkness said unto him: "You have been very foolish. You have given away one of the two cows you possessed, while Brother so-and-so, a much wealthier man than you, has only given five dollars. Now, you have done a wrong thing, a foolish thing." And thus was this brother tempted until he turned round and said, as though addressing himself to Satan: "If you don't cease tempting me, I will go back to the Bishop, and give him the other one." [Laughter.] Now, that is just as I feel. If at any time the Lord has blessed me with means, and I am tempted not to do as I should, because of the actions of others. I hope I shall always when tempted, feel to draw near unto the Lord, and ask His assistance. I would rather give all I have – and it is not much – and be like an Indian, clothed in a blanket, and be acceptable to the Lord, than be clothed in velvet and surrounded with riches, feeling that my prayers were never heard by the Almighty.

JD 24:302, Moses Thatcher, April 6th, 1883

There is no reason why we may not have all the fruits of the Spirit in our midst. There is no reason why we may not have the gifts and blessings of the Gospel. A circumstance somewhat marvelous came recently under my personal observation. A little boy was thrown from a horse violently, his head striking the hard ground with great force, causing severe concussion of the brain. The doctor was called, the Elders also. The eyes of the poor little fellow were fixed and stony; all were greatly alarmed for the case was a serious one, the physician saying that blood was evidently clotting on the brain; the right side was paralyzed; the wrist almost pulseless. He went into convulsions while the Elders were administering to him, and many present believed that he was dying, but the grasp of death was broken by the power of faith. Unbelief was rebuked, and health and reason were speedily restored. Next morning the boy was running about the rooms with no soreness about his head whatever! I say the gift of healing by the power of God, exists in the Church, and it might be far more prevalent if we would live for it.

JD 24:302 – p.303, Moses Thatcher, April 6th, 1883

I bear my testimony, in conclusion, that this is the work of God. I know that its destiny is onward and upward; whatever lies may be concocted, whatever powers may combine to retard its progress, God will eventually make it the head and not the foot. There are boys growing up in these mountains who will so learn to love liberty, and will so desire to see all humanity free, that they will maintain the principles of our national constitution and all just principles, and will invite the oppressed of every land and clime to enjoy liberties which God will maintain in His Kingdom – the liberty wherewith Christ will make them free.

JD 24:303, Moses Thatcher, April 6th, 1883

On the other hand I bear my testimony that men who, in the Church or out of it, sacrifice principle at the shrine of greed, who take away the earnings of the honest poor, who monopolize the avenues of trade to the oppression of God's honest people, will wake up beyond the veil disappointed, unhappy, grieved and damned. They will be damned in that God will so quicken their minds, that they will see the past, and understand the future. They will fully comprehend that in the brief space, perhaps, of a few years, they sacrificed opportunities, and gave away chances whereby they might have become kings unto the Most High God, and saviors on Mount Zion; that they gave all these blessings for the love of self, the honor of men, worldly riches; and the testimony of widows and orphans will come up against them before the eyes of the Lord, and they will see it and comprehend it, and in the conception of their great loss, they will feel that they have been damned.

JD 24:303, Moses Thatcher, April 6th, 1883

I pray that we may be faithful and true to our religion, and that we may have the guidance and inspiration of the Most High. I pity a man that has no inspiration. I pity any set of men who seek in their ignorance and blindness to retard the progress of God's Kingdom.

[JD 24:303, Moses Thatcher, April 6th, 1883](#)

There is a day of deep trial for those who love the things of this world more than they love the things of God. If we have such among us, I earnestly hope and pray that the Spirit of God may rest upon them, that they may see the error of their way, repent, turn unto the Lord, and be saved. Amen.

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Charles W. Penrose, September 23rd, 1883

DISCOURSE BY ELDER CHARLES W. PENROSE,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, September 23rd, 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

ELDERS ALWAYS READY FOR DUTY – NO SALARIED PREACHERS IN  
THE CHURCH – NO COMPULSION IN THE WORK OF THE ELDERS – THE LIBERTY  
OF LAW – SIN BRINGS ITS PENALTIES, RIGHTEOUSNESS A SURE  
REWARD – ASSUMPTION OF DIVINE AUTHORITY – RESTORATION OF THE ANCIENT  
PRIESTHOOD – RELIGION IN POLITICS – THE SECRET BALLOT – THE  
ONE-MAN-POWER – THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC – CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM  
FOR ALL – THE EFFECTS OF THIS WORK ON THE WORLD.

[JD 24:304, Charles W. Penrose, September 23rd, 1883](#)

We always feel it our duty when called upon to undertake any task which may be imposed upon us by our brethren in authority in the Church, no matter how unexpected it may be to us, or how much we may shrink from the duty we are called upon to perform. Brother Goss, who has just spoken to us, at the call of the servants of God, went to his native land to preach the Gospel. Every other Elder in the Church holds himself ready – that is, if he is in the line of his duty – to respond to a similar call; also if required to do so to officiate at home.

[JD 24:304, Charles W. Penrose, September 23rd, 1883](#)

We have no paid ministry in this Church, no hired clergy either to preach at home or to go out as missionaries; but every man in the Church who has received a testimony of the truth, and a portion of the Holy Priesthood –

which is generally diffused among the male members of the Church – stands ready to perform any duty in connection with his calling in the ministry. I am called upon this afternoon to speak to this congregation, and I respond in this spirit, the spirit in which our brethren go abroad to preach the Gospel, or stay at home and preach it, or go to some distant part of the Territory and help to colonize it, or to perform any other work that is necessary for the general good, for the building up of the Church of Christ, and for the benefit of the people belonging to that Church who have been gathered from various nations.

JD 24:304 – p.305, Charles W. Penrose, September 23rd, 1883

It is supposed by a great many people, that there is a spirit of tyranny and oppression existing in this Church, wielded by a few men, or concentrated in one man who stands at the head, by which the people are coerced into certain lines of action. It is supposed that our brethren who are called upon at our conferences to go to various parts of the world in the interest of the Church, act under this compulsion. Now, this is a very great mistake. It seems difficult to convince people who are not of our faith that there is not some coercive power or organization among the Latter-day Saints by which people are obliged to do this, that, or the other. They have not learned the secret of the power that exists in this organization. They could find it out if they would investigate, but it is very difficult indeed to get people who do not believe as we do to look at this thing with any degree of impartiality. They are so prejudiced against it. They think that it must be wrong to start with, and hence do not look into it in the way they should if they want to find out the truth. Now, the spirit that actuates the Latter-day Saints has been manifested in the remarks of Brother Goss, who has just returned from a mission to his native land. He did not come to Utah to find out if this thing called "Mormonism," was true or not. He found that out in his own native land. He heard the principles of the Gospel, and was led to believe them, and believing them he was baptized into the Church; hands were laid upon him by the Elders, and he received the Holy Ghost, which gave him a testimony that the work was true. That is what moves the people to come here from all parts of the world. so with the Elders who are called upon at conference, or at other times by the presiding authorities of the Church, and sustained by the vote of the people, to perform any labor or mission of a public character; they are ready at once, and they start to do it willingly and cheerfully – although sometimes they shrink very much from the task before them – because they know the call is right; they know they are engaged in a great and glorious work; they have a testimony within themselves that it is true, and that it has come from God. They have a perfect assurance – a knowledge they call it. Some people may dispute technically as to whether it is knowledge or not, but it is knowledge to them. They are as sure that it is true, and that it is divine, as that they are alive. That is pretty near to knowledge if it is not exact knowledge; and because of this they are ready to perform any work at home, or to take their gripsacks in their hands and start out abroad at their own expense. They receive no salary. They do not expect to gain any earthly reward, but they are of the firm conviction that it is their bounden duty to help their fellow men to come to the same knowledge as they have arrived at themselves. And they are not only willing to do this, but if it is a temporal labor that they are called upon to perform, if they have the spirit of their calling and duty, they are just as willing to perform that temporal duty as to act in a spiritual capacity. Are they obliged to do this? No. They act in the spirit of self-sacrifice, trying to do good because they feel under obligation, as servants of God, to do anything they can to help build up this great latter-day work, which God has commenced in the earth.

JD 24:305 – p.306, Charles W. Penrose, September 23rd, 1883

Some people say they cannot understand how it is that these Latter-day Saints are so united, unless they are held together by some secret bond or some kind of tyranny. They cannot understand how it is that when the leaders of the people speak, the people are willing to move in a body, with scarcely a dissenting voice, unless it is that they are terrorized or coerced by some power that is not known on the outside. Now, all the bondage and terrorism that exist in this church is the terrorism and bondage – if such a thing can be – of conscience. The Latter-day Saints not only firmly believe in this work, but have received a spiritual influence which has given them an inward testimony or knowledge that this work is of God. They have no doubt, no dubiety, they know it is true. Hence, when any movement is necessary for the building up of the great work of God, which they know to be true, they feel it is their duty to respond. That is all the bondage there is; that is all the

terrorism there is. We have in this Church and in this Territory, perfect liberty. The Gospel is the "perfect law of liberty;" but it is the liberty which is confined to that which is right. There is no true liberty outside the bounds of wholesome law. When we act outside the limits of proper law, and claim that to be liberty, it is not liberty, it is license, and it is injurious to the individual and to the mass. If this people called Latter-day Saints obey any instructions that they may receive from the brethren who are appointed to lead them, they do so in the spirit of liberty. They do not do it because they choose to do it. They do it because they are willing to do it. They do not perform the duty because they are obliged to do it, because of any coercive power exercised over them, or because they will be called upon to submit to any penalty; but they do it because they please to do it, and they please to do it because it is right. I admit that sometimes they may do things which seem at first to be irksome. They could refuse; but they feel that if they do refuse they will suffer loss. In what way? Their religion teaches them that every good thing that they do is bound to bring its reward, and that every evil thing which they do is sure to bring its punishment, either in this world or in the world to come; that is, that sin inevitably brings its penalty, and that righteousness certainly brings reward. Therefore, if a Latter-day Saint is called upon to perform anything in connection with this which he feels it is his duty to do, and he neglects that duty, he expects at some time to be punished or suffer loss for that neglect.

JD 24:306 – p.307, Charles W. Penrose, September 23rd, 1883

Our organization is a very glorious one. It is a perfect organization – perfect – because it is divine. It was not made by man. It was not originated by Joseph Smith, or by any of his associates. It came down from above, direct from the eternal worlds. It was not taken out of the Bible. It was not taken out of the Book of Mormon, or any other book, although it is the same organization that existed on the earth in previous ages, brief accounts of which, in patches here and there, may be found in the various books which compose the Bible. But it was not taken out of that book. God Almighty revealed it. And the authority which men exercise in the Church – the authority of the Priesthood – did not come out of the bosoms or brains of men. It came by direct manifestation from on high. Heavenly beings who were once earthly beings, men who once lived on the earth holding that authority, and who passed away and have progressed (call it evolution if you please), have come back to the earth, and ordained men to the same authority and Priesthood which they held. These men did not take this authority upon themselves from reading the last chapter of Matthew and Mark, in which we read that Jesus Christ sent out eleven men and told them to go to all the world, and preach the Gospel in His name. A great many "Christian" ministers have assumed the authority given to those eleven men, and to no one else. Men who held this authority in ancient times, on the earth, and have gone into a higher sphere in the due course of their progression, by divine commandment have come back to earth, and ordained men to the authority and power and Priesthood which they held while they were in the flesh. That is why we claim that the authority to administer in the name of the Lord is in this church and in no other church on the earth; that all other Priesthoods, so called, are spurious. We do not say that there are not good men in other denominations, claiming to hold authority to preach and administer in the name of the Lord; but we claim that they have no authority in reality, because they themselves have declared that all communication has been shut off from the heavens, for hundreds of years, and as there has been no communication from the heavens for hundreds of years, no authority could have been conferred, unless it was continuous, from the days of the Apostles to the present day. But most of those persons who now claim to hold authority from God to preach and to administer in the ordinances of the Gospel, repudiate the idea that the authority was continuous, and declare that after the days of the apostles, darkness came in, that the world went astray, and that an abominable church arose in the place of that which was established by Jesus and His Apostles.

JD 24:307 – p.308, Charles W. Penrose, September 23rd, 1883

Now, this authority which has been sent down from God out of heaven, is similar in its nature to that exercised by men about whom we read in the Bible. We read about one in the patriarchal ages called Melchizedek, who held this Priesthood. Abraham went and paid his tithing to him after he came back from overcoming those kings that he conquered. Melchizedek, we are told, was the Prince of Salem, and he was a Priest of the Most High God. And after many generations had passed away, Jesus of Nazareth came upon the earth and claimed to have that same Priesthood. He was called to be a Priest after the order of Melchizedek,



that is, He had the same kind of Priesthood that Melchizedek had. We read a little about this Melchizedek, in the Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, and about the Priesthood he held. Some people in reading this confound the Priesthood or authority which Melchizedek had with the man himself. They read it that he was "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life." That is a curious kind of man, is it not? Some people say that that meant Jesus himself. But that could not apply to Jesus, for his descent is given in the Bible. He had a reputed father, Joseph, and a real mother, Mary; and His Father in heaven was His real Father; for we are told that He was the first begotten in the spirit and the only begotten in the flesh. This, then, did not apply to Jesus, nor did it apply to any other man; it applied to the Priesthood or authority which Melchizedek held. The Priesthood of Aaron or Levi, came by descent; it came to a man because he belonged to a certain lineage; but this Melchizedek Priesthood did not come by lineage; it came to all upon whom God pleased to bestow it. Jesus was called to be a Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek, who was the Prince of Salem, a Priest of the Most High God. Moses had this same Priesthood. He received it from Jethro. There was another Priesthood in the days of Moses and Aaron, the Levitical, which descended in a certain lineage from father to son. But when Jesus came on the earth, He received the Melchizedek Priesthood, and that He might receive it in its fullness, Moses and Elias appeared to Him upon the mount of transfiguration. Jesus conferred that same Priesthood upon the Apostles. "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." The same authority that Jesus had, He conferred upon His Apostles, and they conferred it upon others, as they were led by the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, which Christ sent to them after His departure.

[JD 24:308, Charles W. Penrose, September 23rd, 1883](#)

Now, this Priesthood and Apostleship was held in the early Christian Church; but the people put the Apostles to death. They put to death other men who had been called to hold a position of this same authority and Priesthood, and darkness came into the world, and the people have gone down deeper and deeper into darkness, and further and further away from God as generations have rolled on. They have heaped to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they have turned away their ears from the truth, and turned unto fables. The consequence is that this Christian generation have departed from the power of God, from the authority of God, and from the Priesthood of God, and as they confess "like sheep have gone astray."

[JD 24:308, Charles W. Penrose, September 23rd, 1883](#)

But in our day God has restored the old church back again. He has restored the ancient Priesthood, the Priesthood that Moses had, that Abraham had, that Jesus had, that the Apostles had, and that of which Peter, James and John held the keys. God has restored it in the way that I have mentioned – by the ministration of angels from the heavens. The last named persons came down from on high and ordained men to the Priesthood upon the earth, to wit, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, and they, inspired by the Almighty, dictated by the Holy Ghost, the spirit of revelation, have called and ordained other men to the same authority – to go out into the world and preach the everlasting Gospel, and administer in the ordinances thereof. That is the power of this Priesthood.

[JD 24:308 – p.309, Charles W. Penrose, September 23rd, 1883](#)

Does this authority give men any power to bind the souls of men? Not in the least. Does it give men authority to coerce anybody in any shape, form or manner? Not in the least. On the contrary, we are told in the revelations of God, that the power of this Priesthood must not be used to coerce, not to bind the souls of men. It must be by persuasion, by declaration of the truth, by love unfeigned, by the inspiration that attends it, by the manifestation of the power of God that goes with it; it must be used in that way to convince those who hear and who are instructed and directed. They who have this authority and influence really have it in the power of God, and for the good and blessing and benefit of their fellows, and not to coerce them. There is no coercion or bondage in it. But some people will say, "Is there not some kind of coercion in your political affairs? You seem to be united in your voting, not only in your Church matters, but in your politics. How is it that when your people go to the polls, nearly all of them – you may say all of them, for there are very few

exceptions – vote the same ticket?" Well, we hold conference twice a year, in April and October, and upon these occasions the authorities of the Church – the President of the Church, his Counselors, the Twelve Apostles, and all the general authorities – are placed before the people for their vote. For let me tell you that in this Church there are two principles combined – some people think they are opposite and cannot come together, but we have proven in our experience that they can – and these are the theocratic and the democratic principles. They are combined in this organization – the voice of God and the will of the people, the response of the people to that which God says. God commands, and the people say, "We obey; we are ready to listen to the voice of God as it comes from on high." It finds an echo in every heart that is living under the influence and spirit of this work, and the response comes, "I am ready to receive it." When the authorities of the Church are placed before the people, it is very rarely that a contrary vote is seen. Are the people obliged to lift up their hands when called upon to vote in the affirmative? No. They can keep their hands down. They can either vote for or against. That is their privilege; that is their right; it is so recorded in the revelations of God to the Church. Why do they generally – almost always – vote in the affirmative? Simply because they are satisfied that the men who are called to occupy these various positions are men of God, that they are fit for the positions, that they are properly called and ordained, and that they are the right men in the right place. That is the reason they vote in the affirmative.

JD 24:310, Charles W. Penrose, September 23rd, 1883

The same spirit of unity exists among the people in every capacity. If they are called upon to move somewhere else, they are ready to go. They did this at the time the army was sent here. One of the most foolish things the government ever did, was to send that army to Utah. It came about in this way. There were certain judges sent here – we do not always get the best kind of judges; sometimes they are very good lawyers, and sometimes we have men that would be a disgrace to any bar that might be named. Well, we had one of that kind at that time, or just previous to that time, and he and his associates were very corrupt. But because his corruptions were not looked upon favorably or unconcernedly – particularly when the Chief Justice took a vile woman upon the bench with him, a woman who had followed him when he came here, leaving his wife behind – he ran away, went back to Washington, and declared that the "Mormons" had burned the law library, purchased by the government for the benefit of the courts here, and that Utah was in a state of anarchy. Now, it is always unwise to judge from one side of a question; unwise for us, unwise for anybody; both sides of the question ought always to be heard before deciding, but the government judged this question before investigating it. Solomon says: "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him" – in other words he is a fool. The government was unwise in taking the statements of this without hearing what the "Mormons" had to say upon the question. Hence they sent out an army to put down the "rebellious Mormons," supposed to be in hostility to the government. After a while they sent commissioners who found out that all the statements made to the government, and which prompted the sending out of that army, were utterly false in every particular. That can be found on record, if people desire the proof, at Washington. And then the government pardoned the "Mormons" for what they did, or rather for what they had not done. It was very magnanimous, was it not? President Young was governor of the Territory, and the first he heard about this army was that there was an armed mob coming out to Utah, that they boasted they were going to hang the leaders of this Church upon the trees in the mountains, and to take their wives and do as they pleased with them. Well, they did not get here quite as soon as they expected, because some of our brethren went into the mountains to delay the matter for a little while, until it could be investigated. But after a time the troops marched through the city and camped at a place which is now known as Camp Floyd. Before the army reached here, the people had been instructed that the best thing to do was to leave the city and to move south, and to make preparations, if necessary, to destroy their possessions, that they might not fall into the hands of our enemies as they had done before; for this people called Latter-day Saints, had been driven five times from their homes, because of their religion; not for polygamy, because when they were thus driven, except in the case of Nauvoo, plurality of wives was not a part of their creed. The revelation on plural marriage was given in Nauvoo, July, 1843; hence the mobbings, drivings and plunderings to which they had been subjected before that time were inflicted upon them before they claimed to believe in that doctrine. As I have said, they were driven five times from their homes. Many of them were slaughtered; some of their wives were violated; little children were butchered; houses were burned; stock shot down; standing grain was

destroyed; and the Saints were driven from their homes because of their faith. Well, they made preparations when they left this place, to set fire to it, and burn the whole thing, and the people moved south in a body. That was unity, was it not? What was the cause of such unity? President Young gave the word, and they were ready to respond. But they were not obliged to do so. They could have stayed in the city if they chose. There was an army coming. They could have been protected by the army: but they made preparation to set fire to their property, and went forth in a body. How did they come to act in that kind of way? Because they were all moved upon by one common impulse. The spirit that was in the head, was in the body, just as it is with a healthy man. When the head dictates, the whole body responds, to the very extremities, the feet and hands and every part; the whole body thrills with the influence that comes from the head. That is how it was in the Church. The head spoke and the whole body feeling the same spirit, responded.

JD 24:310 – p.311, Charles W. Penrose, September 23rd, 1883

Now, there is just the same unity in our political matters. They are managed as in other parts of the country. The people hold their primaries or caucuses in the different precincts, and select men to act as delegates to the County Convention. Or, if Territorial offices are to be filled, the people select delegates to the Territorial Convention, and when these men meet they take into consideration what shall be for the best interests of the people, and who will be the most likely men to fill the offices vacant, and when that Territorial Convention makes up a ticket, the people are ready to accept it. If that ticket should not happen to have upon it one or two names that they would like to see there, they forego their private opinions in regard to individuals and unite together as a whole. Have they not a right to do that? We think they have. But it is claimed that the church men interfere. Well, they don't interfere. But suppose they did. Suppose the Priesthood of this church or the Twelve Apostles were to get up a ticket and tell the people that it was the best ticket that could be made, have they any right to do that? I think they have. I think the twelve men called Apostles, have just as much right to get up a political ticket, if they please to do so, as twelve lawyers, or twelve doctors, or twelve merchants, or twelve men who are hunting for office, and if the people choose, of their own free will, to go to the polls and vote that ticket, I think they have a right to do so. But those very "liberal" folks who say we are in bondage, want to make us vote as they think – "If you will only vote our ticket," they say, "it will be all right; but if you vote the People's Ticket, or the church ticket, then you are slaves." Well, I have not been able to see the force of that, for the life of me, and I have looked into the matter a good deal. It seems to me that I exercise just as much volition or free will in voting for my friends, men of the same faith, men of the same interests, men who have a stake in this country, men whose interests are embodied here, men who are known, men whose actions I have seen, men whose motives I to a great extent understand by seeing their actions – I say I think I display as much freedom in voting for such men as I would in voting for men I do not like, men in whom I have no confidence.

JD 24:311, Charles W. Penrose, September 23rd, 1883

This cry of bondage is simply got up for effect. There is no truth in it. There is no man, there is no woman in Utah Territory, who is obliged to vote this way, that, or the other way, and as a clear proof of this the fact remains, – a fact that cannot be gainsaid – that our voting is entirely secret. Ballots may be made by anybody, people vote just as they please; but the envelopes in which the ballots are enclosed – furnished from the county authorities, uniform in size and in color – must not be marked or defaced in any way. When the voter goes to the polls, he or she – for the women here vote as well as the men; they vote in church, they vote in state; they have the same freedom and rights in these respects as man – he or she takes the ballot, with the names on it for whom they choose to vote, and then put the ballot in the envelope, which is handed to the judge, and no one can tell how the ballot was cast. There is no chance of repeating here. That is why some folks don't like our style of voting. There is no chance for ballot stuffing.

JD 24:311 – p.312, Charles W. Penrose, September 23rd, 1883

Now, you may think this has nothing to do with religion. In our eyes it has a great deal to do with it. We think that eating, drinking, wearing clothes, and the performance of various temporal acts, as they are called, are a

part of religion, that is if they are done under a religious spirit and influence. We desire to do right, to serve God, and to keep from evil. That is religion. And I think that religion ought to have a great deal to do with politics. I do not mean to say that people should be compelled by religion or any other power to vote or to refrain from voting; but I do think that religion should enter into all the acts of life, in political as well as social matters; religion should enter into all things; a religious influence should have power over the minds of men for good. Now, then, seeing there is a secret ballot, and nobody can tell how a person votes, where can the coercion be? How are you going to find out how this man or that woman voted, or how they did not vote? You cannot do it. The fact remains, then, that there can be no coercion in voting, even if it was desired. I refer to these things this afternoon, in connection with the subject of our liberty, the liberty which the people called Latter-day Saints claim, to worship God or not worship Him; to perform any religious duty, or not perform it; to do anything that is required of them, or to do the contrary; we claim that liberty in church and in state, and in all things.

[JD 24:312, Charles W. Penrose, September 23rd, 1883](#)

Now, some people have an idea that in this Church women are compelled to be married! Just think of it for a moment, will you? How are you going to manage that? How are you going to compel a woman to do anything that she does not want to do? Such an idea as that must have sprung up in the mind of some one who does not understand female nature. It is preposterous. There is no such thing in this Church. This Church is a church of liberty; that is, within the lines of the law. If people take the liberty to do wrong, to transgress the laws of God, to do that which is impure, they can be disfellowshipped – cut off the Church; and that is the full extent of the power of penalty in this Church – the power of excommunication, withdrawing fellowship, making a person not a member; that is the extreme penalty of the laws of the Church of Christ – excommunication. I think sometimes we have a little too much liberty in this Church. People are allowed sometimes to go on doing that which is wrong a little too long. People are allowed to speak evil of their brethren too much. People are allowed to find fault with men that are striving to do them good, and to do the world good. I think sometimes when I look around and see what transpires in this city, that there is a little too much liberty; not that I would infringe upon the rights of any man or any woman; I would give every man and every woman the privilege of doing that which they pleased, so long as they did not interfere with my rights and the rights of others. We do not feel at liberty to interfere with the rights of our neighbors, nor to infringe upon the rights of anybody, nor do we believe that anybody has a right to infringe upon our rights. If they are infringed upon, we will stand up in self-defence and seek legal redress. But our friends (?) on the outside, think we ought not to be allowed that liberty. They say it is treason for us to go into court to test the validity of a law passed against our liberties? They claim this liberty themselves, but they are not willing to accord the same liberty to us.

[JD 24:312 – p.313, Charles W. Penrose, September 23rd, 1883](#)

Again, we hear a great deal about a one-man power. Brother Goss remarked some of the people where he has been laboring, were afraid to investigate our principles themselves – they must first go and consult with the priest. Well, we are not obliged to do that. We can investigate anything we please on our own responsibility. But I must admit that in Utah we have a one-man power, that is of the most irksome character. We have in this Territory a Governor sent by the authority of the powers that be at Washington, appointed by the President of the United States by and with the consent of the Senate. Now, in the first place we have no vote for the President; we have no vote, either directly or indirectly, for any Senator; we are without representation at the seat of the general government. It is true we are allowed to elect a Delegate to Congress; but he has no vote. He can sit there and look on – like they say the fifth calf did – but he has no vote. Well, we have no power in the election of the President; we have no power in the election of any Senator; and these persons holding their positions without any voice or vote or consent of ours, sent a man here to act as our Governor, and they always select, with scarcely an exception, somebody who has no interest here, somebody who has nothing in common with the people; he comes here a stranger. We elect twelve men to our Legislative Council, and twenty-four men to our House of Representatives. These men understand our wants, understand our circumstances, and they pass laws suitable to our local needs, requirements and conditions. But this one man, sent here without any consent of ours in any shape or form, by simply withholding his signature, can

make void and of no effect the labors of the sixty days of those thirty–six men we have elected to make our laws! "But," says one, "I suppose you can pass the bill over his veto." No, sir. He has the power of absolute veto. He can cross out an Act with his pen, or withhold his signature, and that is the end of it. Well, then, we have a remarkable one–man power here, have we not? Yes; but it is not of our choosing. It is not in accordance with the spirit of our institutions. It is not a church matter. It is not "Mormon." It is anti–"Mormon," anti–Republican, anti–American. It makes us to a certain extent slaves, serfs, vassals. But that is not our fault; Joseph Smith did not institute such a power; Brigham Young did not; John Taylor does not enforce such a power; but we cannot help ourselves.

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I might go on and enumerate a great many other things that exist in our midst, that are not of our choice. We pass laws for the restriction or suppression of the liquor traffic. If we had our way we would not have any liquor sold in any of our settlements. It might be necessary, perhaps, in a city like Salt Lake City, where there is such a mixed population, to make an exception, for we have no desire to curtail the rights of any one; but we have proved by experience that prohibition in some places has been attended with good results. We have tried the licensing system, and have found evil resulting therefrom. The liquor traffic results in more police, more drunkenness, more dissipation, and more licentiousness of every kind. Our judges – who are sent to us in the same way as the Governor, without any voice of ours – whenever they can get the chance (with but few exceptions, a few honorable exceptions), to twist a word in favor of the liquor sellers, will do it every time. In one of our cities, recently, where prohibition was established, the liquor dealers tried to establish themselves, and they were taken up and fined. They appealed their case to the Supreme Court of the Territory, and because the charter of that city said that the City Council should have power to license, regulate, prohibit or restrain the manufacturers, sellers or vendors of spirituous liquors and intoxicating drinks of every kind, the majority of the Court decided that as the charter did not say what the manufacturers, sellers, etc., were to be prohibited from doing, the City Council could not prohibit them from selling liquor. That is the way the law can be twisted, and that is the way it has been twisted over and over again, even in favor of licentiousness. We would have no houses of ill–fame if we had our way; but the courts have ruled in their favor, as well as in the favor of liquor dealers. That is the position we are in.

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Well, if there is any bondage here, if there is any coercion here, if we do not have the power of local self–government, which as free men we have the right to enjoy; if we are not in the exercise of every natural right, and every privilege that people should enjoy under the Constitution and laws of this free country, it is not the fault of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter–day Saints, it is not the fault of this people. In our Church there is liberty for all, and there is liberty within our borders for those who do not belong to our Church, those who do not believe as we believe, who do not see as we see. We do not try to coerce them in the least degree. They can build their chapels, churches and schools unmolested. They may worship an image if they like, or a white dog, and they may do without worship at all, and we will never infringe upon their rights. Liberty is a part of our creed – liberty to all, liberty to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. It is part of our faith that every individual has a perfect right to worship God according to the dictates of his or her conscience. We claim that right, and we are going to stand up for it, quietly but firmly, by the help of God, and we expect to conquer some day. We can wait; we can bide our time; we can suffer; we have suffered over and over and over again. We have learned to be patient under wrong; we have learned to submit to all kinds of indignities. Our Elders who have been sent out to preach the Gospel have been abused, derided, afflicted and tormented, some beaten with stripes, sometimes tarred and feathered, and some of them have laid down their lives for the truth. But we have learned to endure with patience, and to take it as the lot that must fall to us as the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. Nevertheless, we are men and women, and we hope some day, to be able to show to the nation and to the world, that we are law–abiding men and women, men and women desiring to do right, to serve God, and to keep every wholesome and constitutional law of the land; that we are willing not only to labor for our own rights, but for the rights of others; that we will contend inch by inch for those rights under the constitution of our country, and in the spirit of the Gospel, this perfect law of liberty which God has

revealed to us. Our influence and power will extend. Our unity will extend and become a great power; we will contend for liberty to all, liberty to every man and every woman under the canopy of heaven. That is our doctrine and creed. God gave to man his agency in the beginning. We have the liberty of choosing for ourselves. We have come into this Church of our own free will and choice, because we believed its principles. I can speak this for myself. I came into this Church because I believed what was taught to me in my boyhood's days, and left my home for the Gospel's sake. I came into this Church because I believed its principles to be true and according to the Scriptures, which my mother taught me, in my infancy, contained the word of God. I investigated the principles of this Church thoroughly, and became convinced of their truth, because I believed the Bible was true. And when I came into the Church, I came in humbly; God knows, I came into this Church for no other motive in the world than to serve God, and to do what was right. And when the Elders laid their hands upon my head, I received the Holy Ghost – the spirit of revelation, the spirit of prophecy, the same that makes manifest the things of the Father and of the Son; I know that I received that spirit, and it has been with me from that time to the present – a light to my feet and a lamp to my path; a joy to my soul; opening up the things of God; bearing witness of the truth of this work; and that spirit has led me to righteousness, to truth, to purity of character, and would rebuke me when I attempted to do anything wrong, and encouraged me in performing my duty. And I have ever been ready, with the rest of my brethren, to do anything and everything I could to build up this work, because I know it is divine.

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I know that there is no power beneath the eternal heavens that can stop its progress. It will go on and conquer. It will grow and spread and increase. It will go to the uttermost parts of the earth. The Gospel will be preached to every creature. The Saints of God will be gathered, and there is no power can stop their gathering. They will come to Zion, and build temples to the Most High God. They will unite together, and build up the Zion of God, and prepare the way for the coming of the Lord Jesus, whose right it is to reign; and every kingdom, every government, every society and every power upon the face of the earth that fights against Zion will become like the dream of a night vision, it will pass away and there will be no place found for it, upon the earth. But Zion will arise and shine, and the glory of God will rest upon her; and all the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ. Then there will be liberty to all. Then the chains and shackles that bind the oppressed will fall to the ground, and light and truth will go forth until the whole earth is immersed in the spirit thereof, and every nation, kindred, tongue and people will sing praises to the Most High and to the Lamb for ever.

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May God bless you, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

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Daniel H. Wells, October 28th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY COUNSELOR D. H. WELLS,

Delivered in the Salt Lake Assembly Hall,

Sunday Afternoon, October 28th, 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE GOSPEL PROMOTE UNITY, FAITH AND LOVE – THE HUMAN FAMILY  
ARE FREE AGENTS – THE EVIDENCE OF OUR HAVING DESCENDED FROM THE GODS – THE  
WORLD  
IS FULFILLING ITS DESTINY – THE CHURCH AND KINGDOM OF GOD ARISING IN INFLUENCE  
AND POWER – THE RESTORATION OF THE HOLY PRIESTHOOD – PLURAL MARRIAGE – MORE  
HAPPINESS IN DOING RIGHT THAN WRONG – ALL REAL ENJOYMENT COMES FROM GOD –  
THE  
LATTER-DAY SAINTS TRUST IN GOD – "MORMONISM" THE ONLY RELIGION WORTH LIVING  
FOR – THE CHRISTIANITY OF THE PERIOD A TREMENDOUS IMPOSITION UPON THE  
CHILDREN  
OF MEN – "MORMONISM" WILL EXTEND FURTHER AND FURTHER – CONCLUSION.

[JD 24:316, Daniel H. Wells, October 28th, 1883](#)

The principles of the Holy Gospel are calculated in their nature to unite the hearts of the people one with another, and to promote faith, union and love towards our fellows.

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We are an independent set of beings. The human family possessed of intelligence, are agents unto themselves to receive or reject that which is good or that which is evil. Indeed it was one of the objects, I suppose, of our coming upon this earth, to learn to know the good from the evil, the right from the wrong, the light from the darkness, the bitter from the sweet, the joy from the sorrow, that we might the better appreciate the blessings of joy and peace, of light, of intelligence, of truth, and of every virtue. Now, as it is written, man having partaken of the forbidden fruit became as one of the Gods, knowing the good from the evil. Therefore he must be cut off; he must not be permitted to live forever in his sins; a flaming sword must be placed to guard the tree of life. Hence mortality, the wages of sin.

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Herein lies the great evidence of our lineage, of our having descended from the Gods, reasoning, intelligent beings possessing the capabilities of the Gods – that is, the power to rise to their capabilities, being of that nature and of that kind of which are the Gods. And I might say that a person who is not capable of being a peculiar agent of the devil need never aspire to become a son of God, for, according to the Scriptures, we are "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." If it would have been as well for us to have remained in our pre-existent state; if we could have learned and gained all of this experience, learned to know the good from the evil, the light from the darkness, do you suppose that our Father in heaven would have sent us forth into the world, subjected us to all these tests and trials and temptations of sin, of sorrow, of misery, sickness, pain and death? I don't.

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To me this is a grand old world, and fulfills its destiny and purpose, the destiny and purpose of God our Heavenly Father, in bringing it forth and preparing it for the habitation of man, and bringing forth his children upon it. This world is not here by mere accident, it is not here because it merely happened so; but it was made with a destiny and purpose which it is answering most superbly in my estimation. It gives the people an

opportunity of obtaining tabernacles for their spirits to dwell in. This in and of itself is a great thing and a blessing, although some may act in such a manner that it would have been better for them, perhaps, never to have been born. Still it is a blessing to undergo tests, to pass through ordeals, to subject ourselves to the principles of truth and righteousness, rejecting the evil and receiving the good. Why, on natural principles a course of that kind is just as sure to exalt us in the scale of human existence and in the scale of future and eternal existence, as it is that we have an existence at all; whereas a course the reverse to purity, the ordinary course of sin and iniquity and transgression against the laws of God, is sure to debase, degrade, and to lead down to misery, sorrow and death. It is as natural as anything else – as natural as that we exist. These things bring their own rewards and their own punishments naturally. Can a person avoid punishment? Yes. How? By receiving and obeying the principles of the Gospel and getting forgiveness of his sins, follies, weaknesses, imperfections, and wrong-doings, we can repent and turn away from the evil and do that which is good from henceforth, and the Lord will forgive us. We know better than anybody else if we are forgiven. We will know whether we have turned away from our evils or not. If we have this testimony we may know that the Lord has forgiven us. It is so written in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, that if a person wants to know whether the Lord has forgiven him, let him examine himself, and see that he has repented with a repentance that needs not to be repeated over and over and over again. The evidence is the turning away from sin; that whereas we did that which was wrong, forsake it and do that which is right, and thus we may know that the Lord has forgiven us. In passing through the ordeals we are subject to in life, we must keep ourselves pure and unspotted from the contaminations of the wicked and ungodly, and walk in the path of life, the path the Lord marks out for us to walk in. Our being here gives Him an opportunity of proving us, whether we will walk in His ways and do His works, or whether we will go our own way. After He has gotten unto Himself a people who will do His work, a people whom He has proved to be faithful and true and full of integrity, why, with such a people He can fulfill His words spoken through His servants centuries ago, that the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of our Lord and His Christ. Until He does obtain a people of this kind, He cannot consistently bestow this Kingdom.

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Now, this work in which we are engaged, is calculated to produce just this class of people – the Saints of the Most High God. And I rejoice day by day, in having lived long enough to see this Kingdom arise in influence, in power – not to its greatness, still to a considerable extent to its greatness – and to see it put on, to a certain extent, its beautiful garments. I rejoice in my heart that I have been permitted to witness this Kingdom, since I became acquainted with it, become considerable of a power in the earth. And I believe also, nay, more, I feel sure that it will continue so to progress. Many fall away from time to time. It has been so in the history of the past, and probably it will be so in the future. But will that impede the progress of this work? No. It has never seen the day nor the hour from the time of its first incipiency upon the earth, but what it has been greater than it was the day or the hour previous. It never will. It is bound to increase and grow, no matter what difficulties it may have to encounter; it is bound to progress and to spread abroad, and to become great in the earth, and no power can hinder it. What! Not if the Saints do wrong? The Saints are not going to do wrong. It is not the Saints that do wrong; it is those that apostatize from the Church and become anything else but Saints, and if those people do not remain Saints and keep themselves faithful who are here to-day, others will come up who will do it. For the Lord will get unto Himself a people who will be faithful, and who will keep His commandments and do His work on the earth even as it is done in heaven. Whether we do this individually, or not, makes no difference to the work of God. All the difference it makes is to us as individuals. Now, we may have part and lot in this matter if we will. The Lord is willing to work with us, if we will only walk obediently before Him. He will accept of our services, and be glad to get them. He has not any too many people of this kind on the earth; but He has some; He has enough to carry on His work, and He will get more as He needs them, from time to time, because it is the day and age and dispensation in which those spirits that will obey the Gospel and keep His commandments, will come forth upon the earth, and bear off this kingdom victoriously. It is an important era for those that live in this day and age of the world. There are great responsibilities resting upon the children of men in this day. Great light has been made manifest, far greater than in any other age of the world – that is, it has been made manifest to a greater extent. I do not know but what there was greater light in the days of Jesus and the Apostles; but it is and will be made more manifest to



the children of men in this day than it was in that day, because it is a greater work. It is the work of the fullness of times, incorporating all other dispensations, and it is to prepare the way for the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to rule upon the earth in power and great glory. This is a preparatory work for those great events that have been set out to transpire. Great events, such as never have transpired on the earth, are to take place in this dispensation of the fullness of times. Hence it is an important era, and great responsibilities rest upon the children of men.

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God from heaven has spoken to the children of men in the day and age in which we live. He has sent forth His angels who have communicated and restored unto man the authority of the Holy Priesthood from heaven, and through which channel a communication has been opened up between the heavens and the earth, through which we may learn the mind and will of our Heavenly Father concerning us, His children. All people may learn to know his mind and will concerning them, through this channel of the Priesthood that has been opened up again in this the dispensation of the fullness of times between the heavens and the earth. That is a great event to say nothing of anything else. Now, God having revealed His mind and will concerning the children of men, having sent forth His angels and a testimony concerning Himself, and the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to all those who obey it, it becomes binding upon the children of men. Great light has come into the world. As the Savior said, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." This light reproves the world of sin and unrighteousness, and tells of judgments to come. It is in force upon the whole human family. It were better for those who lived before this great light came into the world and passed away without a knowledge of the Gospel, than for those who, having been in the world when these events have transpired, and having had an opportunity of receiving the Gospel, reject it; a great deal better. There is not so much responsibility resting upon them. They can be officiated for by their friends in the Temples of the Most High God, which will be built and which are built for the express purpose of going into them and performing the ordinances for the living and for the dead. These things have been restored in this the dispensation of the fullness of times. A knowledge of God has been restored. We know how to repent of our sins. We know how to get them remitted. We have the privilege of knowing concerning the power of God as it is made manifest upon the earth in the hearts of the children of men, which others have not had the privilege of knowing for a great many hundreds of years. We have the privilege of having part and lot in this matter. As I observed before, we can be workers and co-workers for our Father in heaven, if we will only let Him work with us. He is the Master Workman; He is the Great Architect, He is the One who is directing our labors; and if we will seek to obey His laws, if we will walk in the path He marks out for us to walk in, if we will work according to His plan in the building up of His Kingdom on the earth, so as to bring timber to timber, and block to block, and everything in its proper position and proper place, according to the plan that He devises, we may be instrumental in His hands of accomplishing this great work, giving God the glory whose Kingdom it is. There is glory enough for us to be the honored instruments in His hands of accomplishing His purposes and establishing His cause here upon the earth, even the cause of truth and righteousness, and bearing it off victoriously against every obstacle or foe that lies in our pathway. There is honor enough, I say, in being humble instruments in His hands, and in having a lot and part in this matter. I have always felt, ever since I became acquainted with these principles, to make it my life's business, allowing no other business to intervene – to work for God and His Kingdom. I esteem it a privilege and an honor to do so. "Well," says one, "Don't it bring you into difficulties? Have you not a great many things to encounter that you otherwise would not have to encounter? Is it not a hard road to travel?" I do not know that it is. I believe the Latter-day Saints enjoy themselves better on an average in the things of this world than any other people with whom I am acquainted. If nobody but Latter-day Saints had difficulties to encounter in this life, then people might talk.

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I don't often say anything in regard to plural marriage; but there has been a great deal said about the misery of women in that order. Well, if in monogamy women do not have any trouble, if it were all serene in that order of marriage – no cause of difference of feeling or of jealousy – then there might be some cause for this hue

and cry. People imagine, you know, that in a man's family where there are several wives, they must be very jealous of one another – that they must tear each other's hair and all that kind of thing. Well, as I have said, if there was never any jealousy, or any feelings of unhappiness in monogamic families, then they might say something. I have had a little experience both ways, and though not a woman, yet I am bold to bear my testimony that there is more happiness in the number of families living in plural marriage, than there is in an equal number of families in the other condition. And I speak from my own experience in regard to these matters. I think I lived as happily in monogamy as anybody, and I think, too, that I live as happily in plural marriage as anybody else.

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I would like to have people realize that there is more happiness in doing right and in keeping the commandments of God than is afforded by the allurements offered in the world or by the world that are of an opposite character. It is very true a great many things that are counted sins are not sins. I do not believe that it is worth our while to make sin of that which is no sin. There are a great many things counted sins in the Christian world that are not sins at all. Why, there was a great big devil in a very small fiddle, in the estimation of many people where I was born and brought up. I was taught to believe that a man would surely go to hell that would attend a ball or theater. It was thought sinful to do that. Well, I do not know but it is a sin to those who make it so – to those who indulge in sin. And so with a great many other things that are counted sins, that are not sins in and of themselves, only as they are made so by the hallucinations and foolish notions of men. Pastime is right and proper. There is no sin in it, only as we make it so. But we should have our pastimes without sin. We should have enjoyment, and there is nothing that is worth having that is precluded by the articles of our faith as Latter-day Saints. I do not know of a single enjoyment; I do not know of a single thing that is a blessing in reality, or that will afford any real or true enjoyment to the human mind, but what comes within the purview of the Gospel. I believe that all enjoyments and all blessings come from God. The adversary, it is true, sometimes perverts these things, and people think that they can have a little enjoyment in some of their excesses. It may bring a little enjoyment for the time being, but it soon passes away, and leaves a feeling that it has not been real and true enjoyment after all. Therefore, everything that is worth having, and that affords real enjoyment, comes within the purview of my holy religion. Latter-day Saints can pass their time pleasantly in enjoyment of every kind, so long as they will do without sin, never forgetting God. Never do anything – it is a pretty good rule to go by – but what you can ask the blessing of God upon it to begin with. Then it will bring peace, comfort and joy. So that I conclude on the whole that there is just as much happiness and pleasure in leading a religious life – the life of a Latter-day Saint – as there is in any other position in life that a person may find himself in, I do not care whether it is religious or irreligious.

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Notwithstanding all the contumely, and all the out-pourings of wrath, and all the difficulties with which the Latter-day Saints have to contend, we can lift up our hearts and rejoice, trusting in God that all is right, feeling pretty comfortable as we pass along in the present, and very comfortable with regard to the rewards that lie at the end of the race.

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Let me assure you there is no other religion that is worth living for, other than the one we have espoused. All the ordinances that they profess in the sectarian world to perform are without the authority of God, and mankind, the world over, are just as well off without them as they are with them. I design to be sweeping in this – to include everything of that nature. Not but what the teaching of morality, of belief in God, of belief in Jesus Christ, and all of these things are good so far as they go; I do not mean that; but I mean the ordinances that they perform; mankind is just as well off and better off without them than with them. Now, it may require a little explanation as to how mankind are better off without these ordinances. Man is naturally a religious being. He has something to satisfy. His heart craves for something of a religious nature. He feels there is some

being to worship, or some reverence due somewhere. Now, any system that proposes to satisfy this craving, which is not of God, and which is not right, only deludes the individual into a false theory and a false belief, and at the same time partially satisfies this craving for light, truth, and knowledge, and for a reverence for some divine being. In this way, I say, the human family are often deluded. It makes them so satisfied, that they cease to seek for the true light, and they are thus led astray. Therefore it does injury. Man is better without it than with it. If the principles of the holy Gospel, if the Spirit of the Lord had a clean sheet to write upon and to make its impressions, it could make its impressions quicker than it could do if the slate had to be washed so as to wipe out the marks already imprinted thereon. Therefore it would be better for mankind not to receive of this great superstructure that has been reared in the midst of the earth, under the name of religious forms, ceremonies and ordinances. The world would be better off to day, without it, than they are with it.

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The whole system of Christianity is a failure so far as stemming the tide of wickedness and corruption is concerned, or turning men from their evil ways to living lives of righteousness before God our Heavenly Father. I would rather preach the Gospel to a people who have not got any religion than I would to a people who have got a great deal of religion. You take the Catholic world. What impression can the truths of the Gospel make upon them as a people? Scarcely any impression at all. Why? Because they are satisfied with what they have got, which we know is an error, and which is not calculated to stem the tide of wickedness and corruption which floods the world. It never will convert the world to God or His Kingdom, or convey a knowledge of God unto the children of men, and it is life eternal to know Him, the living and true God. The Christianity of the period will never make the people acquainted with God in the world. It will never bring them to eternal life as spoken of in the Scriptures. It is an utter impossibility. In the first place they do not know anything about God, and in the second place, they apparently don't want to know anything about Him. They have reared a superstructure in the earth which is false. It is and has been a tremendous imposture to the children of men. Some have come out of it, to a certain extent, seeing its incongruity, and yet they have floundered in the dark, not knowing what was right; not having that knowledge of God which is necessary to obtain eternal life, they have been tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine, without being able to find the truth. Many who have thus been foundering are honest people; but the so-called system of Christianity is not only an error and a snare, but is a monstrous iniquity fastened upon the children of men throughout the earth. No wonder that people become infidel. The inconsistent and incongruous nature of the system is enough to make any being who reasons infidel. It was time the truth should be revealed; it was time for the Lord to restore the everlasting Gospel, for men were blind. Darkness covered the earth, even gross darkness the minds of the people in regard to religious subjects. Perhaps a darker time was never known since the earth began its revolutions around the sun. From what I have read and from what experience I have had in life, and the intelligence I possess, I make bold to give my testimony that the darkest period the world ever saw was when this work first commenced, when it was made known from heaven to Joseph Smith. It was no darker here, perhaps, than in any other part of the world; but it was just as dark in Christian countries as in any Pagan country, so far as true religion and the light of heaven were concerned.

[JD 24:322 – p.323, Daniel H. Wells, October 28th, 1883](#)

Well, now, this light has broken forth, and it is extending its rays further and further, and will continue to do so. I have seen it between 35 and 40 years myself, constantly extending, and I rejoice in it. I rejoice in this work. It is just as sweet to me to-day as it ever was. From the time I first heard the principles of the Holy Gospel drop from the lips of Joseph Smith, the inspired Prophet of God, the great Prophet of the last days – I say it is just as sweet to me to-day as it was then. I can see a great growth. I am a better man – I will speak of myself – through the influence of "Mormonism," than I was before I received it. You, too, are better men and better women to-day, as a general thing, than you were before you received it. Take this people as a whole, I am happy in believing that the great majority are for God and His Kingdom, and are desirous to walk in the ways of truth and of righteousness according to the light that they have and about as well as they are able to. Some don't, perhaps none of us do as well as we know how. I have said before, and I guess it is pretty true, that I don't do as well as I know how. Perhaps I can't. There may be circumstances surrounding me of that

nature that I am not able to do as well as I know how. I may say I do as well as I can under the circumstances. Perhaps that is the case with all. Perhaps we might do a little better than what we do, notwithstanding the circumstances. Still I am happy in believing that the great majority of the people are for God and His Kingdom; and those who do not walk up to their privileges in regard to these matters and observe the principles of the Holy Gospel, they only injure themselves, they cannot injure the work of God. It is proof against the aspersions of the wicked, the ungodly and the apostate. Me disgrace my Maker! No. What can I do to disgrace my Maker and my Creator? Nothing. I can disgrace myself, but not Him, nor His cause, nor His Kingdom. The higher a man gets the further he may have to fall; but the tree from which he falls would not be apt to be hurt by his falling off it.

[JD 24:323, Daniel H. Wells, October 28th, 1883](#)

I pray God to bless us all; to help us to do right; to help us to make our calling and election sure; to bring us to the full enjoyment of our righteous desires; that we may succeed in obtaining an exaltation in His presence, an inheritance in His Kingdom, an habitation that has been prepared for the righteous, from before the foundations of the world; this is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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George Teasdale, November 4th, 1883

REMARKS BY APOSTLE GEORGE TEASDALE,

Delivered at the Quarterly Conference, Logan,

Sunday Morning, November 4th, 1883.

Reported by John Irvine.

HIGHLY ESSENTIAL THAT THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS SHOULD BE TAUGHT IN THE THINGS OF  
GOD – BELIEF IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST – THE OBJECT OF BEING LATTER-DAY  
SAINTS – THE PROPER EDUCATION OF OUR CHILDREN – THE KIND OF MEN BY WHOM THEY  
SHOULD BE EDUCATED.

[JD 24:324 – p.325, George Teasdale, November 4th, 1883](#)

As I understand it, the object we have in meeting together is to be taught of God through the channel that He has appointed to be His mouth-piece. It is highly essential that we should be properly educated, and the Latter-day Saints believe in being taught of God. That was the promise that was given – that in the last days God would teach His people; that He would reveal His secrets unto His servants the prophets – reveal precious things that had been hidden from the foundation of the world. I presume that if we had a testimony or fellowship meeting, there would be quite a number that would occupy the time in bearing testimony that they knew that this was the work of God; that they knew that He had established His Church upon the earth, and that the gifts and blessings enjoyed by the ancient church were enjoyed by this latter-day Church. Now, in order that we may be properly educated in this Church, we have been instructed to be very particular to preserve the fellowship of the Holy Ghost; because no man knoweth the things of God save by the Spirit of

God, and if we want to understand His ways, if we want to walk in His paths, we must become converted. The Savior established this principle – that unless we were converted and became as little children, we could in no wise inherit the Kingdom of God. Now, I believe in this principle; I believe that it is essential, simply because we are to be educated, we are to receive line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, until we shall become perfect in Christ Jesus. This to me is a glorious philosophy, that we can advance from one degree of perfection to another, until we shall obtain a fullness of truth. And in connection with this education it is highly essential that we should lead righteous lives, for we are being educated in a high school. We are being prepared to associate with the spirits of the just made perfect. The Lord is declared to be a man of Holiness. The doctrine that the Savior taught was, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven, is perfect." Now, if there was no possibility of attaining to this, He never would have taught the principle; but it seems, if we want to place ourselves in a position to receive this high education, it is most essential that we should lead righteous lives, and have the fellowship of the Holy Ghost.

[JD 24:325, George Teasdale, November 4th, 1883](#)

One of the fundamental principles in the Gospel of Christ is faith. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." What do we understand by this belief on the Lord Jesus Christ? As I understand it, believe in His doctrine, and if we believe in His doctrine, then we practice the principles or doctrines that He taught. And the very fact of a man being converted to the doctrine of Christ, and of seeing the necessity of rendering an obedience to this principle that He taught, proves that he has faith in God, and that he has faith in the principle. You go into the world. There are millions of professing Christians that say they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. But they do not believe in His doctrine. They do not understand anything about His doctrine. The calamity that was to come upon the people in the last days, was not because they did not believe. It is said that Jesus Christ would be revealed from heaven in flaming fire to take vengeance on those who knew not God, and who obeyed not the Gospel. Well, now, what is the Gospel? The Gospel is the doctrine of Jesus Christ. The doctrine that Jesus Christ taught, puts us in possession of the Gospel, if we only obey the principles taught, and it certainly is glad tidings of great joy to the believer. Paul said he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, "For it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." To whom was this revealed? To the believer who obeyed the Gospel. You ask the world if they believe in the spirit of revelation, and they tell you no; but yet they profess to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[JD 24:325, George Teasdale, November 4th, 1883](#)

What is the object of our being Latter-day Saints? Is it not that we may be fitted and prepared for the association of the Father and the Son; and has not our Heavenly Father declared to us that He cannot look upon unrighteousness with any degree of allowance, showing that we cannot be saved in our sins. We are called upon to repent of our sins, to cease from wrong doing, and the Lord has declared that herein it might be known who had repented, for they would cease from their evil ways.

[JD 24:325 – p.326, George Teasdale, November 4th, 1883](#)

There are a great many ideas and meditations that might be brought forth in regard to this being converted and becoming as little children. And in this connection I will bring up a very simple proposition this morning. Parents profess to love their children. I will presume this, because it is natural to believe that parents do love their children. You will find this manifested among all sects and parties. For instance, Catholics never send their children to foreign schools – that is, schools outside of the Catholic faith. Why? Because they love their children, they love their religion; they believe in sustaining it, and they are jealous lest their children should go (to them) in inconsistent ways. Now, would you think that it were possible that a people called Latter-day Saints, professing to have the highest light and intelligence, would allow their children to be educated by an enemy? Those who would allow such a thing might tell me they loved their children, but I could not believe them. I would sooner my children should go without any scholastic education than that they should be educated by an enemy. There is no common sense in such a course. I cannot see that there would be any

common sense in taking our children from the family altar and placing them under the dominion of Baal. I would advise all Latter-day Saints who undertake this suicidal policy, for God's sake, to become converted. Listen to the voice of warning. Have your children trained in the principles of righteousness, for your sake – for your future happiness, and for the future happiness of your children; for as you lay the foundation so you may expect to build upon it. I would like our children when they go from the family altar to go into a school where they would hear the same God addressed, the same blessings sought, the hand of the Eternal acknowledged in their education, as well as to ask that His blessing might be upon them when they surround the family altar. You never can make me believe that a man and a woman have the sense of affection that they should have, who do not place their children in this position, for we have most excellent schools. We believe that our children are our glory, do we not? They say the children are the glory of the woman? Sisters, if you value your glory be jealous that when your children leave your firesides, that when they leave your influence, that they go to a man of God, who will teach them the principles of righteousness, who will instill into their hearts the same principles that you profess to love and look forward to as the means of bringing you happiness and eternal glory in the world to come. I would appeal to my sisters, for I know they love their children more than we do if it is possible. I would grant you that, because I can appreciate your suffering, I know how you have risked your lives that your children might be born. I understand and appreciate it; hence, I say, watch over your children with a jealous care. And when your husbands are away, gather them around the family altar, plead before the Almighty with all your faith and power that they may enjoy the fellowship of His Spirit, that the Holy Ghost may be their constant companion; and make sure that that Spirit is your constant companion, for you may be entrusted with the care of choice spirits, destined to hold the Holy Priesthood, which is the greatest of all, destined to perform a mighty work upon this earth, that will be to your honor, for you will be reflected in your children.

[JD 24:326 – p.327, George Teasdale, November 4th, 1883](#)

I feel interested in the establishment of the Kingdom of God, and in my meditations I can see that we must pay the greatest attention to our children. You cannot teach them the principles of righteousness from books alone. No man can understand the things of God, save by the Spirit of God. This Bible has been in the world for ages, and so far as understanding the things of God is concerned, there is nothing but confusion. You can only find a unity of the faith where you have the fellowship of the Holy Ghost; for the spirit of truth always speaks the same. Let me entreat you to have your children instructed in the principles of truth. Put them under the best influence that you can find. If I had my will I would have in every school the best and the purest men that we could find, whose influence would be the influence of love and affection. I can point with pride to my beloved friend, Karl G. Maeser, in Provo. I have known him for years. I know that he is a man of God. I know that his aspirations are all the time to live a life of usefulness; a man that believes in the Priesthood, and the study of the same, that he may be enabled to comprehend its powers; a man who endeavors to live an exemplary life, and whose object is, in the hands of Almighty God, to be a blessing to our rising generation. I say he is an example to all men who are entrusted with the care of children. He devotes his time and his talents to this end, that he may have an influence in the midst of the heritage of God, entrusted in his hands. Our children are the lambs of God, and they should be taken the greatest care of. They are dependent upon you for their education, and if you want to train them in righteousness place them under the influence of the everlasting Priesthood, men of holiness, men who have been converted, and who have become like little children, like clay in the hands of the potter, able to be moulded and fashioned into vessels of honor. I think it should be the ambition of every man entrusted with the care of children to lead a life of holiness, to honor the important charge placed in his hands, that he may have an influence over the minds of the young, and be the means of making them bright and glorious in the midst of Israel, by watching over them with a jealous care. You can see the value of this. Mothers, you know how you feel when your sons come home from missions, having filled honorable missions, filled with the Spirit of the Lord, and a clear record; you know how your hearts are filled with delight when they stand up and bear their testimony, and give you a description of their labors as messengers of salvation to a dark and benighted world.

[JD 24:327, George Teasdale, November 4th, 1883](#)

May God give us wisdom that we may be enabled to act wisely our part in our day and generation; that we enjoy the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, that we may see aright, hear aright, and do aright, is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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Franklin D. Richards, November 4, 1883

REMARKS BY APOSTLE F. D. RICHARDS,

Delivered at the Quarterly Conference, Logan,

Sunday Morning, November 4th, 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

OCCASION FOR GRATITUDE – THE RISING GENERATION – LATTER-DAY SAINTS SHOULD  
SANCTIFY THEMSELVES – GROWTH OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD – PROSPERITY OF LOGAN  
AND

CACHE COUNTY – THE INTRODUCTION OF SALOONS: A REMEDY TO PREVENT THEIR  
EXTENSION – A TIME OF PEACE – WHO ARE PREACHERS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS – THE TEMPLE:  
HOW IT MAY SPEEDILY BE FINISHED – SPREADING THE GOSPEL – GATHERING OF THE JEWS  
TO JERUSALEM – EXHORTATION TO FAITHFULNESS – THE REWARD OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

[JD 24:328, Franklin D. Richards, November 4, 1883](#)

The present favorable opportunity affords us a proper occasion for gratitude, and to think of and listen to those principles which pertain to our salvation, to our improvement, and our advancement in the knowledge of the truth as it has been revealed to us in this last dispensation.

[JD 24:328, Franklin D. Richards, November 4, 1883](#)

The earnest and cordial exhortation which we have just listened to is one that appears to me very appropriate and highly important for all faithful Saints to consider. All matters which affect the interest and well-being of the rising generation are to us of the deepest importance. As we hope for the rising glory and triumph of the Kingdom of God in the earth, so should we labor to educate our children correctly in the fear of God, and in the principles of the everlasting Gospel. For it is righteousness that exalteth a nation, while sin is a reproach to any people. The Lord our God will make His deliverance manifest, and the exercise of His power, less or more to his people in proportion as His people incline less or more to draw near to Him, and to learn His holy will.

[JD 24:328, Franklin D. Richards, November 4, 1883](#)

If the Saints would make it their first and leading purpose in all the labors and duties of their lives to draw near to God, to sanctify themselves, sanctify their inheritance, their families, their habitations, their houses and lands, their flocks and herds; if every man in Israel who is the head of a family, and the possessor of property, made it his business to sanctify himself, and all that he has influence over unto the service of God and the building up of His Kingdom, making that the leading matter of his life, we should find ourselves progressing much more rapidly in the way of righteousness and power of truth before the Lord.

JD 24:328 – p.329, Franklin D. Richards, November 4, 1883

We are making advancement by the directions of the Priesthood in building Temples; we are making advancement continually as God gives us increase by the multiplication of our numbers in the land, all legislation concerning us to the contrary notwithstanding. The Lord is not only multiplying and increasing us numerically in the earth, but He has put us in possession of principles of life, power and increase, which the world know nothing of, and which they despise, which they waste and destroy to the ruin of their souls. He is giving to us these blessings right along with the revolving seasons, with the revolutions of the earth. Every day, every night, every week, every month and every year witnesses increased advancement in some direction; and if we can but make the improvement that we ought to do in our own generation; if our fathers and our mothers can make the improvement which they ought to do, and which they have in their power to do in their generation, this people can become not only a great and mighty people in number, but a vastly greater and more mighty people than the same numbers in any other part of the earth, and the favor of God – which we see and know already is turned toward us – will increase upon us, and His blessings multiply upon us with a greater fruition than ever before.

JD 24:329 – p.330, Franklin D. Richards, November 4, 1883

We are approaching the completion of a Temple. When I think of Logan and Cache County, I realize that you are blessed almost beyond your brethren and sisters in other Stakes of the Territory. You have a tabernacle here, second to none as a place of worship for the Saints of this Stake. You are supplied with other public buildings that place you in a good, comfortable position, such as a splendid court house, and a good, substantial college building, and you are in a position, as a people, by means of that college, to enjoy all the general benefits of a liberal and classical education and of knowledge that may be imparted unto you, not only in the laws and ordinances of the Church and the Kingdom of God particularly, especially and pre-eminently, but also in the arts as well as the sciences. You certainly occupy a very excellent position. But this is no reason why you should slacken your efforts. On the contrary, this prosperity should induce you to increase your diligence in all good things. For you know very well – you see and have the experience right among you – you have the contending elements striving to bring in drunkenness and iniquity in your midst. This of course we have to put up with when we take it as from the world and the ungodly, on the common ground of our warfare to contend against those powers in high places; but when it comes from those who profess to be brethren, when they undertake to insist and push and crowd these things to the destruction of the souls of their brethren, this seems sometimes to us more than we should be required to bear, unless it be required of us from God. When brethren will undertake to thus sow affliction, destruction and death among their brethren, I do not know how long we shall have to put up with it, and be silent. Our enemies we can bear. Like as one said of old: "It was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hateth me, that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him; but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company." Well, it seems a good deal the same way, when we see men who are Elders in Israel, partakers of the holy, High Priesthood, striving to urge the sale of liquors, and to promote drunkenness in our midst. It seems intolerable. How long shall we continue to bestow the fellowship and patronage of the brotherhood in promotion of these evils? I would exhort the brethren to be reminded, however, that there is one remedy, one way that we can ward off this mischief from being extended and promulgated among us; it is to let it alone and stay from those places. Although there may be grog-shops, and billiard saloons in your midst, contrary to your wishes and contrary to your feelings, and which you would prefer might never exist among you – they have the liberty, they have not the right – still we have the reserved right to let them alone; we need not



patronize them, nor partake of their poisonous draughts, nor gamble in any of their saloons. We are not obliged to get down into their low-lived habits. Although we may have to put up with these things in the sight of our eyes and the hearing of our ears, and have the peace of our streets perhaps disturbed by the cries of the drunken, and by the noise of the lewd, yet we are not obliged to partake of them. And this is one of the reasons why the exhortation of Elder Teasdale is so appropriate and timely; you want your children educated in that way, that when they are grown up they will abhor these places, and touch not, taste not, nor handle the unclean thing. And we ourselves want to work against the appetites which are inbred in many of us. I am not asleep to, nor unaware of the fact that many of us coming from the world have brought with us a deep craving for spirituous liquors, and for other things which are not good for us, but which we may have dabbled in to gratify a wicked appetite. Parents afflicted with these propensities ought to take warning not to breed them into the natures of their children, and if possibly they have done so, to use diligence to preserve them from being thrown in the way of temptation until they come to years of understanding, judgment and firmness of purpose, which will enable them to practice self-denial, and live as men of God. These are matters that need to be looked after. They are features in the society of the Saints which ought to be considered, and no less but more because you are here, as it were, under the very shadow of the Temple; and are the people who have so abundantly contributed to the construction of this house; they want now to preserve themselves in purity before God, that they may be counted worthy to enter within its walls, and there receive all the blessings which are to be bestowed upon the just. We need this. It is a sentiment that should pervade all the authorities of the Church from the First Presidency down to the President of your Stake, the High Councilors and the Bishops of your Wards, and all the lesser priesthood – all should be inbred with this feeling.

[JD 24:330 – p.331, Franklin D. Richards, November 4, 1883](#)

We have had a time of peace, a time of great prosperity, a time when the Lord has so far preserved to us our local government and our rights here in the land. He having thus manifested His kindness to us, in this way, we ought to draw nearer to Him, and seek to establish the righteousness of God on the earth. I would, therefore, this morning, remind every Elder, Priest, Teacher, and Seventy, that they are called to be preachers of righteousness. Brethren, every one of you are called to be preachers of righteousness as much as I am, as much as President Taylor, or any other man in Israel. Every one who has partaken of the Priesthood has covenanted to be a preacher of righteousness, preachers by practice as well as by precept – in your own families, among your children, among your neighbors, among your friends, and all around – and if every one is thus magnifying his calling, behold! here is the people of God, and the fear of God is upon that people, and the blessings of God cannot be stayed from them, and they will know the right way, and walk in it.

[JD 24:331, Franklin D. Richards, November 4, 1883](#)

The Temple has proceeded very nicely. It is very gratifying to me, as a member of the Temple Committee, to observe how the work has advanced, and to hear Superintendent Card say that in about three or four months, with the ability to use certain necessary means, the building will be completed. What a joyful time we have arrived at! Yet here is a little matter of means that needs to be attended to, to complete the Temple and to pay some liabilities that have been incurred, necessarily, in its erection. The Superintendent has endeavored to progress with this work and keep out of debt; but one thing and another has come along so much faster than means have come into his hands, that he has got a little behind. That, however, is a very small matter. If the Presidents of Quorums would arise and say to the Elders, "Let us wake up and pay a dollar a head for the finishing off of the Temple," in three months not only will the Temple be finished, but every dollar of debt will be paid; and the Temple could be ready to be dedicated next quarterly conference, if the First Presidency were so minded. It is but a trifling matter, yet it is a matter of sufficient importance to delay the dedication of the Temple until it is entirely paid for, so that we can offer an acceptable offering unto the Lord. We trust and pray that God may be pleased to make manifest a gracious acceptance of this offering, and that the blessings of heaven may rest down upon His people.

[JD 24:331, Franklin D. Richards, November 4, 1883](#)

I rejoice greatly in the glorious latter-day work that has been commenced, and that is being extended on every hand. The Gospel is being spread among the nations of the earth, among the islands of the sea, and among the Lamanites, the remnants of the house of Ephraim, here upon this land. Ephraim and Manasseh, a multitude of nations in the midst of the earth, are reaching out after the house of the Lord, and are seeking counsel at the lips of the servants of God. The glad tidings have not only gone to the Sandwich Islands, but also to New Zealand. The aborigines of that country have taken hold, and we learn that something over one hundred of that fraction of their race have engaged in the work of the Lord. And not only so, but the inhabitants of the eastern countries are being wrought upon by the hand of God, and Judah is being turned toward Jerusalem. The reports are that many thousands of Jews have been gathered to the land of Judea, and regions round about, within the last twelve months. Well, the Lord is at work in all these matters, and we ought to realize that we are but an item, as it were, in the great work that is being carried on.

[JD 24:331 – p.332, Franklin D. Richards, November 4, 1883](#)

There is a great deal that I sometimes feel I would like to say, but at this time I do not feel to occupy your time any longer.

[JD 24:332, Franklin D. Richards, November 4, 1883](#)

I pray that an earnest spirit of improvement and purification among parents, among children, among households, among members of Wards and Stakes, may take possession of the presiding authorities of the laboring Priesthood, and that they may put away iniquity, and all manner of unrighteousness, and become more and more acceptable in the sight of the Lord. Then we shall be more and more ready to do anything that the Lord would have us do in the interests of His Kingdom. We must remember that the strength of the Lord's people does not consist in their numbers; for times have been, and may be again, when they that are with us may be too many. It will be found – if your search carefully among us as a people – that you are carrying a great many people and their sins, and if you don't shake them off they will lead you down, you will be partakers of their sins, and you will have to answer for them. It is necessary that the Bishops – more especially those who have not had experience – learn correct principles of government – how to build up their Wards in righteousness and in the power of God. And this feeling and influence should be carried into every habitation of the Saints; because where there is righteousness and faith there is the favor and blessing of God; and when the sick are among you and you have this faith, you can call down the blessings of God upon them, and if you don't, and remain careless, then you will find that you have not the power to take hold of and receive those blessings. We want so to live day by day, that whatever affliction may overtake us, we may be prepared for the worst as well as for the best.

[JD 24:332, Franklin D. Richards, November 4, 1883](#)

May the Lord help us to draw near unto Him, nearer than we have ever done before; that we may be able to go into His presence and realize the association of angels, and that we may realize all those blessings which He has in His hands ready to bestow upon us as fast as we will put ourselves in a position to receive them; this is my prayer and desire and labor in the name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.

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Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE F. D. RICHARDS,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Saturday Morning, October 6th,

(Semi-Annual Conference,) 1883.

Reported by John Irvine.

RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW OF THE PROVIDENCES OF GOD IN RELATION TO THE SAINTS – THE WRATH AND SCHEMES OF MEN TURNED TO THE ADVANTAGE OF GOD'S PEOPLE – THE ORDER OF GOD'S CHURCH PERFECT – THE WICKED DISTURBED BY JUDGMENTS WHILE THE RIGHTEOUS ENJOY PEACE – THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAW OF GOD IN RELATION TO OFFENCES – SHOULD BE RESIGNED TO THE WILL OF GOD IN ALL THINGS.

[JD 24:333, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883](#)

The Lord be thanked and praised for granting us another so favorable opportunity of meeting together to contemplate the interests of His Kingdom, and our soul's salvation at this Conference. "Day unto day uttereth speech," said the ancient man of God, "and night unto night showeth knowledge." We can say, that week after week, and month after month, since our last Conference, we have had renewed occasion for thanksgiving and praise to Him for the many blessings which He has vouchsafed unto His people.

[JD 24:333, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883](#)

If we take a retrospective view of His providences to us as a people, especially during the period of our sojourn in these mountains, we shall find that circumstances have occurred at very short intervals which have kept the people continually awakened to a sense of their liberties, and to a watch care for them, measuring and weighing and noticing the efforts that have been made from time to time to take away our privileges and liberties, and such blessings as were thought could be taken from us which we had entered into the enjoyment of, since our location in these mountain fastnesses. Step by step every such instance has been attended, if not with all that gift and abundance of favor and mercy which we might have desired, and which might not have been best for us, yet with sufficient blessing to manifest the kind care of our Heavenly Father continually and unceasingly over us.

[JD 24:333 – p.334, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883](#)

When we came here and first made our laws, realizing that we were far away from the mass of the people of the States, both east and west of us, we found it was with great difficulty that we could avail ourselves of the few blessings which government seemed to tender to us. We could not even obtain the presence of federal officials in our midst regularly, as was designed by government, and as was needed by the people. Consequently, our isolation required our Legislature to confer unusual powers upon our local courts; but it was not long before the effort was made, and final success was had in taking from our local courts the civil and criminal jurisdiction. Time will not allow me to enter into minute details. Therefore, suffice it to say, that mission judges have come here fully determined to convert us from the error of our ways, as it appeared to them, to the "purity, refinement and civilization" of the world! After laboring and toiling some years in our midst, finding their decisions frequently overthrown by the decisions of the Superior Court at Washington, and our Prophet, who had been illegally imprisoned, released from his confinement, one thing after another upset their plans and devices; so that the great changes which had been hoped to be brought about among us to make us like the people of the world, signally failed, and the end of that effort was that the poor, miserable man who undertook the job, was carried home in his coffin.

I must notice one or two other important facts which have stood out very prominently before us, and they were, that this people who were not of the world, and had no fellowship or love with the world, must be restricted in their civil rights and military duties, for fear that they should do some mischief on a holiday, therefore they were forbidden by Gubernatorial Proclamation to order out a company of infantry or cavalry to help to celebrate the Fourth of July, as they and their fathers were wont to do from time immemorial.

One after another these and similar efforts have been made to take our liberties and privileges away from us, that we might be brought into some sort of contemptible subjection, it would appear. But without stopping to animadvert upon the folly and nonsense of such a procedure, let me inquire what was the result? What followed the proclamation that we should not do military duty as a people, or protect ourselves even from the surrounding savages? Immediately when this occurred, it seemed as if the very heavens were moved in our behalf, all the tribes around us became divested, seemingly, of what hostility they had possessed, and ever since that occurred we have had the most substantial peace and quiet all around us among the natives. How kind of Providence it was to so completely remove the enmity of the natives when this circumstance transpired. We are relieved from the unpleasant tax of military duty, and even our adversaries are made to be at peace with us. What a logic of fact for a contentious world to read.

During the past year, the great efforts that have been made have seemed to prove abortive; special efforts and measures have appeared to miscarry; and we have had a law right from the Capitol, that seemed as if it must tell on the "Mormons." A class of our people have been temporarily divested of the right of suffrage; men and women, who may have violated some law, and many who have never violated any law of Congress, have been deprived of their political rights. But with all this, we still seem to live and thrive and prosper faster than we have ever done before. The very step itself will prove a great blessing to this people by separating a portion of those who have not the highest respect and veneration for all the laws of God, and enabling those who have, to be the wiser counselors and more efficient aids in advancing the interests of the Kingdom in the hands of those who may be more acceptable in the eyes of government to wield administration here locally.

But it is a singular fact, a singular circumstance, that a man should come here from the heart of the nation – clothed, as was supposed, with every qualification to be a Governor of Utah, and then act as he has acted. He had been through the army in the late rebellion. He was a man capable, as was supposed, of understanding what was right and proper as between the nation and any other part of the country that might seem to feel in any wise oppressed or limited, and who would administer constitutional rights and executive powers with ability and with skill. He came here clothed with the supreme beauty of the State from whence he came. This man by his excessive propensity for figures, as we all know, made some very strange calculations; and then when one thing didn't work another seemed to, until our representative in Congress was removed. But by and by we are blessed with another one in Congress to represent us there. And in a short time we found that, with the special effort that was being made in Washington in our behalf, such a shadow of doubt was cast over a certain portion of the law, entitled the Hoar amendment, when it was thought advisable by the Governor to execute some three hundred commissions, more or less, to men whom he appointed to fill supposed vacancies in this Territory, which if carried out would have turned over the local authority of the Territory into the hands of the avowed enemies of this people, but the supposed vacancies did not exist and the offices continued in the hands of the incumbents. After all, an election was held during the past season, when these offices were filled by the people's candidates. Thus we have occasion again to rejoice that notwithstanding another desperate effort has been made to take away the rule from the hands of the people, and put it into the hands of their enemies, and make us an outside Territory, subject to their oppressions, subject to all manner of taxation that

they might please to impose upon us – we find that the voice and vote of the people are still triumphant, that their candidates have gone into office and are commissioned, the selections having been made from among those whose rights and privileges have been maintained unto them.

JD 24:335 – p.336, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883

It is a singular feature in this matter, that the Governor has taken it into his head to leave the Territory, just at the time when it was supposed he would be required to execute these commissions. But without going into particulars, persons of ordinary discernment observe that the course he has taken is such that he cannot himself cheek it to remain and issue the commissions to the properly elected persons to rule in this Territory; indeed it looks as though the dishonorable, undignified course he has taken is just what has driven him from the Territory, to leave his duty and let the secretary be acting–governor. When men come here full of determination to show their bravery, their ability, smartness and competency, beyond their predecessors, to capture Utah, and turn her over to the hands of the ungodly; it appears that every one who has made such an attempt has met with very signal defeat. When a man defeats himself as perfectly as this last one has, I think the Latter–day Saints have occasion to thank God and take courage; we have reason to rejoice and praise the Lord in all these matters, for whatever our enemies do, He makes it return that, like a boomerang that is thrown out, it comes back and strikes the person that hurled it. Well, then, my brethren and sisters, seeing that this is the way that these matters all move, the way they all operate, should it not inspire in us the most profound gratitude toward God for these manifestations of his mercy, goodness and blessing unto us. He has made our fields to abound with plenty. He has favored us with blessings innumerable and incomprehensible. We have a peace, a joy and a satisfaction at heart which those men who make these desperate laws cannot contemplate. We rejoice in the blessings that heaven is bestowing upon us. Is it not, then, our bounden duty to testify to God, the angels, and those that attend upon the covenant people of God, that we are determined to love Him more and serve Him better? I was pleased to hear the remark made by one of my brethren yesterday, that he felt on returning here, after an absence of five or six years, that there was an improvement in the spirit and feelings of the people. This is very manifest to those who observe and notice it. But we think there should be a very much greater improvement. Many of us have been very careless of some of the commandments; words of wisdom which the Lord has seen fit to give to us. We have not used that care, that caution, and that sound discretion in our daily lives before Him, which it is becoming we should do. I propose, brethren and sisters, in view of this matter, that we take these things to heart, and see if we can and ought to draw nearer to God, while He is willing to draw nearer to us, and thus more fully sense His blessings, His mercies, and His loving kindness unto us.

JD 24:336, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883

This institution – which President Taylor so beautifully reviewed yesterday morning in the Assembly Hall, noticing the varied authorities of the Church and their multifarious duties – sets forth to every discerning mind, that the order of God's government presupposes and contemplates the strongest possible form of government that has ever been known on the earth. Men have come here in years past, and in speaking of President Young, they have said that he had a strong government here in Utah; and later on, in speaking of President Taylor, that he had a strong government in Utah, and also that men coming here from abroad to govern the people, simply governed the out–siders, and that the President of the Church governed the Latter–day Saints. This is the way the ungodly speak about it. Latter–day Saints know that the order of God's Church is the perfect order. They know that it is the one intended to give a people strength in the earth, and that strength is in their righteousness, in their virtue, in their purity, and in their union and fellowship with the Spirit, with each other, and with the heavens.

JD 24:336 – p.337, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883

These principles are very dear and very glorious, and we ought to rejoice above all men in the earth. We may look to the east, to the west, to the north and to the south, and we see all governments, all peoples, all nations, all kindreds and tongues stirred up with an activity, a spirit of strife and ambition for superiority, and we see

that there is continual commotion among them in their political affairs and in their civil relations. There are a great many disturbances continually going on, and many of the nations are really on the verge of bankruptcy through the vast debts created to maintain their numerous armies, even in the time of peace; while here among this people, though our liberties are menaced and threatened, and our peace would be sometimes disturbed if we would allow it, yet by the blessing of God we enjoy peace in our hearts, such peace as the wicked cannot give to us nor take from us. The voice of Him that spake to the waves of Gennesaret, and commanded them to be still, speaks to us, and while dark clouds and the thunderings and lightnings roll over the political horizon, yet in the hearts, in the homes and in the habitations of the just there is peace, such as the wicked know not of, and it bespeaks the truth of the revelation which says that not long hence the people of Zion shall be the only people that will not be at war among themselves, and that the day will be when they who will not take up the sword against their neighbor, will have to flee to Zion, of which this is the embryo.

[JD 24:337, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883](#)

Look abroad and see what the Lord is doing in the way of judgments. There has scarcely been a year for many years past when they have seemed to be so terrible as they have been during this present year, so far. Think of one portion of the world where islands of the sea have been sunk, and 100,000 people reported destroyed by earthquake and volcanic eruptions. And another where it is said some 15,000 or 20,000 were likewise destroyed. Think of it! And yet the Lord has preserved us in these mountains – in this region of country that might scientifically be called one of the most volcanic portions of the whole earth. The very face of the earth tells us its character by its extinct volcanoes, its silent craters, and numerous hot springs. Look at the strata of the earth's crust in these canyons, and see its nature. Also the Lord has manifested His judgments by cyclones, etc. The words of the Prophet Joseph have been and are being verified, those words he uttered before he went to Carthage. Said he: "I call for the four winds of heaven, the thunderings, lightnings, earthquakes, whirlwinds, the hailstorms, pestilence, and the raging seas to come forth out of their hiding places and bear testimony of the truth of those things which I have taught to the inhabitants of the earth as is promised in the revelations that have been given." These were some of his last words among the people. And what have we seen? Scarcely a week last summer without a cyclone or hurricane happening somewhere in the States, destroying towns and villages, or parts thereof.

[JD 24:337, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883](#)

We live in times, if we only considered the matter and looked upon it as we should do, that should cause us to draw near unto the Lord, and to live up to every word that proceedeth from His mouth.

[JD 24:337, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883](#)

I wish to bear testimony that this Gospel and this order of government which I have been alluding to, is that which brings down the blessings of heaven upon this people. Besides peace and good order, it brings the gifts and blessings of the Gospel, the gift of healing to those who are afflicted and wounded, and who are walking upon the borders of the grave; such are restored and healed by its divine power exercised in the prayers and faith of the Saints.

[JD 24:337 – p.338, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883](#)

The fact of the matter is, those things which are held out as menaces to us are the things that preserve us from the hands of the wicked, and keep us from forgetting God, in the time of prosperity. It is one of the greatest blessings to us that we are kept continually on the alert, diligently seeking after Him, putting our trust in Him, and then to find how successfully and perfectly He leads us to triumph over our enemies, and makes the mischief they would bring upon us recoil upon their own heads. Saints find it good to trust in Him.

[JD 24:338, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883](#)

The great work that is now upon us – to build temples and to labor in them, calls upon us to perform our duties faithfully; calls upon Presidents of Stakes and Bishops of Wards that they look well among their peoples and see if they are not taking upon themselves the responsibilities of other people's sins. Presidents, High Councilors and Bishops should seek diligently the Spirit of the Lord, to know how to deal with and decide between the righteous and the wicked; to know how to pull up the tares without pulling up a great number of the roots of the wheat. When a man has given himself up to be a drunkard, to dishonor the cause of God, and to be picked up in the streets, and to become a reproach, until people say, "that is one of your Mormons," it is time the Bishops or Elders, or those whose duty it is, were looking after him to see that this evil is put away, and to see that his wife, who may be the deepest mourner over this whole matter, and his children, clothed in sorrow over his conduct – to see that they are cherished and sustained and preserved, lest while pulling up the tares you pull up the wheat also. It requires the skill and wisdom of the Holy Spirit in all of these things to know how to deal in the right way, to save those that can be saved, while those who will not work righteousness, may be known as transgressors, and that we may no longer carry them upon our faith, and become partakers of their sins.

[JD 24:338 – p.339, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883](#)

In the late organization of 1877, a score of Stakes were organized, a great many more Wards were instituted, many men were called and ordained to be Bishops in the Church who had never given their attention to consider carefully the duties of the bishopric. In view of the responsibilities of this calling – it may not be thought strange that some brethren holding this high and holy office are so afraid that they would do wrong, that they even dare not do right! Now, this is true whether you believe it or not. A great many men hold these important offices who are so timid and so fearful lest they should do wrong, that they are slow and backward in doing the thing which is right. Now, what is it that makes a man useful and strong in his calling and labor? Is it not his constant labor, and the diligent, actual performance of his duties? What is it that makes the blacksmith's right arm stronger than any other man's? It is because he is all the time using it, and in this way his arm acquires that practice which gives it the greatest attainable strength. If the brethren standing in these responsible places, whether they be Presidents of Stakes or Bishops of Wards, see anything wrong in their Wards, it is their duty to get after it. And it is notably the duty of a teacher to be conversant with the people, and to see that there is no iniquity in the Church. Instead of hardness of feeling or division of sentiment, or mischief of any kind being allowed to exist in your Stake, until it produces party strife, and people take sides with one and sides with another, it is far better to get after the mischief at once, find out where it is, root it out, and set matters right before the peace of families, of neighborhoods, and perhaps of the Ward is disturbed. I wish the brethren in authority would heed this matter and wake up to their duties, and not act merely as figureheads, but more like men of God clothed with authority and power. When men standing in such responsible positions are so backward in their duties, they don't know the power of God, nor the spirit of their callings; but the moment they step forward and take hold with a prayerful heart, coming from their closets, clothed with the Spirit of God, they find they have the power to make peace and restore union, fellowship and love in the midst of the people, and the people love and bless them in return. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

[JD 24:339, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883](#)

We need a great deal of missionary service at home. We need a deal of labor in all the spheres of life – in the families, in the Wards, and in the Stakes of Zion, which are organized and are being built up in the Church in these latter times. The work is constantly spreading. Stakes are being organized in different parts of the country, and the work of God is prospering. Our enemies "can do nothing against the truth, but rather for the truth;" for God will sanctify their evil designs and their wicked and ungodly purposes, to bring to pass His ends and to magnify His name and to honor Him in the earth.

[JD 24:339, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883](#)

Let us humble ourselves before the Lord, let us keep His commandments and teach our children so to do. Let us teach them the principles of purity and righteousness, so that they may go to the house of the Lord pure as they were born, free from sin, and while there to enter into covenants with God that shall abide and stand while time shall last and eternity endure; that they may live, grow and increase, as Abraham grew and increased, become as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore for multitude. For the blessings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have come down upon us. And they that are the children of Abraham will do the works of Abraham. Let us not forget it; that they that would inherit the blessings of Abraham, must do the works of Abraham, to entitle them to these blessings.

[JD 24:339, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883](#)

Let us draw near to the Lord with our households, and strengthen ourselves in the truth. "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."

[JD 24:339 – p.340, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883](#)

We ought to be more careful concerning the observance of the Sabbath. We talk of the great things of the laws of God, such as adultery, and those greater crimes, and murder, which are less frequently committed, but which are most terrible in their effects upon those who do, and are terrible also in their effects upon those who are surrounded and are connected therewith; but let us attend also to the Sabbath, to keep it holy, and go to our meeting and be more dutiful in that respect, and not go to the canyons, or hunt stock, and attend to a multitude of things, which otherwise might be avoided. Let us avoid if we are going a journey, starting on a Sunday, "just to save one day more for business." Let us undertake no manner of business on that day. Let us reverence the Sabbath as God has commanded us in the revelations of the last days. It is one of the ten commandments. "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work," etc. The Lord has been particular. He is going to be particular again. We have been in circumstances where we were rudely dealt with. We have had to travel over the plains; but even there we revered the Sabbath. We stopped our teams and let the cattle rest, and attended to our duties. Now we have come into a country where we have hardly had to buy land save at a nominal Government figure. Here we found a new world – a place in which we could make a living; and cannot we afford to take time to serve the Lord? to rest our bodies and refresh our spirits by a study of His holy word, increasing our faith also?

[JD 24:340, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883](#)

Another thing, we ought not to run after doctors as much as we do. "But," says one, "if we have a bone broken we must have somebody to set it." Yes, that is true, but we need not take all the nostrums they can think of. We ought first to go to the Lord and exercise our faith as far as we can make use of it in that direction, and we will make fewer blunders than we do in placing implicit confidence in the medical and surgical professions. When we do this we are certainly sure of one thing – we secure the help of God and the help of angels; and if we are appointed unto death, we want to go. We ought to want to go. Our prayers and supplications should be always conditional – that is, if not appointed unto death that he or she should be raised up. And if the heavens want a man to labor there in any sphere, there is where he should be. If a man is wanted to be on a mission in Europe, in Germany, or in the States, and he stays at home, he is not where he ought to be. He ought to be where God would have him; there the Holy Spirit will labor with him and help him. But for us to importune the Lord to heal those whom He has appointed unto death is just like asking – as we do once in a while – a man to go on a mission, and we get a long petition saying that he is such a blessed dear good man, or he has been such a good school master, "Do, pray, President let him stop." Now, when the Presidency want a man to go on a mission, he ought to go. It is best for that man that he should go. It is best for all concerned that he should go to the place he is sent and labor with all his heart. Just so with us. Here we are on a mission in the world. The matter of death is a very small matter. It is a matter of life or death to be sure; but if the Lord does not want us here, and we are taken away, His will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

[JD 24:340, Franklin D. Richards, October 6th, 1883](#)



I do not wish to occupy more time, for fear of infringing upon the rights of others.

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I pray the Lord to still bless Israel, to bless us with humility, and with faithfulness in the keeping of His commandments; then we shall see more and grander things accomplished on His part, just in proportion to the faithfulness with which we perform the duties devolving upon us. May the Lord help us to do this; and to walk in the way of life, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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George Q. Cannon, October 7th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEO. Q. CANNON,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday Morning,

(Semi-Annual Conference) October 7th, 1883.

Reported by John Irvine.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS – INCREASED FAITH IN GOD – THE IDEAS ADVANCED BY JOSEPH SMITH – LAPSE OF EIGHTEEN CENTURIES AND NO VOICE FROM THE HEAVENLY WORLDS! – JOSEPH SMITH'S TESTIMONY IN REGARD TO THE FATHER AND THE SON AND HOLY ANGELS – THE EFFECT OF HIS REVELATIONS UPON THE MINDS OF MEN – SPIRITUALISM – THE ONE POWER THROUGH WHICH GODLINESS, THE POWER OF GOD, AND THE GIFTS OF GOD CAN BE MADE MANIFEST WITH SAFETY i. e. THE PRIESTHOOD – JOSEPH SMITH DID NOT ATTEMPT TO PREACH THE GOSPEL UNTIL HE WAS DULY COMMISSIONED OF GOD – JOHN THE BAPTIST – THE HIGHER PRIESTHOOD – THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS STANDS ALONE – THE RESULTS FOLLOWING THE RESTORATION OF THE GOSPEL – WONDERFUL FAITH OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS CONSIDERING THEIR TRADITIONS – PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH – THE GENERATION GROWING UP IN THESE MOUNTAINS – CONCLUSION.

President Cannon commenced by reading a portion of the 84th section of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants:

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"Which Abraham received the Priesthood from Melchizedek, who received it through the lineage of his fathers, even till Noah; and from Noah till Enoch, through the lineage of their fathers; and from Enoch to Abel, who was slain by the conspiracy of his brother, who received the Priesthood by the commandments of God, by the hand of his father Adam, who was the first man – which Priesthood continueth in the Church of God in all generations, and is without beginning of days or end of years. And the Lord confirmed a Priesthood also upon Aaron and his seed, throughout all their generations – which Priesthood also continueth and abideth forever with the Priesthood, which is after the holiest order of God. And this greater Priesthood administereth the Gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God; therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest, and without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the Priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; for without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.

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"Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God; but they hardened their hearts and could not endure His presence, therefore the Lord in His wrath (for His anger was kindled against them) swore that they should not enter into His rest while in the wilderness, which rest is the fullness of His glory. Therefore He took Moses out of their midst, and the Holy Priesthood also; and the lesser Priesthood continued, which Priesthood holdeth the keys of the ministering of angels and the preparatory Gospel; which Gospel is the Gospel of repentance and of baptism, and the remission of sins, and the law of carnal commandments, which the Lord in His wrath, caused to continue with the house of Aaron among the children of Israel until John, whom God raised up, being filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb."

JD 24:342, George Q. Cannon, October 7th, 1883

After which he said:

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In arising to address this vast congregation this morning, I trust I may have the assistance of the Spirit of God, that I may be able to speak in plainness and with a distinct voice, so that all can hear those things that are appropriate to us on the present occasion. Naturally one shrinks from the task of addressing so large an audience. It requires a great physical effort to do so; besides it is a serious labor to attempt to teach and to instruct the people in the things of God. I would not attempt it if I did not hope to have His aid. But the people have come together this morning to be fed, to have the bread of life administered to them. This is our privilege. We believe in this, and I rejoice that I am identified with a people who have this faith.

JD 24:342, George Q. Cannon, October 7th, 1883

When I think of the great change that has been wrought in the earth within the last half century in regard to faith in God and in the manifestations of God's power, I feel exceedingly thankful, and more especially because I and my family are identified with the people who have this faith.

JD 24:342, George Q. Cannon, October 7th, 1883

Fifty–three years ago the religious world stood aghast at the ideas advanced by the Prophet Joseph Smith, and those associated with him.

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Eighteen centuries had elapsed from the days of the Savior and His Apostles, and during the greater portion of this time no voice from the heavenly worlds had been heard by man – at least this was the statement made by the religious people of that time. A deep silence prevailed. There had been no voice of God. There had been no manifestations from the Son of God. There had been no angelic visitation. The silence was deep, profound and uninterrupted, as much so as though every possible means of communication between God, Jesus, the angelic hosts and man on the earth had been entirely cut off.

[JD 24:342 – p.343, George Q. Cannon, October 7th, 1883](#)

Joseph Smith, inspired of God, came forth and declared that God lived. Ages had passed and no one had beheld Him. The fact that he existed was like a dim tradition in the minds of the people. The fact that Jesus lived was only supposed to be the case because eighteen hundred years before men had seen him. The fact that angels had an existence was based upon the knowledge that men had recorded it eighteen hundred years previously. The character of God – whether He was a personal being, whether His center was nowhere, and His circumference everywhere, were matters of speculation. No one had seen him. No one had seen any one who had seen Him. No one had seen an angel. No one had seen any one who had seen an angel, and all that was known concerning angels was that which had come down in this book, [the Bible]. Is it a wonder that men were confused? that there was such a variety of opinions respecting the character and being of God? Angels were painted with wings – half fowl and half man, illustrating most perfectly the absurd notions that had generated in the minds of men concerning these beings. How could it be expected to be otherwise? But Joseph Smith, as I said, startled the world. It stood aghast at the statement which he made, and the testimony which he bore. He declared that he had seen God. He declared that he had seen Jesus Christ. He declared that he had seen angels, that he had heard their voices, that they had communicated to him divine truths. It was something entirely unheard of; and because he made these statements, he was deemed worthy of death? It is a most wonderful thing when you contemplate it, that there should have been one man found who, after eighteen centuries of unbelief and incredulity, had faith sufficient to feel after God, and obtain revelation from Him – that one man should have been found who had strength sufficient and power from God sufficient to make so great a departure as to believe that it would be possible for God to reveal Himself to man. All the persecutions that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter–day Saints endured in the early days were due to the fact that they bore testimony to this great and important truth, that God lived, that God was a God of revelation, and that God had communicated His mind and will to His children once more.

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After that revelation faith began to grow up in men's minds and hearts. Speculation concerning the being of God, ceased among those who received the testimony of Joseph Smith. He testified that God was a being of body, that He had a body, that He had parts, that man was in his likeness, that Jesus was the exact counterpart of the Father, and that the Father and Jesus were two distinct personages, as distinct as an earthly father and an earthly son. He bore testimony also that angels did not have wings, that they were men who had kept their covenants with their Father and their God, and had been exalted, through obedience to the commandments of God to that condition that they could dwell in His presence and become His ministers. By degrees this faith has grown until there are thousands upon thousands who have received it, and who believe it, who know for themselves concerning God, concerning Jesus Christ, concerning His Gospel and the plan of salvation; and the faith that formerly existed has been restored to the earth, and has begun to grow and to increase in the hearts of the children of men.

[JD 24:343 – p.344, George Q. Cannon, October 7th, 1883](#)

Not only has faith in spiritual manifestations grown in the hearts of the Latter-day Saints, but something of a similar character has grown up in the midst of the world. The pendulum which had swung in one direction, in the direction of extreme unbelief, of extreme incredulity, concerning everything of a spiritual character, after the organization of this Church, after the restoration of the everlasting Gospel in its ancient purity and power, – the pendulum, I say, that had swung to such an extreme in one direction, began to swing in the other direction, in the direction of credulity, and willingness to have something that might be traced, or that could be attributed to a spiritual origin. Some fifteen or sixteen years after this Church was organized, spiritualism began to make its appearance, and thousands upon thousands of people were ready to receive anything that any charlatan chose to bring before them as the result of spiritual manifestations, until the whole nation of the United States, as well as some nations in Europe, were humbugged by the most extraordinary statements and ideas set forth by those charlatans. Men are ready enough now in some places to believe anything that makes its appearance in the form of spiritualism. All sorts of stories have been told. All kinds of powers have been manifested. Tables have been tipped. I cannot attempt to describe the many kinds of manifestations that have been had among men. But the same unwillingness to receive the truth, the same unwillingness to receive the Gospel and the blessings and gifts of God, has continued to be manifested, and this belief or credulity concerning spiritualism has not had any favorable effect upon the people in causing them to receive the truth as it is.

JD 24:344, George Q. Cannon, October 7th, 1883

Now, there is one power, and one power alone – as I have read to you in this extract from this revelation – through which godliness and the power of God and the gifts of God can be made manifest with any degree of safety – that is, through the Priesthood of the Son of God. Take that authority away from the midst of men, and they would be left precisely in the same condition that the world was in at the time of this revelation to Joseph Smith –

JD 24:344, George Q. Cannon, October 7th, 1883

Though Joseph Smith, as I have said, was permitted in his boyhood, to behold the Father and the Son, was ministered unto by holy angels, he did not – and it is a very remarkable and noteworthy fact – he did not because of these things, those glorious visions that he had, attempt to exercise any authority as a servant of God in the administration of the ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. His conduct in this respect stands out in remarkable contrast with the conduct of men, hundreds of whom, because they receive an impression at some time, that they ought to preach the Gospel, take upon themselves that holy calling, without any further authority than a mere impression upon their minds. He refrained from doing anything of this character. He waited the good pleasure of God. And how consistent it was! How much in accordance – now, we look at it in the light of experience and knowledge – with the will and plan of God, that he should thus wait, and that a holy messenger should be sent with the authority from on high to lay his hands upon him and to restore to the earth through him the everlasting Priesthood, by the administration of which the gifts and blessings and power of God had been manifested in ancient days.

JD 24:344 – p.345, George Q. Cannon, October 7th, 1883

Joseph Smith waited patiently for years, until the due time of the Lord, when He should send a heavenly messenger, and He did send John the Baptist. John held the authority in ancient days to baptize for the remission of sins, and held the keys – having inherited them from his great ancestor Aaron, of the Aaronic Priesthood, which Aaron held, and which authority his descendents exercised among the children of Israel, until the days of John, who was called the Baptist. This John, Jesus said, was a prophet than whom none greater had ever been born of woman. He was a mighty man, and was distinguished above all men upon the face of the earth in this, that God chose him to be the instrument to baptize His Son Jesus Christ in the waters of Jordan. He was a unique character in this respect. John was beheaded, as we know, to satisfy the priests and the murderous disposition of a wicked woman. When he died he held the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood – that Priesthood, as I have said, which he derived from his great ancestor Aaron, the brother of Moses. He

carried with him that authority, and there having been no bestowal of it from his day until the day of Joseph Smith, it became his legitimate right, when the authority was once more to be restored to the earth, to come and confer it. He did so. He laid his hands upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, and ordained them to the authority which he himself held. He bestowed upon them the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood, that he had exercised while in the flesh. When these men were thus ordained, they then had the right, which they exercised by the command of God, to baptize each other, and to baptize others, who might be willing to repent of their sins, for the remission of sins.

[JD 24:345, George Q. Cannon, October 7th, 1883](#)

But this was not all. Something more was needed. This higher Priesthood of which I have read – this greater Priesthood, which holds the keys of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, the keys of the knowledge of God – this greater Priesthood was still reserved. John did not possess it. "I indeed," says he, "baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." John did not have that authority. But Jesus held it. And Jesus had bestowed it upon His Apostles, three of whom were prominent among the Apostles – one as President, and the other two as Counselors associated with him – Peter, James and John. These three held the keys of this greater Priesthood, which they had received from the Son of God Himself. They came, as Joseph Smith testified, and laid their hands upon his head, and bestowed upon him the keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood, the higher Priesthood, the Priesthood which is after the order of the Son of God. This authority was bestowed once more upon men by the administration of these heavenly beings who had been sent from God, the Eternal Father, to restore it once more to the earth.

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Hence this Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints stands alone. It stands disconnected entirely with every other organization on the face of the earth. It draws its power from no existing organization. It derives its authority, it derives its Priesthood from nothing that exists among men; but claiming that the Church had fallen, that the authority of the Holy Priesthood had been taken from the earth and withdrawn to God in heaven, because of the wickedness of men in slaying those who held this Priesthood, it was eminently proper and consistent that when it was once more restored to the earth it should be restored from heaven by the administration of holy angels.

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Time will not permit me to dwell at any length upon the results of what has occurred since then. But I may say this, that a new order of things commenced on the earth from the day that Joseph Smith was ordained, and the day this Church was organized. Once more the Church was organized, having within it all the old authority – the Apostleship, the Priesthood, the gifts, the graces, the blessings that characterized the Church of Christ in the day when it was upon the earth. Nothing was wanting. The same power, the same blessings, the same gifts, the same union, the same love, the same testimony on the part of those who had received these ordinances, until to-day we have in these mountain valleys a people the exact counterpart in every particular of that primitive Church which Christ and His Apostles organized upon the earth. Every distinctive feature, every characteristic, every power, every ordinance, that that Church possessed is claimed and possessed by this Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the same fruits, the same characteristics, the same blessings, the same union, the same power, attends the administration of its ordinances, and follows its believers in all their lives and in all their operations. Go with its missionaries to the remotest land, you will find them the exact followers of the disciples of Jesus, who were with Him in the flesh. Did they travel without purse or scrip? So do the Elders of the Church in these last days. Did they exercise faith before God, to have their way opened up before them? So do the Elders in these last days. Did they baptize repentant believers for the remission of their sins? So do the Elders in these last days. Did they promise unto repentant believers who were baptized that they should receive the gift of the Holy Ghost? So do the Elders who go forth in these last days. The same promise, the same gift, the same power, that was promised anciently is

again promised, and, what is better still, is again bestowed and enjoyed by those who qualify themselves to receive this precious gift. Did they lay hands upon the sick for the restoration of their health? So do the Elders in these last days; and the sick are healed; and the power of God is manifested among men as it has not been manifested for these many centuries past. Did they, when they had organized a Church, find a people full of union and love, loving one another and willing to do deeds of kindness to one another, and thinking more of their brethren than they did of themselves? So do the Elders in these last days in organizing branches of the Church, and the same spirit attends their labors and follows as a result of their administrations in every land – not in Christian lands alone, but in heathen lands, and among the natives of our forests and of our mountains. Wherever these Elders go they go accompanied by the power of God. This rests down upon the people who receive their words, and they are filled with the Holy Ghost, and their hearts are blended together in union and in love, which cannot be found elsewhere upon the face of the earth – God in this wonderful manner bearing testimony to the labors of His servants and to their word, and fulfilling their promises in bestowing those gifts upon all races, upon all men who bow in submission to the Gospel which they preach. There is not a single characteristic that the ancient Church possessed, that is not manifested in these our days in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The same persecution of the Church, the same hatred, the same inclination to shed the blood of inoffensive, innocent men and women, to drive them from their homes and to treat them with the utmost cruelty upon baseless charges and misrepresentation – that characteristic is not wanting either. It follows the Church. It follows the Elders of the Church go where they will. They may be as pure as angels – so far as it is possible for earthly beings to be – nevertheless they are followed by this flood-tide of falsehood, of slander, of misrepresentation, and also by the same disposition to kill them, to shed their blood; and Prophets have been slain in our day, the blood of apostles has been shed in our day, the blood of disciples and Saints has stained the earth in our day for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God. There is not a single characteristic lacking; and to day this Church stands as a living testimony in the eyes of all nations, that God has indeed restored the everlasting Gospel, that God has indeed once more spoken from the heavens, that He has indeed restored the everlasting Priesthood, through the administration of which all these blessings have come in so remarkable a manner to men.

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Considering what an age of unbelief we have had, considering the traditions that we have inherited, it is wonderful the faith that has been manifested by this people called Latter-day Saints. When I look at it from a certain standpoint, I am amazed at what I witness. The fathers of this people had not faith in anything of this kind. Imbued with the traditions that were prevalent throughout Christendom, they believed that the heavens were sealed, that all communications had ceased between God and man, and that all we had to depend upon was this book [the Bible] for the knowledge of God. This was the tradition instilled into the minds of our ancestors, until it has become a crystalized belief. One of the most difficult things to make men believe, when this Church was first organized in these last days, was that it would be possible for God to speak, that it would be possible for angels to come to the earth, that it would be possible for that power to be manifested once more. All these things were associated with imposture in the minds of men. A man who made any such statement was immediately accused of being an impostor, and of trying to deceive somebody.

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This Church has made its onward progress, despite this crystalized unbelief, which has been like a wall of adamant in front of us, hedging our way, barring our progress in the midst of the human family. Men would listen and then turn away with a sneer when they heard a statement of the truth. Yet notwithstanding that, it has a foothold in the earth. And what is the result? A generation is growing up in these mountains filled with the old faith, to a certain extent free from the traditions of their fathers. My children I hope will have more faith than I, as I had more faith than my father. I was trained in this faith. My children, I trust, will have more faith than I, and the children of the present generation will have more faith than their fathers for this reason, that we are endeavoring to instill into their minds this faith; endeavoring to promote it; endeavoring to make them believe that God is a God of revelation, that God is not afar off, that He is not remote, but that He is near at hand; endeavoring to make them believe that God will answer prayer, and you can tell what the result will

be. Every young man who goes out – as in the case of our young men who are constantly going – goes without purse or scrip. What is the result? They have to feel after God. If they want a pair of pantaloons they have to ask God to obtain them. If they want a meal of victuals, they have to exercise faith on this account. In sending out my sons to preach the Gospel, or having them go, I would not give them one dollar to go with; and while I am on this subject I will say, the father who gives his sons money to go to preach the Gospel, does them the greatest injury he can do. I would not do it if I had millions at my disposal. I would not give them a dollar. Let them go out and feel after God, and obtain a knowledge of God, through faith and through mighty prayer. When a man is hungry; when a man is without friends; when a man has no place to sleep, he will, if he believes in God, and His gifts, be certain to go to Him and ask Him to furnish that which he needs, and when his prayers are answered he has greater faith next time. When he lays hands on the sick and the sick are healed, he has greater faith next time to go and administer to the sick, and in this way faith is growing and increasing in the midst of the Latter-day Saints, and the power of godliness is being made more and more manifest. But we are far from being what we should be.

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I have not time to dwell further on these things. I would like to talk on kindred subjects; but time is passing and I am now trespassing.

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I pray God to bless you, to fill you with the Holy Ghost, and to help you to seek after God with greater faith; I pray that He may help you to put away your sins, and to keep His commandments perfectly, so that you may receive the blessings that He has in store for all the faithful, which I ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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John Taylor, December 9th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered in Kaysville, Davis County, Sunday, December 9th, 1883.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

THE AGE IN WHICH WE LIVE – THE POSITION THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS  
OCCUPY – THE PROGRESS THEY HAVE MADE THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF  
THE GOSPEL – THE HATRED MANIFESTED AGAINST THE SAINTS OF  
GOD – CAIN – SUFFERINGS OF FORMER-DAY SAINTS – SUFFERINGS OF THE  
LATTER-DAY SAINTS – THE ATTACKS OF RELIGIOUS FANATICS AND POLITICAL  
DEMAGOGUES – THE MORMONS ARE NOT SCARED – DUTIES OF THE LATTER-DAY  
SAINTS – THE CONSEQUENCES OF ALLOWING OUR CHILDREN TO BE EDUCATED

BY OUR ENEMIES – THE WORK OF OUR ENEMIES; THEIR AIMS – FREEDOM  
EXTENDED TO ALL SECTS IN UTAH – WHAT THE MORMONS CLAIM – THEIR  
BELIEF IN PLURAL MARRIAGE – INSTITUTIONS INTRODUCED BY  
CHRISTIAN CIVILIZERS – NO YIELDING OF THE PRINCIPLES GOD HAS  
REVEALED – CONCLUSION.

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If you will give me your attention and your faith and prayers I will endeavor to address you. It always affords me pleasure to meet with the Saints of God. In company with my brethren we have been traveling up and down lately, associating with the Saints in the different conferences, trying to speak of things in which we are all interested, things pertaining to the building up of the kingdom of God, and the establishing of His Zion upon the earth.

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I have been very much interested in the remarks which have been made by the various speakers who have addressed you. They have touched upon subjects which concern the whole people.

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We are living in a peculiar day and age of the world, a day that is pregnant with very great events, a day that has been spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world was. We are living in an age when the Gospel has been restored to the earth; and that Gospel in this day, as in other ages of the world, has brought life and immortality to light. The spirit of truth, even the gift of the Holy Ghost, has again been restored to the children of men by the opening of the heavens, by the ministering of holy angels, and by the voice of God. A message has been sent forth to the nations to gather together His elect from the four quarters of the earth. We have been gathered together, therefore, according to the word of the Lord, and notwithstanding the numerous afflictions and trials to which we have been exposed for these many years, we possess many privileges, many enjoyments. In a word, we have been greatly blessed of the Lord. Instead of wandering about in sheep skins and goat skins – we have done very little of that comparatively speaking – it may be said of us that "the lines have fallen unto us in pleasant places; yea, we have a goodly heritage."

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It behooves us, therefore, at all times, as far as possible, to comprehend the position which we occupy. Especially does it rest upon the Holy Priesthood, who have the manipulation and management of the affairs of the Church of God upon the earth, to comprehend the position and relationship which they sustain to the kingdom of God, to the people of God, to the Church of God, and the Zion of God, that they may be enabled to act wisely, prudently and intelligently, and to pursue that course, and help others to pursue it, which leads to prosperity, peace and happiness, in this life, and to exaltations, thrones, principalities and powers in the eternal worlds. We are here for that purpose. We are thus gathered that we may be instructed in regard to those principles, that we may obtain a knowledge of the way of life. Therefore, it is well for each and all of us to consider the position that we occupy.

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There has been a good deal said about schools, and a variety of other things, all of which has been very well said and very correctly. If men were wise they would need no instruction of that kind. But then we are not



wise, we are not educated, we are not intelligent, in regard to the things of God, and yet, comparatively speaking, we are. When we compare ourselves with the rest of mankind, we have made very great progress; for through the medium of the Everlasting Priesthood, by the revelation of the will of God to man, and through the ministration of His Holy Spirit, we have drunk of the stream whereof maketh glad the city of our God. That life and immortality which has been revealed through the Gospel, has given unto us a glimpse of things that the rest of mankind are entirely ignorant of. No matter how sincere they may be, and many of them are very sincere in their religious faith and worship, yet they are ignorant of many of the great principles pertaining to the kingdom of God, and they can only know them in the same way, and through the same channel that we received our information – that is, by obedience to the Gospel of Christ, and by the reception of the gift of the Holy Ghost. For we are positively told that no man knows the things of God, but by the Spirit of God, and the way to obtain that Spirit is the same now as it was in former times. How did they then receive it? What was the instruction then given? "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." And what then? "And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." This is the way pointed out in the Scriptures. Are there any other instructions given at variance with this? Certainly not. And if a knowledge of the things of God can only be obtained through the medium of the Spirit of God, and if that Spirit can only be received through obedience to the plan or order laid down in the Gospel, then those who have not yielded obedience to that Gospel are not competent judges of those principles. Then, again, when we come to ourselves, the same reasoning and the same principles hold good. When men are humble, pure and virtuous, and seek unto the Lord for His guidance, for the light of His Holy Spirit to lead them unto the paths of life, that they may comprehend His law, His word and His will – and then obey it as it is made manifest to them – such persons, those brethren and sisters who follow this plan, are a thousand times more likely to comprehend the things of God, than those who are careless, indifferent, foolish and wayward, and who neglect the blessings and the opportunities which are offered to them. The light that is in those people becomes darkness, while the path of the others is like that of the just which shineth brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. The whole human family, it is true, have a portion of the Spirit of God, but not in the light that we speak of it. A portion of the Spirit of God is given, we are told, to every man to profit withal; but it is the Gospel that brings life and immortality to light. It is the Gospel that places men in communion with God. It is the Gospel that puts us in possession of that principle of certainty that no one can comprehend but those who are in possession of it, and therefore in that respect there is a very material difference between them and us.

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It is not strange to me to see the kind of spirit and animus that is frequently manifested against the Saints of God. This principle and spirit of antagonism to the rule of God, and to His government and laws, is as old as the creation of the world. It began in heaven. The third part of the hosts of heaven, we are told, were cast out because of their rebellion against God. We are informed in our late revelations, that Satan desired to take away the free agency of man, just as men are seeking to take away ours; just as men have sought to do in different ages. Satan rebelled against his Father, and he was cast out, and one-third of those spirits that had not received tabernacles were also cast out with him. What did he do when he was cast out? He began to persuade the sons of men to do the same thing on earth that he had done in heaven. You can read of Cain and the course he pursued, and yet Cain professed – and there are a great many who do it now – to recognize God his Heavenly Father, while at the same time he was in league with the devil. Cain was called the great Master Mahan. Still he was a religious "cuss." Excuse the expression; but we have a great many such to-day. Abel was told to offer up sacrifice, and he did so. He brought the firstlings of his flock and offered them up as a sacrifice to the Lord; and the Lord accepted his offering. Cain offered up the first fruits of the earth. He was going to be, as I have said, a religious "cuss," a religious hypocrite – as if God was not acquainted with what he was doing! – as if He could not read the contents of his heart! – as if He did not know that Cain had made a compact with Satan! He knew all about it, and understood all about the principle. Cain went to work and offered his sacrifice. But the Lord knew of his hypocrisy and deception, and of his plotting and planning against Him; for we are told that Cain loved Satan more than he loved God. The Lord would not accept his offering. Cain felt annoyed about it. He wanted to serve the devil, and at the same time receive the blessing of God, the same as many do to-day. They would like the blessing of God, but want to have the devil mixed up

with it. Finally, the Lord spake to him. He asked him why he was wroth, and why his countenance was fallen? I presume that he tried to make out that he had not been treated right, in that the Lord accepted his brother's offering and would not accept his. But the Lord told him: "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." After a while he began to do something that men are guilty of to-day. What was it? He coveted his brother's flocks and herds, as many people covet our property here. What else? In order to get him out of the way, he killed him. He apparently had nobody to recommend to do the killing – as some are recommending that we be killed – so he had to do the business himself. The Lord again interrogated Cain. "Where is Abel, thy brother?" And he said, "I know not; am I my brother's keeper?" "What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." And the Lord went on to tell him that for his crime he should be looked upon as a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth.

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I need not go into further detail: I simply desired to show that this spirit of hatred against God, His laws and His people is nothing new. The history of this world is full of examples of this kind. We are told that in former times the servants of the Most High wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy): they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth; and it was said in Jesus' day, that they killed the Prophets, and stoned those who were sent unto them; and finally, when the Son, himself, came, they said this is the heir, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. Jesus said, if they do these things in the green tree, what will they do in the dry? They beheaded John the Baptist; they crucified the Savior; and His Apostles were martyred for the same truths that He, himself, had proclaimed; and the Christians of those days under the rule of Pagan Rome, were thrown into the arena, to be devoured by wild beasts; they were imprisoned, slaughtered, and tortured in every conceivable way; and it is said of one Roman emperor, Nero, that he had the Saints covered with inflammable material, and then set on fire to light the streets of the Imperial City. When Christians were in possession of the same spirit, they did no better, as exhibited in the persecutions and destructions of the Waldenses, the Albigenses and the Huguenots, in the application of the tortures of the thumbscrew, the rack, the faggot and the fire, and of other species of refined cruelty by those who professed to be the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus.

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Our history has been a history of the same kind of scenes. Joseph Smith, in his lifetime, was persecuted and driven from place to place. He was maligned, vilified, scourged, tarred and feathered, and finally murdered in cold blood, by a mob with blackened faces, in violation of the pledge of protection of the governor of the State of Illinois. It may be asked, why are we here to day in these valleys of the mountains? Because we had to flee from Missouri to Illinois; from Illinois into these mountains, to seek for that protection among the savages of the plains which was denied us by the civilization of the age under the auspices of a boasted Christianity; and the same spirit of vilification, falsification and abuse still follows us.

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At frequently recurring periods, frenzied demonstrations are made by religious fanatics and political demagogues against the Latter-day Saints; a hue and cry is set up by these pretended apostles of freedom and champions of the rights of man, and it is made to appear that "there are terrible things in the land of Ham, and wonderful things by the Red Sea."

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Some people get scared. I am not a particle scared. "Why," they say, "Don't you think they will swallow us?" If they did, I think they would be something like the whale that swallowed Jonah – they would throw us up again. I do not think we are quite swallowed up yet; but we should have been but for the interposition of the Almighty. There is one thing, however, that the world does not comprehend – and I think, sometimes, that the

Saints do not comprehend it – and that is that the Lord reigns. There is a Scripture which says: "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice. The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble." If the Lord did not reign we should be in a very peculiar position; in fact, to use a somewhat vulgar expression, we should be "in a bad row of stumps." But the Lord has decreed to accomplish certain purposes. He decreed it before the world was framed or the morning stars sang together for joy. He laid out the plan associated with humanity that He decreed should be accomplished. He understood about the fall of man. He understood about the redemption that would be required to redeem man and bring him back into his presence. He understood all about the opposition to the principles of truth, and the power of Satan, as it would be manifested in the different ages of the world, and the ruin, desolation, misery, confusion and destruction which would issue in consequence of Satan possessing this power and dominion, for he is called the prince and power of the air, who rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience, and leads them captive at his will. They don't know this, but it is nevertheless true. And then the Lord understood another principle, namely, that the time would come when the power of Satan, and the power of the wicked would be overthrown; when the Zion of God would be established; when a reign of righteousness would be introduced; when there would be a communion between the Priesthood on the earth and the Priesthood in the heavens, and when correct principles would be introduced, and the rule and government of God would be established in the earth, and continue until the kingdoms of this world would become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ, and He would reign with universal empire over the nations of the earth. This is a thing that has been spoken of by all the Prophets, and it is the time of the restitution of all things since the world was.

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Very well, this is the work, then, which is committed unto us, and it is well for us to comprehend the position we occupy; to understand the path we walk in; as the Scriptures say: "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

[JD 24:353 – p.354, John Taylor, December 9th, 1883](#)

As a people we have an important work to perform. We must proclaim the Gospel to the nations of the earth. For this purpose, we are first gathered together. Then we are taught, then we are organized. We have our quorums of various kinds. We have the First Presidency; we have the Twelve; we have the Presidents of Stakes; we have High Councils; we have Bishops; we have Priests, Teachers and Deacons; we have Seventies, High Priests, etc., and all of these various organizations have their several duties to perform. It behoves every one of them to comprehend those duties, and to fulfill them. And I would say to the Presidents of Stakes; I would say to the Bishops; I would say to High Councils; I would say to all men holding authority, Priests, Teachers, etc., that they are not here to condone men's offenses and to pass by and look over the iniquities of men, but to purge them out, to prune the tree, to purify the Church of the living God. These officers are placed in the Church for the perfecting of the Saints. Do the Saints need perfecting? Yes, or you would not find such things as Brother Joseph F. Smith referred to this morning. They would not be known among us. People would not be found shuffling their children over into the hands of the enemy to be educated – to be let down to death. If such people ever get into the celestial kingdom – and I very much doubt that they ever will – they will find the children that might have been there with them, wallowing in misery; and those children will point up to them, if they may, and say, "Father! mother! I blame you for this; for it was you that led me to it." I tell you such people will sup sorrow in this world and in the world to come. Therefore, be careful how you treat your children: act the part of fathers and mothers to them, and not the part of unnatural monsters, who, having been enlightened to a degree by the Spirit of the Lord, trample under foot the things of God, and cast your offspring into the arms of the corrupt, of the evil, and of those who are seeking your life, and striving to destroy you.

[JD 24:354 – p.355 – p.356, John Taylor, December 9th, 1883](#)

What, then, would you do? Would you entertain harsh feelings? No; but if I had been living in Adam's time and had had children, I do not think I should have sent them to be educated by Cain. Would you? I think some of you would. I do not think I should. I do not think I would do it now, and I do not think any decent man would – no man or woman who has the light of the Spirit of God, could do it. Well, but what would you do? Would you persecute them? No; but I would let them severely alone. They are very plausible. They are very nice. So was the devil. Like him some of those people would like to deprive us of our free agency. They are of their father, the devil, and the works of their father they will do. There are some ministers of the Gospel, even, occupying prominent positions, who advocate the use of the cannon, the musket, and the bayonet, in order to rob, murder and plunder the Latter-day Saints. What for? Because we happen to claim the right of free agency in regard to our religious worship, and think we ought to enjoy it, and when we do we feel we are simply carrying out a constitutional principle, and are not interfering with anybody. Whose religion do we interfere with? In Salt Lake City we have Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Catholics and others; do we interfere with them? No. Do we persecute them? No. Do we get up tirades against them? No. Do we publish falsehoods about them? No. The truth would be too bad, if told about some of them. There is no need of lying; and if any of them were persecuted in any way or in any place among our people, I would be the first to step forward in their defence; because I do believe in the free agency of man, though they don't; and while they boast of this being a land of freedom, they seek to bring us into bondage. Why is it then that we are persecuted? Who have we sinned against? What laws have we broken? Will they please tell us wherein we have violated the laws or the Constitution of the United States? Will any of the savants at Washington, or anywhere else, tell us what we have done? They make us guilty of crime only on the principle of falsehood, defamation and the violation of truth; for you know, and we all know, that ninety-nine out of every hundred of the charges that are made against us are baseless fabrications. I am not speaking of these things in anger. I feel more to sympathize with those people than anything else; but I certainly don't want them to teach my children. As I have said, we do not interfere with them in their religious worship. Are they Baptists? They can baptize by immersion if they like. Are they sprinklers? Then they can sprinkle if they like. I do not propose to interfere with them. But because we believe in certain principles which God has revealed, they must go to work to deprive us of the privilege of putting our belief into practice. As I have said, there is nothing new in that. It don't affect me one particle, but I wished to mention some of these particulars for your consideration, that you may comprehend your true status to-day. For example, they passed a law which we consider unconstitutional, and which interferes with our religious rights. If I were to ask this congregation if they believed plural marriage to be a part of our religion – and that it was revealed by God, and that we did not enter into it until He revealed it unto us – why this congregation would all say they believed in that principle. What! believe in plural marriage? Yes. Why do you believe in it? Because it is according to your preconceived ideas? No; but because God revealed it. That is why I believe in it. That is why you believe in it. Now, all who believe as I do, hold up your right hands. [A sea of hands went up]. All of a contrary belief make it manifest by the same sign. [Not a hand was raised.] There is not one contrary vote. Now, they interfere with us, and say we shall not worship God according to the dictates of our conscience; but that we shall marry just as they do, and commit vile irregularities "out of the marriage relation" as they do. What is that? Why, it is a doctrine of the devil. As I have said, he sought to take away the free agency of man, and because of that he was cast out of heaven. They are striving to do the same thing in these United States to-day. They are seeking to deprive you and me and thousands of people in this Territory of religious liberty, without trial, without investigation. They have proceeded on the principle of tyranny and coercion, if not on the principle of blood, just as Cain did. Well, shall we feel very angry? I don't, I honor men who act as men, but I cannot honor men whom I know to be hypocrites. Still we have these things to suffer. Our Elders go out to preach the Gospel, and they meet the hireling priests, who, because they cannot withstand their arguments, get angry, and when some men get angry, as you are aware, they act on the "knock-down" principle – or use tar and feathers, the bludgeon, or some others of those refined adjuncts of civilization, and if these will not do, then they take to shooting – a practice which has been resorted to in different places not so very long ago, against our Elders. Why do they do this? Because, say they, we preach false doctrine, and they recommend that the musket and the bayonet be brought to bear upon us. What a strange argument against truth! Yet these are things that are sought to be crowded upon us because of our religious faith.

As I have already inquired, what shall we do? Do as they do? Oh, no! They talk about our corruption. Let me ask you who introduced prostitution here in our midst? Has it been done by this people – the Latter-day Saints? No; for a man or a woman guilty of anything of that kind is immediately severed from the Church. You know they are. Who, then, introduced prostitution? Our Christian civiliziers. Who maintains prostitution here? Our Christian civiliziers. That is a fact. And they are making some headway in this Stake, I am told in regard to billiards, etc. Let me ask, who introduced billiard halls, and gambling halls in our midst? Our Christian civiliziers. Have any of our people done so? If they have, I say to you Bishops, cut them off from the Church. Who maintain these institutions here by law? Our Christian civiliziers – Christian judges, associated with Christian churches – crowd them upon us and we cannot get rid of them without violating law. That is the position we are in to-day? Do we want much more of that civilization? I think not. Who sustain drunkenness and saloons in our midst? Our Christian civiliziers. How many saloons have we in Salt Lake City? [President Joseph Smith: Forty-five]. Forty-five rum shops in Salt Lake City! Who sell this rum and keep these establishments? Our Christian civiliziers. And who patronize these places? Sometimes some of our own people thus disgrace themselves – who ought to hide their heads in shame to be found mixed up with and taking part in these corrupting and damning influences. Can't you Latter-day Saints let such things alone? Oh for shame! For shame! Have we any people engaged in this degrading business that we know of? [President Joseph F. Smith: In Salt Lake City two, who profess to be Latter-day Saints]. They ought to be cut off from the Church. Any man who will deal in that liquid damnation ought to be cut off from the Church. They don't belong here. A saloon is not one of the institutions of Zion. It is one of the institutions of modern Christianity. Shall we join hand and glove with them? No, we can't do it. Do we hate them? I don't. If they were hungry I would feed them; if they were naked I would clothe them; if they were sick I would administer to them; that would be my feeling; but I say, my soul, enter not thou into their secrets, and mine honor with them be not thou united. That is what I say; and while I would treat them aright, and treat them kindly, yet I don't want them to teach my children; I don't want them in my house or to be associated with them. What, with no out-siders? Yes. There are thousands of honorable men, tens of thousands and millions of them in the United States and all over the world. It is not honorable men who engage in the things that we are talking of; but a bastard Christianity, which, in its present methods towards us is a system of hypocrisy and falsehood. What then would you do? Why, let us attend to our own business, go on with the work that the Lord has given us to do. Let us look well to ourselves, every man and every woman. Let us train up our children in the ways of life. Let us see that they are instructed in the laws of God, and that they are kept from the snares of the adversary. Avoid corruption of every kind. Preserve our bodies pure. Preserve our spirits pure. Be honest, upright and virtuous. Sustain every principle that is good, everything that is calculated to lead to God, to truth, to virtue, and to the establishment of correct principles among men. God expects these things at our hands. It is for the President of this Stake, and for the Bishops he has around him, and for all men in authority, to set their faces against wickedness and corruption, and wherever they find any evil, to root it out and not condone it. We do not want corruption in our midst; and men or women, professing to be Saints, that cannot preserve their bodies and spirits pure, and that can not adhere to the principles of the truth as God has revealed them, we don't want them among us.

[JD 24:357, John Taylor, December 9th, 1883](#)

Again, there are some other things to which I wish to refer. I have heard some people say, "Don't you think that we are in very great danger now?" We should be if the Lord did not rule. We should always have been in danger if the Lord did not reign. We should always have been in danger if He had not taken care of us. "But," say some, "don't you think that when our Legislature meet they had better go to work and pass a law doing away with polygamy?" No; no such thought ever enters my mind; and as I said in the few remarks I made this morning:

[JD 24:357, John Taylor, December 9th, 1883](#)

"We want no cowards in our ranks

Who will our colors fly

Journal of Discourses, Vol. 24

We call for valiant-hearted men

Who are not afraid to die."

JD 24:357 – p.358, John Taylor, December 9th, 1883

No yielding up of principles that God has revealed. What, turn our backs on Jehovah! and place ourselves in the hands of men who would deprive us of the last vestige of liberty, and take our lives if they had the power! What! shall we forsake God our Heavenly Father? No, never! And all who are for God and His Kingdom say Amen. [The audience responded with a loud "Amen."] We want no trembling in the knees, nor anything of that kind around us. Let those who hold such ideas go among the other class and advocate their views with them, but not with us. These are my feelings and my views in relation to this matter. If we can be true to ourselves, true to our God; if we can maintain our virtue, our uprightness, our integrity; if we can be honest and upright and cultivate the spirit of kindness, harmony and union among ourselves, God will take care of Israel, for He will fight our battles. And what else? I will tell you what you will see by and by. You will see that Scripture fulfilled wherein it says, "the wicked shall slay the wicked." And the time is not very far distant when another Scripture will be fulfilled, namely, "that every man that will not take up his sword against his neighbor, must needs flee unto Zion for safety." In Zion there will be safety. We must therefore cleave to the truth and work righteousness, and God will take care of the balance. The kingdom of God will be built up. The will of God must be done on the earth as it is in heaven. Will such a thing as that ever take place on the earth? Yes, as sure as you and I are here to-day it will. Then, if the kingdom of God is to come; if the will of God is ever to be done on the earth as it is done in heaven, where can it commence except it is among the Latter-day Saints; for there is no other people under the heavens who acknowledge the authority of God? They do not really acknowledge the rule of God, or the Government of God, anywhere among all the nations of the earth; and if His will is ever done on earth as it is done in heaven, where shall it start but in the land of Zion, and among the people of Zion?

JD 24:358, John Taylor, December 9th, 1883

Now, I would say to your Presidents, and to your Bishops, and to your High Counselors, and you brethren holding the Priesthood in this Stake of Zion, cannot you begin to introduce these principles here; and cannot you fathers and you mothers do the same? It will not be long before the most of us who are present will pass behind the veil, and would you not like to be found on the side of the kingdom of God; that when you meet the general assembly and Church of the First Born in the heavens, and God the Father of all, you can say, "I have been true to God; I have been true to the principles which He has revealed; I have been true to the kingdom of God, to the Zion of God, and to the Church of God, and now I am here, O Father, in thy hands, and I am ready to do anything that thou hast for me to do?" This is the position in which we want to place ourselves. It is not what we shall eat or what we shall drink. We are doing first-rate about these things. You don't look as if you suffered much in the flesh here about. And I will tell you another thing, and that is, as fast as you are prepared for it, God will not only deliver you from your enemies, but He will pour riches into your laps, until you will not be able to contain them, although to some, riches would be the greatest curse that could be given them. You, the people of Zion, will be the richest of all people. You will possess not only the riches of this world, but the riches of the world to come; for when the earth is redeemed we expect to come back and inherit it. We shall then have a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. We expect then to have our place here, for "blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." We are working for these things, and we will go on with the work and let the world wag. Let them get up a commotion once in a while. There is nothing new in that. It is the old trick. If we are faithful God will bless us, and Zion will arise and shine, and the glory of God will rest upon her. But woe to them that fight against Zion, for God will fight against them. Amen.

George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEO. Q. CANNON,

Delivered in the Salt Lake Assembly Hall,

Sunday Afternoon, December 2, 1883.

Reported by John Irvine.

CONDITIONS ON WHICH THE SAINTS SHALL PREVAIL – PREVALENCE OF  
PEACE – THE FEELING IN THE EAST – FALSEHOODS SWALLOWED BY A  
CREDULOUS PUBLIC – NO REAL INJURY – IMMEDIATE PROMISES – ONLY  
ONE THING TO BE FEARED – THE SAINTS SHALL PREVAIL – THE SAINTS  
SHALL PREVAIL THROUGH FAITHFULNESS – THE PRAISE OF THE WORLD A  
SIGNAL FOR SORROW – POWER OF A UNITED PEOPLE – THE FIERCEST PERSECUTION  
ANTECEDENT TO POLYGAMY – SALT THAT HAS LOST ITS SAVOR – ONLY ONE CHANNEL OF  
REVELATION – Vox Dei, Vox Populi – THE AARONIC AND MELCHIZEDEK  
PRIESTHOODS – WRITING AND SPEAKING – SPIRITS THAT PEEP AND  
MUTTER – DECEITFUL DEVICES OF THE ENEMY – THE MEN WHO HAVE  
AUTHORITY – THE PARABLE OF THE SHIP – THE  
MAN WHO PRESIDES – INVOCATION.

[JD 24:359, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

I will read a portion of the 103rd Section of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, commencing at the 5th paragraph:

[JD 24:359, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

"But verily I say unto you, that I have decreed a decree which my people shall realize, inasmuch as they hearken from this very hour, unto the counsel which I, the Lord their God, shall give unto them.

[JD 24:359, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

"Behold they shall, for I have decreed it, begin to prevail against mine enemies from this very hour.

[JD 24:359, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

"And by hearkening to observe all the words which I, the Lord their God, shall speak unto them, they shall never cease to prevail until the kingdoms of the world are all subdued under my feet, and the earth is given unto the Saints to possess it for ever and ever.

[JD 24:359, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

"But inasmuch as they keep not my commandments, and hearken not to observe all my words, the kingdoms of this world shall prevail against them.

[JD 24:359, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

"For they were set to be a light unto the world, and to be the saviors of men.

[JD 24:359, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

"And inasmuch as they are not the saviors of men, they are as salt that has lost its savor, and is henceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.

[JD 24:359, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

"But verily I say unto you, I have decreed that your brethren which have been scattered shall return to the land of their inheritance, and build up the waste places of Zion.

[JD 24:359, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

"For after much tribulation, as I have said unto you in a former commandment, cometh the blessing."

[JD 24:359 – p.360, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

I am thankful, my brethren and sisters, for the opportunity of meeting with you to-day under such favorable circumstances, and partaking of that peaceable influence which prevails always in the midst of the Saints of God. It is a great blessing which God has bestowed upon us in giving unto us peace. It is a blessing that is beyond price, incomparably greater than almost any other blessing that we can enjoy; for without it the other blessings that we might have would be, to a great extent, obscured by the absence of peace.

[JD 24:360 – p.361, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

I have been asked by a few whom I have met since my arrival yesterday morning in the city, if there is not a great deal of excitement in the east concerning us. Some of the utterances of the papers probably have given this impression. But so far as my observation has gone I have seen no greater excitement at this time than is usual, or has been usual in years past, prior to the meeting of Congress. There is doubtless a desire on the part of those who are anxious to do us an injury, to endeavor, by misrepresentation and falsehood, to arouse feelings against us, and to make it appear necessary to politicians and public men that something should be done with us to check the growth of this much feared organization of the Church of God. And it is astonishing – it would be at least astonishing if we had not seen so many instances of this character – how men resort to the most unfounded falsehoods – falsehoods which do not have even the color or foundation or the semblance of anything real and truthful – to accomplish their purposes. But presuming upon the credulity of the public respecting everything connected with our Church and our organization and movements, men abandon themselves to the most reckless assertions concerning us, without seeming to have the least fear of their being contradicted, and thinking, apparently, that anything they can say about us, however false, will be swallowed by the credulous public. In this very thing consists, to a great extent, the weakness of the opposition that is arrayed against the Church of God. Falsehood has no existence only so far as the mere relation or statement of it is concerned. There is no foundation to it. There is nothing tangible about it. It is a lie, and it may be said, therefore, to be non-existent. And this opposition against us – that is, opposition of this character – can do us



in the end no real injury, because truth must eventually prevail, in our case at least. That which is real, that which is true, that which is genuine, that which has an existence, must in the very nature of things prevail in the contest with falsehood and misrepresentation. In this consists, I may say, our strength. We know that these statements which are made, so many of them, concerning us are false, and we can afford to wait to see the developments which will follow, especially when we understand, as we do, that God, our Eternal Father, has made promises unto us concerning this very condition of things to which I am now alluding. It is not a new thing for us to have this to contend with. We have been warned about it from the beginning, and in fact before the Church itself was organized. The Prophet Joseph was told what he might expect, and what all who associated themselves with him in the belief and practice of the truth might expect, and the warnings that were then given, and which have been so often repeated since to us as a people, certainly have had the effect of preparing us – to some extent at least – to encounter the evils with which we have been assailed and with which we have had to cope. God, our Eternal Father, as I have said, has made promises unto us concerning this. We are not left to imagine what shall be the result. The mind of the Latter-day Saint is not left a prey to apprehensions and fears; for God, by His word, has removed these, and has given us immutable promises which the experience of 53 years has proved to us to be reliable. We have proved them to be true in the past, and we certainly can rely upon them for the future.

[JD 24:361, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

There is only one thing connected with this work – speaking for myself individually – concerning which I have any fear, and that is ourselves. I never had any feeling of fear while I was at Washington, and the clouds were dark and menacing, and our enemies were threatening and active in their preparations to assail us; I never had, I can truthfully say, any fear as to the result of their operations so long as the Saints at home were united and were seeking to keep the commandments of God. But when I heard, as I did upon one or two occasions, about division – for instance in election matters – and hearing of brethren not being united upon questions of policy, then, I confess that a feeling – a sickening feeling, if I may so describe it – would sometimes take possession of me.

[JD 24:361, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

God, in the revelation that I have read to you, has plainly given a promise unto this people, this Church.

[JD 24:361, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

"But verily I say unto you, that I have decreed a decree which my people shall realize, inasmuch as they hearken from this very hour, unto the counsel which I, the Lord their God, shall give unto them.

[JD 24:361, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

"Behold they shall, for I have decreed it, begin to prevail against mine enemies from this very hour.

[JD 24:361, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

"And by hearkening to observe all the words which I, the Lord their God, shall speak unto them, they shall never cease to prevail until the kingdoms of the world are subdued under my feet and the earth is given unto the Saints to possess it for ever."

[JD 24:361, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

Now, here is a promise that the Lord has given, He says, by a positive decree. It is a promise given with conditions, and if the conditions should be observed we may rest assured that the promise, in its entirety will be fulfilled. There are no reservations about it, only the reservation connected with the condition upon which it is made. "They shall prevail," – that is if they keep His commandments, if they observe the counsel which

He has given unto us. Now in the next paragraph he says:

JD 24:361 – p.362 – p.363, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883

"But inasmuch as they keep not my commandments, and hearken not to observe all my words, the kingdoms of this world shall prevail against them." Our fate, therefore, as a people – that is, as individuals at least – is plainly pointed out unto us in these two or three paragraphs. The principle upon which we can be successful as a people is given unto us so that we cannot be mistaken concerning it. Also if we should be unsuccessful, if we should fail and become subject to our enemies, the causes by which subjection shall be brought to pass are plainly pointed out to us. The experience of the years that have elapsed since this revelation was given in which these promises are embodied, has proved to us most clearly the truth of the word of the Lord here spoken. There has never been an hour since the Lord gave this word unto the Church – not one hour – that they have not prevailed over His enemies, when they have hearkened unto His words and kept His commandments. Where we have been surrounded by circumstances of the most threatening character, when there seemed to be no possible way of escape, God has opened, in the most marvelous manner, the path before this people and made it plain, and that which has seemed like an impassable barrier before them has been removed, and they have been enabled to pursue the path that was right for them to walk in. We know by experience that when the Latter-day Saints have been most faithful, have been most diligent, when they have been most zealous in preaching the Gospel, in building temples, in carrying out the word of our God as He has given it unto us, then the anger of our enemies has been most fierce against us. But notwithstanding the fierceness and the heat with which it has burned, it has been powerless against this people to injure us or to interfere in any manner with our growth, and with the accomplishment of the purposes of God entrusted to us. God knows this is so, and we know it. We have proved it to our entire satisfaction – it seems to me so at least. It is no good sign for us to be beloved by the world, and to be spoken kindly of by the world, however pleasant it may be to us, and however much we may shrink from the opposite condition of affairs, and dread its manifestation, and wish that it could be otherwise – and it is natural to human nature to shrink from these trials – nevertheless it is one of the worst signs for us as a people to be spoken well of by the world, and to be free from threatenings, from opposition, and from hatred. It is not the true condition for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to be in, to be petted by the world, to be fostered by the world, to be spoken well of by the world, to be welcomed by the world, to have favor showered upon it by the world, because we ought not to be of the world, God having chosen us out of the world. Our true condition is that which we occupy to-day. I welcome it; I thank God for it; for the manifestations that I see around me concerning us, bear ample testimony to me that the Latter-day Saints are striving to keep the commandments of God; that they are doing the will of God, or this anger, these manifestations of hatred, this intense opposition, these groundless accusations would not have an existence against us. I say this is the condition that God has designed that we should occupy, and instead of our feeling to dread it, to wish it were otherwise, to shrink from it, let us rather glory in it, thank God from the bottom of our hearts that we are connected with his work and have the privilege of taking part in such scenes as these – scenes in which our predecessors, who have gone to the rest of our God, have shared, in their day and generation. Let us thank Him that we live upon the earth and have this opportunity – this great and glorious opportunity – of showing unto Him that we are devoted to that Gospel that He has revealed, to its principles, its ordinances, its endowments and powers, and to the Church that is organized upon the earth, in the plenitude of its power, in these last days. These are opportunities for which we should be most profoundly grateful. Instead of shrinking from them, instead of being sorry for them, instead of feeling to dread them, we should have the opposite feeling, one of thankfulness and gratitude unto God that we are permitted to share in them, and to live at a time like the present. I thank God with all my heart for this myself: and so far as these manifestations are concerned, they cause only one feeling within me – have done so far – and that is a feeling of rejoicing and thanksgiving within my bosom to see the fulfillment of the predictions of the holy prophets concerning this work, and the hatred of the world against it.

JD 24:363, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883

Now, what have we to fear? The only cause of fear in my mind is, as I have said, concerning ourselves – divisions, differences of views, ideas concerning the course that should be pursued, that may not be in

accordance with the mind and will of God. It is of the utmost importance to us as a people that we should be united. Our strength, our prosperity, our success in the past, have been due to union. It is the union of the people that has been hated, and that has brought upon us the persecution that we have had to contend with. That is all that gives us importance in the earth. Strip us of union, and what is there about 200,000 Latter-day Saints in the Rocky Mountains that is at all remarkable or worthy of note? Well, we would be like 200,000 people anywhere else, full of division and strife, who do not amount to anything or have any particular importance. But unite 150,000 or 200,000 people together, of one heart and of one mind, a people who are increasing, and there is a power manifest that impresses men. They feel that there is an unusual power and influence there which they can not comprehend, it is so different from the systems with which they are familiar. The fact that these people are united creates a dread in the breasts of those who dislike them. It is this, my brethren and sisters, that has given us influence, that has given us importance, that has made us what we are, that causes us to occupy the position that we do. Take this away from us, and we are indeed, as this revelation has said, like salt that has lost its savor, good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled under foot of men. Take away from us as a people the principle of union, and you take away from us the salt that makes us the savor that we are to-day. And it is of the utmost importance for us as a people, that we should keep this constantly in view. It is against this and against that authority which makes us a united people, that the whole of the attack against us is directed. It is the revelations of Jesus Christ, through that Priesthood coming unto us, giving testimony unto us by the Holy Ghost, that has brought us unto this union, unto this oneness that is so characteristic of this Church. It is against the authority that has produced these results, that the whole strength of the adversaries of this kingdom is directed.

[JD 24:363 – p.364, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

We hear about plural marriage, or polygamy as it is termed. That is merely a war cry. It is merely used because it is a popular catch-word, and they who use it know full well that they only use it in that form and for that purpose; but that is not the real thing at issue. There is something more than that, deeper than that, higher than that, broader than that; but it is not necessary to let it be known that they are aiming at that. Polygamy, therefore, answers the purpose. It appeals to the ignorant; it excites the clergy; it stirs up the passions of the impure, and it inflames the hatred that is necessary to intensify this conflict. But if such a thing were possible that polygamy could be wiped out to day, without wiping out our faith and making us apostates, and every man who has a plural wife was to put her away, it would not lessen the hatred of those who oppose this work – not one particle. Of course, if we became apostates we would be like the world, and we would be of the world. But I repeat, it is not polygamy; we know that. We know that the fiercest persecution we have passed through in our experience was anterior to the practice of polygamy, was when polygamy was not a doctrine of this Church, when it was not a practice of any member of this Church. Therefore, the hatred that is entertained to-day against this work is not traceable to that doctrine nor to that practice. It is the organization of the Church of God upon the earth. It is the restoration of the Holy Priesthood. It is the authority by which man is bound to man, by the effective bond of union that has been so wonderfully manifest in the history of this people from the commencement until the present time. It is that which is hated. It is the gathering of the people together. As General Clark said, who led the militia at Far West, when the brethren were prisoners: said he: "I would advise you to scatter abroad, and never again organize yourselves with Bishops, Presidents, etc., lest you excite the jealousies of the people, and subject yourselves to the same calamities that have now come upon you \* \* \* my advice is that you become as other citizens lest by a recurrence of these events you bring upon yourselves irretrievable ruin."

[JD 24:364, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

Unwittingly he told a great truth pregnant with meaning. That is really the great cause of hatred against this people. If you were to divide up and cease to listen to your Bishops, to your presiding authorities, to the Presidents of your Stakes, to the Apostles, to the Presidency of the Church, what is there about you that would excite opposition? What is there about you that would make you worthy of newspaper notice? As I have said, you would be like any other number of citizens who are not banded together by the ties of the everlasting covenant and of the Gospel. Having had the truth, and having had the savor of righteousness, you would be

like salt that had lost its savor, it would be good for nothing, fit for no other purpose but to be cast out and trodden under the feet of men. This figure of the Savior's in this revelation – and as He used it to His disciples – is a most forcible and comprehensive figure. There is no article in the world that is so utterly worthless as salt, after it has lost its savor. You cannot use it for any purpose, and it is good for nothing except to be trodden under the feet of men. And how truthfully it is exemplified in the history of this people. When a man has lost the Spirit of God, become an apostate to the work of God, of what further use is he? He is good for nothing. He don't make even a good sectarian. And it would be so with us as a people if we were to lose the salt of the Spirit of God; we would be good for nothing.

[JD 24:364 – p.365 – p.366, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

Now, there is only one way in which the commandments of God can be revealed unto us. God has not left this in doubt. He has not left us to grope in the dark respecting His methods of revealing His mind and will unto His children. In the very beginning of the work of God in these last days, to remove all doubt upon this subject, God gave revelations unto this Church in exceeding great plainness, and there was one principle that was emphatically dwelt upon and enforced, namely, that there was but one channel, one channel alone, through which the word of God and the commandments of God should come to this people. The word of God was not to come from the people up. It was not vox populi, vox dei, but it was to be vox dei, vox populi – that is, the voice of God and then the voice of the people – from God downward through the channel that He should appoint; by the means that He should institute, that word should come to the people, and when obeyed by the people would bring the union and the love and the strength consequent upon union and love. And this has been the peculiarity and the excellence of this work of God thus far in the earth. Its excellence has consisted in this. Its power, its glory, the glory that we have as a people, the glory that belongs to the Church of God consists in this peculiar feature, that the word of God to us comes from God and not from the people. It is received by the people, accepted by the people, submitted to by the people, and this has produced the union and the love, as I have said, that have characterized the work thus far in its progress in the earth. Take away from it this feature and it becomes weak as water that is unconfined. There is no strength to it. There is nothing to be feared about it. There is nothing to excite animosity or hatred. But give it this feature and it becomes a power in the earth. Even if there were only six men it would be a power. Let there be twelve and it is twice the power, and you go on doubling it, and it increases in a proportionate ratio, and it will do so, as long as that principle is maintained and lived up to. God revealed that principle in the beginning. Oliver Cowdery – a representation of whose ordination is given to us on this ceiling – received at the same time that the Prophet Joseph did the Aaronic Priesthood. John the Baptist, who last held the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood in the flesh upon the earth, laid his hands upon Joseph, the Prophet, and him at the same time. He afterwards received, in common with Joseph, the administration of those who had held the keys of the Apostleship in the flesh on the earth – that is, Peter, James and John. They administered unto him at the same time that they administered unto Joseph, upon the same occasion, and he became an Apostle with Joseph, being the second Apostle in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Now, it might be thought that a man thus favored, favored to receive the Aaronic Priesthood, favored to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood and Apostleship at the same time with the Prophet, favored with the privilege of baptizing the Prophet of God, and of sealing upon him the gift of the Holy Ghost; it might be thought, I say, that a man thus favored would have stood alongside of the Prophet and been of equal authority in giving the word of God in writing unto the people. But no. God drew a distinction and plainly told Oliver Cowdery that that which he wrote to this Church should not be by way of commandment to the Church, but by wisdom. The Lord said to him, "If thou art led at any time by the Comforter to speak or teach, or at all times by way of commandment unto the Church, thou mayest do it. But thou shalt not write by way of commandment, but by wisdom." It was only one man's privilege, one man's authority to stand pre-eminent in the earth at one time holding the keys and giving the commandments of God – or rather the Lord giving His commandments through him in writing to the Church.

[JD 24:366 – p.367 – p.368, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

In the early days there was a man that was a witness to the Book of Mormon, who had been selected by the Lord to handle the plates, to heft them, and then to write his testimony concerning that which he had seen and felt. He obtained possession of a seer stone – or as it is called sometimes, a peep–stone. Through this peep–stone he professed to obtain revelations, which he wrote. And the Lord gave a commandment upon the subject, and Oliver Cowdery was commanded to take Hiram Page by himself, and talk to him upon the subject. He was instructed to tell him that that which he had received through that stone was not of God, and that Satan deceived him. He was told that this power was not given to him, and "neither shall anything be appointed unto any of this Church contrary to the Church covenants." That is, there was only one man upon the earth who had a right to give to the Church commandments concerning the word of God, and the conduct of the word of God, and that was the man whom He had selected. Thus plainly in the very beginning of this work, the very threshold of it, there was no doubt left upon the minds of those who received the revelations of God concerning the policy of the Lord in the building up of this work upon the earth. You can see, readily, if you will reflect for a few moments upon the subject how necessary it is that this should be the case. Invest two men with that power, and what is the result? Why, there is an opportunity for division. Invest twelve men with it, and you have the same result to an increased extent. Invest the whole body of the people with it, and what would be the result? You can understand this by a very little reflection. It is not God's way of doing. It is not God's manner of building up His kingdom. It is not the way that He has founded His Church, neither in this day nor in any other day when He had a church upon the earth. It is through this source that commandments must come to the people of God. It is through this source that the word of God has come to this people during the 53 years that have now elapsed. The prosperity of this people, their success, and the triumphs that have attended this work are due to this, that God has chosen one man, and through him has given His word unto His people, and by listening to His counsel, by obeying the manifestations of God through him, they have been led in this career of prosperity upon which we have entered, and in which we are now traveling. I wish to impress this with all the power of which I am capable upon the minds of my brethren and sisters who are here to–day, and upon this entire Church. I wish them to understand it. I bear testimony, as a servant of God, that this is the way, God having revealed it unto me to my perfect knowledge, to my perfect satisfaction and understanding. There can be no two channels; there is but one; God having chosen but one. Now, as long as we keep this in mind we are in no danger as a people – that is if we keep it in mind and obey it. I am willing to stake my reputation – I never claim to be much of a prophet; I do not talk much about prophecy – but as a servant of God I am willing to stake my reputation in making this statement, that if you will listen to the voice of God as manifested through His servant who stands at our head, you never will, from this time forward until eternity dawns upon you – you never will be overcome by your enemies, or by the enemies of God's kingdom. I know this as well as I can know anything that has not been accomplished. There is danger among us of becoming divided. We are menaced now by our enemies. They would like to divide us. Already they have made a discrimination which they hoped would be attended with some great results. They have by their laws deprived the fathers of this people, the leaders of this people, the men who have borne the heat and the burden of the day – they have deprived them of those rights which belong to us as much at least as they belong to them. They have sought to humble us in the dust. The elite of this people, the foremost men, the men who have been the foremost in enterprise and in every good work – and this is not saying anything disparaging concerning those who are not of this class – have been singled out just as you would single out of a conquered tribe of Indians the chiefs. The chiefs have been marked, the ruling men have been deposed, and another class have been told that they now can come to the front. Why, it has reminded me of the tyranny which has been so obnoxious in times past – the tyranny of Great Britain in her treatment of the people of India. The ruling men all deprived of their power. The king deposed. But this has never been done except as a result of war. The king deposed; ruling chiefs, men of influence, authority and power among the people, have been stripped of all, and another king and other chiefs set to rule, by the authority of the conqueror. But this has never been done unless as a consequence of war. But here in a time of profound peace, in a Territory unexampled for its prosperity, the wonder and admiration of every candid and reflecting mind; a Territory of this kind, because our religion is not popular, and because of our union that is so dreaded, the ruling men, without any trial or conviction, without proof of any guilt, have been removed, so to speak – that is, everything has been done that has been possible to take away from them that authority and that influence which rightfully belongs to them, which they have earned by long years of faithful labor in the midst of the people, earned them legitimately and

properly, having no influence that they have received from ancestry or from wealth – having no influence but the influence that God has given them, and that they have earned by their own good deeds. These men, in the attempt to break up this people; to divide them asunder – these men have been told, "You step aside. We will strip you of your power and of your influence. We will humble you in the midst of the people. We will take away from you all the influence that we can, and we will see if we cannot divide you by this process." That is the object. It is, as I have said, to divide us, to arouse ambitions in the minds of others, to endeavor to stir them up to pay no heed and to disregard entirely the counsels and the examples of the men who have been faithful, and who are thus thrust aside. What will be its effect? Ask yourselves. Answer this question yourselves. You Latter-day Saints, with you remains the answer. It is for you to say whether the devices of the wicked are going to have the effect of causing you not to heed the man of God, the man who holds the keys of the Eternal Priesthood of God, the man chosen by eternity, by the Lord himself; it is for you to say whether you be these devices, will no longer pay heed and attention to his counsels. It is for you to answer this momentous question. I am in no fear as to the result. I have no doubts myself as to the result. There may be unwise persons among us. There may be some who may not have faith. There may be some who may be prompted by some improper ambition; but I am glad that in the providence of God there is an opportunity given to all such to show their true characters, if there be such among us. I accept all these things as wise in the providence of our God, He having this work in charge; I accept it as one of His divine providences in regard to this work, to test this people, to prove us, to put us upon trial, to have us learn ourselves; and not only this, but to show the world – the great world of mankind, who are looking now with intense expectation, watching the results of these experiments in Utah – that we may show unto them that God is still with us, and that notwithstanding all the efforts of the wicked, we are still a united people, willing to listen to the voice of God, through his divinely appointed servant – the medium that He has chosen. The world must know that the men through whose administrations we have received these precious gifts of the Gospel, are still the men who have authority with God, and who have a claim upon His blessings and His sustaining care. These results I expect to see wrought out by this that is now being done.

JD 24:368, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883

It is a most extraordinary thing that this Edmunds law – a law which is so unconstitutional in every aspect – should now be looked upon almost as a meritorious law, and that because we have not split into pieces under its operation, and it has not produced the results designed by its author, and those who urged its passage – it should now, as I have said, be talked about as though it were a benign law, and designed for our good; and because we do not accept it as such it should be considered as a sufficient reason that there should be additional legislation! It is a most extraordinary position to assume. Yet this is the position that is taken by many.

JD 24:368 – p.369, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883

Now, my brethren and sisters, I used a figure many years ago, when we used to meet in the old bowery, before the new tabernacle was built, to which I will refer to-day. It was at a time when there was considerable talk about our moving away from here. Astrologers were predicting this, and there were some who seemed inclined to put credence in their sayings. In remarks upon one occasion I said, that it had been my habit when I crossed the ocean – and I had been on both the Pacific and the Atlantic oceans many times – when a storm came up, or we appeared to be in danger from ice or any other cause – to watch the captain of the ship. I noted his demeanor, and I thought that by it I could form a correct idea of our danger. He knew the ship. He knew her capabilities. He knew, probably better than anyone else about our position and our danger, and therefore, as I have said, I took pleasure in watching his demeanor. And so it is in regard to the work of God. It is my privilege as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ to have the revelations of Jesus. It is my privilege to live so as to have the gift of prophecy, and to have wisdom and knowledge from God. It is my privilege to have all these gifts and blessings resting down upon me by virtue of my calling. If I am faithful thereto they will rest upon me. But it is not my privilege to guide this ship. It is not my privilege to write revelations or commandments to this Church. Much as I may rejoice in the knowledge of God, much as I may be possessed of the revelations of Jesus, that is not a privilege which has been accorded unto me, nor has it been accorded unto any other

Apostle, or officer, or member of this Church, but one, and that is the man whom God has chosen to hold the keys. Therefore, in times of danger, whatever my own feelings may be – and as those who are acquainted with me know, I have pronounced opinions generally upon every subject that is brought up – notwithstanding this characteristic, I look always, and always have looked to the man whom God has placed to preside over His people. I watch his demeanor. I know that it is for him to give the signal. It is for him to direct the movements of the crew of the Ship Zion. It is for him to direct how she shall be steered, so far as human power is necessary for this purpose, and when there are no tremors in him, when there are no indications of fear on his part, when he feels serene and confident, I know that I can do so with the utmost safety, and that this entire people can trust in that God who has placed a prophet, a seer, and a revelator to preside over His people upon the earth. We need not be afraid. We need not tremble. We need not give way to anxiety. That which we ought to do is to seek for the mind and will of God. I wish that the men of Zion would do this more than they do. I am jealous for my God. I am jealous for the authority of the Holy Priesthood that He has bestowed upon men. I dislike to see my brethren yield to the influence of those who are outside of us, and who assail this work and say, "you are governed too much by your leaders." When I see men doing that I fear and tremble for them. They yield to an influence that is not of God, the influence of the world, the influence that is fighting Zion. I like to see a man loyal to this work, loyal to the cause of God, loyal to the Holy Priesthood, determined to stand by it. It is all that has saved us thus far; it is all that has given us power thus far in the earth, and when we desert that, God will desert us and leave us to ourselves. I am jealous, therefore, for my God. I am jealous for the Holy Priesthood. I am jealous for the honor, the dignity of the man who presides over Zion, and I always have been. Through my entire life I have had this feeling. It is not a new feeling. It is one that was born in me, and it continues with me, and I pray that it always may be my feeling as long as I live upon the earth. I want to die having that feeling; I know that it is the right feeling, and that we are always in the right path when we are seeking the counsel of God through His appointed servant.

[JD 24:369, George Q. Cannon, December 2, 1883](#)

God help you, my brethren and sisters; God help every man in Zion; God help me and all who stand in leading positions in this Church to bear this in mind, and to be humble, meek and lowly obedient to the counsel of God's servant, that in the end God may crown us in His celestial kingdom, which I ask in the name of Jesus, Amen.

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George Q. Cannon, September 2nd, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEO. Q. CANNON,

Delivered in the Meeting House, Provo,

Sunday Morning, September 2nd, 1883.

Reported by John Irvine.

TRAVELING THROUGH THE SETTLEMENTS – THE NECESSITY OF THE SETTLEMENTS  
BEING VISITED – REVELATION – BOGUS AUTHORITY OF SECTARIAN PREACHERS – THE  
CLAIM THAT THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE IS FULL – THE CAUSE OF THERE

BEING NO COMMUNICATION WITH GOD – VISITATION OF THE FATHER AND  
SON AND HOLY ANGELS TO JOSEPH SMITH – MAHOMED – THE WORLD NO IDEA  
OF THE CHARACTER OF GOD – RESTORATION OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF  
GOD – ANGELS NOT FEATHERED BEINGS – NO WONDER THE WORLD HAS GONE  
ASTRAY – SPACE BETWEEN DEATH AND THE RESURRECTION – THE REIGN  
OF SATAN – JOSEPH SMITH ACCOMPLISHED HIS MISSION – PERSECUTION – THIS  
NATION MAKING JOSEPH SMITH A PROPHET – NO SURRENDERING THE  
KINGDOM OF GOD – GOD WILL DELIVER HIS PEOPLE – TEMPLES – SHALL THOSE  
WHO HAVE OBEYED THE LAW OF GOD BE LOOKED DOWN UPON  
BY THOSE WHO HAVE NOT? – CONCLUSION.

[JD 24:370, George Q. Cannon, September 2nd, 1883](#)

I feel as though I would much rather sit still and listen to somebody else, than to attempt to speak myself.

[JD 24:370, George Q. Cannon, September 2nd, 1883](#)

For a number of weeks past the First Presidency of the Church have been traveling through the various settlements, and such counsels and instructions have been given to the people – mingled with kindly reproofs and warnings as the Spirit has seemed to dictate – and in the meetings we have held there has been a goodly outpouring of the Spirit of God; the people have rejoiced in their meetings and in that which they have heard.

[JD 24:370 – p.371, George Q. Cannon, September 2nd, 1883](#)

There is a constant necessity for the visits of those whom God has called to preside over the affairs of His Church, and to hold the Apostleship of the Church, in the midst of the various Stakes of Zion. It is true that God our Eternal Father – in accordance with the promise which He has made unto those who would receive the Gospel in humility and with sincerity of heart – has poured out His Holy Spirit upon the people, and they are led by it in the most of instances, and the gifts of the Spirit are manifested. At the same time there are other agencies which God calls into requisition to teach and instruct His people. He has placed in His Church Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers, etc. He has given unto them certain specified duties. He requires them to discharge those duties in His fear, and holds them accountable for the condition of the people – that is, to a very great extent. He has placed certain men whom He has chosen as watchmen upon the walls of Zion; He has placed them as shepherds of the flock of Christ; and in their capacity as watchmen and as shepherds He expects them to exercise that vigilance and care which are necessary for the protection and preservation of the people. The Lord has promised unto His servants that He will give them the necessary qualifications for, and that He will sustain them in the discharge of the duties that devolve upon them; and through the varied experience of the past 53 years this has been the case. The Lord has not left His people without proper care, and He has not left His servants destitute of his word and of a knowledge of His will, but has given these to them at the very time when they have been needed. No evil or difficulty has ever occurred in the Church or outside of the Church affecting us that we have not been warned of by the servants of God, and prepared for by their teachings, their counsels and their warnings. This constitutes the great difference between the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the other churches that are organized among the children of men, and called by various names. God has made promises unto this people; He has provided for them; He has revealed



himself unto them, and has extended His power for their preservation and safety all the day long.

[JD 24:371 – p.372, George Q. Cannon, September 2nd, 1883](#)

Now, this is a new thing, it may be said in the earth – that is, comparatively new. Previous to the organization of this Church there was no claim made by any of the churches of the day to hold direct communication with Deity. Preachers, and those who lead in these various sects, base their claims for authority upon that which was given in former days to the ancient servants of God. They are honest enough to make no pretense of having received communication from heaven, or direct revelation from God, calling them to the ministry or designating them to occupy the places they fill; but, as I have said, claiming the commission that was given to the ancient Apostles as the basis for their labor, they proceeded to teach the people such doctrines as they considered essential to salvation. God's voice was not heard. The silence that existed between heaven and earth – and which had existed after the slaying of those who had received authority from God, and unto whom He gave communications – was still unbroken – there were no heavenly messengers descending from heaven to earth and making manifest the mind and will of God unto the inhabitants of the earth, but it was as though the heavens were as brass over the heads of the people, and as though – so far as the voice of God was concerned – He took no interest in the affairs of the children of men. And this was the conclusion to which the whole religious world had come – that God had withdrawn Himself from communicating with his children, that He had revealed his mind and will as it is recorded in the Bible, and that therefore the canon of Scriptures was full, and there was no longer any necessity for further light or knowledge from Him. This was produced as an argument against the Elders of this Church, when they commenced to teach the doctrine of new revelation; when they went forth proclaiming unto the inhabitants of the earth that God had spoken; that the silence between heaven and earth had been broken; that angels had descended from heaven once more and communicated God's will unto man; that the Holy Ghost had been poured out according to the ancient promise; that the Church had been organized according to the ancient pattern, and that the gifts had been restored as they existed in former times. The argument that was used against these testimonies was this: that for nearly 1800 years or thereabouts, there had been no communication of this character, there had been no heavenly visitations; prophets had not been known among men since the days of the Apostles, and, therefore, this being the case, it was an evidence, they contended, that it was not God's design that there should be any of those gifts and blessings, and that that condition of affairs which existed – or which they declared existed – was the condition that God designed should exist and should continue to exist until the end of time.

[JD 24:372, George Q. Cannon, September 2nd, 1883](#)

Now, the world in this way took advantage of its own wrong, and sought to justify itself by that which had been brought to pass by its own actions, attributing to God that which was traceable to man, and which was the result of man's conduct; for the unbroken silence which reigned between heaven and earth was not because God preferred to have that condition of affairs exist, but was the result of man's own actions. God had sent messengers; He had sent His only Begotten Son, and had given unto Him His Gospel to declare unto the inhabitants of the earth, and after a short residence among them they slew Him. They would not have Him or His teachings, and they were determined that He should have no place among them. Not content with slaying Him, they continued the warfare against the organization that He established upon the earth at that time, until they slew every man whom He had chosen – that is, they either slew them or drove them from their midst. The result was that the earth was stained with the blood of the Son of God, and of His chosen Apostles and Prophets. No one could live among the inhabitants of the earth at that time who professed to have any revelation from God, or to be a divine messenger; for if he made such a proclamation, and it was in truth, the whole power of Satan, manifested through the inhabitants of the earth, was hurled against him, and he was either slain or compelled to flee.

[JD 24:372 – p.373, George Q. Cannon, September 2nd, 1883](#)

This being the case, is it any wonder that there should be no voice of revelation – that God should leave His children to themselves? I will tell you how I feel about my family. If I had children that were determined not

to listen to my counsel, nor to obey that which I said to them, but should treat my instructions with contempt, I would say to them: "You can go your own way. You and I have chosen different paths. You have chosen one path and I have chosen another. Now, if you and I go together, you will have to go with me, and not I with you, and if you don't do that we separate; you take your path and I take mine." And it seems as though the Almighty had taken that course with His children. They had slain all His chosen people and had left none of them upon the earth. They had hunted them, persecuted them and slain them until there was none left; and the authority which God had bestowed upon men through His only Begotten Son had fled – that is, the men who held it had been exterminated. What then? "Why," said He, seemingly – that is, we may judge so by the result – "you have chosen this course, you have slain my chosen Apostles and servants, and now I will withdraw myself from you, and leave you to yourselves;" and for 1800 years, or nearly that – probably 1600 or 1700 at least, so far as that continent was concerned – there had been no man left upon the earth who held the Priesthood, that we know anything about. If there are any among the children of men who held it, they are in some retired place, inaccessible to the wicked. When the set time had come for God to re-establish His Church and to bring to pass the fulfillment of that which had been spoken by the mouths of the Prophets, He came himself.

[JD 24:373, George Q. Cannon, September 2nd, 1883](#)

The first account we have of the visitation of divine beings in this dispensation, is the account that is given to us by the Prophet Joseph Smith himself, concerning the visit of the Father and the Son. There had been men, doubtless many men in the various ages of the world, who had light and who had a degree of the Spirit of God. I believe myself that Mahomed, whom the Christians deride and call a false prophet and stigmatize with a great many epithets – I believe that he was a man raised up by the Almighty, and inspired to a certain extent by Him to effect the reforms which he did in his land, and in the nations surrounding. He attacked idolatry, and restored the great and crowning idea that there is but one God. He taught that idea to his people, and reclaimed them from polytheism and from the heathenish practices into which they had fallen. I believe many men were inspired who lived after him and before him, who, nevertheless, did not have the Holy Priesthood, but were led by the Spirit of God to strive for a better condition of affairs and to live a purer and higher life than those by whom they were surrounded were living. But while this was the case it was the Spirit of God that did it. We have no account – no authenticated account at least – of angels coming from heaven, or of the Father manifesting Himself unto the children of men. And we have no account of the Priesthood being restored; in fact, there is every reason to believe it never was restored after it was withdrawn. The first that we knew concerning God, was through the testimony of the Prophet Joseph. Even the personality of God was doubted. The traditions of men were so false respecting God, that the idea of a personal Deity had faded from the so-called Christian mind. Though Jesus had appeared on the earth as a personage having a body, parts and passions, and declared Himself to be the Son of God, and the Apostles declared Him to be in the express image of His Father – notwithstanding that fact and that the record bore ample testimony to it, so long had been the silence that had existed between God and man, that the very conception of the nature of God – that is, of His characteristics – had entirely faded from the human mind, and He was deemed to be something other than He is. The common sectarian idea was that His center was nowhere, and His circumference was everywhere. There was no man scarcely upon the earth that had a true conception of God; the densest ignorance prevailed; and even ministers of religion could not conceive of the true idea, and there was mystery associated with what is called the Trinity – that is, with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. But all this was swept away in one moment by the appearance of the Almighty Himself – by the appearance of God, the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ, to the boy Joseph, as he kneeled in the forest beseeching God for knowledge concerning Him, and concerning the Gospel of salvation. In one moment all this darkness disappeared, and once more there was a man found on the earth, embodied in the flesh, who had seen God, who had seen Jesus, and who could describe the personality of both. Faith was again restored to the earth, the true faith and the true knowledge concerning our Creator, our Father, the Being from whence we derive our origin. This revelation dissipated all misconceptions and all false ideas, and removed the uncertainty that had existed respecting these matters. The Father came accompanied by the Son, thus showing that there were two personages of the Godhead, two presiding personages whom we worship and to whom we look, the one the Father, and the other the Son. Joseph saw that the Father had a form; that He had a head; that He had arms;

that He had limbs; that He had feet; that He had a face and a tongue with which to express His thoughts; for He said unto Joseph: "This is my beloved Son" – pointing to the Son – "hear Him."

[JD 24:373, George Q. Cannon, September 2nd, 1883](#)

Now, it was meant that this knowledge should be restored first of all. It seems so, at least, from the fact that God Himself came; it seems that this knowledge had to be restored as the basis for all true faith to be built upon. There can be no faith that is not built upon a true conception of God our Father. Therefore, before even angels came, He came Himself, accompanied by His Son, and revealed Himself once more to man upon the earth.

[JD 24:373, George Q. Cannon, September 2nd, 1883](#)

As I have said, the set time had come, the instrument had been born – the instrument that had been selected doubtless as much as the Son of God had been selected to accomplish His mission – that is, He had also been selected from before the foundation of the world, to come and to be the instrument in the hands of God to again lay the foundation of His Church upon the earth – that instrument had been born and the set time had come for the establishment of the work of the Lord. Joseph Smith had the necessary gifts and qualifications by which he was enabled to seek unto God with such irresistible faith that God heard his prayer and granted unto him the desire of his heart by revealing Himself unto him and giving unto him the instructions which He did. This was followed by other ministrations – the ministrations of angels. In the sectarian world you can scarcely see a picture of an angel without having a pair of wings attached, and every angel looks like a woman. Such ideas have come down through ages. And who knew differently? Who could tell anything about it? As with the being of God Himself, so there were false conceptions concerning the character of angels, and there was no man who could correct them, because all were alike in ignorance, and all were alike a prey to the traditions that had been handed down. But when Joseph received the ministration of an angel – or angels, for he was visited by more than one – he saw that they were men, and that they had not feathered after death, that they did not have wings, but that they were glorified men, or men who had received glory from God; they were personages like they were on the earth. Thus a true conception began to dawn upon the minds of at least a few individuals, who believed Joseph's testimony concerning these beings. When I see our sisters and our brethren buying pictures of the sort to which I have alluded – pictures in which are angels having wings – a sort of hermaphrodite beings, or worse – I wonder that they would hang such things on their walls, and then allow this false conception to be perpetuated in the minds of little children concerning the character of these heavenly beings. I think it is just as wrong to represent an idea falsely by a picture, as it is to teach it falsely by words, because an impression is made on the mind by either means. Pictures of that kind should not be patronized by our people. Our children should not be allowed to come to conclusions upon such false representations.

[JD 24:373 – p.374, George Q. Cannon, September 2nd, 1883](#)

Is it to be wondered at, my brethren and sisters, that after so many ages of darkness and unbelief, so many ages of ignorance concerning God, concerning his true character, concerning heavenly beings, that the whole world should have gone astray concerning the Gospel of Christ and the gifts of that Gospel and the nature of heaven and the future state of existence? Is it to be wondered at that the whole world should have gone astray concerning all these things, when they were so much astray concerning God Himself, concerning angels, and concerning other heavenly things? Is it any wonder that we have difficulty in preaching the Gospel, and in reaching the hearts of the people, when we consider that they are the inheritors of those false traditions that have come down intensified and strengthened by the ages of transmission, coming through one age to another, until they have reached the present time? It is not to be wondered at that the Latter-day Saints themselves have so little faith concerning these things, when we recollect the pit from whence they have been dug, and the rock whence they have been hewn. Well might the Savior ask, if He should find faith on earth, when He should come again? In looking down through the ages that would succeed His own, He saw the terrible condition of ignorance that would prevail upon the earth. Why, this so-called Christian world is as far from

God, as any heathens that ever lived upon the face of the earth. Yea, they are worse than the heathen, because they think that they are in the full light of the Gospel, and that heavenly rays are shining upon them, when in reality they are sitting in the deepest darkness and are surrounded by clouds of ignorance that are impenetrable to them. How can men know anything about God, when He never speaks to them? How can men find out whether there is any revelation from heaven, when no revelation comes from that source? How can men find out about the future, if no one comes to tell them what the future is? It would be impossible for them to do it. It requires knowledge from God, concerning Himself; it requires knowledge concerning angels, it requires knowledge concerning eternity, to give men proper conceptions about these things. Hence it was that Joseph Smith, having had these visions opened to his mind, moved like a being from another sphere, among the children of men. God had opened his mind and revealed to him heavenly things. He saw them in their true light; he knew about them; and when he talked to men he was in their midst like a being from another world. That which he told them appeared, in some instances, to be false, to be nonsense. They could not comprehend it, because they had none of the Spirit of God about them, none of the knowledge of God, and they refused to accept him as an exponent of divine truth. So it is with the Elders who go out at the present day, to talk to the inhabitants of the earth. They are looked upon in the same light; though there is this to be said: that which has been taught by the Elders has had effect in the earth, and much misconception has gradually disappeared. There are men even now, for instance, who are ready to believe a doctrine which, when it was first preached, they rejected – the doctrine that there is a space between death and the resurrection in which a man can repent of his sins. Now, when that doctrine was first taught, some 42 years ago, it was looked upon by many as an absurd doctrine. They said it was contrary to the divine will. If man, they contended, did not receive the Gospel or the truth here in this life, he lost his opportunity, and would be damned throughout all the endless ages of eternity. That was the popular idea, and many believed it. Many believed that this would be the case with pagans, and with these Indians that we know something about, and with other heathen peoples, who had never heard the name of the Son of God – the only name under heaven by which man can be saved; many believed those people were to be consigned to hell by millions, never to be delivered therefrom, and yet they called God just, the God they worshiped.

[JD 24:374, George Q. Cannon, September 2nd, 1883](#)

Joseph Smith taught a different doctrine even before the Church was organized. He taught the doctrine, in a revelation given to Martin Harris, – it had to be given with great care, because it was entirely different to what was generally believed – that "eternal punishment is God's punishment;" but it does not follow that those who come under God's punishment are to be punished throughout the endless ages of eternity. He taught that grand truth in the year 1829. Then it was followed up by the Vision, which explained in the most wonderful manner the goodness of our God, and showed Him to be the being that He is described to be by all the holy Prophets – a being just and merciful, a being who labored to save His children, and had their salvation at heart continually.

[JD 24:374, George Q. Cannon, September 2nd, 1883](#)

But Joseph taught in later years, this doctrine: that there was a space between death and the resurrection, and during that space the children of men who had not had an opportunity of hearing the Gospel in this life, could hear it proclaimed by men who had authority in the spirit world; and he explained that the Savior himself, during the time that His body was in the tomb, "went and preached to the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah."

[JD 24:374 – p.376, George Q. Cannon, September 2nd, 1883](#)

It was a doctrine that was new to the sectarian world; new to every one; no one had ever thought of such a doctrine. But now I see by allusions in the newspapers occasionally, that popular ministers are taking hold of this idea and ventilating it and speaking about it. How wonderful! is it not? It shows that when knowledge is upon the earth, there are some at least who profit by it, though they may not accept it as coming from God. In this way the preaching of this Gospel has had its effect upon the inhabitants of the earth. I have seen of late,

and doubtless you have, many arguments in favor of God being a personal being, of there being a personal God – that is, a God with a form like a man, or that man, rather, had a form like God. The world has profited by the ideas which the Prophet Joseph received from heaven. Until these truths were revealed all was vagueness, doubt, uncertainty. Satan reigned over the earth. He swayed, it might be said, almost an undisturbed sceptre. There was no one, scarcely, upon the face of the earth to dispute his reign. A few that did so, even though they did not have the Priesthood, were speedily crushed. For instance, the Huguenots, and others, who, in mountains and recesses and distant places, sought for a purer worship, was determined to reign with undisputed savvy. During this reign he had slain the Son of God, and every man who testified of Him. He was determined to control this earth, and that has been his determination all the time. When the Prophet Joseph received those revelations from God, he leveled at him all his artillery; he made him the target for all his attacks; he hounded him from morning to night; he concocted every plot that could be conceived of, to destroy him from the face of the earth. Joseph's great anxiety all the time was to bestow the keys and authority of the Holy Priesthood, so that at his death they would not be taken from the earth. His aim from the beginning was to this end. He urged the Saints forward to build the Temple in Kirtland, so that he might bestow upon some that knowledge and authority which God had given to him. And then afterwards in Nauvoo, the burden of his thoughts and talk was to urge the Saints to push forward the Temple there, so that he could bestow upon them the keys and authority which God had restored from heaven. He feared lest he should die until these were bestowed upon men. But God preserved his life until every key, every authority, every power and every gift that he had received from the eternal worlds, through the ministration of angels, from the days of Adam down to the days of Moroni, was again restored to the earth and sealed upon the heads of men, and then it proved more difficult for Satan to accomplish his purpose. He slew Joseph; but it was too late to prevent him communicating that authority which he had received; and the Church organization was preserved on the earth. Joseph lived long enough, as did our Elder Brother Jesus, to accomplish the work God sent him to do. He laid the foundation of the Church. He laid it so deep that it will never be overthrown. He bestowed upon man the everlasting Priesthood, with all its authority, from the Apostleship down to the authority of a Deacon, with every key, every endowment and every ordinance necessary to accomplish the work of God upon the earth. Then Satan raged, and he has raged ever since. You wonder many times, doubtless, at the hatred exhibited to this Church and people. If you could see the eternal worlds; if the vision of your mind could be opened to the scene; if you could have the veil withdrawn, you would not wonder at it when you understood the real character of the stake that is being fought for. It is the supremacy of this earth that is being contended for. Satan is determined that God shall not have this earth, and that He shall not reign here; he is determined in this, and if he could he would shed the blood of every man and woman on the face of the earth, rather than it should go into the hands of God. All those who are connected with him would, if they could, slay every man that stands in their pathway. The more faithful a man is in the cause of God, the more the hatred of the wicked is manifested against him, illustrating the truth of that statement made by the Apostle Paul, that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution" – not may suffer it, but they shall suffer it. Hence a people who seek to establish the cause of righteousness, to build temples, to restore the authority of God, will be hated to the death, and thus the prophecy will be fulfilled concerning them. We were told in the beginning of this work that we should be hated by a township, then by a County, then by a State; but after a while it would not be the opposition of a State, of a County, or of a township against this work, but that it should be the united power of the nation itself, against this work. We live and behold a fulfillment of that prediction; we are living witnesses of it; and this nation is fulfilling just as fast as it can do, the predictions of the Prophet Joseph Smith. They are making him a Prophet by their conduct, and fulfilling everything that he has spoken concerning this work. And it will not be confined to this nation. After a while it will gain such a foothold in the earth, and excite such fear, that the nations of the earth will band themselves against it. You need not expect any other result. This warfare will not cease. "But," says one, "when this present excitement passes over, will we not have a time of peace?" God forbid that there should be peace on such terms as our enemies would have us make; for peace means surrendering the Kingdom of God; surrendering and giving up by the servants of God, that which they have undertaken to do, namely, to restore the reign of righteousness and truth upon the earth, the reign of God and of heaven. Such peace as our enemies have in view, means the surrender of this upon our part. When we are ready to surrender these things, then there will be peace, but it will be the peace of death, it will be the peace of hell, it will be the triumph of Satan,

and the destruction of everything that is pure and holy, and godlike, upon the face of the earth. Men say, "Let us compromise." This means the giving up of this principle and that principle for the sake of the world's favor. And when we commence giving up, where shall we stop? I want peace on no such terms as these. We have engaged in this warfare to build up the Kingdom of God upon the earth, let the consequences be what they may. They can only kill this body of ours; but let us fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. God has said that He will bear this Kingdom off triumphantly, and that it shall not be given into the hands of another people, and as sure as He has spoken, His word will be fulfilled. It may seem sometimes as though there was no ray of light, as though all was darkness, and as though our destruction was inevitable; but there is a God in heaven who, under these circumstances knows our condition, and remembers the promises that He has made concerning Zion. His arm will be stretched out to save, and He will deliver us from the greatest perils that may environ us. This is true – true as God lives, and we shall realize it in the future just as we have in the past.

[to be continued in volume 25]