

Contentment—Home Manufactures—The Priesthood—Tithing—Gathering—Building Up Zion—Purification

A Discourse by President Heber C. Kimball, Delivered in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, Nov. 26, 1854.

I feel grateful for the privileges and blessings we enjoy as a people. This seems to be the feeling of everyone that attempts to speak before this congregation. But what are the feelings of thousands of this people that appreciate their blessings and their enjoyments? I know for one that I have never seen a day since I entered into this Church, but what I felt thankful for the situation in which I was placed. I have been many times poor as to the things of this world, but I never saw the time but what I felt rich in regard to the principles of life and salvation, that God has revealed to us.

I presume there are but few in this valley, and perhaps not one, that has seen closer times than I have, or than President Brigham Young has. I hear a great many people say, and even some of those who labor on the Public Works, that they have nothing but bread to eat and water to drink; well, I have seen the time, a great many times, that I had not bread to eat, but there was plenty of water, though not half so good as we have here in these valleys. I have thought a thousand times how it is possible that men can have nothing under the heavens to live upon but bread and water, when the valleys are full of vegetation, and at the same time they will have plenty of potatoes, beets, carrots, pumpkins, and everything of that kind, and still they say they have nothing but bread and water! That is a mystery that never has been unfolded to me. I have never seen the time in my life but what I had something to eat, if it was nothing but some horse beef, or something of that kind.

Well, there are a great many who labor, and have their three dollars and three dollars and a half a day, and they say there is nothing but bread and water to live upon. Ask them how much of a family they have, and you will learn they have only one wife, and no children, and are paid from 18 to 20 dollars a week, and cannot get anything but bread and water!

I merely speak of this because I have heard it so much. Perhaps they cannot get meat, and perhaps they cannot get butter, nor sugar, nor coffee, nor tea, but they have plenty of potatoes, and they have plenty of beets, carrots, pumpkins, squashes, &c., &c., for there are thousands of these things in the Tithing Office. I wish the brethren would not come to President Young, nor to any other one, with that complaint any more, until the potatoes are all gone. Why not say, "We have to live on bread, and water, and potatoes, and pumpkins, squashes, and all these good things?" Will you not be so candid as to make that report the next time? I know perfectly well we are comfortable as a people, and you may go into the United States, and into the best cities and towns that there are in the United States, and you cannot find so large a congregation as are here together, which is as well clad as you are today. If you could stand where I am, and look upon this congregation, you would be surprised to see the good clothing you have on; it is better than I ever saw any congregation have in any part of the United States, or in any portion of Europe that I ever was in; and we have the least cause of complaint of any people that live upon the face of the earth; this I know. And I know another thing, that a great many people are becoming so proud—well, perhaps it is not pride, but they have got so that they cannot dress and clothe themselves with anything that is not brought here by the merchants. Many will bring in their wool, and their linsey, and their good clothing that they make here from the wool, and give it to clothe the Indians, for they are too proud to wear it themselves. But the day will come when the merchants of the earth will lift up their heads and their voices, and cry out, "We have no place to sell our merchandise."

Will the time ever be that we can make our clothing? We nearly can at this time. We can do it almost universally as a people. If there are any who have not got the sheep, they can buy the wool cheaper than it can be bought in the United States this day. You can buy it at from 20 to 50 cents a pound. I would like to see the people take a course to make their own clothing, make their own machinery, their own knives and their own forks, and everything else we need, for the day will come when we will be under the necessity of doing it, for trouble and perplexity, war and famine, bloodshed and fire, and thunder and lightning will roll upon the nations of the earth, insomuch that we cannot get to them, nor they to us. If you do not believe me I want you to believe the Prophets; read the

revelations that came through brother Joseph Smith, and through Daniel and Moses, and through Jesus, and through all the ancient Prophets. They spoke of these things, and declare they shall come to pass in the latter days. Well, what period is it now? Unto us it is the "last days," in which, the Lord says by His Prophets, when you hear of war, and rumors of war, it will not be long before you have it in your own land. Now are we as a people preparing and qualifying ourselves for that day, lest it overtake us as a thief in the night? It certainly will if we do not wake up from our slumber.

There is a blessing that attends this people wherever they go, and every man that comes to us, or is at a place when we come, I never have seen the time but what they begin to get rich. Look at Nauvoo, for instance, and see how poor and penniless we were, living in old log cabins, and destitute; but we began to get rich, and many became wealthy. There is no man upon the face of the earth that will be favorable towards Zion and towards this people, but what he will prosper temporally as well as spiritually. I have never seen a place, since I was born upon the earth, in which I could make one dollar, but that I could make 50 dollars among the Saints in the same length of time. It seems to cost more to build a house here by one half than it does in the United States, still it is easier to build, and to multiply and replenish the earth, and raise food, and everything else, in this place, than in any other that ever I saw. At the same time there are a great many who murmur, and say it is the hardest place they ever saw; that is a curiosity to me, when the blessings of the Almighty attend us wherever we go; for we can build up a city in a few days, or at the furthest in a few years, and it seems to be no trouble at all. Brethren and sisters, let us try to appreciate our blessings, and honor the calling we have received. At the same time there are a great many who disregard their profession, and tantalize others who hold the Priesthood, and try to make it dishonorable; but they cannot do it. I cannot dishonor it, but I can dishonor myself.

The Priesthood is a gift from the Almighty, and He has placed a portion of it upon me to honor, and if I honor that calling, that Priesthood will honor me, it will magnify me before God, and before the world. I do know that when I take a course to dishonor myself, I degrade myself in the eyes of heaven, and upon earth. When I trifle with the Priesthood I trifle with the Almighty; and when I trifle with President Young I trifle with the Priesthood, and that Priesthood will leave me, and I will fall and I will become disgraced in the eyes of heaven, and of all Saints; and I forfeit everything that I had attained while I held that Priesthood, when I forfeit it; I forfeit my salvation and every blessing I possess.

Supposing we all realized this, do you not think that those who have the Priesthood, and take a course to pollute not only themselves, but their brethren, and their sisters, and degrade themselves, and steal, and lie, and take the name of God in vain, would repent speedily? How do you suppose the Lord looks upon them? Now reflect one moment; He looks upon them with less allowance than I do, and that in proportion to the light and knowledge which He has. And how do angels look upon them when they are sent forth to minister to those who will become heirs of salvation?

We read in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants that when Peter and James desired to depart, John desired to tarry, that he might accomplish a greater work. "Well," says the Lord, "you may have your wishes, and, as John wants to tarry to do a greater work, I will authorize you, James and Peter, to assist my servant John to perform a good work while he shall tarry." Now, if John has angels to administer to him, why not other men who are servants of the living God? It is just as reasonable that they should. I know it is so; I do not believe it, but I actually know it; and that the God which I serve lives and dwells in the heavens; and I feel to honor Him, I feel to reverence Him, and to do a good work by His authority, that I may come into His presence, and give up my stewardship with joy, and not with grief; and dwell with Him at some future time. And when I give up my stewardship to Him, if He considers me worthy, He can restore it to me, with an hundredfold beside.

We are on trial, and let us prove ourselves by paying our tithing, and fulfilling all our duties before God, and see if He will not pour us out a blessing that there will not be room to contain it. How in the heavens can you prove the Lord whether His word shall be verified, if you do not step forward and do as He has told you? Gentlemen and ladies, let me tell you one thing, your withholding does not impoverish the Almighty, for you have not anything only what is His, and you have not anything only what He gave you; and do you suppose He has given all to you that He possesses? No. When He has given every thing that you can retain, that you can watch over, and preside

over, He is not impoverished, because there is an eternal increase, and there is no end to His income, and there is no end to His creations, for they go on continually. You have not anything only what you have received from the Almighty from day to day. Where do you get your water, your meat, your bread, and the luxuries of life? Did not He create them all, or, in other words, organize them? Were not the elements thereof placed here upon the earth before you came here? One half of this people may draw away from the truth, or two-thirds of them, or a quarter of them, or all but twenty, if you please, and do you suppose it will hinder the salvation, the exaltation, the happiness, and the heaven that pertain to those who cleave to this Church? No, it won't affect them one hair. If you do not pay one dime of tithing it will not impoverish the Almighty, but I will tell you where the effect will be, it will affect yourselves, your own salvation. If you neglect these things, I tell you the Lord will neglect to bless you; it comes on yourselves individually, and it stands you in hand, every soul of you, men and women, to arise and prove the Lord, and see if He does not watch your faithfulness, and is not ready to pour you out a blessing that you have not room to receive.

Since President Young and others have dwelt upon tithing it is coming in first rate, and Bishop Hunter has become frightened; "Good heavens," says he, "what shall we do with the tithing? We have not got room to put it." "Why," says I, "stretch out, Bishop." If he does not stretch out, he will, in comparison, be like an artificial globe, he will become round, he will draw up, that is the trouble. Too many have got the sweeny, and the skins are growing tight on their flesh, and even on their bones. Some of the Bishops and Elders become so contracted that it is too hard for them to pay their tithing when it pertains to them as individuals, for it is an individual salvation. Let us be one in these things, and be up and doing while it is time; and it is time all the time, and it is time in eternity all the time, and always will be; and when we get into the next stage of action it will be time while we are there, and it will be eternity around us. Let us go to work and purify our hearts—our tabernacles—and purify and cleanse our houses, and let us rise up as a people. What say ye? Do you feel inclined to do it? Let us show to the world that we are Saints, for it hurts my feelings to see the steps that some Elders here are taking right in the midst of Israel, rising up in clans to steal from their brethren, and thinking we shall believe it is someone else. Is that righteous? Is that the religion of Christ? Is that doing as you would wish to be dealt by? Such characters will see sorrow, they will see wretchedness, they will see misery; and may God grant that their misery may begin to fall upon them, and increase, that they may never rest until they repent, and wash away their sins, and turn unto the Lord; I wish this on conditions you know. Well, here we pray, and here we desire, that inasmuch as the world raise weapons against Zion, or against God's people, we pray that these weapons may fall upon their own heads, and not upon ours; we pray, inasmuch as they dig pits, that they may fall into them instead of getting us into them.

Bless your souls, I have no fear about any matters pertaining to this people, if they would rise up and be as one man, and act by common consent with the President, as his Counselors and as the Twelve do. The Twelve feel to be one with the First Presidency, as they are with each other. I do not fear this world, nor do I fear anything that is in it, for where there is union and concentration with that man whom God has appointed, there is a power that this earth cannot handle. Now the world do not know this, but still they are fearful; there is something out of sight which they fear. Again, if those who go forth to preach the Gospel could speedily gather every one of the Saints from Europe, Asia, Africa, the islands of the sea, and from wherever they are scattered, there would be twenty thousand, yes, fifty thousand, converted, where there now are not ten. The lingerers are right in the gate, like a dog in a manger; they will neither eat themselves nor let anybody else eat; and they are an offense in the eyes of the world, and they block up the work from rolling on. I wish they were gathered into a brush heap and burned, that is those who ought to be burned, and the rest gathered with us; for the Lord, in the very first start of this Church, said, "All those who have entered into covenant with me, and come into my Church, let them gather themselves together into one place." Still, do you not see how desirous people are to scatter here and there, and not go as they are told; but they are for getting off by themselves, to partake of the spirit of the world, and the spirit of selfishness; and they want to own everything there is, that no person or being can get within miles of them.

We are commanded to gather into one place, and purify ourselves, and sanctify ourselves, that we may be prepared for His coming; for He will come by and by, when He gets ready; the time is not very far off, as many suppose; He will not come to the wicked first, but to those who are virtuous, and have kept their covenants; and

when He comes to the wicked He will come in the clouds of heaven and in flames of fire, and will take vengeance on them, and on those that know not God, and do not obey His counsel, and His Priesthood, and the power He has placed upon earth. To me, the word comes from brother Brigham as the word of the Lord; but how many there are who disregard it. He is the delegate that God has appointed to be Joseph's successor, and his word is the word of the Lord, whether it is written or not; whether it comes out as revelation or not, it is the word of God to those who believe and practice it; and when this is done the blessings of the Lord God will rest upon this people to that degree that you cannot conceive nor imagine. As for riches, let us seek after the riches of eternal life, and let us seek first the kingdom of God, and its righteousness, and then all necessary things shall be added unto us, both those that pertain to earth, and that pertain to heaven and heavenly things. As to what little I have in this world, I have not anything but what belongs to the Almighty; and if I have got anything here in my possession that I am steward over, if it is wanted I want He should have it, I do not care what it is. I know the earth is full of the abundance of everything that is or ever was upon it; and we are bound to prosper if we take this course, but if we do not we shall experience the opposite; and when the opposite takes place it will be worse, and more sorrowful, and more to be dreaded than anything we have ever had to experience.

I wish many of you had been through the scenes that brother Brigham and many others have. "What, do you want us to pass through the same that you have?" Yes, and more abundantly. Do you think I will cry about it? No; I will rejoice if you only stick to the faith, because it will be for your good—for your happiness; it will give you an experience that you have not got, and I do not know that you can have it until you have been tried. You have never seen the day that you have had to watch with your firelock in readiness; that is, you have not had to watch President Young, with your fire-arms and other weapons of defense, and not only to watch him, but to watch you Elders. This was all the time the case in the former part of our career in this Church, and we were happy then; were we not, brother Brigham? ["Yes, sir."] and rejoiced all the day long that it was no worse with us.

We talk of these things to you a great many times; well, we have passed through a great deal of tribulation. Though there may be individuals who have passed through pretty close places, yet I never saw a place where there was not a chance to get out sometime; but have you, as a people, one in a hundred of you, passed through any great trials? Many of you have been brought here free of expense, and did not work to pay one dime of it, until you got here, and got settled. Did we get carried in our early day? No, we had to look out for ourselves, and then take a large back load besides.

Some say they do not want to work here for nothing and find themselves; but we found ourselves, that is, we found ourselves right there. Telling about finding ourselves! God finds us, and furnishes us with everything we have, with the breath we breathe and the earth we stand upon, and the water that we drink. Do you make all these things? No, the Lord made them, and placed them here upon the earth for our use; He made the wheat and organized it; we have the seed, and all we have to do is to sow one kernel and get a thousand, to sow one bushel and get twenty, forty, or eighty; to plant one bushel of corn and get five hundred; to plant six bushels of potatoes and get three or four hundred. Find yourselves, do you? Did you find the seed? No, you did not, the Lord found it; when He came here He brought it with Him, and He told His sons to sow it, and let it increase.

You are aware that my object in addressing you is to try to influence your minds to do good, and take the right course, and listen to counsel, and to the government of God as it is established upon the earth. Do you suppose I would occupy this stand, were it not that peradventure I might persuade you? I am exhorting you to faithfulness, humility, and to be true to your integrity, and to your God, and to one another, and to pray. There are a great many men will pray when you ask them to pray, but I doubt whether they pray at any other time, but they must keep up an appearance in our midst, and at the same time carry on iniquity right here in the heart of Zion. As someone said here last Sabbath, I wish things would take a little different course, that we should have no necessity of exhorting you to faithfulness. I wish you would exhort yourselves to faithfulness, and then practice it, and then continue in it to the end. Let us go, to work and build up Zion as well as build up ourselves, for when we build up Zion we build up ourselves, when we enrich Zion we enrich ourselves. When we build up the Public Works we enrich ourselves, for the public improvements increase the value of our private improvements, and they are connected together. Let President Brigham Young and his Counselors, and the Twelve, leave this place and go to

Fillmore, and property in Fillmore will rise the moment we go there and commence to build a temple. Lots, instead of selling for 25 dollars, will sell for 25 hundred. Take away the temple from here, and place it there, and see what a change it will make; for where the carcass is, there the eagles will gather together, and you cannot help yourselves. Do you know it? Now let us go to work and build up these Public Works, and make things look nice and comfortable. It will take us but a little while to do a thing if we have means to do it; for the more means there are, the more men can be employed; and after all true riches are in labor and muscle, the sinew and the bone, more than in gold and silver, and fine clothing. Did you ever see a piece of calico make itself? It is produced by bone and sinew.

Some in the world say, "I never can believe the earth was made with hands, or if it was, it is certainly a curiosity for the Lord to measure the whole of it in the hollow of His hand, and it is said He did; He hefted it and weighed it in a balance. What does all this mean? Does it not mean what it says, or does it mean something else?" God made the earth, and He made it with His hands, just as much as I ever made a vessel from clay with my hands. I shaped it, but the elements were made before; I only took the material from the bank and organized it and put it into such shape as my master told me. An apprentice who goes to a trade has to do as his master tells him. Look at it, we are apprentices, and we ought to become obedient to our masters, that we may become workmen who need not be ashamed to present ourselves before our masters, or before those who of right take cognizance of us.

In Europe all the troops that are enlisted have to be taken and drilled, and when they have been drilled for many years, they have to learn to march with heads up, and eyes right or left, and all step alike; after they can do this first rate they must then be examined by the best military men, and when they are approved they are sent to different parts of the earth to take stations. That is good, is it not?

The Saints have to come to as careful discipline, and the day will come when the wicked will have to come to it, and if they do not learn to step right, they will be made to do it. I was speaking about it yesterday, when I went with brother Brigham to see the review; they are improving, no doubt, though our troops were not all there. We were speaking about an open vision that we saw some years ago; it was not seen in the dark, but we saw it with our natural eyes; President Young, myself, brother Phineas Young, and many others saw it. We saw an army start from the east, and go to the south, and there were twelve men in a column, and one column came right after the other, so that when the first stepped, the next stepped in their track; and they had swords, guns, knapsacks, caps, and feathers, and we could see them march with a uniform step from one side of the heavens to the other. This we saw with our natural eyes, and looked upon it for hours; it was the very night that the angel delivered the plates to Joseph Smith.

This army marched to the southwest, and they marched as if there was a battle to take place; and we could hear the clashing of their swords and guns, and the measured tread of their march, just as plain as I ever heard the movements of troops on the earth. John P. Greene came to wake me up to look upon it. I am speaking of this to show you how exact in our discipline and government we must be to prepare us for a celestial being; we have got to begin to come to it, and I would like to know when you will begin to prepare yourselves. The whole world have got to see and feel the armies of heaven, and when they come they will come with order, and when they are commanded to act there will be no running away, and there will be no traitors in that army, but it will be composed of virtuous Saints, who are clothed with the power of God, and have the integrity of heavenly beings. They will not sell whiskey, and stick up grogeries, and establish distilleries, and engage in various other operations to pollute this people among whom they have enlisted, even under the banners of Christ. Among the wicked there will be disorder, but in the armies of heaven there will be order. Things in heaven are in order, there is a pure government there, and it must be observed, and strictly adhered to; this you read in your Bibles. When the order of that government was threatened, did not Michael the archangel, with the hosts of heaven that were with him, cast Lucifer out, and all his votaries?

The world is in confusion, and shall we pattern after the world, or after the armies of heaven? What do you say as a people? To pattern after heavenly things is my religion, it is what I believe, and is what I would like to practice, and what I would like to see the Elders in Israel practice, and all who profess to be Saints.

To judge from my exhortation at this time, some of those who come in from the States might think we are quite corrupt and wicked here; but the gentlemen and ladies who have come in our midst, know that this is the most virtuous and upright community that they ever lived with; and if they ever become doubtful about it, let them go back to the States after they have lived here. You know that it is said to be the most celebrated place for good order. I say the majority of this people are the best that ever lived, or dwelt upon the earth, according to their experience. Is not that a pretty good recommend? But there are some scoundrels, and when we think of it, we wish it were otherwise. But you remember the figure that Jesus used; said he, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that is cast into the sea, and it brought together all kinds. Don't you see them here? It is that, for one thing, which makes me think it is "Mormonism;" if there were not such devils here I might doubt occasionally; or in other words, might doubt, if there was any chance to doubt, but there is none. Just look at the different kinds of fish. There is a time coming for the net to be drawn in, and all the fish drawn together, both good and bad; the good will be put into baskets, and the bad will be cast away. You recollect the passage. The day will come when we who prove faithful will dwell on this earth in a Holy City, and it will be walled in, and there will be fine buildings of every description in it; we have not a house here that will compare with the most inferior that will be in that city. Why do you not qualify yourselves, and prepare to go into that city and kingdom where you can be still more useful?

Now look at yourselves, and scan yourselves, and see whether you are fit subjects to go there. Are you without spot or blemish? If not, awake and exert yourselves to work righteousness. What will you see outside of that city? Dogs, sorcerers, and whoremongers, and those who love and make a lie, and steal, and disobey the requirements of God, and take His name in vain. Are they going inside? No; but a wall will have to be built to keep the devils out, even in heaven; and still, many do not deem it necessary for Saints to be gathered together and wall in a city!

Awake, all ye Israel, from your slumber, and call upon God, and listen to His counsel, and obey, and then we shall prevail, and not be prevailed against; then we shall live forever, and see the devil cast out of heaven, and destroyed with his works. I do not expect to live forever in this old body, for I am going to have a new one. Then let me magnify and keep this body pure, that I may be entitled to a new one, and if I do not keep this pure I shall not be entitled to a better; neither will any of you, except you honor this body. Now, will you go and pollute yourselves, and lose the right and title to a resurrection, to dwell with the Saints, and with God the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ, who is my brother? You who do not wish to be Saints, who do not care anything about righteousness, and desire to follow the evil habits you have been accustomed to in other countries, will you not please to leave us? Will you lift up your hands and show yourselves? No. I cannot get a hand up, you keep down under the curtain; but we will find you out by and by, and we will cast nuisances out of this city; for in a city acknowledged by God the Eternal Father grog shops cannot be tolerated. Look in the Eastern States; we cast them out there as nuisances, and they never can be tolerated here. Don't you say it will be better to take that course than to have the chastity of our virtuous women violated? Drunkenness and pollution cannot prevail while we dwell here, and when we remove there will be nobody here but devils. Every place we have left has become a literal hell. Look at Nauvoo, which we tried to build up, and they would not let us, but killed our Prophet and Patriarch, because we preached, and tried to practice, the same righteous course which I am now exhorting you to pursue. That is what they drove us for. I know all about it, I was there, and President Young was there. We never had any peace in the States after we embraced "Mormonism;" even as soon as I embraced it in my own country, men came into my house to drive and mob me. They had no fault to find with me and brother Brigham, but with our religion, because it was severe towards the wicked and ungodly. Now, you who profess to be in the sheepfold, for Heaven's sake be subject to the law and government of the Shepherd.

Have I said enough? I feel just as I say; I am honest. I am a servant of God, and I intend to sustain His cause. When we came to this Valley we came to leave wickedness and work righteousness, though we came here because we were obliged to.

Brethren and sisters, may God bless you, and cause peace and plenty to abound among you from this time henceforth and forever. Amen.