

The Great Principles of Truth As Taught By Revelation to the Ancients, and Also to the Saints in Our Day

Discourse by President John Taylor, delivered at Ogden Tabernacle, on Sunday, March 21st, 1880.

It affords me pleasure to have the opportunity of being with the Saints of this place today. I came here to attend your Primary meeting of the juveniles; and as I was here, I thought I would stay over Sunday and talk to the fathers and mothers a little. And I would state, as is generally understood by you all, that we do not have our discourses arranged for us, or marked out particularly. Our ideas are to present ourselves before the people, and to seek for the influence of the Spirit of the Lord, that such things may be communicated as may be advantageous and interesting to those who hear. And, therefore, when we meet together in an assembly like this we ought all of us, both speaker and hearer, to feel that we are in the hands of our Heavenly Father, and to seek for the aid of his Holy Spirit, that the speaker may speak correctly and understandingly, and in a manner that shall be calculated to promote the welfare of the people, and that the people themselves may also be prepared to receive such things as may be communicated.

We occupy a peculiar position on the earth at the present time, perhaps a little different from that of any other people that have existed on the earth—our thoughts, our ideas our principles, our organization, our doctrines, our ordinances, and everything connected with our religious matters are different from those of other people; and it is our opinion, and not only our opinion, but a certainty—in fact, it amounts to knowledge among a great many of the Latter-day Saints, that the influences and principles that we have received have been communicated to us by the Almighty. We were not the originators of the principles we believe in; neither was Joseph nor Hyrum Smith, nor President Brigham Young, nor the Twelve; neither was any individual nor any people associated with the priesthood or the organization of the Church at the present time. We believe that these things have been communicated to us by the Lord; that they are in strict harmony with principles that have existed heretofore, to a certain extent, with this difference however, that in the various dispensations that have existed upon the earth since its formation, each one has had its peculiar role to fulfil, with certain duties devolving upon those operating to attend to. We are living in the dispensation which is emphatically called the dispensation of the fulness of times, which we are informed from the scriptures has been “spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world was;” and this being the case, the dispensation in which we live embraces necessarily all that was contained in any and all of the other dispensations that have existed in all the ages preceding ours; and that consequently whatever organizations, manifestations, revelations or communications that have ever come from God to the human family in their times and dispensations, we may consistently expect to be embodied in this one. And, therefore, in some respects, as I stated before, the dispensation or time in which we live differs in many particulars from those in which God has communicated to man.

We have, for instance, what is called the patriarchal dispensation, which existed before and after the flood. And those patriarchs and men of God that lived in those remote ages had communications with the Almighty, and they also had the Gospel. And they not only received revelations pertaining to their own day and age, but also in regard to the future. And hence we are told that Adam, three years before his death, gathered together a great many of his people and the prominent authorities of the holy priesthood, and he blessed them, and being filled with the Holy Ghost, predicted whatsoever should befall his posterity unto the latest dispensation, including all the leading events that should transpire in the different ages of time, even until the winding up scene, associated with this our earth; embracing those things that have been and are to be brought forth in this the present dispensation. And, in fact, this dispensation, we are told, has been “spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world was.” And, therefore, it must of necessity have been associated with the teachings of Adam, of Seth, of Enoch, of Methuselah, and of Noah, Abraham, Moses and many other prominent characters that held communication with the Lord, and who had revealed unto them his purposes and designs in the days in which they lived. Many people listened to the principles of truth in their day. Enoch was a remarkable man and had a special mission to the people in his day, and he was full of the spirit of prophecy and revelation; he also had a Church organization as we have to a certain extent, and he preached to the people and forewarned them of certain events that should transpire upon the earth. And the wicked were angry with them, as they are sometimes with us; they did not like their teachings and

operations, and they conspired against them, and great numbers of their enemies assembled for the purpose of destroying them. And Enoch was clothed upon by the power and spirit and revelation of God. And whilst under the inspiration of the Almighty he uttered his prophecies, and his enemies and the people generally trembled at the power of his words; and the earth shook, and the people fled from his presence afar off, and were not able to injure him; for God was with him. And Enoch, with the united labors of the elders of his day, gathered the people together who hearkened to his words and believed the message sent to them, in the same manner as you have been gathered together. They built up a city which was called Zion; and the people who inhabited it were under the inspiration of the Lord for a great number of years; receiving instruction, guidance and direction from him. And finally, as wickedness grew and increased, and as the testimony went forth among them, the good, the virtuous, the honorable, the pure and those who desired to fear God and work righteousness assembled themselves together, constituting the city of Zion; and the others became more corrupt. And Enoch and his brethren prophesied unto the people about the calamities that should overtake them, that the world was to be destroyed by a flood; and there were provisions made for the continuance of the human family, and it was made known to Methuselah that his seed should be the medium through which should be perpetuated the human family upon the earth. And Methuselah was so very desirous to have this thing fulfilled that Noah, his grandson, who was the son of Lamech, was ordained by Methuselah when he was ten years old.

The people, we learn, grew to be so corrupt that "the imaginations of the thoughts of their hearts were only evil, and that continually;" and we are told that it even repented the Lord that he had made man. But the servants of God went forth preaching the Gospel of life and salvation to this wicked people, and warned them of the destruction that was coming upon the earth. Before this great calamity took place Enoch and his city were translated.

The power of translation was a principle that existed in the Church in that dispensation. There is something very peculiar in these things. Some people, who are not in the Church, might ask me where I got my evidence from. To the Latter-day Saints I would say, we get it by revelation. We do not believe that, say some. That we cannot help. I am speaking now to those who do believe so, to those who are believers in God, and who are believers in the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and who believe in the revelations which the Lord has given and in those he continues to communicate. It is to those people I am speaking today on these points.

The Bible does not give us a very extensive history of these matters; in fact, it is very, very brief. Referring to that great man, Enoch, it tells us that he was not for God took him; and that is all. This is a very short history for so important a subject.

After that the flood came, which was a terrible calamity, to overtake the inhabitants of the earth; and they were swept away according to the prophecy—cut off from the earth, deprived of life and existence, and shut up in prison.

After some thousands of years Jesus came, associated with another dispensation. And when he appeared on the earth and had got through with his ministry, and had suffered in the flesh and was quickened by the spirit, "he went and preached to the spirits in prison" who were, as stated, "sometime disobedient in the days of Noah." And hence thousands of people that had suffered the wrath of God for so long a time had the opportunity of listening to the principles of the Gospel in another dispensation that Jesus came to proclaim. And when he had got through with his mission on the earth to those who lived, he went then to preach to those who had been dead, and I might properly say were damned for so many years. And what was the special mission he had to proclaim? He came "to preach the gospel to the poor, to open the eyes of the blind, to set at liberty those that were bound, and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God." That was part of his mission; the whole of his mission, however, has not yet been fulfilled. But he came to liberate the prisoners, which he did in the spirit, when he got through with his mission on the earth.

On the back of that Noah steps forward in a prominent position, and he had his work to perform, which he did perform, and began to raise up another seed; and they lived also in what may be termed a patriarchal dispensation. And among them were many of his leading posterity. There was Melchizedek, for instance, who was

called the King of Salem and the Prince of Peace, of whom Paul makes some curious remarks, among which was that Christ was a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek. If he was, then of course Melchizedek was a priest after the order of Christ. And as Christ introduced the Gospel, so Melchizedek had the Gospel, and had and held and administered in the same priesthood that Jesus did. And we read too, according to some men's ideas, a very singular thing concerning him, that "he was without father and mother, and without beginning of days or end of years, and abideth a priest continually." He must be, indeed, a very singular man, to be without father and without mother and without descent, and yet that he should be a priest forever. Well, how is it? You generally understand it; but I will inform those who do not that the Apostle Paul referred to the priesthood that Melchizedek held, and that they had what was termed the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood in their day, that is, the day in which Saul lived; and that a man to be a priest had to be a literal descendant of Aaron and of the tribe of Levi; and he had to be able to prove his lineage, tracing his descent back to the time when this priesthood was given by Moses in the wilderness. But the Melchizedek priesthood was different from that, it had nothing to do particularly with either father or mother, it being without descent, and, therefore, people holding it were not altogether dependent upon their father or mother or descent for this authority; but that priesthood is an everlasting priesthood, administering in time and in eternity. And this is what Paul referred to by way of contradistinction to the Aaronic priesthood which then existed.

Associated with this priesthood there were certain powers and privileges. These Abraham possessed and enjoyed. Some people think that he was a kind of a shepherd with very few more ideas than a mushroom; that he lived in the dark ages and did not comprehend much; that he was not intelligent and had a species of what we term nowadays "old fogyism." But if we examine into his character and the position he occupied, and if we understand something about the principles he promulgated, we shall find that he was another character entirely. In giving his history he tells us that "He sought for the blessings of the Father and the right whereunto he should be ordained to administer the same." He further says—"Having been myself a follower of righteousness, desiring also to be one who possessed great knowledge, and to be a great follower of righteousness, and to possess a greater knowledge, and to be a father of many nations, a prince of peace; and desiring to receive instructions, and to keep the commandments of God I became a rightful heir; a high priest, holding the right belonging to the fathers; it was conferred upon me from the fathers; it came down from the fathers, from the beginning of time. Yea, even from the beginning, or before the foundations of the earth, to the present time, even the right of the firstborn, on the first man, who was Adam, or first father, through the fathers unto me." *Times and Seasons*, vol. iii, p. 704. His father, however, was an idolater; but had probably possessed a record of his genealogy, for Abraham in his record continues—"I shall endeavor hereafter to delineate the chronology, running back from myself to the beginning of the creation, for the records have come into my hands, which I hold until the present time." And having found out that he had a right to the priesthood, he, therefore, sought an ordination, and he was ordained by Melchizedek to the Melchizedek priesthood. And the Lord gave unto him certain privileges and powers that were very great; not only did he have an ordination in the way I refer to, but he sought more information from the Lord. And the Lord communicated with him and gave him a Urim and Thummim by which he was enabled to interpret, to read and comprehend the mind and will and the laws and purposes of God. And, furthermore, I would state that he went still further. He asked God for certain blessings and privileges and powers which belonged to him and which he considered were within his reach, and which were his privilege to obtain. And the Lord revealed himself to him and communicated unto him certain eternal principles—that no man can comprehend unless God does reveal them—and many other things—the motion of the planets, and the planetary system of the earth on which we live, and the sun and the moon and the stars and the various bodies that compose our solar system; and then of other suns, and other heavenly bodies and the laws governing them. Abraham wrote those things, and was well versed in those great principles; and some men affirm today that he was the founder of certain abstruse principles which they allege are discovered in what is called the Great Pyramid of Egypt—principles that not only pertain to the planetary systems but to events yet to transpire on the earth. I am not going to say anything about the truth or the untruth of these latter statements, as I have not investigated them sufficiently to comprehend them; but I merely give the opinion of a great many men respecting him and the intelligence he possessed. But suffice it to say, that the Lord himself instructed Abraham in things pertaining to this and other worlds, and that he in his day possessed more light and intelligence on the principles alluded to than all the combined wisdom of the world of today.

Now, this was the kind of a man that Abraham was. And his heart and feelings and affections were drawn out after God. And God blessed him and said unto him, "That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thee and thy seed shall be as the stars of heaven," &c. And further the Lord told him, "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my word." And hence he occupied a very important position. And, as I before said, being a patriarch he had the gospel and the priesthood belonging to it, namely, the Melchizedek priesthood.

I do not propose today to show how these things have all been literally fulfilled that are here spoken of; that I will leave for you to hunt up for yourselves. But the promises made to that man of God have been literally fulfilled, even to the present day to the coming forth of this work with which we are associated.

Now, that was a peculiar dispensation; it was under the dispensation that was introduced, say by Noah, or the one that he was, I was going to say, founder of; he was not the founder of it, but he was the one preserved by the Almighty from the wreck of the world, in which he had lived for upwards of 600 years to introduce it. And Abraham was one of the prominent actors in operating and carrying out the purposes of God in that dispensation, and there were a great many others too that were in possession of the same kind of intelligence; but he was one of the most prominent, therefore I have referred more particularly to him.

Then, there was another dispensation followed, called the Mosaic dispensation. Moses was made use of as an instrument to deliver the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage. It had been predicted that the descendants of Israel should go into bondage and be confined there for 400 years, and that they should be delivered by the power of God. And Moses was the man chosen of the Lord to perform that work; and he was indebted to the Lord for the instruction and the intelligence he received. We read in the Bible that on a certain occasion he saw a burning bush, and the bush, we learn, was not consumed; and on going towards it he heard the voice of the Lord speaking unto him, telling him to take his shoes from off his feet, for the place whereon he stood was holy ground. He did as he was commanded. The Lord then told him that he had a work for him to perform, which was that he should go down to Egypt where he had been reared from his youth, and where he had been taught according to the learning of the Egyptians to deliver this people Israel out of their bondage. You that are acquainted with your Bible know the history of it. The account is lengthy and I shall not attempt to enter into it. Suffice it to say, he succeeded in delivering the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage. He had the power, when his people reached the Red Sea, to smite the sea and cause the waters to divide, thereby making a way of escape from their pursuers, the Egyptians. He led them into the wilderness where they had to depend entirely upon the mercies of God for their sustenance. But having been in bondage for so long a time it was difficult for them to comprehend many things that were communicated to them; and, we are told, they began to long for the leeks and the onions. We, in our day, would think that their taste was not so very delicate; but that was their desire, many of them feeling that they would rather go back to Egypt than to suffer the trials that seemed to await them. And the Lord manifested himself to them in many marvelous ways, and Moses who was their leader and who had been especially appointed by the Lord, went up to the mount, and the Lord gave unto him certain commandments which he wrote with his own finger, upon tables of stone which were prepared for that purpose, Moses was away from the people for some time conversing with and receiving communications from the Almighty, and when he came down he found that the people whom he had led out of Egypt and to whom the manifestations of the Lord had been shown, had made a golden calf and were worshipping it—about the same as we do sometimes, and we profess to be a much more enlightened people than they were—and they said, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt." On seeing this wickedness on the part of his people he became angry, and he threw the tables of stone to the ground and broke them. Afterwards other stones were prepared and the same laws written on them. And the Lord was desirous that they as a people should be faithful in the observance of his laws, that they should be governed by the principles of the Gospel which Moses taught them. This is a singular idea to some people; they think there was no Gospel until Jesus came. Well, we cannot help that, but Paul understood it better. He tells us that Moses preached the Gospel to them in the wilderness, but the word preached did not profit them, etc., wherefore the law was added because of transgression. Added to what? To the Gospel. Paul understood this if men in this age do not. And Moses did himself get into the presence of God, and he also led seventy elders who were so instructed and prepared that they could go into the presence of God to communicate with him; but the people

were afraid of God, and when the Lord appeared to them on Mount Sinai, when they heard the thunders and saw the lightning and felt the mountain quake, they said to Moses, do not let the Lord speak to us any more lest we his people die; but do thou speak to us and be mouthpiece. They were not prepared to come into the presence of the Lord; they were not sufficiently pure, neither did they understand the laws and principles which God had communicated. But they murmured and murmured and that continually—the same as we do, we see something of the same spirit, we are found sometimes murmuring against God, or at least against some of the revelations he has given unto us, or against the priesthood, and in many instances without cause. And what had God done for them? He brought them out from the midst of Egypt, from a state of servitude and vassalage, and delivered them from the hands of their oppressors, and when the Egyptians pursued them, he opened the waters of the Red Sea and let them pass through in safety; but swallowed up their enemies who pursued them. Then when they were short of food he supplied them with angel's food, manna. That was all the harm he had done to them—just about as much as many others who murmur. They murmured against God for bringing them away, and against Moses for being the instrument in doing it. Whereas God was trying to fulfill the promises he had made with Abraham, their father; and he was making use of Moses as his instrument to deliver the people from that bondage with which they had been oppressed for so long a time; but because of their transgressions, their wickedness and their rebelliousness, the law was added or given unto them, which was a law of carnal commandments and ordinances, of which a later writer in speaking of it says, "neither we nor our fathers were able to bear."

Well, he placed them in another position, and gave unto them the Gospel, but as they could not endure the greater light he gave them a lesser light in the form of a law of carnal commandments and ordinances. Hence that dispensation is therefore called the Mosaic dispensation; and Moses was the instrument made use of by the Almighty to introduce it, and it was revealed to him upon the mountain. And that law of carnal commandments and ordinances seemed to suit them a little better than the Gospel; they loved these carnal commandments better than the light, the truth, the revelation and spirit that was associated with the Gospel. And they could not come into the presence of God. If you remember, certain men at one time went running to Moses to complain of certain other men whom they said were prophesying; and Moses said to them, would to God that all the Lord's people were prophets; would to God that all could be inspired with that spirit of revelation that flows from him. Says the Prophet Joel, in speaking of the glory of the latter-day, "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And upon the servants and the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit," etc. Now, they had a dispensation then called the Mosaic dispensation; and associated with that was a sprinkling of the Gospel. Once in a while the light of the day star would dawn upon the people, foretelling some things in which they and their children were interested; and that was manifest through certain men among them who were peculiarly inspired by God. But they did not have then a regularly ordained organization of the Melchizedek Priesthood as we have it. If a man received these things in those days he received it from God. A young man came to me to ask me some questions on this subject, and I will here mention one thing I told him. These prophets had the Melchizedek Priesthood, but they did not have it in the regular organized form as we have it. Hence when Elijah was about to be translated—for that spirit and power was yet with him; it had not left the earth after Enoch's day, for many were translated besides him and his city—there were certain prophets scattered up and down among Israel, and as Elijah and Elisha were traveling together, Elijah said to Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me to Bethel. But Elisha said as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they went on together. And at Bethel the sons of the prophets at that place came forth unto Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head today? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. At this place Elijah wanted Elisha to tarry, saying that the Lord had sent him to a place called Jericho; but Elisha made the same answer. Elijah at this place made the same request of his companion, saying the Lord had sent him on to Jordan; but Elisha would not be separated from his master. And they went on to Jordan together; and when they came to that stream, Elijah took off his mantle, wrapped it together and smote the water which divided, so that they went over on dry ground. And when they had passed over, Elijah asked Elisha what he could do for him before he should be taken away. Elisha, knowing that he had something to do and that he was about to be left alone, and that he might be the better prepared to perform the work before him, requested Elijah to let a double portion of his spirit rest upon him. But could Elijah grant his request? No, he could not. What answer did Elijah make him? He

said, thou hast asked a hard thing; nevertheless, if thou seest me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not it shall not be so. How did Elijah know that? Because he knew that the Melchizedek Priesthood holds the keys of the mysteries and the revelations of God; and that if he could see him as he ascended, it would be an evidence to him that the Lord had granted his request, although he himself had not power to grant it, Elisha would then know that his prayer was heard. Those other prophets, who knew that Elijah was to be translated, went and stood to view the event afar off; I do not suppose that they saw anything of Elijah as he was being taken up into heaven. But he was taken up, and Elisha saw the manner in which he went, and cried out, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." And how did he see them? God had conferred upon him that priesthood by which he was enabled to see them. Elijah threw down his mantle as he ascended, which Elisha took up and started off alone, his "head" having been translated. But he had received the answer to his prayer; and approaching the banks of the Jordan, with the mantle that had been left him he smote the waters saying, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" And when he did so they parted as they had done at the command of Elijah, and Elisha passed over. And God was with him, manifesting his power through him, as he had done through his predecessor. I speak of this as a certain principle and I speak of it now for the information of you elders, that they did not have then an organized Melchizedek Priesthood, but that if it was conferred upon individuals, they did not have the power to confer it upon others, unless through special command of the Lord. And Elijah knew that if Elisha could see him when he was ascending, that his prayer would be answered. Why? Because the Melchizedek Priesthood holds the keys of the mysteries and the revelations of God.

This is a principle on that point; and it may be of use to you elders, that you may comprehend the position, that they occupied. That was associated in part with the Mosaic dispensation, but only in part. But when Jesus came he introduced the Melchizedek priesthood in an organized form, and restored the Gospel. But those men did not restore the Gospel. But let me show you that are acquainted with the history of the Book of Mormon, they had a great many more revelations in regard to these things upon this continent than they had upon the continent of Asia. And they had the Gospel and administered in the ordinances and talked about the coming of Christ, still they administered in the laws of Moses until the coming of Christ; and yet at the same time they did have the Gospel and an organization of that Gospel in part and ordinances among them different from what they had on the other continent before Christ came. You that are acquainted with the Book of Mormon will find these things in it; and if you have not found them, hunt them up, and you will find what I say in relation to this matter is true.

Very well. When Jesus came he had been looked forward to by all the prophets since the world was, and it had been prophesied about him that he would come to redeem the world and offer himself as a sacrifice, as an atonement for the sins of the world, of which there were many shadows and types. I will refer back again to Moses, and then I will refer to the sacrament. Moses, as I stated, had the Gospel when he went among the children of Israel. There were many signs and wonders poured out among them and many calamities overtook the Egyptians. And Moses went from time to time into the presence of Pharaoh telling him what should take place, and among the rest he said that if they did not let Israel go, the firstborn of the Egyptians should be slain. And he told the people that dwelt in the land Goshen—the children of Israel—that they were to kill a lamb and sprinkle the blood of the lamb upon their door posts, and that when the destroying angels passed through, their children should escape death. And it happened precisely as had been told them—while the firstborn of the Egyptians was destroyed, the children of the Hebrews were preserved. Now, that was called the Passover among the children of Israel, and it was continued among them year after year, and the day on which it was kept was called the day of the Passover.

When Jesus was upon the earth he sent his disciples to go and prepare a place that they might hold the *passover* together. "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." What was it they were doing? It was partaking of the passover of the sprinkling of that blood which was typical of the shedding of the blood of the Lamb of God upon Calvary. And the breaking of that bread was typical of his broken body. And they offered in former times the blood of bullocks and of rams, goats, etc., as sacrifices. And all this, as Paul says, had reference unto the shedding of the blood of Christ; and was typical of that of which he was the great ante-type when he came to fulfil all these things. Very well, what was that? Did they have the passover then? Yes. They

looked forward from that passover to the time when Christ should come and shed his blood to atone for the sins of the world. And we look back to the time when he did it, and we partake of this sacrament—this bread and water, which we use instead of wine—in commemoration, in token of what he has done for us. And we are told by the apostles, that as often as we eat and drink of this, we show forth the Lord's death until he come again. And let me say to you Latter-day Saints, while we are doing this, there is something very important connected with it, and we ought to be careful that we do not partake of these emblems to our condemnation. Do you ever quarrel with your brethren, or act in such a way as to get up feelings, and perhaps speak harsh words one about another, and in other ways do that which is wrong, and then meet together in solemn mockery before God and eat and drink condemnation to your souls? We want to be careful about these things; and hence we should understand that when we bring our gift to the altar, and there remember that we have ought against our brother, we should first go and be reconciled to him and then come and offer our gift. Not come in any kind of hypocrisy, but come with clean hands and pure hearts and feel to say "O God search me and try me and prove me, and if there is any way of wickedness in me, let it depart, and let me be thy true representative upon the earth and let me partake of the spirit that dwelleth in Christ, and live in the enjoyment of that upon the earth; that when he comes again I, with my brethren, may meet him with clean hands and pure hearts." And I would say to the teachers who go around to visit their brethren, when you find ill feeling of any kind, it is your duty to root it out, and to see that there is no hardness and no contention or strife among the people who come to participate in this sacred ordinance.

Well, so far as the gospel is concerned, that dispensation was introduced to the world first by John the Baptist, who was the forerunner of Jesus. And when the Savior came John knew it, and on seeing him he exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." And when people were flocking to John to be baptized of him, Jesus came also as a candidate for baptism. But John told him that he (John) had need to be baptized of him. But the Savior told him to suffer it to be so, then "to fulfil all righteousness." And he was baptized of him. Well, that dispensation continued for a long while after, and it began to decline and disappear; but there were a great many men in different parts who listened to the principles of the Gospel of the Son of God. But by and by it began to fade away, both upon the Asiatic continent and upon this continent. It was prophesied that it would, and that there should a certain power arise who should seek to make war with the Saints of God and that it should overcome them; and this power should seek to change times and seasons and things, and they should be given into his hands until a time and times and the dividing of a time. These things were fulfilled—the Church of God fell into darkness and the priesthood was taken from them, and they had instead something in the form of a bogus priesthood and a bogus creed instead of the true principles which Jesus introduced among men. That was on the continent of Asia. On this continent they seemed the same pretty much; but they had an unparalleled scene of prosperity and joy in the Gospel of the Son of God after he came; and it grew and spread and prevailed throughout the land. And as it was in their love for one another that no one said that ought he possessed was his own; but, they had all things common among them. We are told of these things more elaborately in some other places which might be introduced, but which I do not wish to enter into now. On this continent they remained in this condition for two hundred years; and they dealt justly one with another, and dwelt together in peace. I wish we could do that always. By and by they fell into darkness, and the result was, as recorded in the Book of Mormon, to which I again refer you to read and investigate.

Then what next? Were things to go on in that way forever? No; the dispensation of the fullness of times has got to be restored to introduce all that has been spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world was. The Apostle John, when banished to the Isle of Patmos 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. What do you mean? The same Gospel that Adam had, the same Gospel that Seth had, the same Gospel that Enoch had, the same Gospel that Noah had, the same Gospel that Abraham had, the same Gospel that Jesus had; the Gospel that brings life and immortality to light, and that places men in communion with their Heavenly Father—the everlasting Gospel. And who introduced it? God himself came to earth with his son Jesus and manifested himself to the prophet Joseph, and, pointing to his Son, said, "This is My Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, Hear Him!" Jesus from that hour was to be his instructor. What then? Then came Moroni, who had charge of the records of the people on this continent, who came and delivered them to Joseph Smith. What next? Then came John the Baptist and laid his hands upon his head and upon the head of Oliver Cowdery, and said, Upon you

my fellow servants, I lay my hands and confer upon you the Aaronic priesthood, which shall never be removed again from the earth until the sons of Levi shall offer acceptable sacrifices to the Lord. Why did John come? Because he held the keys of that priesthood and was the last that held them in that dispensation. And then Peter, James and John came and laid their hands upon his head and ordained him to the office of the Melchizedek priesthood. Why? Because they had held that priesthood themselves and they were the ones that held the keys of that priesthood; and when they left, the keys of that priesthood were taken with them and they came having it in their charge to confer it upon Joseph Smith. What else? Then Elijah appeared in the Temple at Kirtland and conferred upon them the blessings that were spoken of pertaining to him. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." The prophet conferred upon him those keys; and hence we try to do these things. And people wonder why we are building our temples. It is that the hearts of the fathers may be turned to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers. And if Jesus saw it necessary after being put to death in the flesh to go and preach to the spirits in prison that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, it was also necessary that provisions should be made for men who had died without the Gospel, without a knowledge of the principles of eternal truth, that we might be baptized for them, as the Scriptures say, according to the flesh, that they may live according to God in the spirit. Why is it you are so willing to build temples? You would squeeze your dollar in many other things, but when it comes to that you say, "I want to do it." And it is so throughout Israel. I suppose we have as many as five hundred men engaged in this work. And the brethren feel willing to do it. Why? Because you want to secure certain blessings for yourselves; and, then, you want to look after your friends, that the hearts of the fathers may be turned to the children, etc. We are operating upon the earth because we have the power; and they are operating in the heavens because they have the power; and as the Scripture says, they without us cannot be made perfect, neither we without them. And neither they nor we could operate in these things unless those keys had been restored and things put in the position they are today. Then we will build our temples, won't we? I think we will, and then administer in them. Were we to talk to the world about a great many of the things I have referred to today, we would have to bring up evidence to prove the truth of them. I am talking to Latter-day Saints, however, today; and you ought to know of them, if you do not; and if you are not acquainted with them "search the scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life," and you will find all these things I have mentioned.

Now, then, all of these dispensations had to be restored. Then comes Moses. Why? because he held the keys of the gathering dispensation: And he conferred upon Joseph Smith the power to gather Israel from the four quarters of the earth, and also the ten tribes. But the latter have not come yet; but people are hunting them up, and they will be found by and by; when the time comes, and the mountains will flow down at their presence, and a highway will be cast up, and they will come to a knowledge of the people. But they could not come without the restoration of the keys I have referred to.

Now, here are all these different dispensations, and there is one I have not mentioned. We are told to build up Zion, shall we do it? I tell you in the name of Israel's God we will do it with the help of the Almighty; we cannot do it without, but with his help we will do it. We will build up the Zion of our God, and help to roll on the work which God has commenced. And those children you saw here the other day, [referring to a general conference meeting of the children of Weber Stake] many of them will live to participate in these things. And we will endeavor to train them in the fear of God that their tender hearts may be rooted in the principles of truth; and they be led to acknowledge the God of their fathers. Having said so much I will pass on to something else.

Here we are. We are organized under the direction of the Almighty; and as I before said, not according to our ideas and notions, but according to the word and will and revelations and law of God. And none of us can do anything only as God permits us. What are we going to do? We are going to build up Zion. What then? When Zion is built up—and it is not built up yet; but it will be built up; and when that is done Jerusalem that is spoken of shall be built—and we are a long way from that—but when that is built up and the glory of God shall rest upon it, upon every dwelling of Mount Zion as it did in former times—then we will build up our Zion after the pattern that God will show us, and we will be governed by his law and submit to his authority and be governed by the holy priesthood and by the word and will of God. And then when the time comes that these calamities we read of shall overtake the

earth, those that are prepared will have the power of translation, as they had in former times, and the city will be translated. And Zion that is on the earth will rise, and the Zion above will descend, as we are told, and we will meet and fall on each other's necks and embrace and kiss each other. And thus the purposes of God to a certain extent will then be fulfilled. But there are a great many things to be brought about before that time. And we are here in an organized capacity trying to prepare ourselves for all the providences of the Almighty. We are trying to instill into the hearts of the people the principles of honesty, truth and integrity, and remove covetousness and iniquity of every kind. Never mind the world nor what they can say or do, for they can only do what the Lord permits them. We will then continue to do as we have done only a great deal more abundantly. We will send out the Gospel to them, and continue to advocate the principles of truth, and to organize ourselves according to the order of God, and seek to be one—for if we are not one we are not the Lord's and never can be, worlds without end. Hear it, you Latter-day Saints! And do not be figuring for yourselves and for your own aggrandizement; but feel to say in your hearts, "What can I do to help to build up Zion. I am here, and everything that I have got is upon the altar, and I am prepared to do the will of God no matter what it may be, or where it sends me, to the ends of the earth or not." But we are not doing that yet; we are too much after our own affairs and drinking into the spirit of the world, and yielding and catering to that feeling and influence. Now, while we wish the world well and would desire to promote their happiness, we cannot be governed by their practices nor be under their influences. God is the Lord our God; he is to be our king and lawgiver, and he must rule over us. We must not permit ourselves to conform to the ideas, notions, dogmas, theories nor the wickedness that exists in the world, and of which there is too much already among us. But to the contrary, battle against these evils, continuing the warfare until we purge them from us, and call upon the Lord to assist us, and to lead us in the paths of life, and to enable us to comprehend to some degree the position we occupy to him, and the magnitude of that priesthood that has been conferred upon us.

What will you do with the world? I was talking with a gentleman lately who thought because of certain inimical legislation that had been manifested towards us, that we should feel at enmity against our government. I told him that he was laboring under a very great mistake; that there was not a more loyal, patriotic feeling people in the United States than the Latter-day Saints are. But have they not done so and so to you? Yes, but the Lord has guided us, and we can put our trust in him and wait his time. We are not in a hurry; he will bring things about in his own way, and will abundantly fulfil the words of the Psalmist—"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Some men seem to think that we are going to be swallowed up; but we are not very much alarmed about it. We have been "swallowed up" a great many times, but they have generally managed to vomit us up again. [Laughter.] Among the legislators of our nation and throughout the land, there are many high-minded, honorable men, who desire to see all men protected in their rights, but because there are a great many who are not and who feel otherwise, and who do not understand us, should we entertain feelings of enmity? What was the message that Jesus came to perform? "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," etc. What have we been told to do? To go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved he that believeth not shall be damned. We go and offer the message of life and salvation. How many of these greyheaded men whom I see around me today that have traveled thousands of miles in order to promote the welfare of the human family. I have traveled hundreds of thousands of miles myself. And did he ever forsake me? Never; he was always true to his word. And when you elders have gone forth he has been true to you. And when people have believed, repented and obeyed the message you bore to them, and you laid your hands upon them to confirm them members in this Church, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost;" they received it. Is not that proof that God has been with you? Yes, it is. Will he not be with us to the end? Yes. What is our message to the people? Peace on earth and good will to man, and seek to promote the welfare and happiness of the human family, in every possible way that we can. And we ought to feel to endure as Jesus did the contumely of sinners until the Lord shall say: "Stop, it is enough." They will have hard enough times of it. Do we need to seek or injure anybody? No. Is that our mission? No; but to seek to promote the welfare of all men.

Well, we are here in a political capacity as well. We are an integral part of the United States—a very small part. What shall we do? Why live so that no man can bring any reproach against us; treat all men right, deal honestly with one another, and with all men, and be true to God and your religion. If we do this then we have a claim upon God; then we shall be blessed of the Lord and our offspring with us; then the Almighty will smile upon us, and then

we shall advance from wisdom to wisdom, from intelligence to intelligence and knowledge to knowledge, until we shall see as we are seen and know as we are known. And we will go on performing the work God has placed upon us; and we will continue to teach and instruct and educate and elevate our children; and also teach all men who will be taught by us, the principles of life; and by and by God will work with us in a more powerful manner than he has done yet; and thousands upon thousands will flock to the standard of Zion, and many will come and say, "we do not know much about your religion, but you are an honorable people and execute justice and we want to be governed by those principles and be under their influence; and if we cannot endorse your religious views, we seek your protection and want to be one with you." You will find hundreds and thousands of people will yet come in this way, and many are pretty near it now. But we are not prepared; we sometimes pull and haul, and talk and get hard feelings and seek to tear in pieces and destroy, and carry out our own ideas and will. I have no will of my own; I do not want a will of my own; I want to know the will of God, and then do it. Don't you? We ought to do it; and let our own feelings and judgment be emerged in the will of God, and seek to carry out his purposes. As seventies go forth and be ready to go to the ends of the earth at the drop of the hat, when required to fulfil any mission that may devolve upon you, or that you may be called to, and consider this your mission of life, you seventies, do you hear it? I tell you that this is the will of God concerning you, and not to consider how you can fix yourselves and make yourselves comfortable; but attend to the other first, and be on hand to do that, and then it will be all right.

May God help us to do right and keep his commandments, that we may have his spirit to be with us and live in the enjoyment of the same, and be saved in his kingdom, in the name of Jesus. Amen.