

There is something beautiful and god-like in a plan of salvation of this kind; it is comprehensive. It shows that the mercy of God is extended to His children, and that He has prepared the way whereby they who die in ignorance of the gospel may receive the benefit thereof. It causes a feeling of rejoicing in the breasts of those who receive the gospel when they find that their parents and ancestors back to the time when the gospel was on the earth anciently, who have died in ignorance, are not debarred from its blessings; but can receive, if they will, all the blessings and benefits of that gospel in the due time of the Lord. This principle also explains that saying of Paul in reference to the resurrection, where, in reasoning upon the truth of that principle, he says: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?" Of what avail would baptism for the dead have been if the dead never rose? But there was a principle there that Paul understood, by which the living Saints could be baptized for their relatives who had died in ignorance of the gospel of Jesus Christ, whether father, mother, brother, sister, child, remote ancestor or friend, whereby they could stand in the stead of that individual, and be baptized or immersed in water for and in their behalf, and then have hands laid upon them for and in their behalf, and have all the ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ performed in their behalf. Though they could not be there themselves in person, yet these individuals who represented them, could render a vicarious offering for them, and render a vicarious obedience for the one who had gone, on the same principle that Jesus, our Lord and Master, did for us all. He acts for us all. He has atoned for us all. He stands in the stead of all the children of men; His atonement and redemption saves all who will be saved from their sins. In like manner can we, each one of us, stand in each other's behalf, in behalf of all those who have gone without the privilege of hearing, while in the flesh, the gospel in its fullness. The son for the father, the daughter for the mother, the grandson for the grandfather, great-grandfather or remote ancestor; the grand-daughter for the grandmother, aunt or remote ancestor or female friend. In this manner each could stand for the other. This principle opens up the way of salvation for all the children of men, from the days when the gospel was on the earth before. It opens up the way by which every human being who has lived and died in ignorance of this gospel, who has never heard the plan of salvation, who has never known the mode which he or she should adopt in order to receive the blessings of celestial glory—this principle opens up a way by which all such can avail themselves of the blessings of the gospel of Christ and by which they may be rescued from the grasp of the adversary.

But how many Latter-day Saints appreciate these blessings? I recollect the time when the Saints went forward by hundreds and thousands to be baptized for their dead relatives. They went forward and were immersed for them. For the want of a better place, after the permission was given, they were immersed in the waters of the Mississippi, and the feeling was very general in relation to it. There was great anxiety manifested by many to attend to this ordinance. The privilege has been extended in this city. It is known that we have a font prepared for this purpose. But there has been a great lack of interest on the part of the Latter-day Saints of late years, respecting this matter. Such a feeling is unpardonable. It is a privilege every one should seek and embrace. God has blessed us with revelation on these matters; He has made them plain and simple, so that we can understand them. He has borne testimony by the revelations of Jesus Christ to our hearts that this principle is true. And if all the world sneer and cry "delusion," and say it is inconsistent and ridiculous, we know it is true. God has sealed it upon our hearts by the testimony of His Holy Spirit. We know this as we do in revelation to the Holy Ghost, and to the principles of baptism, gathering, tithing or to any other of the duties that devolve upon us. They all come in contact with the traditions of the world; they are directly opposed to their belief; but we know them to be of God, and rejoice in going forth and carrying them into execution.

If it were not for the revelation given on this principle, we should be in a very singular condition; we should be at a loss to know what God would do with those who have died in ignorance of the gospel. We should not know how to reconcile the various parts of the plan of

salvation the one with the other. There would be inconsistency connected with it. We might say, as the world say, "Why is it that I am privileged to listen to the servants of God, and in obeying the ordinances of the gospel, while my connections, or many of them, have died without such privileges?" Such reflections would arise in our minds, and we should labor under a great amount of uncertainty and doubt, and we should not feel that confidence in the Lord which we now have. But God has dispelled this doubt and uncertainty, and, in accordance with the prediction of Malachi, which says: "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 hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse," He has sent Elijah, the prophet. He has turned the hearts of the fathers toward the children, and the hearts of the children toward the fathers. There is no people on the face of the earth who feel this anxiety about their children; that the Latter-day Saints do; and there is no people on the face of the earth who feel the anxiety about their parents and relatives that we do, notwithstanding we may be remiss as I have said. But still with the remissness manifested now by us, there is a feeling among us for our kindred that is very strong, and our hearts are turned towards them. But God has revealed the sealing power by which children can be connected with their parents, and the parents with their parents, and so on back until a complete chain is formed to Adam, until the entire human family is connected together in the bonds of the everlasting covenant which God has revealed. In the bonds of that covenant men may be sealed to men, women to men, children to parents until all are bound indissolubly together.

This was the nature of the power conveyed to Peter when it was said to him that whatsoever he should bind on earth should be bound in heaven; and whatsoever he loosed on earth should be loosed in heaven. Now, Peter, as president of that dispensation, had great power given to him. The Savior said unto him "thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." This power he gave to Peter, and that same power and those same keys have been restored with the restoration of the holy priesthood to the earth. Peter, James and John—and, mark the consistency of this!—held the keys in the previous dispensation, and they came and laid their hands upon Joseph Smith and gave him that authority which they held. Nobody else could give it legally. It would not have done for Moroni, Alma, John the Baptist or for any other angel or being who had lived in a previous dispensation to have come and laid his hands upon Joseph. John the Baptist could give the keys he held, namely the keys of the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood; he could bestow the power and authority to baptize. Those keys were vested in Joseph Smith, as the head of this dispensation; but it was necessary that Peter, James and John, as the First Presidency of the church of the previous dispensation, should come and lay their hands upon Joseph and seal upon him the authority of the Melchisedec priesthood and apostleship. They conferred this upon him, and by virtue of that authority Joseph Smith was authorized to bind on earth and to bind in heaven, and to loose on earth and to loose in heaven. By the same authority President Young exercises the right, and holds the keys, having received them legitimately from Joseph who held them and who still holds them, but has gone behind the veil. And by that sealing power and those keys, children are sealed to their parents and wives to their husbands for time and all eternity. If they are faithful, and observe their covenants, this sealing will hold good, and will be recognized in heaven as it is on earth.

Those who receive these blessings have them sealed upon them by authority which no man can revoke; but which can be revoked by the transgression and wickedness only of the individual upon whom they are conferred. It is by the same authority that men and women are baptized for the dead; it is by this authority that they have hands laid upon them for the dead. By this authority wives are sealed to their husbands, and by the same authority wives who may have died without re-

ceiving the gospel may be sealed to their husbands for time and all eternity.

Thus God has restored to the earth that knowledge which has long been taken away from it. He has restored the everlasting gospel in its fullness, and in the plenitude of its power. He has authorized His servants to officiate in these ordinances, to seal on earth and it is sealed in heaven, and to loose on earth and it is loosed in heaven.

Pretenders may arise and the wicked may array themselves against the kingdom of God, and say these things are not so, and declare that Brigham is a fallen prophet, as they said of Joseph; but the Saints of God are not dismayed. They know there is a power in the holy priesthood, and they know that no power on earth or in hell can deprive the priesthood of the keys and power vested in the man who holds it. We of all people on the face of the earth, have the greatest cause to rejoice in the revelation of this knowledge, and in its plainness and simplicity. It does not come darkly or vaguely; it is so plain, lucid and clear "that a wayfaring man though a fool" need not err respecting it.

May God help us, my brethren and sisters, to appreciate our privileges and to live worthy of them, that we may retain the Holy Ghost from this time forward until we are brought back, under the guidance of the holy priesthood, into the presence of our Father and God, which may He grant in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Correspondence.

CEDAR CITY, IRON CO.,

March 24th, 1869.

Editor Deseret News.—Elders Joseph F. Smith, Thomas Taylor, Amos Neff and myself, held meetings yesterday in Pine Valley and Pinto. The change of climate in rising from St. George to Pine Valley on Monday is a remarkable feature in the county of Washington, the distance by the road being about thirty-five miles but the actual distance in latitude is not more than twenty minutes. The route leads through the midst of the cones of several extinct volcanoes, some of which look as if they were but recently blown out. These cones render Diamond Valley an interesting locality for the study of geology and the wonderful power of subterranean fires, and give variety and additional interest to the journey. Pine Valley was covered with snow which had recently fallen. It is a romantic and fertile spot, surrounded on all sides with lofty mountains, beautifully ornamented with stately pines which form an agreeable contrast to the naked rocks intermingled.

This valley has one hundred school children, a considerable portion of whom also attend Sunday school. The soil is rich, producing wheat, barley, oats, potatoes and other vegetables in abundance. The inhabitants keep cows, but the feed is mostly consumed by the lumbering teams, as much of the lumber used in Kane, Washington and Rio Virgen counties is made here, though the labor of sliding the logs from the mountains is already considerable. The inhabitants live upon a city site, regularly surveyed; and many of the dwellings, mills, barns and out-houses are highly creditable to a new settlement and remind me of the villages of St. Laurence county, New York, in my youth.

The water is very pure. Any time in the Summer a day's ride will enable any person in the hottest regions of our Dixie to luxuriate upon the cool springs and cooling breezes in a climate much resembling that of Cache or Rich counties.

Our meeting was well attended. The roads have been much improved, although the recent storm made them muddy. We met the saints in the little village of Pinto, this side the rim, in a large stone school house, which, among other evidences of thrift, has been erected since my last visit. They have not succeeded in raising fruit, the frost nipping down the apple trees, and even the potawattamie plum, currants and gooseberries seem to fail. There is but little land that can be irrigated, but this little produces good crops of wheat, barley, oats and potatoes. The settlement was located under the direction of Elder Parley P. Pratt as an Indian missionary station. I visited it in 1857 when it consisted of two dug-outs or cellars covered with earth. It now produces 10,000 lbs of excellent cheese for market. The people have recently constructed a reservoir to receive the waste waters of Pinto creek in the flood time, and in

this way they expect to reclaim a few hundred acres of desert which is about eight miles below the village. They have enclosed a large field with a substantial fence for the purpose of testing this experiment, which, if successful, will add greatly to the agricultural resources of the inhabitants.

To-day we visited the iron works of Ebenezer Hanks & Co., on Little Pinto. Much labor and means have been expended by the company to prepare for the manufacture of iron; and after much trouble and expense they have produced a fire brick, which they are satisfied will stand the heat as it has been submitted to the most rigid tests. They are constructing a turbine wheel for the purpose of propelling their machinery, with thirty feet head of water on the creek, which will be in operation in a few days. There is abundance of iron ores of different qualities to be obtained from numerous ledges in the vicinity. The country round is densely covered with scrub cedar and piñon pine which will be their resource for charcoal, no other coal having been discovered in the vicinity that will answer the purpose. I heartily commend the efforts of these brethren who, with their little means, are exerting themselves to the utmost to supply the much needed article of iron to the inhabitants of the Territory.

Yours,

GEO. A. SMITH.

ST. GEORGE, Washington Co.,
March 22nd, 1869.

Editor Deseret News.—President George A. Smith and party, on the 16th inst., commenced to descend the Pacific slope, having camped upon the rim of "the great basin" over night. Since reaching Parowan there have been eight meetings of the people of Summit Creek, Cedar City, Kanara and Harmony, at which much good instruction was imparted. In our descent we found ourselves winding around at the base of the mountain east of North Ash Creek, a dug-way made in a serpentine form, amongst the black masses of volcanic rock, from which the traveler in a very perilous position can gaze upon Ash creek as it winds its course southward through a deep chasm several hundred feet below. This dugway, although several miles in length, is only about half completed, notwithstanding the thousands of dollars raised by subscription by the people of Washington and Kane counties, and the appropriations of our Territorial Legislature. If persons who wonder what becomes of the appropriations made for roads in these counties would take a trip and see the country that our brethren live and make roads in, they would not begrudge them another appropriation.

After traveling five miles south from what is known as the Black Ridge, we found a number of families located in a town they call Bellview. By the industry and perseverance of the people water has been brought from high up, on South Ash creek, a distance of several miles, and poured upon the heretofore parched desert. We beheld a beautiful wheat field, that promises an early harvest, as the crop is several inches high. Beautiful orchards and vineyards are growing and substantial houses and fences built from the rock. Bros. Joel E. Johnson, James C. Snow and other veterans are amongst the settlers.

As we left Bellview, on our way to Tokerville, the rain began to descend, and continued at intervals during our visit at Tokerville and with the Saints up the river as far as Rockville, and in fact until we returned to Tokerville, during which time our fellow traveler, who rode in the open buggy, was soaked, and made to confess, at the end of the third day, there is virtue in having a cover to a carriage.

Meetings were held at Tokerville, Virgen City and Rockville, at which instructions suited to the people's condition were imparted.

Eight years ago, when President Smith visited these upper settlements, he informed the people that they were in the bed of the river, and in all probability they would be washed out. Inside of one year subsequently, the citizens were seen one winter morning carrying beds and other fixtures to higher ground, while they beheld with wonder, earth, rocks, farms, orchards, gardens, houses and other fixtures being washed by the stream in the direction of the Gulf of California. The people of these settlements are anxious to have a line of settlements thrown out farther south and east to afford them security against the incursions of hostile Indians. Several large houses have been built within two years past in Tokerville, of as good red brick as are to be found anywhere; among the buildings is a magnificent meeting-house. I noticed a beautiful grove of small olive trees three years old, that the frost has not effected, demonstrating that olives can be raised in Tokerville; orange trees also were green and fresh, on Bro. J. C. Naile's place. Bro. Naile informs me that two-thirds of the crop of grapes were destroyed last fall with the hail storm, notwithstanding which, a great number of barrels of wine were manufactured.

More anon,

NONNAC.