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HISTORY OF JOSEPH SMITH.

APRIL, 1842.

Wednesday, 13.—I introduced Messrs. Backenstos, Stiles, and Robinson into the Lodge Room in the morning, and Samuel H. Smith, William Smith, and Vinson Knight in the evening.

About 150 Saints, from England, landed in Nauvoo from the steamer "Louisa," and about 60 from the "Amaranth."

Thursday, 14.—Calvin A. Warren, Esq., Lawyer from Quincy arrived and commenced an investigation of the principles of general Insolvency in my behalf according to the Statutes, for the United States Congress had previously instituted a General Bankrupt Law, by which any individual who was owing to a certain amount more than he was able to pay, could make out a schedule of his property and of debts due from himself, and by a specified process, pass the same in the hands of a Commissioner, Government Agent, or "Ass gnee," who could make a dividend of all his effects, and pay his creditors whatever percentage his property amounted to, and then the individual was at liberty to start anew in the world, and was not subject to liquidate any claims which were held against him previous to his insolvency, although his property might not have paid but the least percentage, or none at all.

The justice or injustice of such a principle in law, I leave for them who made it, the United States. Suffice it to say the law was as good for the Saints as for the Gentiles, and whether I would or not, I was forced into the measure by having been robbed, mobbed, plundered and wasted of all my property, time after time in various places, by the very ones who made the law, namely, the people of the United States, thereby having been obliged to contract heavy debts to prevent the utter destruction of myself, family and friends, and by those who were justly and legally owing me, taking the advantage of the same act of bankruptcy, so that I could not collect my just dues, thus leaving me no alternative but to become subject again to stripping, wasting and destitution, by vexatious writs and law suits and imprisonments, or take that course to extricate myself, which the law had pointed out, for not the hearers of the law are justified, but the doers of it.

Friday, 15.—Editorial of the Times and Seasons.

"BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD."

"The great designs of God in relation to the salvation of the human family are very little understood by the professedly wise and intelligent generation in which we live; various and conflicting are the opinions of men concerning the plan of salvation, the requisitions of the Almighty, the necessary preparations for heaven, the state and condition of departed spirits, and the happiness or misery that is consequent upon the practice of righteousness and iniquity according to their several notions of virtue and vice.

The Mussulman condemns the heathen, the Jew and the Christian, and the whole world of mankind that reject his Koran, as infidels, and consigns the whole of them to perdition. The Jew believes that the whole world that rejects his faith and are not circumcised, are Gentile dogs, and will be damned. The Heathen are equally as tenacious about their principles, and the Christian consigns all to perdition who cannot bow to his creed, and submit to his *ipse dixit*.

But while one portion of the human race are judging and condemning the other without mercy, the great parent of the universe looks upon the whole of the human family with a fatherly care and paternal regard; he views them as his offspring, and without any of those contracted feelings that influence the children of men, causes "his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends his rain on the just and unjust." He holds the reins of judgment in his hands; he is a wise lawgiver and will judge all men [not according to the narrow contracted notions of men, but] "according to the deeds done in the body whether they be good or evil," or whether these deeds were done in England, America, Spain, Turkey, or India: he will judge them, "not according to what they have not, but according to what they have," those who have lived without law, will be judged without law, and those who have a law, will be judged by that law; we need not doubt the wisdom and intelligence of the Great Jehovah, he will award judgment or mercy to all nations according to their several deserts, their means of obtaining intelligence, the laws by which they are governed, the facilities afforded them of obtaining correct information, and his inscrutable designs in relation to the human family; and when the designs of God shall be made manifest, and the curtain of futurity be withdrawn, we shall all of us eventually have to confess that the Judge of all the earth has done right.

The situation of the Christian nations after death, is a subject that has called forth all the wisdom and talent of the philosopher and the divine, and it is an opinion which is generally received, that the destiny of man is irrevocably fixed at his death, and that he is made either eternally happy, or eternally miserable; that if a man dies without a knowledge of God, he must be eternally

damned, without any mitigation of his punishment, alleviation of his pain, or the most latent hope of a deliverance while endless ages shall roll along. However orthodox this principle may be, we shall find that it is at variance with the testimony of holy writ, for our Savior says, "that all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men wherewith they shall blaspheme; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come," evidently showing that there are sins which may be forgiven in the world to come, although the sin of blasphemy cannot be forgiven. Peter, also, in speaking concerning our Savior, says, that "he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah," 1 Peter 3 ch. 19-20 v. Here then we have an account of our Savior preaching to the Spirits in Prison, to spirits that had been imprisoned from the days of Noah; and what did he preach to them? That they were to stay there? Certainly not! let his own declaration testify "he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised," Luke iv. ch. 18 v. Isaiah has it, "To bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness from the prison house," Is. xlii. ch. 7 v. It is very evident from this that he not only went to preach to them, but to deliver, or bring them out of the prison house. Isaiah in testifying concerning the calamities that will overtake the inhabitants of the earth, says, "The earth shall reel and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage, and the transgressions thereof shall be heavy upon it, and it shall fall and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall punish the hosts of the high ones that are on high, and the Kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in prison, and after many days shall they be visited." Thus we find that God will deal with all the human family equally, and that as the antediluvians had their day of visitation, so will those characters, referred to by Isaiah, have their time of visitation and deliverance; after having been many days in prison.

The great Jehovah contemplated the whole of the events connected with the earth, pertaining to the plan of salvation, before it rolled into existence, or ever "the morning stars sang together for joy," the past, the present and the future were, and are, with him, one eternal now; he knew of the fall of Adam, the iniquities of the Antediluvians, of the depth of iniquity that would be connected with the human family, their weakness and strength, their power and glory, apostacies, their crimes, their righteousness and iniquity, he comprehended the full of man, and their redemption, he knew the plan of salvation and pointed it out, he was acquainted with the situation of all nations, and with their destiny, he ordered all things according to the council of his own will, he knows the situation of both the living and the dead, and has made ample provision for their redemption, according to their several circumstances, and the laws of the kingdom of God, whether in this world, or in the world to come.

The idea that some men form of the justice, judgment and mercy of God, is too foolish for an intelligent man to think of; for instance, it is common for many of our orthodox preachers to suppose that if a man is not what they call converted, if he dies in that state he must remain eternally in hell without any hope: Infinite years in torment must he spend, and never, never, have an end; and yet this eternal misery is made frequently to rest upon the merest casualty. The breaking of a shoe string, the tearing of a coat of those officiating, or the peculiar location in which a person lives, may be the means, indirectly of his damnation, or the cause of his not being saved. I will suppose a case which is not extraordinary: Two men, who have been equally wicked, who have neglected religion, are both of them taken sick at the same time; one of them has the good fortune to be visited by a praying man, and he gets converted a few minutes before he dies; the other sends for three different praying men, a tailor, a shoemaker, and a tinman; the tinman has a handle to solder to a can, the tailor has a button hole to work on some coat that is needed in a hurry, and the shoemaker has a patch to put on somebody's boot; they none of them can go in time, the man dies, and goes to hell; one of these is exalted to Abraham's bosom, he sits down in the presence of God and enjoys eternal, uninterrupted happiness, while the other, who was equally as good as him, sinks to eternal damnation, irretrievable misery and hopeless despair, because a man had a boot to mend, the button hole of a coat to work, or a handle to solder on to a subcap.

The plans of Jehovah are not so unjust, the statements of holy writ so visionary, nor the plan of salvation for the human family so incompatible with common sense; at such proceedings God would frown with indignance, angels would hide their heads in shame, and every virtuous, intelligent man would recoil.

If human laws award to each man his deserts, and punish all delinquents according to their several crimes, surely the Lord will not be more cruel than man, for he is a wise legislator, and

his laws are more equitable, his enactments more just, and his decisions more perfect than those of man; and as man judges his fellow man by law, and punishes him according to the penalty of that law, so does the God of heaven judge "according to the deeds done in the body." To say that the heathen would be damned because they did not believe the gospel would be preposterous, and to say that the Jews would all be damned that do not believe in Jesus would be equally absurd, for "how can they believe on him of whom they have not heard, and how can they hear without a preacher, and how can he preach except he be sent;" consequently neither Jew nor heathen can be culpable for rejecting the conflicting opinions of sectarianism, nor for rejecting any testimony but that which is sent of God, for as the preacher cannot preach except he be sent, so the hearer cannot believe without he hear a sent preacher, and cannot be condemned for what he has not heard, and being without law, will have to be judged without law.

When speaking about the blessings pertaining to the gospel, and the consequences connected with disobedience to its requirements, we are frequently asked the question, what has become of our fathers? Will they all be damned for not obeying the gospel, when they never heard it? Certainly not. But they will possess the same privilege that we here enjoy, through the medium of the everlasting priesthood, which not only administers on earth, but in heaven, and the wise dispensations of the great Jehovah; hence those characters referred to by Isaiah will be visited by this priesthood, and come out of their prison upon the same principle as those who were disobedient in the days of Noah were visited by our Savior [who possessed the everlasting Melchisedec Priesthood] and had the gospel preached to them, by him in prison; and in order that they might fulfil all the requisitions of God, their living friends were baptized for their dead friends, and thus fulfilled the requirements of God, which says "Except a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he can in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven," they were baptized of course, not for themselves, but for their dead.

Chrysostom says, that the Marchionites practised baptism for their dead. "After a catechumen was dead they had a living man under the bed of the deceased; then coming to the dead man, they asked him whether he would receive baptism, and he making no answer, the other answered for him, and said that he would be baptized in his stead; and so they baptized the living for the dead." The Church of course at that time was degenerate, and the particular form might be incorrect, but the thing is sufficiently plain in the scriptures, hence Paul, in speaking of the doctrine, says "Else what shall they do, who are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?" 1 Cor. xv. ch. 29 v. Hence it was that so great a responsibility rested upon the generation in which our Savior lived, for says he "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the Temple and the Altar. Verily I say unto you all these things shall come upon this generation," Matthew xxiii. ch. 35-36 v. Hence as they possessed greater privileges than any other generation, not only pertaining to themselves, but to their dead, their sin was greater, as they not only neglected their own salvation but that of their progenitors, and hence their blood was required at their hands.

And now as the great purposes of God are hastening to their accomplishment, and the things spoken of in the prophets are fulfilling, as the Kingdom of God is established on the earth, and the ancient order of things restored, the Lord has manifested to us this duty and privilege and we are commanded to be baptized for our dead, thus fulfilling the words of Obadiah, when speaking of the glory of the Latter Day. "And Saviors shall come upon Mount Zion to judge the remnant of Esau, and the kingdom shall be the Lord's." A view of these things reconciles the scriptures of truth, justifies the ways of God to man, places the human family upon an equal footing, and harmonizes with every principle of righteousness, justice and truth. We will conclude with the words of Peter: "For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the gentiles." "For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."

I continued busily engaged in making out a list of debtors, and an invoice of my property to be passed into the hands of the Assignee, until

Saturday evening the 16.—On which day the first number of "The Wasp," a miscellaneous weekly newspaper was first published at my office, William Smith, Editor, devoted to the Arts, Sciences, Literature, Agriculture, Manufacture, Trade, Commerce and the General News of the day, on a small sheet, at \$1.50 per annum.

Sunday, 17.—Spent the day with my family at home.

Monday, 18.—In consequence of the utter annihilation of our property by mob violence in the State of Missouri, and the immense expenses which we were compelled to incur, to defend ourselves from the cruel persecutions of that State, we were reduced to the necessity of availing our-

selves of the privileges of the General Bankrupt Law; therefore I went to Carthage with my brothers Hyrum and Samuel H. Smith, and severally testified to our lists of Insolvency before the Clerk of the County Commissioners Court. Sidney Rigdon and many more brethren were at Carthage the same day on business. My Clerk Dr. Richards went with us.

About this time a disturbance broke out in Rhode Island, by a part of the inhabitants wishing to change their Constitution, and make it like other States in the Union, which created much confusion and angry feeling in that State, and excitement in other States.

Tuesday, 19.—Rode out and examined some land near the northern limits of the city, &c.

Wednesday, 20.—Assisted in surveying some land in section 25, which I sold William Cross.

Thursday, 21, Friday, 22, and Saturday, 23.—Was engaged in temporal and spiritual affairs, at home, this office, &c.

Friday, 22.—"Honorary degree. Ordered by the Chancellor and Regents of the University of the City of Nauvoo, that the Honorary degree of L.L.D. be, and the same hereby is, conferred on General James Arlington Bennett, of Arlington House, N. Y.

Passed April 22, 1842.

JOHN C. BENNETT, Chancellor.

WM. LAW, Registrar.

Sunday, 24.—Preached on the hill near the Temple, concerning the building of the Temple, and pronounced a curse on the merchants and the rich, who would not assist in building it.

Monday, 25, Tuesday, 26, and Wednesday, 27.—I was engaged in reading, meditation, &c., mostly with my family.

Thursday, 28.—"7th of May dinner. General Joseph Smith and Lady present their compliments to the Officers (and their respective ladies) of the consolidated General Staff of the Nauvoo Legion; that is to say, his personal staff, Major General Bennett's Staff, including the Band, Brigadier General Law's Staff, and Brigadier General Rich's Staff, and respectfully solicit their company at a *repast Militaire*, at his quarters, on the 7th day of May proximo; at 1 o'clock, p.m.

General Bennett has been ordered to issue a *programme* of the operations and field exercises of the day, which will appear in ample form, and in due season.

April 28, A.D. 1842."

Head Quarters, Nauvoo Legion, City of Nauvoo, Ill. April 28, 1842. General Orders.

The Lieutenant General directs that a *programme militaire* issue from the office of his commanding general, for the 7th of May proximo, which I now proceed to consummate.

1st.—The Adjutants will form the lines of their respective regiments, and the Colonels of the line assume command at 9 o'clock, a.m.

2d.—The Adjutant General will form the line of the Legion, and the Brigadier Generals assume the command of their respective Cohorts, at half past 9 o'clock, a.m.

3d.—The Major General will assume the command of the Legion at 10 o'clock, a.m.

4th.—At a quarter past 10 o'clock, a.m., the Lieutenant General will be escorted to the field at the review station.

5th.—General Review and Inspection will follow, accompanied by such evolutions and exercises as the time will admit of.

6th.—At half past 12 o'clock, p.m., the *forenoon* will be dismissed until a quarter before 2 o'clock, p.m.

7th.—At 2 o'clock, p.m., the Major General will resume the command, and perform such military movements and field exercises, as the Lieutenant General may direct.

8th.—At 3 o'clock, p.m., the Cohorts will separate, and form the line of battle, the Brigadiers assume their respective commands, and General Law's command will make a descent upon that of General Rich, in order of sham battle.

9th.—At half past 3 o'clock, p.m., the Cohorts will resume their positions in the line of the Legion, and a sham battle will be fought between the mounted riflemen under the immediate command of Lieutenant General Smith, and the Invincibles under the immediate command of Major General Bennett.

10th.—At half past 4 o'clock, p.m., the *forenoon* will be dismissed for the day.

11th. Every officer, musician, and private will be required to be at their respective posts, at the hours specified, throughout the day, under the most severe penalties of the law.

JOHN C. BENNETT, Major General.

28.—At two o'clock, p.m., I met the members of the "Female Relief Society," and after presiding at the admission of many new members, gave a lecture on the Priesthood, showing how the sisters would come in possession of the privileges, blessings, and gifts of the priesthood, and that the signs should follow them, such as healing the sick, casting out devils, &c., and that they might attain unto these blessings by a virtuous life, and conversation, and diligence in keeping all the commandments; a synopsis of which was reported by Miss E. R. Snow.

"Prest. Joseph Smith arose and called the attention of the meeting to the 12th chapter 1st Corinthians. "Now concerning spiritual gifts, I would not have you ignorant." Said that the passage in the 3rd verse, which reads, "No man