

2 p.m.

Singing. Prayer by Elder W. Woodruff. Singing.

DISCOURSE BY ELDER GILBERT CLEMENTS, BOWERY AT PROVO, SATURDAY, P.M., JULY 14, 1855.

[REPORTED BY J. V. LONG.]

I feel extremely diffident in standing before this congregation, because I am an entire stranger to the saints here and to those in the regions adjacent, hence I am unacquainted with the circumstances which surround you, unacquainted with your past difficulties and history as a settlement, and therefore not so capable, probably, of treating upon those subjects that would be beneficial.

I sincerely ask the faith and prayers of this congregation; I do not make this request as a matter of courtesy, but that I may be able to speak unto edification, and that God may speak through me and impart something that will do you good. I also ask the indulgence of the brethren and sisters that I may be at liberty to select a text, as a foundation, for the few remarks which I may make on the present occasion. The passage of scripture that strikes my mind is contained in the 3 last verses of the 3d chapter of Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians: "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

It appears from the two chapters which precede the one from which I have taken this scripture that there were various opinions among the Corinthians respecting the talents and qualifications of the ministers who were laboring in their midst, and also respecting those who had been ministers and presidents amongst them. It likewise appears that those contentions and seisms had grown to such an extent that there was division among that branch of the church of Christ, and they actually contended about those men whom God had appointed to labor amongst them, hence some were for Paul, some for Cephas, others for Apollos, and a few for Christ.

The apostle takes up the subject and endeavors to show them the folly of such a course, and that they had grieved the spirit of God, that their influence had been weakened and that instead of forwarding the work of God, their strife had been the means of keeping it back. He also shows that they had foolishly paid deference to persons instead of the priesthood which God had given them, and in strong terms informs and assures them that whether that priesthood was held by a Paul, an Apollos, or a Cephas, that God alone could give the increase, and that all those men put together were totally incapable of accomplishing anything unless blessed with the Spirit of God.

When we take a broad and enlightened view of society, either as it is or should be formed, we see that God has endowed the human family with a variety of talent and capacity, and as we cannot find two that are alike in their features, so it is with the mental endowments of men; there is as great a variety in the mental as in the physical organization, and by reflection we can discern the wisdom of God in this arrangement.

If we were all possessed of the same talents there would be too much a sameness in the creations of God, there would be less to beautify, to diversify, and to cause laudable emulation; in short, there would be far less room for men to spread and increase, as they do now, in their endeavors to obtain happiness and perfection. Suppose, for example, that all men were of a purely calculating turn of mind, and constantly studied the abstruse science of mathematics, to the neglect of the simple and every day duties of life, is it not obvious that our present state of society could not exist? Then it appears that the hewer of wood and the drawer of water are as necessary as the man who can tell the condition of the sun, or the precise size, weight and measurement of each planet as it rolls in its orbit. All men are designed to be useful in the several spheres in which they exist, and we could not well do without any of them.

If there were not a diversity in men, society would suffer a great loss, and I believe that we will never have a perfect state thereof until every man fills that position for which he is best qualified, mentally and physically. No matter what a man's calling may be, every man ought to be respected and esteemed in the sphere in which he is placed and lawfully operating. The hewer of wood and the drawer of water ought to be esteemed useful to society, as well as the skillful architect, or the learned philosopher.

To show you that society could not so well exist without the variety of characters I have alluded to, I will mention a circumstance which will illustrate what I have now said before you. There was a certain celebrated musician called to play an oratorio in Germany, and of course he called to his aid a good sturdy bellows blower. The vast audience were riveted to their seats while the splendid piece of music was performed, and when the first part was gone through the poor bellows blower, in the pride of his zeal, said to the organist, "did we not do that well?" The performer showed his indignation by saying to the bellows blower, "what had you to do with it?" "We shall see," replied the raiser of wind. The service of the church being over, the organ was again called into requisition. The organist places his fingers on the keys, but, lo and behold, there was no wind! He turned hastily around and beheld his companion listlessly sitting "like patience on a monument smiling at grief," and angrily exclaimed, "why are you not blowing?" "I'm not going to blow unless it is we," he doggedly replied. The professor saw he was on the horns of a difficulty, and blandly said, "Well, let it be we." The instrument was immediately filled with the necessary element, and poured forth its rich and mellow strains to the expectant congregation.

We can understand very clearly that the choice

music could not have been produced unless we had been in the matter, the big I and little I do not promote general harmony. Seeing then that God has endowed the human family with a diversity of mind and intellect, He displays His wisdom by calling into the service of the ministry men of widely different capacities and talents, to suit all classes of mankind. In every quorum of the church this diversity exists; we find some that we may compare to the profound Paul, some to the eloquent Apollos, and others to the rough and ready Cephas; and every one is necessary in his place, because every man will have a work suited to his capacity and to the class he is qualified to teach.

It is certain that we cannot enter into all the whys and wherefores of such an arrangement, but it is unquestionably requisite or it would not be. We find a diversity of men and talents in this church, and they are all suitable and necessary in the places in which they are appointed to act; and no matter how rough the exterior may appear when those men are clothed upon and endowed with the power and authority of God they are mighty men indeed, and shine in the sphere in which they move, no matter whether as pioneers or ministers of the gospel, or at home at their daily avocation.

I have often reflected on the wisdom of God in bringing those men into the church at first who have so valiantly stood forth in defence of the cause of truth; who possessed the bone and sinew, the strong and brave hearts to stand faithfully by the ship of life in the midst of every storm. Suppose that God had called into his church, in its first organization, those who were refined by education and by birth and riches, persons who were unacquainted with, and, in fact, unfit for the every day practical duties of life, what would they have done during its tribulations? They would have been ELEGANTLY USELESS, totally unfit to pass through the scenes which Joseph Smith, the Prophet, and the leaders of this church have had to endure. Look at the persecutions of this kingdom, the mobbings and drivings of this people from State to State, the pioneerings and losses sustained by frequent burnings of the property of the saints. Their progress has been marked with the blood of martyrdom! In the midst of such trials what would the college bred and worldly learned have done? God called the true, the loyal, those who were inured to the hardships of life, because he knew that they were the ones that could move forward his church and kingdom with all their energies, minds and strength.

Several writers have made complaints to the world about the progress which Mormonism is making; they are afraid because of the great number of honest, firm converts which 'Mormonism' has made. It does not as yet gather the lofty and great ones, nor many of the rich, but the clever artisan, the ingenious mechanic, the hardy laborer, the producers of wealth, the bone and sinew of every country. And I conceive that this class of men are brought into the church of God for a wise purpose, and he does and will make them useful. No doubt the nations will ere long, if they do not already, feel that they have sustained a loss, they will be brought to their senses, for their strength is wasting away in this respect as well as in others.

When I look at these settlements, the oldest only 8 years old, it seems a wonder and a marvel that this people, with the limited means which they possess and have had since they came here, could have accomplished so much in so short a space of time. I look at it as one of the greatest miracles of the present age, and no one could deny it who would come disposed to view the matter with an unbiased mind.

But more immediately to my text, I believe that the "all things" means neither more nor less than all the treasures which God has in reserve for his people. This people now have a great many things within their reach, and they will eventually have all things that are good for them, whether temporal or spiritual. The apostle says the world is ours, and if the world, of course all things in the world, and we know that "the kingdom and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heavens will be given to the saints of the Most High God;" that God will turn and overturn the nations and cause them to break in pieces, that he will cause them to become weak while his kingdom is becoming stronger.

With these views then, and knowing as we do that the kingdom of our God must and will triumph, I wish to produce the feeling that we are members of that kingdom, and that we are brethren and sisters in the truest sense of the word, bound together by the strongest feelings and ties, and when we can feel this oneness of faith and feeling we realize that we are brethren indeed. I do not mean that kind of oneness propounded by the chartists of England or the equality enunciated by the red republicans of France, but it is that kind of equality which, irrespective of rank or position, esteems every man for his virtue, integrity, and uprightness of heart, makes us feel that we all have an interest in the cause, and prompts men to feel for each other, to strive to do each other good and to do good to all mankind. No matter what humble situation in life a man fills he is not to be despised, for we believe in esteeming every man according to the integrity of his heart; if the spirit and power of the gospel dwell in his heart and manifest themselves in his life and conversation we believe in treating him as our brother and friend. This is the equality that I love and admire, and this is the brotherhood which I glory in, because it is of God.

The christian world take a more spiritual view of equality, they don't admire honest, virtuous equality. For instance you will see a 'fat living,' jolly looking bishop pass the poor man in the street, of a week day, and treat him more like a dog than a brother, but when Sunday comes he will stand up and say, "Dearly beloved brethren,

the scriptures moveth us in divers places to confess our sins one to another, &c. &c."

It is well known that my country is famed for the wit and ingenuity of its inhabitants, that they are clever at getting out of a difficulty. There was once an Irishwoman in great difficulty and distress, and she called upon a Bishop of the Protestant church to implore him to give her bread. She told him her story, assured him that herself and family were in a state of complete destitution, and that she would be thankful for any relief that he could afford her. Her pious teacher, after an exhortation, turned her away and would neither give her money nor bread. She had proceeded but a little way from the rich man's house, when the thought struck her that she would return and ask the Bishop to teach her her prayers; accordingly she returned and rapped. The Bishop did not appear, and she asked the butler to inform "His Grace" that she wished to be taught her prayers. The butler told "his grace" that the poor woman wished his lordship to teach her her prayers; "his grace" then ordered the woman to be brought into his study, and he questioned her to know whether she could pray, she replied, "no, she could not." "What," said he, "do you not know how to say the Lord's prayer?" "No," said she, "I do not." The Bishop told her to kneel down and repeat after him. The poor woman was obedient, and the Bishop commenced, "Our Father who art in heaven," "stop," said she, "is he my father?" "Yes, most certainly," replied "his grace." "And is He your Father?" "Yes, praise His holy name," he replied. "Then you and I are brother and sister." "His grace" seemed confounded and stammered out an affirmative. "Well then," said she, "Brother, will you lend your poor sister a shilling?"

I dislike the equality that is in the world for it is like their religion, there is no substance in it, but the real equality in this kingdom I love, for it actually respects and benefits all men and women so long as they do right. God is no respecter of persons, and all men and women who strive to do right are the favorites of heaven, angels smile upon them and will soon rejoice to hail them as friends in the celestial world.

There is one thing that we need not be afraid of, we need not be afraid of the authorities of this church, either while here or when we are thousands of miles away from them, if we are walking in the path of duty. I was forcibly struck with a remark which I saw in the "Journal of Discourses;" President B. Young there says, in one of his sermons, 'I was never afraid of br. Joseph in my life, because I lived up to the line of my duty.' So it will be with us, if we strive to keep the commandments of our God we need not fear anything.

The Apostle Paul, in the chapter we have read from, severely chastises the Corinthians who had not hearkened to the teachings of the Spirit of God that would have made them one, but by losing the Spirit, he tells them that their influence was weakened and they had become divided into parties, and that division would ruin them except they repented. Indeed he says, 'I thank God that I baptized none of you;' he felt that he could have no honor in baptizing such a people, for they were divided among themselves, and were full of strife regarding those who had been instrumental in bringing them to a knowledge of the truth.

When we value and esteem the priesthood as we ought we shall be united, there will be no disputes amongst us. We will then honor men who hold it, not on account of them being such and such men, nor because they bear such and such names, but because of the priesthood and authority which they hold from the Almighty, and because they have been called to occupy important positions in his Church and Kingdom.

Then, whether a man be a president of a stake, a bishop or an elder sent forth to preach the first principles of the Gospel, we will feel to uphold him in the situation to which he is appointed. If this be our course we can, as a united people, claim the privilege of enjoying all things that God has in store for us.

An earthly father will not give a child such things as are only fit for persons of mature years, for they would do the child harm, therefore the prudent father withholds them until it has acquired wisdom and judgment to make a good use of them, then he not only gives but feels a pleasure in giving that which will do his child good. It is so with our heavenly Father; of his blessings, his knowledge, his wisdom and grace he will impart and we will receive as fast as we are worthy and can contain.

But, says one, 'does not a sentiment contained in the text seem to clash with some remarks expressed by Pres. B. Young when he says that nothing is ours?' At first sight there seems to be, and how will you reconcile the statements? Simply by comparing scripture with scripture.

When we know to whom this promise is made of enjoying 'all things,' the difficulty will be immediately removed.

The Apostle Paul, in writing again to the saints, gives them a key by which they could come in possession of all things, and writes, 'Brethren, I exhort you to present yourselves a living sacrifice to God, both body, soul, and spirit,' he wished them to dedicate themselves unto Him from whom they had received their all, not only their bodies but all things which they possessed. If they possessed the true spirit they would feel that they wholly belonged to God, and I will here remark that I know of no other principle, that has been revealed in these last days, that has such a tendency to unite this church in one as that principle.

And when that key, the law of consecration, was given, the saints of these days learned to whom their property belonged, and they may now ascertain the means by which they can enjoy 'all things.' When men comprehend this principle they see that their lives, their goods, their chattels and, in short, every thing rightful belongs to

God, and that from him all our substance comes and he has a right to claim it at any time.

As a people we never can become one until we feel that our interests are one, that we are identified with our Creator—heirs with God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. A family can never prosper if it be divided in its interests, a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. The principle of disunion brings death while that of unity brings life, hence we know the great reason why every thing prospers which comes from God.

The hosts of heaven are united, all their interests are one, and when the kingdom of God upon the earth becomes so united as to have all its interests centered in one head then all will prosper and go right.

No man can feel fully interested in any trade or business concern, unless his prosperity is interwoven with it.

We find that in the world when men have full interest and their whole is staked and dependent upon the prosperity of an establishment; it will succeed, if their skill and means can effect the object.

Men of the world venture their all in business, and so it should be with the kingdom of God.—This will be more fully so when the people acknowledge this principle in all things; for when every member of this kingdom, even to the lowest and least that can be called a saint, feels that all his interests are centered in the kingdom of God he will feel an interest in its extension and building up.

I recollect an incident that occurred in the old country, and it will tend to illustrate what I have before said, that God brings all kinds into the church. In a branch of the church there was a young member who was a sweep by profession, and some of the saints met this little fellow going to the meeting, when a large collection was to be raised, with his bag of sut on his back, and they questioned him about going to the meeting in such a manner, and asked him why he went so, if he could not leave his sut at home or wait for another opportunity to attend meeting, and he said, 'O, but I must go for I have a share in the concern.'

I felt forcibly struck with the importance of the remark, and I think that we should all feel, like the little sweep, that we have a "share in the concern."

There is nothing that has been of such importance to me as this kingdom, and wherever I have felt especially to devote myself entirely to God then have I felt that the prosperity of this church was my prosperity, with it I was anxious to rise, or with it I was willing to fall.

These are my feelings, and if this church was blotted out of existence I feel that there would be no hope for me at all. I feel like the apostle of old when Jesus brought out some of his strong doctrine, and his disciples felt the spirit of alarm and apostacy, Jesus turned round and said to them, "Will ye forsake me also?" Peter said, "Lord, to whom shall we go, for thou alone hast the words of eternal life?" So we can say with regard to this church, if we forsake it and its valiant leaders, to whom shall we go? (The wind blew clouds of dust into the Bowery.)

I think if we have not the spice in our meeting we have plenty of dust.

Brethren and sisters, when we have obeyed this principle—this law of consecration, and laid our all upon the altar, with a covenant sure and steadfast, which cannot be broken, I am well assured that we will all feel that we have an interest in the concern that we never felt before, and that we could not possibly have felt it by any other means. I long for the day to come when we shall all have complied with it, and I have learned with a great degree of pleasure that a few have complied with it in Provo, and I hope that the heaven will continue to work until the whole is leavened.

I have only been in this Territory a short time, having arrived in the last company last fall, and having been all the time pretty much confined at my business, I have had but little time to visit anywhere, except the meetings in G. S. L. City; but I must now say that I have been agreeably disappointed with my journey to Provo. It had not entered into my mind that I would see such a city as I see here; I felt truly astonished at the sight when I visited the machine shop and the other public shops, and I was pleased to see so much work going on in this city. I can not only say this of my experience in Provo but also of the Territory at large. I have been very agreeably disappointed with things in general, for previous to my coming here, I had no idea of this people being so comfortably situated. I had an idea that there would be the greatest difficulties to encounter and the greatest obstacles to surmount, but in all this I have been happily disappointed. I have not been disappointed in the people, though I know that this is a fruitful source of apostacy and backsliding with many. They expect perfection, and on their arrival here they expect, of course, to find a much better people than they do.

Their idea of coming to Zion was that here they would find all perfection, but I never looked for this as yet. I did not expect to find perfection here, for I realize that the gospel net gathers good, bad and indifferent. My idea was, that it was not the place that sanctified the people but the people that would sanctify the place, for where the pure in heart dwell, there is Zion, and there God dwells.

Man, when blest by the Divine Being, is a fountain of happiness to himself and all around him partake of the same influence.

The wind and dust come with such force that it will be impossible for me to continue my remarks.

May God bless you, brethren and sisters, is the prayer of your humble servant, for Christ's sake. Amen.

Benediction by President Joseph Young.

A single line of "empty space."