

Memento to Orson Spencer,

[Who departed this life, in St. Louis, Mo., Oct. 13th, '55.]

Sad news, alas! he's mute and cold,—
Died far away from his dear home,—
It looks so like a tale of old,
We hardly think it true, tho' come.
Ah Death! thou uncertain foe,
How dared thou crush so pure a heart;
Well didst thou know, the deadly blow,
Thy dart to thousands would impart.
Yet tho' thou'st robbed us of a gem
As pure, as bright as ever sped,
Thou'st gained for him a diadem,
And laid him with the honored dead!

To him 'twas everlasting life,
The prize of eternal crown,
Who midst old Babylon's cares and strife—
Could battle 'gainst her deathly frown
The heavy surge of mental ire,
Borne with the furious storm of hate—
'Twas his to combat, false and dire,
Amongst the wealthy, proud and great,—
And as the billows swept along
With manly heart he stood, nor shrank;
But stem'd the current wild, and strong—
Till 'neath its mountain-wave, he sank.

Yet, still he lives, his spirit glows,
Pencil'd in words of living fire,
Caught from the altar of our woes—
His burning words can ne'er expire!
Our eyes can see the figured sounds,
The letter'd spirit of his thoughts—
So full of truth, truth that confounds
The mighty in their wisdom caught.
So cogent, meekly, truthful, he
Their men-made systems did explode,—
And led them from the things that be,
To truth, to righteousness, and God!

If learning be an earthly prize
To light the brains of duller heads!
He had that wisdom, and was wise,
To guide the pen, to paint their deeds:
If letter'd skill and classic lore
The deep research and erudition,
Ere gave to man a richer store
Of thought, to canvas, dark portition,
He had that learning quite profound,
Before he knew of inspiration,
And might have lived and died, nor found
Ought, but the world's adulation!

But he disdained their learned lore,
And gave for truth all he held dear—
His name his wife his children,—more,
His palace for a desert drear—
His home the sterile mountain wild
Where storm-clouds canopied his head,—
He was an out-cast, and exiled
By virtue of the choice he made!
Thus, humbly for the faith he owned,
He proved himself a faithful one,
And will with lasting glory crown'd,
Receive the welcome of a son.

Fresh on our minds his memory still
Will live embalmed, till future times
Shall echo forth the ETERNAL will—
His bright reward, in blissful climes.
There we shall meet our brother dear,
Crowned with the triumphs of the just;
Meet in a higher, nobler sphere,
Of honor, and immortal trust,
Where time, nor circumstance, nor change,
Will cause regret,—when 'twill be said
No more we'll doubt, nor feel afraid,—
Nor mourn, a LIVING SPENCER dead.

G. S. L. City, Dec., 1855.

LYON.

DISCOURSE

BY AMASA LYMAN, TABERNACLE, DEC. 2, 1855.

[REPORTED BY GEO. D. WATT.]

[Concluded from last number.]

After a while we find those men who have traveled long and far, and suffered much; and what do they tell us? Why, we have tried Mormonism for twenty years, and now what conclusion do they come to? To the conclusion, that is sometimes vulgarly expressed in this way,—"We have not found Mormonism what it is cracked up to be—it has been misrepresented to us." This is simply because they have not realized all their expectations, and hopes, and have not been able to grasp the reward they were seeking after, and which they regarded as constituting the elements of happiness. So now, after twenty years' hard service, they are ready, as we say, to apostatize and go somewhere else to seek happiness, and leave Mormonism to go as it may go, to sink or swim.

If toiling, and laboring, and suffering privations and hardships were sufficient to save men, and place within their possession the constituent principles of happiness to redeem them from evil, such men would have been redeemed very likely; such men would have been pure. But what does it prove? It simply proves, that if there is anything in a man's experience, in his toiling and labor, it is simply the facts that we see, the outward result that may be calculated, that flows from his labors, such as the building of houses, and cities.

He may suffer toil in various ways; for instance, as in preaching the gospel and trying with all his might to get the people to believe that which they ought to believe; to get them to serve God, and keep his commandments. If there is anything but this results from his labor and toil in the gospel I am not aware of it. By and by he lays his body down in the dust, his work is not completed, and he is unhappy and wretched.

Why is it? It is because the gospel is untrue; because he is not faithful that has promised? No. But it is simply because he has been looking where it is not: for the constituent principles of happiness where they do not exist; and while he has been laboring and toiling he has failed to gather to himself a store of happiness as the reward of his toil. He supposed if he built this house, performed this mission, or discharged that duty, that this would give him salvation. Says one, "Is it not this which gives men salvation? What does the Savior say? He once on a time defined what eternal life is; and that is what we all seek; that is the principle without which we as Latter Day Saints calculate that men cannot be happy, and be saved in the kingdom of God, which is to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent."

Then traveling by sea and land, living in luxury or poverty, suffering hardships and toil does not constitute eternal life; because there are countless millions of earth's sons that are seen to-day, suffering and toiling, and wasting themselves away, wearing themselves out, so far as their bodies are concerned, until they lay down in their mother earth, being as poor at the end of their toil as at the beginning of it; and as a general thing more wretched.

Then there is something else that should be connected with all this labor; there is some other principle, something that should be developed in the history of every individual besides the making of a house, the exploring of a new country, the preaching of the word of God to others, that word which would save them, and direct them to the fountain of life and salvation. And what is that something? It is the important thing which we all want; whether it is large or small, little or much; whatever may be its name is a matter of no importance to us, only, so we possess it.

There should be developed that which will give life and assurance in the bosom of man, the thing that can constitute him happy; that can be a means of bliss to him. This cannot be found as I have said in building houses; there are millions of men that build houses and never know the truth, they never comprehend it; they began poor, and die poor, so far as this principle is concerned.

So it was with the Pharisees, after all the pains Jesus Christ had taken to instruct and teach them, and render his teachings so perfectly simple that a person with but a child's capacity could have understood them: when he was demanded of them when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said; "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Neither shall they say, Lo here! or Lo there! for behold the kingdom of God is within you."

We as Latter Day Saints have heard a great deal said to entertain us; and a great many speculations have been formed in our minds with regard to the kingdom of God, and we may have pursued our various ways to impart our ideas to satisfy those to whom we may have addressed our conversation in the course of our lives, and in the course of our labors, as to what the kingdom of God is, so as to get our hearers to understand it.

Now, we as Latter Day Saints who are in possession of that principle of salvation, need not say we know of a principle that will produce salvation, for whenever the principle is developed in man, he is already saved; he has no need to go around the bush to find something else—he has not to take another step to get something else in his possession before he is saved, but when the principle is in his possession he is saved, and he is saved to the extent to which the principle is developed in him.

Jesus Christ understood this when he took that mild way of admonishing certain of his disciples, and rebuking them perhaps for their dullness of apprehension, telling them they were slow of heart to believe things that had been spoken by the prophets.

How often have we been told that it was requisite for us to live that the Spirit of God would come and dwell with us, live in us constantly, until it should be a living fountain of life, and light, and glory in our souls, until it should lead us into all truth.

What did we suppose when we heard this was to happen with us? What did we suppose we were to do? What kind of feelings were we to cultivate, if any at all, that we may have the Holy Spirit?

Says one, "that is one thing, and perhaps the thing you are talking about is something else." What is the Holy Spirit? What will it do for you and me? What has it ever done for any man, or for any people who have been so happy as to enjoy the blessing of its presence with them, as to partake of its fruits, to live and enjoy the life which it imparts? What has it done for us?

I would like to ask every intelligent man this question, as Latter Day Saints, if they suppose it ever revealed anything more than the truth to any soul? Did it ever do anything beyond simply reflecting light around individuals in which they were enabled to discover just the simple naked truth which enabled them to comprehend it as well as be sensible to its existence. What did it ever do, whether you apply its power to revelation, to the principle of light that it would impart; or to the fact that there is a God who lives, rules and reigns in the heavens, above and in the earth beneath; or whether you apply it to something that might be called a smaller matter,—a matter of less magnitude; did it ever do anything but simply teach mankind the truth?

Then the truth is the highest point that can

be gained, it is the richest gem that can be possessed; you cannot go beyond it, nor stop short of it without partaking of falsehood, and error.—There is no alternative left. The principle that governs the dwelling of Jehovah is truth, simple truth, and that is all there is upon which a permanent foundation for happiness can be laid.

If we would learn the God of truth that imparts life, and freedom from darkness and error to us; it is simply that truth that enables us to comprehend the facts in relation to him. If we learn ourselves it is the same; it would be the revelation of some principle applied to ourselves, to our own history, to the reason why we are here, and the same that brought us here. Then this is what the Holy Spirit will do.

We have been taught that we should so live that it should be with us continually. How is it that we are to live that it may dwell with us? Have we to live so as to possess this truth, this counselor, this adviser, this minister that will admonish us of God, and for our good, and tell us the truth always?

Have we got to depend upon the contingency of our being able, for instance, to go to meeting every Sabbath day to hear somebody inspired of God tell the truth that we may see it, and hear it, mark it, and define the exact ground we should occupy, the path in which we should walk, and the duties that should fill up the measure of days through the week.

If this was the way that we were to be saved, by living for the truth, and getting it in our possession, and this was to be the only principle upon which we were to possess ourselves of its advantages, if any thing should happen that we could not go to church, we should be as hard off as a mariner in a fog without a compass or chart. We should, in every sense of the word, be lost, and be entirely unable to find ourselves.

Was this what was contemplated in the gospel? Was it contemplated to make the condition and circumstances of those individuals that should embrace the gospel better? I do not think that it was, I do not believe it was.

The savior intimated that whoever should do the will of his father, should fulfill his requirements, what should be their condition; he intimated that this principle should be in them like a well of water springing up to everlasting life. To the woman at the well at Samaria he said, "whoever will drink of the water I will give them shall never thirst."

One of the ancient apostles in admonishing his brethren who had been taught probably as much as the Latter Day Saints have, and probably might have embraced the gospel with similar views; says he, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."

When a man is in darkness it is necessary he should have a candle, or some borrowed means of light to dissipate the darkness around him. How long? Until the day dawns, and the day star arises. Where? In this man's heart—in your neighbor's heart? No. But give heed unto the sure word of prophecy until the day dawns, and the day star arises in your heart.

When the day dawns, we dispense with the light of the candle; when the day star arises in the heart, to use the language of the apostle, it reflects its light there. Does it wear away? No, it is there continually. The apostle chose that as a figure that was as near something immutable and without change probably as anything that could occur to his mind in selecting the dawn of day and the rising of the day star.

The apostle Peter spoke these words, a man inspired of God, who spoke thus to instruct the uninstructed, that they might be brought to the comprehension of some truths, be led to drink at some fountain of life; this was the object for which they were to attend to this instruction.—Then you can discover very readily that it is the development in the soul of every individual of this principle of light, or life, I care not which you call it; it is this comprehension of truth the apostle refers to.

That the great object of the gospel, and the object of its being preached was the development of its light in the soul of those individuals that are to become heirs of salvation, the sons and daughters of God, who are to be clothed upon with the principles of truth with which God is clothed; that in the comprehension of truth, they may receive a capacity to will and do, and accomplish those things which are requisite to their happiness and exaltation.

And so long as this object fails to be accomplished—so long the preaching of the Gospel has failed to accomplish its object, as far as those individuals are concerned, and the object for which that labor was performed. Whether the lack is in the man who preaches, or in the people to whom he preaches, it is all the same.

This is a point that Latter Day Saints should duly appreciate and consider; because if we do not the consequences are, discontent in the mind, and dissatisfaction; we shall quarrel with circumstances that are around us, we shall find fault, simply because we are not contented; and because the estimates we place upon truth, and the blessings conferred upon us, lead us to consider that they are not worth the labor we are required to bestow, the money or means we are required to give. The consequence is we consider it a bad bargain, and we want to rue; and then as Latter Day Saints we apostatize—we quit it—we back out, saying, we have not found Mormonism what it was cracked up to be.

How have such people received it? What views have they entertained of it? There are

those things that will actually tell the truth on a man, when his lips fail to speak it; his actions will tell it. What did they consider it worth? As much of their tithing as they could not avoid paying.

Some may think it is worth a tithing but not any more. Another man considers it worth every thing; and more than every thing of which he can entertain a perception. He would not refuse to pour out the last dollar; he will hunt the last corner of his pocket to get out the last farthing to give to it. And when it comes to his labor he would not stop to labor one day in ten, but ten whole days, and only wish there were more days to labor to accomplish more; because in so doing he is serving himself and enlarging his own interest, when he is seeking the interest of Mormonism.

Why so? Because he estimates it to be that that is universal in its extent, and intimately associated with every principle of the Gospel, in which the narrow conceptions of men are drowned, they are lost, submerged like a mote cast into the ocean.

On taking this view, he does not stop at any thing he can do. Does he stand back from pouring out his life's blood? No, but he pours it out as freely as water that glides down from the summit of the snow clad hills to the valleys below.

In what consists the difference between these two classes of men? It is in the estimate they place upon the value of Mormonism. One class considers it worth what they give for it, and the other considers it worth more than they can possibly give.

Then it is as men receive the gospel, and endorse the truth; if they consider it excellent above every thing else, so they will manifest their love for it, and their zeal in promoting its interests, and the accomplishment of its object.

You can readily see, then, how the kingdom of God must be built up in the soul of every individual; Zion must be developed there. What is Zion? It is the pure in heart, so says the revelation. Do you suppose you are going to build up the kingdom of God until the perfection of purity and truth is developed in the hearts of the people of that kingdom? No.—You may gather them together by thousands, and tens of thousands, until the concourse swell the congregation in Zion to millions, and what will it amount to until this principle is developed in them?

There will be a corresponding stream of apostasy flowing out, at the same time at the back door. What is the reason? Simply because this principle is wanted, this important part of the Gospel is omitted, if it has ever been thought of; its harmonizing influences are not felt through the sphere of man's being; his interests are at war with the interests of Zion; he runs after some fanciful notion that is at war with the kingdom of God. He cares not for it, he would exchange it for a piece of bread and cheese, for a farm or for the glittering treasure of the world.

Why, because the principle is not in the heart that causes him to estimate the real value of the gem which he rejects; he considers it worth but a trifle, consequently he will barter away his chance for it, for a trifle. That is the way men act for Mormonism. We are going to build up the kingdom of God, and compass sea and land to tell the erring sons of earth the gospel, and testify that the Lord has set his hand again to build up the kingdom, and then get down by the fireside and say Mormonism has been preached so many years, and perhaps, in five years the son of man must come; and in their feelings they say, it cannot be put off; from what br. Joseph said, and from what br. Brigham has said, or some body else, we calculate the Son of Man will be here in a few years at the farthest. And will he not have nice times when he comes, visiting among this people?

When will he come? When will be the day of righteousness that we talk about, when peace and truth, and the kingdom of God shall cover the earth as the waters do the deep? It will be when the principle of truth and light and life are developed in the hearts of the people that dwell on the face of the earth, and never until then.

Knowledge is just as near the earth, so far as that is concerned, now as it will be then; but where is it? There is such a thing as truth, as a comprehension of it, but that does not prove that it exists within you or me; or that either of us have the advantage, or can secure to ourselves the advantage of having it in possession; although a seraph might stand by our side, whose being has been made radiant by the light of truth, we still will be in some ignorance corresponding to the amount of knowledge we possess.

The light must be in the soul before its benefit can be realized. We have heard our teacher tell us that two and two make four; if we had never heard anything else, if this was all that had been connected with it, would we ever have comprehended the principle? No. The comprehension of it must exist in a man's mind. It must be in the center of his being, a fountain of light, and consequently of life and glory, from which fountain should proceed life and truth until it is diffused throughout his whole being, until all his affections are sanctified, and his judgment corrected.

Then he would have no need to pile up and read the musty records of passed ages, because the principle of light, and life, and truth is planted in him; and when he began to partake of the fruits, to drink of this fountain, would he thirst again? No. When a man learns the truth, he does not feel any more anxiety about it, he does