

earth reaches up to the sun, whence it receives its warmth and life.

It is natural for everybody to reach after Deity; and when we meet a person who says he does not believe in any kind of God he is to that extent an unnatural being—there is something about him that is wrong. I do not say it is altogether his fault. I believe there are people whose minds have become clouded as to spiritual things, and one of the reasons why they doubt the very existence of Deity is their own ignorance and the teachings of men who profess to be sent of God. To hear some of these men's theology you would think God Almighty, our Father, the great Creator, was the most cruel and relentless Being that could possibly exist. Nothing that can be said about the devil is worse than some men have told about God.

The idea has been entertained for hundreds of years, and taught by men professing to be servants of Christ, that there is a great pit where fire and brimstone are kept forever alive, into which God tumbles lost souls by the millions, that in this pit they *burn*, and *burn*, and *BURN*, forever, without a moment's cessation from this infernal misery. The idea has prevailed that only a few will escape this everlasting torment, and they not through any good acts of their own—not because they deserve to be saved from this horrible pit, but because through certain circumstances they have been led to believe that Jesus is the Christ and His righteousness is to be imputed to them. As for the heathen and the Jews, for generations and generations millions upon millions of these sons and daughters of God, through no fault of their own, but through what is commonly called "the accident of birth"—because they did not happen to have been born in a "christian" land are, it is said, to be hurled into hell, never to come out again! No wonder that some people reject such men as representatives of Deity and become skeptical as to such a God. The Bible does not teach such stuff as that. Men read with a distorted vision with their minds biased beforehand in regard to certain things, and they interpret the Bible to suit those preconceived notions.

The Bible teaches that there is a place of punishment prepared, and that God will reward or punish every man "according to his works." It teaches, too, that but for Christ's coming and dying for us we would all have been lost. But there is a plan of salvation prepared by which all mankind—except very few—will be eventually redeemed. There is no redemption for the sons of perdition, those who sin against the Holy Ghost after receiving it, who prostitute to evil the power given to them to attain to the highest glory. But the end of their career no man knows. It has not been revealed unless to a few and then the vision has been shut up. The rest of mankind, in the due time of the Lord, through the suffering of Christ and through obedience, either in this world or in some

other state in the future, will be brought forth and placed in some position where they can enjoy their existence and glorify their Creator.

If people born into this world would always be guided by that natural inspiration which is given to every individual of all races and all nations; if they would listen to the "still small voice" of that Spirit and be guided by its whisperings, they would approach nearer and nearer unto God until they would ultimately commune with Him and learn His will.

Some people think that God made a big blunder in the beginning when he permitted evil to enter the world. Evil is a fact in the universe and it was permitted here for a purpose. If there had been no evil here we could never have been properly tested. Everyone of us will be judged according to justice, and all have to be tempted and placed in the midst of opposites. It is vain to talk about the "origin of evil." There is a necessity and "opposition in all things." Good always existed, so did evil. Therein lies the possibility of probation. There are different degrees of glory, different "mansions" in the Kingdom of the Father, and places will be found for all His children according to their deserts and adaptabilities.

When in different parts of the world we heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ preached by a servant of God, he spake by the power of the Holy Ghost. There was something about the tone of his voice and the influence that came from his presence which found a correspondence in us. It awoke within us something that had been dormant, aroused something which had been measurably asleep; our souls reached out to his words, testimonies and spirit; for "light cleaveth unto light, intelligence unto intelligence." The testimony of the servant of God penetrated our souls; we felt and realized that he spoke the truth, and that for the first time in our lives we had heard the true Gospel of Christ. We came into the Church under the influence of that spirit, and through faith, repentance and baptism, by the laying on of hands, we obtained a higher endowment of that divine spirit, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. It is that which unites us together and makes us one. It is the spirit of revelation, and the same by which Moses led the children of Israel unto liberty, the Spirit which has inspired all the Prophets.

Joseph Smith was one of those men specially endowed whom God raised up and filled with the spirit of intelligence, light, and understanding. He brought forth more principle, more truth, more doctrine, more ideas for the benefit, advancement, and development of mankind than any man who ever lived on the earth, save alone Jesus Christ our Redeemer. But each one of us has the right to that spirit by our obedience to the Gospel, and if we walk with God and listen to the whisperings of that Spirit, it will lead us from all evil unto all good; it will bring us nearer to the Father; the veil which hides futurity and our

past will grow thinner and we will be guided unto all truth.

There are many people in the world opposed to what they term "Mormonism;" so much so that they have been filled with vengeance, animosity and sometimes with a spirit of murder against men who have brought to them "glad tidings of great joy." Why is it? Because when the testimony of the truth pierced their souls, when the light of God reflected from His servant awakened the latent light within them, they would not receive it; they "loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil." And that brings condemnation. When men shut their eyes against that light and refuse to let it enter their souls, and will not hearken to the "still small voice" within, an evil influence takes possession of them and they are filled with anger, bitterness, malice, vengeance, animosity and sometimes murder. All such feelings come from beneath.

Having received the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, through our covenants with God and our obedience to the Gospel, let us walk in the light of that spirit, seek for it every day, and pray for its guidance continually.

The choir sang the anthem:

We will give thanks.

Benediction by Elder Henry P. Richards.

Bear Lake Stake Conference.

The quarterly conference of the Bear Lake Stake of Zion convened in the new Tabernacle at Paris on Sunday and Monday, August 11th and 12th. On the stand were Presidents Wilford Woodruff and George Q. Cannon of the First Presidency, F. M. Lyman of the Quorum of the Twelve, the presidency of Stake, the High Council, also Elder Tanner, of Salt Lake City.

On Sunday the speakers were Presidents Wilford Woodruff and George Q. Cannon and Apostle F. M. Lyman.

President George Q. Cannon presented the names of Hugh Findlay and Thomas Oakey to be ordained Patriarchs. Sustained by unanimous vote.

At a Priesthood meeting in the evening the speakers were Apostle F. M. Lyman and Presidents Geo. Q. Cannon and Wilford Woodruff.

On Monday President W. Budge reported the condition of the Bear Lake Stake, and said that the Stake territorially is quite extensive. It embraces twenty-three wards and three districts. Meetings are conducted regularly. The Bishops report monthly, and a friendly feeling prevails. The condition of the Elders' quorums is not so good as might be desired, owing to changes which have recently taken place; but the vacancies will shortly be filled up. The High Council and Bishops of this Stake are united and work in harmony with the Presidency. There is no feeling to pull down or create division in any way. He was thankful for the liberality of the Saints in having so far completed this house as to be able to oc-