

in the grave or leaning on their staffs for very age.

There is Parley Pratt, jun., who has just spoken. I remember the day of his birth very well, for his mother died the day he was born, and I attended her funeral.

Now he has grown to be a man, and I rejoice to hear him bear testimony of the work of God in connection with the other young brethren; it does my soul good to see them coming on to the stage of action. I realize that the kingdom of our God, of which we are members is only in its infancy, although we look upon it as being great compared with what it has been.

It commenced like a small mustard seed, but it has gradually increased until the birds begin to lodge in its branches, and yet it is but small compared with what it is to be. We have had many symbols and figures presented to our minds to illustrate the growth and increase of the kingdom of God, and I will here say in respect to its being like the comparison made by Daniel it answers the figure very well, only instead of it rolling down hill it has come up hill into the tops of the mountains, and I do hope and pray that it may continue to grow and increase in strength and in power, that when it rolls down hill it may go with mighty power and accelerated speed, that it may not require so much toil, labor and fatigue to carry the kingdom from the mountains as it did to bring it up.

I have no fears in regard to the increase of this kingdom, and I may also add that I never had any, only so far as concerned the weaknesses and frailties of mortality. I hope we may all pursue the course laid down for us by the servants of the Lord, for if we do this I know that we shall be safe in this world, and secure happiness and exaltation in the world to come.

There are a few thoughts that I wish to present to the congregation touching one principle that has been alluded to by the brethren, namely in regard to following the instructions and counsels of those who lead us. I have reflected much upon this subject and I contend that there is one principle by which the Lord leads his servants, and if we are faithful they will lead us in the way of life, and in as much as we have faith to believe in their instructions, in the teachings of the Holy Spirit through them we are always in the safe path, and shall be sure of our reward.

You take a shepherd for instance, and according to the ancient practice we learn that they always went forward and prepared the way, so that there could be no danger in advance but what the shepherd would learn of in time to save the sheep. If they are allowed to run by the shepherd, the wolves are apt to catch them and destroy them, and the very moment that men in this kingdom attempt to run ahead or cross the path of their leaders, no matter in what respect, the moment they do this they are in danger of being injured by the wolves.

This is a subject upon which I have thought a great deal, and I have gained a little useful knowledge during my experience by watching the conduct of men, and I have never in my life known it to fail, that when men went contrary to the counsel of their leaders, neither in the days of Joseph nor of br. Brigham but they always became entangled and suffered a loss by so doing.

Now whatever I might have obtained in the shape of learning, by searching and study respecting the arts and sciences of men, whatever principles I may have imbibed during my scientific researches, yet if the prophet of God should tell me that a certain principle, or theory which I might have learned was not true, I do not care what my ideas might have been I should consider it my duty, at the suggestion of my file leader to abandon that principle or theory. Supposing he were to say the principles by which you are governed are not right, that they were incorrect what would be my duty? I answer that it would be my duty to lay those principles aside, and to take up those that might be laid down by the servants of God.

I have seen men in the days of Joseph bring up principles, and read and teach, and advocate theories when the prophet would say "it is not right to do so, they are not true." Those men would still argue, maintain their position, and they would write in defence of their theories when the prophet condemned them, and they would say we have no faith in your theory, nor in the system you present.

The very moment a man does that he crosses the path of the servant of God who is set to lead the way to life and salvation. This is one thing that the Elders should carefully avoid. The fact is there are a great many things taught in the building up of this kingdom which seems strange to us being contrary to our traditions and are calculated to try men. Br. Joseph used a great many methods of testing the integrity of men, and he taught a great many things which in consequence of tradition required prayer, faith and a testimony from the Lord before they could be believed by many of the Saints, his mind was opened by the visions of the Almighty, and the Lord taught him many things by vision and revelation that were never taught publicly in his day, for the people could not bear the flood of intelligence which God poured into his mind.

How was it in that day in reference to many things that were taught and practised? All was not revealed at once but the Lord showed the prophet a principle and the people acted upon it according to the light which they had, all the perfections and glory of it was not revealed at first but as fast as it was revealed the people endeavored to obey.

I will bring up one thing which will show that the position I take is correct, viz.—baptism for the dead; when that was first revealed we rejoiced in it and as soon as we had an opportunity we began to be baptised for our dead; a man would be baptised for both male and female.

The moment I heard of it my soul leaped

with joy, for it was a subject in which I felt deeply interested, I went forward and was baptised for all my dead relatives I could think of both male and female as did others, but afterward we obtained more light upon the subject and President Young taught the people that men should attend to those ordinances for the male portion of their dead friends and females for females; this showed the order in which those ordinances should be administered, which ordinances had before been revealed, and shows us that we are in a school where we shall be constantly learning.

This revelation in connection with the revelation and vision concerning the three glories gave me more joy and consolation than any revelation I ever read and I had a great desire to obey it.

I was taught from my childhood that there was one Heaven and one Hell, and was told that the wicked all had one punishment and the righteous one glory, that the grey headed sinner who had spent his days in wickedness, debauchery and murder would go to hell to suffer everlasting torments, and that the youth but sixteen years of age, who had not been religious, would go to the same hell, suffer the same kind of torment and for the same length of time, and that Jesus and the apostles and all men who had suffered death for the testimony which they bore for the kingdom of God and the works of righteousness would have the same glory and no more than the Presbyterian deacon in Kentucky with his hundred negroes who had never made a sacrifice in his life, but had been full of this world's goods, but he was a professor of religion.

I never did believe a word of this doctrine a day since I was born and I am sure that I never did before, and when I read the vision and was taught the principle of the baptism for the dead, it enlightened my mind and gave me great joy, it appeared to me that the God who revealed that principle unto man was wise, just and true, possessed both the best of attributes and good sense and knowledge, I felt he was consistent with both love, mercy, justice and judgment, and I felt to love the Lord more than ever before in my life.

I never was satisfied with the doctrine taught by the sectarian world upon this subject in my life, and hence I felt to say hallelujah when the revelation came forth revealing to us baptism for the dead. I felt that we had a right to rejoice in the blessings of Heaven. I felt when I first learned of the justice of God in relation to his rewarding all men according to their deeds, that such a God was reasonable, and I felt I could worship such a God, and I was just so when I heard of baptism for the dead.

There are thousands and millions who never had the privilege of being baptised for themselves and hence never ought to be punished for not obeying a law which they never heard. How did we feel when we first heard the living could be baptised for the dead? We all went to work at it as fast as we had an opportunity, and were baptised for every body we could think of without respect to sex.

I went and was baptised for all my friends, grandmothers and aunts as well as those of the male sex, but how was it? Why by and bye it was revealed through the servants of the Lord that females should be baptised for females, and males for males, but the full particulars of this order was not revealed till after the days of Joseph, therefore this shows an advance in the building up of the kingdom, the gathering of Israel and the warning of the nations of the earth.

You will see an advance in a great many things, for the Lord will open the mind of br. Brigham and lead him into many principles that pertain to the salvation of this people, and we cannot close up our minds and say that we will go so far and no farther; this we cannot do without jeopardising our standing before God.

With regard to crossing the path of any man who may be appointed to lead us, I will say we never should do it, and I do not care what our feelings and views may be upon the subject as far as our traditions and education is concerned.

If God has anything to reveal, he will reveal it to that man who stands at the head. Now here is the quorum of the Twelve Apostles; we cannot bring forth a new revelation for the guidance of this people while the First Presidency are here, for there is no other plan, no other system by which to guide and govern men in this kingdom, only that which has been established by the revelations of God in the order of His church and kingdom, and that is for the head to lead, counsel and govern in all dispensations in which the will of God is revealed to man.

I wish to say a few words to the missionaries, to those who are going abroad to preach the gospel of Christ. I want to give you a word of exhortation and counsel, brethren, that is whenever you are in doubt about any duty or work which you have to perform never proceed to do any thing until you go and labor in prayer and get the Holy Spirit, wherever the Spirit dictates you to go or to do, that will be right, and by following its dictates you will come out right.

We shall be brought to many places during our career in the ministry among the nations of the earth, where we may consider a certain course of procedure to be right, but if we do not know it will be better for us to go before the Lord, and ask in faith that we may be instructed in the way of life.

I will take the liberty of saying that it is your privilege brethren to get the mind and will of the Lord in relation to your duties while abroad among the people, and it is also the privilege of the whole people who are called Israel to obtain the revelations of the Holy Spirit to guide them in every duty in life, whatever position a man may stand in it is his privilege as a Saint of God to enjoy this blessing, and a man who understands himself will not move without the operations of that Spirit to lead him.

Brethren, as the order of the day is short sermons, I will not detain you longer, but I will say

that I am happy to be with you, and my soul does rejoice in the things of God, for I feel that I have been fed in my mind not only to-day but yesterday and all through the conference, and I do feel that we of all men have the greatest reason to rejoice. For the Lord has committed unto our Hands the gospel of Jesus Christ, the way of life and salvation, we can walk into this Tabernacle and our places of worship and sing and pray and preach and praise the Lord with none to molest us.

We can plant and build and eat and inherit those things which God has given us in peace and quietness, for these things we should feel thankful and feel in our hearts to acknowledge the hand of God therein.

The truths and revelations which have been made known unto this people, for their salvation and exaltation and glory and for the salvation of all men both the living and the dead are of great value and worth unto us and unto all men if they would receive them; we are the only people to whom this holy gospel, priesthood and covenants have been committed in our day, and we shall be held responsible for the use we make of it.

Then we should be diligent and faithful in offering this great salvation unto the children of men, and in building up Zion, and the kingdom of our God, we should also be careful to strictly obey the voice of our Heavenly Father and the voice and counsel of his servants who are set to lead us: which may the Lord enable us to do, which I ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

## REMARKS

By Elder Charles H. Bassett, Bowery, G. S. L. City, May 10, 1857.

[REPORTED BY LEO HAWKINS.]

Brethren and sisters, it is a pleasure to me to have the privilege of addressing you from this stand. It has been a pleasure to me this morning to listen to the interesting and eloquent discourse of br. Mills. It is a pleasure to me at all times, to hear the principles of our holy religion dwelt upon by the Elders of Israel; and, although I am but a very indifferent speaker myself, yet I believe it to be a fact that the Elders of Israel who live their religion should have continually sufficient of the Holy Spirit in their hearts to indite some few remarks that may be interesting to our brethren and sisters.

The principles of our holy religion are near and dear unto me; there are no other principles under heaven that give me joy and satisfaction but those principles which are connected with the great plan of salvation, as has been revealed in these last days; all of my hopes and desires are based upon, and connected with the principles of the gospel of salvation. The joyful anticipation of a glorious resurrection and exaltation, surely ought to inspire every heart; and it is my constant study, and my constant theme to order my life and direct my energies in such a way, that I may secure unto myself the smiles and approbation of my Heavenly Father. It is my continual aim to carry out the counsels and requirements of the servants of the Lord who are placed here to carry out his purposes in establishing his kingdom.

I am thankful, my brethren and sisters, that I am a Latter Day Saint, and that 'Mormonism' took hold of me before I became thoroughly trained in the traditions of the world. I am thankful that my mind was unbiassed at the time I heard the principles of the Everlasting Gospel and that I had a heart willing to obey its requirements, and I am more thankful that I have had the privilege of being gathered with the Saints of the Most High in these valleys.

Ever since I first obeyed the gospel I have had a constant desire to be with the body of the Church, and not quartered in the world, among the wicked and ungodly, and this has been my happy privilege; yet I am confident that I do not to-day fully appreciate the great blessings I have derived from being so closely associated with the servants of the Most High God.

I am aware that very many who have embraced this religion, been baptised for the remission of their sins, have faltered. In my acquaintance with the Latter Day Saints I have observed that different principles and different ideas have been in the hearts of the Saints when they have obeyed this gospel. I know that very many have obeyed the truth because they feared to do otherwise. I have known several to embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ for fear they would displease God and bring condemnation upon themselves. I have known some to be baptised for the remission of their sins when they had their doubts as to the truth of 'Mormonism,' and those doubts have remained to the present day: some have embraced 'Mormonism' with the secret hope that it was not true.

For my own part, I believed it was true and would not have it any other way. I saw beauty and order in it, and something that would bring me substantial enjoyment; and I thank my Father that I am able to bear this testimony to-day, that 'Mormonism' is true, and it has brought me all the blessings which were promised me when I embraced it.

I recollect very well when I first embraced the gospel, that there was a family in the neighborhood who became very much concerned in relation to 'Mormonism,' as it was called, which was then being preached in that region. They were afraid it was true; they were afraid they would be convinced of its truth, and that it would seriously interfere with their long established notions and convictions, and perhaps it would take them from their homesteads and bring upon them reproach and persecution. They could not bring their minds to consent to go into the waters of baptism, yet they hardly dared to reject what seemed to be the voice of truth. One time the old gentleman went into the woods and asked the Lord if 'Mormonism' was true; and after an absence of a few minutes he returned and said, "wife, 'Mormonism'

is true;" "Oh dear," said she, "I was so afraid it was."

Some who embraced 'Mormonism' under those circumstances, I believe, are those who are now leaving our midst. I cannot for a moment believe, my brethren and sisters, that individuals who have been firmly rooted in the gospel, and lived according to the requirements of the same will now forsake it and go from the midst of the Saints.

I observed on one occasion, before a congregation in this city that I believe that the individual that went forth from the Saints saying unto his brethren and sisters that he believed 'Mormonism' was true, but that he could not live in the valleys was as deceitful as the devil; but those that came out frankly and said they had lost their faith in 'Mormonism,' I had reason to believe they were less criminal in their intentions, and in their going forth from among this people. There is a great variety of causes that lead to apostasy among the Saints of the Lord; yet as I before intimated I do not believe that those who embrace the gospel for the love of the truth, and because they glory in it, and the principles of salvation and eternal happiness which it promises beyond the grave, will ever apostatize; such individuals I do not believe will ever depart from the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ; it is only those who have embraced 'Mormonism' with fears and have cherished those fears from the day of their baptism up to the present time, and when the reins of government, or justice and equity are drawn round us they begin to feel that their freedom is curtailed, and their privileges trampled upon, and thus they are constrained to go forth to mingle with the beggarly elements of the world, where they ought to have remained.

I do not intend to judge my brethren and sisters unkindly, by if my views are not correct they can easily be corrected, and I shall be quite satisfied.

I mean to live the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ better and better than I ever have done, and I mean to live nearer and nearer unto my God than I ever have done since I have been a Latter Day Saint, and in this way I hope to secure enough of the power of God, to be an eternal barrier against apostasy.

My prayer is to-day, my brethren and sisters, that the smiles and approbation of our Father in Heaven may rest down upon us, that we may be kept from apostasy, sin and temptation, that we may learn to live our religion and keep the commandments of God and be saved in His presence, which I ask in the name of Jesus Christ:—Amen.

## DISCOURSE

By Elder Jacob Gates, Bowery, Sunday Afternoon, May 3, 1857.

[REPORTED BY J. V. LONG.]

I am glad to have the privilege of speaking upon those principles that pertain to our holy religion, and that apply to us as a people. I rejoice in the prospects that lie before us in the kingdom of God, and I feel that there never was a people who had greater reason to rejoice than the people who have assembled together in these valleys of the mountains.

The blessings of the Lord our God seem to be extensively spread before us and to invite our attention and due consideration; to me it seems that all we have to do is to live for the blessings that are in store for the faithful, and live so as to merit those that are daily being bestowed upon us.

The work of reformation has commenced among us, and I hope it will never cease its operations and effects until we are sanctified before the Lord, perfected in his wisdom and knowledge, clothed with his power and enjoy the blessings that we have already received from his hands, and until we receive even a fulness. Although many of us have been in the Church for many years, and sat under the instructions of the Prophet and Apostles of the Most High, yet notwithstanding this we sunk into a state of lethargy and drowsiness, but within the last few months we have been roused by the voice of his servants to the work of reformation and improvement.

Does not the Lord remember us? We clearly see that he does and he has interposed in time to save us. We undoubtedly feel more or less the effects of the power of the adversary; doubtless feel the effects of the late adversity, and our common enemy is lurking in the path desiring to meet us at every corner we turn.

I believe if ever there was a time when the Saints of God really needed to be watchful, prayerful and careful, it is at the present time. We have learned much from the instructions which have been given, and there is yet much to learn. We may still have our faults, our weaknesses and follies, but in my reflections, taking myself into the account, viewing things as they pass before me, I have concluded that we are yet far, very far from being perfect; far from being one in Christ Jesus.

We have but little of the knowledge of God as yet, we have just a little foretaste of the things of the future, but that foretaste of things to come should prompt us to diligence and faithfulness. We may say that we are almost full of the intelligence of heaven, but yet that intelligence only benefits us to a very limited extent, and therefore we do not have the knowledge of God as we might have if we were to carry into practice the principles, revelations and instructions that have been poured out upon us; but at present we are short of being what we should be, and what we must be in order to enjoy the blessings which God intends to bestow upon his people.

He says except we are one we are not his. I will ask the question, can we say that we are really one, that we are one in Christ Jesus, one in faith, one in hope and one in interest? And does that feeling of oneness affect us in a manner so that we can daily come together in the unity of the Spirit and maintain confidence towards