Part 2 DESERET EVENING NEWS. 9 to 12

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

SATURDAY, JULY 22, 1893. SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BY

ELDER CHARLES W. PENROSE,

at the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday afternoon, June 25th, 1893.

[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

I am pleased to see so many people gathered in this house today to worship the Lord our God. While many are seeking pleasure in different directions, it is gratifying to think that so many of the Saints have regard for the day which has been set apart for rest and for the worship of God, and are gathered in this Tabernacle to partake of the Sacrament, and to manifest their faith in the Gospel by their presence and their veneration of this day, which has been held sacred by the worshippers of the true and living God for many hundreds of years. It may be said, however, that for several centuries the seventh day was regarded as the Sabbath. This is the first day of the week. I do not know that it matters so much which day is observed so that we keep a sabbath—one day out of seven—as a day of rest and of worship. That is the spirit of the matter, and it is the spirit that "giveth life" the letter, we are told, "killeth."

I had no expectation whatever of addressing you; in fact, I had invited some others to speak this afternoon; but received a request from those whom we all respect that I should address the congregation. I have no subject prepared, have nothing outlined in my mind to speak to you about; but, responding to this request, I ask you to help me by your attention and your faith and prayers, that I may be inspired by the Holy Spirit to bring forth something which will be profitable for us to reflect upon. As I said to you just now, the Spirit is the life. It is the Spirit that gives life to all animated things. Without it there would be no life. And it is the same in natural things as it is in spiritual things. We need the Holy Spirit this afternoon to quicken our understanding and to enable us to comprehend the things of God. No man knoweth them, we are told in the Scriptures, but the Spirit of God, and that Spirit "searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." It is the Spirit which enlightens as well as gives life, and we need it this afternoon in our worship, because we are told that "God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

As to the day, however, when the people should assemble specially to worship God, we Latter-day Saints are much left in my view to the revelations given to us in the age in which we live that the first day of the week—Sunday—is the day on which we should assemble and offer up our sacraments before Him and pay our vows to the Most High; "And on this day thou shalt do no other thing, only let thy food be prepared in singleness of heart, that thy fasting may be perfect, or, in other words, that thy joy may be full." He has told us that if we will keep this day and make it holy unto Him, and also observe the other commandments which He has given unto us, the good things of the earth shall be ours, as well as the blessings of heaven. Let us remember this, my brethren and sisters, and always observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy; and as God has set apart the first day of the week for the Latter-day Saints to observe as a Sabbath, let us observe it in the spirit of it, and we shall receive the blessing which pertains to the observance of that day; for all the blessings of God are promised upon certain laws, and he who keeps the law receives the blessing, and he who breaks the law receives not the blessing, but is liable to the penalty which attaches to every law that God gives. We do not, however, wish to observe the Sabbath after the pharisaical order. God does not desire to bring us into bondage. He has not told us that we may not smile on the Sabbath day, nor even laugh, if there be something to laugh at. It is proper to sing, if we sing proper songs. If there are any songs that might not be termed spiritual exactly, if they are pure and contain good sentiment, and are enlightening to the mind and sweetening to the heart, they are all right. There is a time and place for everything. In our meetings of worship we should join in the hymn, in the psalm, and in the spiritual song, as well as in the prayer, and partake of the sacrament, and rejoice before the Lord. And we should not be with a mournful countenance, but with a joyful heart and a glad countenance; for God delights in this. This idea of mourning, and sorrow, and a long face as a part of religion is all wrong. It never was a part of the religion of Jesus Christ, but is an invention of man.

In connection with the idea that came to my mind when I arose to speak to you, that the letter killeth and the spirit giveth life, I will read to you a passage of Scripture from the second epistle of Paul to Timothy, 3rd chapter, 15-17 verses:

"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

"That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

I read this to you this afternoon because my mind was turned to a topic of public discussion in the day in which we live, and one which has caused the expulsion of some eminent preachers of various denominations from the societies to which they belonged. The idea embodied in the creeds of the various orthodox denominations is that the Bible, containing the Old and New Testament, as translated in the time of King James, contains the very word of God, that all the books in the Bible are inspired books; that all the chapters in each of those Books are inspired chapters; that all the verses are inspired, and that all the words are inspired, and some go so far as to say that every letter is inspired. That is the old idea that is contained in a number of the creeds as they now exist in written form. This idea is still entertained—that is, it is said to be entertained, and I suppose we must give credit for sincerity to those who utter it, although it is rather hard to believe by a great many men who are learned, eloquent, and have the understanding of the Scriptures after the manner of men, and educated to deliver their ideas to the public, and they wield a great influence in what is called Christendom. They say they believe that this book, and all the verses in it, and all the expressions in those verses, are inspired of God—the very words of the Almighty. When pressed to a very close point on this, some of them will admit, however, that what we have is simply a human translation of the words that men wrote when they were inspired of God. They go back to the idea that the original Scriptures were inspired; that those things that were written by the prophets, the translation of which we have in this book, were the very words of God, the same as though God had spoken them Himself to the people, and that they have been handed down to us and translated for our benefit into the English language. But these gentlemen I have been speaking about, some of whom have been excommunicated from their churches, and others about to a state of suspension, say they do not believe that the Bible is literally the word of God. They do believe that holy men of old were inspired; they do believe that some of their words have been handed down to us in their original purity; but they believe that those men were but men, and that they wrote in the land of their nativity, although they were assisted by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost. They think, too, that a great many interpolations have been made, and that a great many things have been omitted from the ancient books. They think that some books were not altogether written by inspiration, but men wrote them according to the best knowledge and understanding that they had. And while they endeavor to cling as closely as they can, in order to be orthodox, to the old ideas of the creeds, yet they show by their expressions that they discard that idea, or, as they say, they have grown out of it; their minds have expanded; they are not tied down by the rules, ceremonies and ordinances of their church; but they have seen fit to think for themselves, apart from their creeds, and they have formed more advanced ideas.

Now, what do the Latter-day Saints hold in regard to the Scriptures? As far as the text that I have just read to you is concerned, they understand it as it is written. The Apostle Paul, writing to Timothy, said that "From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." That is taken as evidence by some of our learned Christian friends that this Bible is inspired, because it goes on to say "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable," etc. But let us look into this text a little. When Timothy was a child, what scriptures did he have? He certainly did not have the New Testament—it was not written. He certainly did not have this book that is called the Bible, for it was not compiled; in fact, the Bible was not compiled until centuries after Timothy was dead. Therefore, he could not have had the Bible in its present form, and the scripture with which he was acquainted when a child was not that which is called the Bible, the holy scriptures. What did he have? We read, "Timothy, with the rest of the people who believed in the Old Testament scriptures among the Jews, had the law and the writings of the prophets. They had some books that we do not have. We also believe in those books, those that we do have. He certainly did not have the New Testament. He did not have the four gospels, as they are called, nor the epistles that the Apostles wrote to the churches. He had the writings of the prophets, and that Paul wrote to him; but when he was a child he did not have any of the New Testament, and he may not have had some of the books that we call the Old Testament.

The saying of the Apostle Paul to Timothy, then, has no particular bearing upon the question of the authenticity of the scriptures we have in them, nor as to the value of the scriptures as an inerring guide. It is written here, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." But you will find the word "is" in italics. What does that signify? It signifies that the translators, when translating the New Testament, interjected that word to make sense, as they understood it. It is not claimed that the men who translated the Old and New Testaments to the time of King James were inspired men. They were learned men, experienced men, educated men, and no doubt they did the best they could and gave to the work committed to them the benefit of their erudition, their experience and their research. In some instances, in the passages that would not make exact sense as they read them in the original, and therefore they interpolated some words, which are placed in italics in this translation. Suppose we read this passage which Paul wrote to Timothy, "scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Don't you think that would make a good deal better sense? It seems to me that it would. What did he mean by, "scripture given by inspiration of God?" Did he mean that the scriptures we have in this book were given by inspiration which is given by inspiration of God to which also. When you say that *all* scripture is given by inspiration of God you say something that is not true; for scripture means anything that is written, and there are a great many things written that are not written by inspiration of God. But all scripture that is given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, no matter where it is given or by whom it is given, so long as it comes from God through the channel that He has appointed. When God reveals anything to mankind, and it is written, that is holy scripture, and it is profitable, more particularly to those to whom it is specially given. There are many things contained in the Bible which were originally written for the people who lived at the time they were given. They are profitable to us, although we live under different circumstances and conditions, that we may read what God gave to people in former times, and also that, so far as they are adapted to us, we may apply them in our lives and profit by them. Even after all we are more particularly interested in that which God has for us, and our minds should be directed to the Lord to obtain that which is for our guidance, for our profit, for our edification. It will be to have those things that God revealed to ancient times, and if anything therein is applicable to all people, in all generations, among all races and under all circumstances, why, then they are very valuable to us. And so the Bible has been handed down to us in those times, and it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.

But to go back to the idea in regard to the authenticity of these scriptures. Are all the books that are contained in the Bible written by inspiration of God? The book itself does not claim it any where that I can find. In fact, as I told you, this book is a compilation of books made hundreds of years after the inspired Apostles and Prophets, whose writings are contained therein, were gone from the stage of action, and some things that the holy Prophets wrote were thrown away at first, and are not to be found in this compilation. What proof have we that all the books contained in this record were inspired of God? Why, someone will say, did not Jesus say, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me?" Yes, He did. But let us look at that. This is one of the texts quoted by those who claim special and verbal inspiration for the Bible. Now, what scriptures did Jesus refer to? He could not refer to the New Testament—not a line of it was written when Jesus uttered that memorable saying, "Search the scriptures." What scriptures? Why the scriptures they had, not the scriptures they had not. What were those scriptures? Did He mean that the book of Chronicles is scripture? Did He mean the book of Joshua was scripture? He did not say so. Did He mean that the book of Kings or the book of Esther was scripture? He said, "They are they which testify of me." Now, you turn over the pages of the Old Testament and find out the books contained therein which testify of Jesus—which foreseadow His coming, which predict His appearance, which tell of the works He will do, which speak of the plan of redemption, which refer to Him in any way; they are the scriptures that He referred to. He did not say that they had eternal life in them. But He found that the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Scribes and the rest of the sects were in the same condition that people are in today—worshipping the word, bowing down before the letter, and he said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of Me," and "I am the way, the truth, and the life"—not the dead word, not scripture, not anything that is written; not a book that can be burned in the fire, but the living Christ. "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me." So Jesus Christ was not a scripture worshipper, and the very words that are quoted by those who worship the Bible—the bibliolaters—go right against their theory. The Old Testament contains a number of books which speak of the Messiah. They are valuable to us. They point out His coming; not only His first coming, when He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, but His second coming, in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, as the King of kings and Lord of lords. They speak of Him being led, as I say, like a lamb to the slaughter, and "as a sheep before its shearers was dumb so opened He not His mouth;" but they also speak of His coming and placing His feet upon the Mount of Olives and its dividing in the midst thereof. They speak of Him as coming as a meek and lowly person, and also as the Great I Am, to sit upon the throne of His father David and reign as king of all the earth. These, I say, are valuable books, and all the books contained in the Old Testament are valuable to us who live in these times; but it does not follow that every word that they contain is the very word of God. Take some parts of the book of Chronicles and they will not compare with what we read in the book of Kings; there is contradiction in minor things. So in regard to other books. If we take just the letter of the Old Testament we find a great many things that are false. I might quote a number of them if there were time. I will quote one in the book of Isaiah. It speaks about a great battle that was fought, and says:

> Then the angel of the Lord went forth and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand; and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.—Chap. 37, v. 36.

There is some mistake there in the writing. God does not make mistakes.

In the third chapter of the book of Genesis we read that Adam and Eve "heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." Well, voices do not walk. There is a verbal mistake.

In Genesis we read that "God did tempt Abraham," while in the New Testament (James iii) it says God tempteth no man. How do we account for this? Infidels bring such passages forth as proof that the Bible is not the word of God; and it is not the word of God in the sense that people try to make it appear. The Bible itself does not claim any such thing.

There is a great dispute as to whether Moses wrote the Pentateuch—the "five books of Moses," as they are called. What is the reason of so much contention? We say, in the first place, that Moses wrote the books. How do we know? Because the Lord has said so. He has said unto Moses that He inspired Moses to write these books. But years after the time of Moses—in the time of Ezra—these books were revised; and there may have been other revisions; and the books as they have been handed down to us are not just as they were originally written. For instance, in the last chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy we read:

> So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.

Do you think God revealing that? I am satisfied He did not. The person who revised these books added that by way of explanation. How do they know he died, or how do they know the Lord buried him? They simply learned that Moses went out in the mount of the people of old and took what became of him; so they supposed he died and that the Lord buried him, because nobody else had done so. "No man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." No wonder, because he did not have any sepulchre. According to what we have learned, he was treated the same as Elijah was; not taken up in a chariot of fire perhaps, but translated, quickened by the power of God, that he might remain as a witness of the Lord until the last day. He appeared with Elijah to Jesus on the mount of transfiguration. It is appointed unto all men once to die; but some men have been translated, as it was in the days of Enoch, and they will like others pass through the great change. I just refer to this to show you that Moses could not have written that, although it is recorded in one of those books that were written by Moses—the Bible book, called Deuteronomy.

I might quote a number of passages from the Bible to show there are mistakes in it. As to the Bible being all the word of God, why, we have the word of the devil there. The devil spoke to Eve and we have his words. We have the words of an ass, spoken to Balaam. We have the words of wicked men and women. We have words of no inspiration at all, as well as words that were inspired of God. If you will examine this matter for yourselves, you will find that what I am telling you is the state of truth.

It is no use for men to be bound up with creeds if the creeds are not true. I believe in being bound by a creed if that creed is the word of the Lord and it is one as free as the law of emancipation. It is good to have rules and regulations and fundamental principles, in which we can apply as a standard of truth, and to which we can bring other things to test them, to find if they are true. There are fundamental principles in all sciences; and when anything is contradictory to those fundamental principles, the scientist knows it is erroneous. So it should be, and is, in true religion. There are fundamental principles, and we can bring other truths to them, and if they harmonize with them, then they are right; if they do not, then there is something wrong about them. But the Bible is not such a standard. Yet it is the only standard that Christendom claims today. The only standard that the various sects have is the written word—the letter which killeth. Books which they claim were written by inspiration, every word of them the word of God, as I have shown to you, contain the word of the devil, the word of wicked men, the word of the serpent, as well as some speculations, some ideas that men had, and his notes of things that men wrote. You take the book of Chronicles and the book of Kings, containing histories of the same things, and they do not exactly harmonize. That shows that both books were not written by inspiration of God; perhaps neither of them was. But they are very valuable because we get from them a great deal of information.

The Latter-day Saints were accused in the beginning of this Church of not believing in the Bible; but the people who now compose the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were once perhaps as big Bible-worshippers as any people, but they have learned a little order. The Bible was brought to them by the Elders of this Church to prove the truth of the doctrine which was preached to them. It was not claimed that these doctrines were taken out of the Bible; it was claimed that God had revealed them; but they were referred to the Bible to prove that these principles were true, and that they were the same principles that were believed in and obeyed by the people of old who were Christians. Therefore, the claim that the people of the Church did not believe the Bible was not true. In latter times it has been claimed that they believed too much of the Bible. That is what Harry Pike, a bitcher said. He said: "It is a mistake to suppose that these Mormons out in Utah are not Bible believers; they believe in it like thunder." That was his remark. The fault that he found was that we believed in it too much. We do believe in the Bible. We believe that holy men of old wrote as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. We believe that what they wrote was scripture. We believe that it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness; and we believe that these things are able to make people wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, just as it was with Timothy. Timothy could not be saved by simply believing in the Bible; but the scriptures which he had when a child bore witness of the Messiah, pointed to the time when Christ should come; and because of the wisdom that he gained from them they were able to make him wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus, and by his faith in Jesus Christ he obtained a knowledge of what was essential to salvation, and by obedience to that he could be saved. But he could not be saved by the dead letter or by reading a book. Some people are so full of idolatry about the book that they think if they only read the Bible with a long face on a Sunday they are sure to be saved; and if they carry one, particularly if it is a large one, so as to bump out a pocket handkerchief, to show their reverence for it, they are in the way to be saved. They sometimes sing:

> Holy Bible, book divine,
> Precious treasure, thou art mine—

Mine to carry in a pocket-handkerchief.

The Latter-day Saints believe in the teachings of the Bible; but they do not worship it. They believe that there is a means whereby people may be brought into possession of the same spirit by which the prophets were moved who wrote those things contained in the Bible. That is what gives life and light. That is the power of God unto salvation; not a dead letter. They believe that by reading the scriptures they can find out something in regard to that. We can read of the operations of this Spirit upon the holy men of old who wrote as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. We can read about the operations of the Spirit as it existed in the Christian Church, through reading the writings of the New Testament, which Timothy did not have when he was a child. We are more favored than he was. By reading the Old and New Testaments we learn something of the dealings of God with men hundreds of years ago, and we also read that God is the same "yesterday, to-day and forever," that He is "no respecter of persons," and therefore we come to the conclusion that today people may obtain the same gifts, blessings, inspiration and communion with God that the ancients had, because God is always the same. We can learn of that from the Bible. But we also learn from one of the writings of the ancient Apostles that there is something more than this mere letter to which we should be opened upon for guidance and direction. The Apostle Peter, in speaking to the Saints on this subject, said:

> 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.
>
> Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.
>
> For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.—II Peter, I chap. 19-21.

Peter had reverence for the words that were spoken by holy men of God as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost, and he wanted the people to understand in his day that they had no right to attach private interpretations to the words of these prophets. That has been the mistake in the ages that have intervened since darkness came on the earth—since the death of the Apostles. Private interpretations have been put upon these sayings, and people have gone astray, and they have divided, quarrelled and fought, and dissected the earth with blood, because of their private interpretations of these sayings of the old prophets. But mark the words of Peter: "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." Now, what did he refer to? Why, he referred to the same spirit. He was talking to them about the living oracles they had in their midst. Apostles that Christ had set in the church for a guide. Christ never told the church that He gave them a book for a guide. He gave them living men, inspired by the same spirit that the men had who wrote the old scriptures; Apostles that He had called and ordained and sent among them, clothed with the power of God, filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spoke by the Holy Ghost. They also wrote some things by the Holy Ghost, and they were for the good of the people to whom they were written, and for our profit, so many of them as we have; a great many of them are lost. But, says Peter, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy." What is it? Why, the spirit that is like a light shining in a dark place—the light of the Lord, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the spirit of truth, which guides into all truth, and which takes of the things of the Father and shows them unto His children. That is the more sure word of prophecy. That is the spirit which giveth life, while this book is the dead letter that killeth, if we have nothing else, because we contend over its meaning and do not comprehend its teachings. That is what the Apostle Peter referred to, and what all people on the face of the earth need, if they want to understand the things of God they must have the Spirit of God, the light of God, and therein discover the things of God pertaining to us. The Bible is all right. We venerate it. The Lord has told us that we should do so, and remember the former holy scriptures, as well as the latter day scriptures that He has given to us.

We believe in the writings of the Apostles; but we look upon them in the light in which they exist. They have been handed down to us through men that were not inspired. They have been translated by men according to their understanding. We have not a single document containing the original scriptures. We have not one of the Hebrew writings of the old prophets. We have not one of the New Testament writings of the Apostles. They are not in existence, or, if they are, nobody knows where they are. The books which were used in the translation of the Bible were not the original writings; they were copies, and there were a great number of different copies, and they contributed one with another in a great many important particulars. We want to look at these things as they are, and not have our eyes blinded. We do not want to worship books, but we want to believe in them for all the good they can give. We love the Bible to be the most valuable book in the world. I do not think there is any book more valuable and to them made by inspired men and Foreign Bible societies, which have printed books by the million and sent them abroad in different languages among the nations of the earth. It is a grand book. It is beautiful in its composition, the most of it. There are chapters in it. There are some things that are childish; some things that there is no need for or to pin our faith to at all; but those things that relate to God, to Jesus Christ, to our salvation, to our moral conduct, and that are given to us in this book are very essential. We need the Bible as we have it. There are thousands of them in the Bible, and if we can only get the same spirit in our hearts that the Prophets and Apostles had who wrote those things, then we can comprehend them and begin to feel the spirit of them and get their full value.

This is the great need of the people in this century. That is what these men need who meet in their synods and conventions, when they exclaim against those who are standing up for that which they believe to be right. I do not know but they are perfectly justified in it, though. When a man professes to be a minister of any religious denomination and voluntarily takes the articles, thirty-nine or any other number, and with uplifted hand to heaven, or by writing his name, subscribes to that creed and says he believes it, and promises to be a true and faithful minister of that creed, if he then preaches something contrary to it, he should either go out of that church and preach as an independent preacher, or in some denomination with which he does harmonize, or he should be cut off that church, unless the church likes to remodel its creed in harmony with that which he believes. But while that creed remains as the doctrine of the church, he has no business in that church as its minister and he should go out of it like a man. So I have no respect for men who act as some of them have acted, and I have no sympathy for them as martyrs. People are not burned at the stake nowadays; people are not tied to the wheel; they are not stretched on the rack; they do not have thumbscrews applied to them; nor are they thrust into dungeons if they dissent from the creeds of the times. So these gentlemen who quibble over what they believe to be right about the Bible have a perfect right to do so, but not as representatives of a religion that they do not believe. Let them go out into men and preach their doctrines where they are not people to hear them.

But it would be a good thing if all those creeds could be revised in harmony with these scriptures; for strange to say, though these people in themselves right down in the written word, and say that the Bible contains the very word of God, yet you read it to them and they will not hearken to your words and they will not order their lives in accordance with the book. Let me refer to a little scripture. There was a man by the name of Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night. He was afraid to come in the daytime, because the religion of Christ was unpopular. Here was a man that had read the old scriptures and he came to Jesus to be instructed. What did Jesus say to him?

> Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

They will believe that. What else did He say? Nicodemus was startled, he took the words of Christ literally, and he said, "How can a man be born when he is old?" Jesus said:

> Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."—John, 3rd c., 5th v.

That is Jesus Christ's statement, and it is in the New Testament. It is what they call the word of God. We tell them that this is one of the doctrines of Christ, that a man must be born of water as well as of the spirit. Well, they say it is not in the Bible that will turn away at once. They do not believe there is any need of the birth of the water. They say it is the mere form, a mere ceremony, an old, antiquated custom; and of other thing, it is good enough, if you believe in baptism, to have a little water sprinkled on you. That is what they say. These very ministers who have been suspending men from the ministry because they say the Bible does not contain in every respect the very word of God say you may take a little infant and sprinkle a little water upon it and call it baptism. Can they find that in the New Testament? No, they cannot. In the first place, this has to be a flow of water. Is there any similitude of truth in sprinkling a little water or pouring a little on the head of a baby, or making the sign of the cross? Not a bit. But you take a person down into the water, as Jesus was taken into Jordan, and immerse that person; bury him in the water and raise him up from the water into life, there is a flow of a new life. That person is buried from the old life, and comes out of the women of the waters to the air and breathes a new life.

The Spirit of God is then given, and the birth of Christ is applied. As in the first birth we come into the world by water, by blood, and by spirit, and are made a living soul, so by the second birth—the birth of water and spirit and the blood of Christ—we are regenerated and started on a new life, we are born again of Jesus Christ, born again; born of the water and of the Spirit, that we may inherit eternal life. Jesus commanded His apostles:

> Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
>
> Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. Matt. xxviii, 19.

And they went out and preached and baptized, and in the Acts of the Apostles we have a history of what they did. We find that whenever the baptized people they immersed them. Paul says:

> We are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
>
> For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Rom. vi, 3, 5.

Buried first from the old life, born afterwards to a new life, buried by water and born by coming forth out of the water. You go and teach that to some of these reverend gentlemen who get their faith in the Bible and bear down to it as it is were a deity, and they will not believe it.

We read where Christ told His disciples to lay hands upon people to confer upon them the Holy Ghost, and they did so. We read about it in the Acts of the Apostles. On the day of Pentecost, in the very first sermon preached after the apostles were endowed and inspired by the Holy Ghost, they said:

> Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts ii, 37-38.

They exhorted the people and laid their hands upon them for the bestowal of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost was a revelator to them; it was light, it was life; it brought them into communion with the Father, and made them sons. They were all baptized into one body, whether they were Jew or Gentile, bond or free, we all were made to drink into one spirit. They were joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment, because they had the same spirit. They met and have to quarrel over the letter of what they read.

We read in this same New Testament that the Lord placed in the Church apostles and prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints. Not a book, not a collection of books, but apostles and prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, "for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man." That is how Christ's church was organized. You go to these same reverend gentlemen that worship the Bible and read to them out of the 4th chapter of Ephesians and the 12th chapter of I Corinthians, and what will they say? "Oh, well, we don't need any apostles nowadays. We have so many enlightened men that we don't want any apostles or prophets; and we have got the Bible, so we don't need any revelation." Yes, they have so many enlightened men who can quarrel over a passage of scripture and resort to technicalities, and they can turn to them. That is all they have, and the book is their standard. But what was the standard in the Church that Christ set up? Another living men clothed with power and authority, men filled with the Holy Ghost, who received their information direct from the fountain of light, and who could bear to the old scriptures and explain them if necessary, who were the fountain of scripture themselves, so that if every book written by holy men of God in ancient times was burned, these men could bring forth the words of God to the people in their time, by the Holy Ghost, which gives life, and not by the letter that killeth. You see, these gentlemen about this organization of the Church, and they what they do and what they do not believe. Do they believe that which they worship? No, they do not. I do not wish to say anything harsh about anybody; but that is the truth of it. They worship the book, and then do not believe it.

In the writings of the Apostles to the Christians, we read of "Desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy." Reverend gentlemen, do you believe that? Do you teach that to your congregations? Is it right to prophesy? Should people desire spiritual gifts? Should they seek to prophesy? "Yes, say these things are all done away. You are in darkness. You don't understand these things; we do. We have been to college, and have been trained to comprehend these matters, and we do not need any prophesying nowadays. The people who pretend to be prophets are all impostors." That is what these gentlemen say, and yet the Apostle Paul says: "Covet earnestly the best gifts;" and "Desire spiritual gifts, but rather that we may prophesy." And he tells us that the fruits of the Spirit are not only joy, love, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, and charity; but says he, "to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." 1 Cor. xii, 8-12.

Then he goes on to say that all these form a part of the body of Christ—His Church—and further along says: "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondary prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." All these are a part of the Church of Christ. Well, if they are, where is the Church now? Where are the signs of its existence? Where are the apostles to stand first in the Church? Where are the prophets to bring forth the word of God to the people who now live, that they may not be dissenting upon what we read thousands of years ago or somebody else? Where are the evangelists, the pastors, the teachers, to perfect the Saints and to bring them to the unity of the faith, to the knowledge of the Son of God, "that they henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine?" That is what they were placed in the early church for. Where are they now? They are gone; and men have built up churches; men have made creeds; men have put their private interpretations upon the sayings of the old Prophets; men have set up this Bible—this dead letter—as a deity for people to fall down and worship. The result is, they are in the dark; their lives have not profit them, nor all their training and study till their hair has turned grey or fallen out and fell them bald. Why? Because the letter killeth, and the Spirit has departed, which giveth life and makes alive. Do they believe in the Holy Spirit? Yes, in a sort of perfunctory fashion; but they don't believe in receiving that Holy Ghost that the prophets had. Does the Holy Ghost reveal the mind of God to day? "Oh no," say they, "that was thousands of years ago." Has the Holy Ghost now? No such manifestations now! God does not speak now! Angels do not come down now! The Holy Ghost is not in us as it was in the prophets and the apostles of old! We have to go by the writings of the old, dead men, written for ages that are dead and buried." It is all nonsense. We who live on the earth in these days are the sons and daughters of the great God as much as those who lived in the days of Isaiah, or in the days of Peter, and we need the word of the Lord today—the living word, the word of God spoken now. Is God dumb? Are the heavens shut up and sealed? Has God changed? Is we not need scripture now to refresh us spiritually, as well as the people who lived in the past times? Are we to chew over the old dry husks they have left, if we are to have the fruits of life, the living word of the Lord today?

Thanks to the Almighty, the heavens have been opened again; the silence of ages has been broken. Our Father has spoken from heaven. Jesus Christ has made himself manifest. Angels have come down from the courts of glory and brought messages of life and salvation. And we have the books also; not only the Bible, but the Book of Mormon—a history of this continent, written by inspired men, translated by an inspired man. But that is a record of the past, the history of another people, the revelations to another people, it harmonizes with the Bible, and also with the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, which contains some of the revelations given through the Prophet Joseph Smith and the Prophet Brigham Young. We have in our midst, above all that, the living oracles—living Apostles, living Prophets; men now inspired of God, who can give us, today, as it is no less,