

THE DESERET NEWS.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY

NO. 9.

GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, WEDNESDAY, MAY 1, 1861.

VOL. XI.

REMARKS

By Pres. HEBER C. KIMBALL, Tabernacle, Saturday morning, April 6, 1861.

[REPORTED BY G. D. WATT.]

I am glad to see you, and the feelings within me are God bless you, peace be multiplied upon the Saints; and those that are not Saints, may they be blessed with that which they love to that degree that they cannot stay in this land. (A voice in the stand, "And I say amen.")

I do respect and love good men and women. It has been natural to me all the days of my life to do this; and the more of the good spirit that dwells in a man, the more that love of those that are good accumulates in him. I often speak by figures, and so did Jesus in his day. He said, "I am the true vine and my father is the husbandman; every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me ye can do nothing."—Again he says: "If a man abide in me, and he is cast forth as a branch that is withered; and men gather them and they are cast into the fire, and they are burned." When a branch withers and dies the avenues of the sap and nourishment from the root is cut off, and the branch is cut off after it ceases to live and draw nourishment from the roots.

No branch is cut off from the tree while it is bearing fruit, and cleaves to the tree. We cleave to the vine by our works of righteousness, and by our works of unrighteousness we become dead, and unfruitful; then it is necessary that the unfruitful branch should be taken away, and another branch that is more fruitful should be grafted in. We should all be one like unto a tree, and receive intelligence from heaven as the tree receives its nourishment from the roots.

My prayer is from time to time, Father, baptize the Presidency into one spirit, and let them partake of the same element; and then Father, baptize the Twelve, and the Seventies, and every officer in the Church and kingdom of God, and also every branch connected to them, that we may all be baptized into one spirit; then we need not fear earth or hell. Br. Wells was speaking of the extension of our settlements, that every inch of ground that is consecrated to God and the use of his Saints is redeemed from the power of Satan. That is verily true; and when the people of our settlements act like one man in all things that are revealed unto them it will truly be so. But I presume brethren you will find many devils in all these places; and they will be there until they are cast into hell with all those that forget God, and turn away from him. It is for us to keep them out of our own bodies, if we do that they will not trouble us much. Resist the devil, and the scripture says, he will flee from you; that is he will stand back a little until he can get a better chance at some future time to make an attack upon you. That is his business, and it is ours to avoid him and keep him far from us. Our calling is to do right, and to teach righteousness and virtue, industry and economy, that we may gain power over the world, over the flesh, and over the devil, and over all that is combined to overthrow this work. Do you think they will overthrow it? They may overthrow many of you, but they will never overthrow this Church while the world stands. But when a man loses that good spirit he looks upon this work as the world look upon it, he sees no beauty in it, he is opposed to it in his heart.

As for the condition of the nation that Br. Wells has been speaking of, we shall never secede from the Constitution of the United States. We shall not stop on the way of progress, but we shall make preparations for future events. The south will secede from the north, and the north will secede from us, and God will make this people free as fast as we are able to bear it. They send their poor miserable creatures here to rule us. Why it would be upon the same principle that this Church and authority should send some poor creature to rule me and my family in my own house. We need good men that are capable of ruling us, and we have them in our midst. Take any man there is here, and I would rather have him come and rule me and this people, than have any of those poor creatures that come here. What do they know? Nothing only to come here, and undertake to lead this people astray and pollute them; they would pollute every one if they had the power, or every one that would yield to them. We have to submit to this and to bear it with patience. But let me tell you, the yoke is now off our neck, and it is on their's and the bow key is in.

The day is not far distant when you will see us as free as the air we breathe, and we will be ruled by those men whom God Almighty appoints. I live above the law, and

I am above them, and mean to keep so by doing right, as the Lord requires us through those who dictate and lead us.

President Young is our leader and has been all the time, since the death of Joseph Smith the Prophet, he can govern this people with his hands in his pockets, and they are not governed one whit by the men that are sent here. I want to tell it, and I want they should know I tell it. We are going to be ruled by our Father in heaven, and the agents he sends and appoints for us from this day henceforth and forever.

Let us all go to work and cultivate the earth beautify and adorn it with trees and shrubs, and plants that never die. Let us preserve and sustain, and make ourselves independent, both for clothing and for food, and also for herds and flocks. And we will be free, and our enemies will not trouble us much more. I am a witness to what the nation has done to the people of the Saints for thirty years past; they have killed some of the best men that ever lived, and the whole nation sanctioned it, thinking they had got rid of the worst men that ever was upon the earth. I know this to be true. They now look upon President Young as they looked upon Joseph Smith, as one of the greatest curses that could come upon the earth. They have driven us, robbed and plundered us, and when we sought for redress they said our cause was just but they could do nothing for us. Let a man come into my house or into yours, and serve us as the United States have served this people, and would there not be a scrambling. We would soon decide whether the cause was just or not. I can do it in a family capacity, but territories and States have not got as much governing power as a man ought to have in his family. I do not wish to say any more at this time. Amen.

REMARKS

By President HEBER C. KIMBALL, Tabernacle, a.m. of April 6, 1861.

[REPORTED BY G. D. WATT.]

We have always had larger congregations on such occasions as this, than we have had buildings to accommodate, and had it not been that I requested the brethren of the city to tarry at home, so as to give room to those who should come from a distance, the house would have been crowded to overflowing and there would have been a large congregation outside. I do not know that, this side of the day of rest that we are looking for, we shall ever have a building large enough to accommodate our congregations. When we have overcome the enemy to righteousness and can have a thousand years to work unmolested, I think that we then can build a room that will contain as many people as can hear the speaker's voice. We have the privilege, it is true, of assembling in the open air, where most of our conferences have been held.

We now enjoy the anniversary of our general conference, the church is thirty one years old to-day. It seems but a short time—but a few days—since there were only six members in this church. It seems but a short time since I desired most fervently to see some one who was a foreigner baptized into this church. I well remember how anxious I was that an English preacher belonging to the Independents, and with whom I was acquainted, should come into the church, that he could go to his native land and preach the gospel there. What were the feelings of the few, thirty-one years ago to-day?

Br. Kimball observed, in his remarks, that he could recollect the history of this church from its beginning, and understood the persecutions against this people. The Book of Mormon was translated near where we then resided, as we might say, in our own neighborhood. It was translated about as far from where Br. Kimball then lived, as it is from here to Little Cottonwood; and where Joseph first discovered the plates was about as far from where I then lived, as it is from here to Provo. Here we would have considered the discoverer of those plates and the translator of the Book of Mormon as one of our neighbors. We are in the habit here of traveling more frequently, and further than we were there. From the time that Joseph had his first revelation, in the neighborhood where Br. Kimball and I then lived, appears but a few days. Since then this people have passed through, experienced, and learned a great deal.

If there is a person in the midst of the Latter Day Saints, one who has named the name of Christ as a Latter Day Saint, that can ask for any more literal testimony than we have, I do not know what he would ask. He might wish to see some person that had power to bring fire down from heaven. Should such a person appear, the exercise of that power would by no means prove that he was a messenger of salvation. Or suppose that I should see a man capable of raising the dead every

hour in a day, could I merely for that believe he was sent of God? No. Some may think it strange, but should I see a man come along here and cast his cane on the floor and it become a serpent and run out of the door, would I any more for that believe that man to be sent of God? No, I would not. Were I to see a person fill the air with living creatures, turn the dust into life, or the river Jordan into blood, do you suppose I would any more for that consider that man sent of God? Not in the least. There is but one witness—one testimony—pertaining to the evidence of the gospel of the Son of God, and that is the Spirit that he diffused among his disciples. Do his will, and we shall know whether he speaks by the authority of the Father or of himself. Do as he commands us to do, and we shall know of the doctrine whether it is of God or not. It is only by the revelations of the Spirit that we can know the things of God.

Suppose that we should see a man capable of raising the dead, and he should say, "consequently I ought to be the leader of the Church—the legitimate heir that God has appointed to perform his work in the last days"—would I for that believe him? No, I have never seen the day, since I arrived at the years of discretion, when it would have made any difference in my feelings. Almost one of the first things I read in the Bible was that Saul in his darkness and unbelief called on the witch of Endor for a revelation, and she had power to raise Samuel from the dead. What proof was that that she was a saint of God? If the people want any more witness than they have, I do not know what they would call for. Seek for the Spirit of truth, and that will bring all things to your remembrance that Jesus spake and performed, all that has been, is, and that which is to come, so far as may be necessary. That is the Spirit by which Joseph spoke.

I am thankful that we live to see this day, and have the privilege of assembling ourselves in these valleys. We are not now mingling in the turmoils of strife, warring and contention—that we would have been obliged to have mingled in, had not the Lord suffered us to have been driven to these mountains—one of the greatest blessings that could have been visited upon us. It has been designed, for many generations, to hide up the Saints in the last days, until the indignation of the Almighty be over. His wrath will be poured out upon the nations of the earth. We see the nations steadily driving along to the precipice. The Lord has spoken from the heavens, and he is about to fulfil the prophecies of his ancient and modern Prophets. He will bring the nations into judgment, and deal with them and make a full end of them. Do you wish to see it done to-day? Are you prepared for the crisis that will eventually come? No.

I have frequently thought upon the preparation that is necessary. Suppose the word should come, "Return and build up the centre stake of Zion," are we ready for it? No. I have often alluded to our mechanics. We have not a mechanic that would know how to lay the first stone for the foundation of the wall around the New Jerusalem, to say nothing about the Temples of our God. Are you prepared for the day of vengeance, to come, when the Lord will consume the wicked by the brightness of his coming? No. Then do not be too anxious for the Lord to hasten his work. Let our anxiety be centered upon this one thing, the sanctification of our own hearts, the purifying of our own affections, the preparing of ourselves for the approach of the events that are hastening upon us. This should be our concern, this should be our study, this should be our daily prayer, and not to be in a hurry to see the overthrow of the wicked. Be careful, for if they were all to be overthrown at once, how many would there be left that are called Saints? Not as many as I would have remain; not as many as you would like to have remain. We are prepared for the day that is approaching, let us then prepare ourselves for the presence of our Master—for the coming of the Son of Man. The wicked and the ungodly are preparing for their own utter overthrow; and the nation in which we live is doing so as fast as the wheels of time can roll, and ere long sudden destruction will come upon them. Seek not to hasten it, but be satisfied to let the Lord have his own time and way, and be patient. Seek to have the spirit of Christ, that we may wait patiently the time of the Lord, and prepare ourselves for the times that are coming. This is our duty.

We are blessed in these mountains; this is the best place on the earth for the Latter Day Saints. Search the history of all the nations and every geographical position on the face of the earth, and you cannot find another situation so well adapted for the Saints as are these mountains. Here is the place in which the Lord designed to hide his people. Be thankful for it; be true to your covenants, and be faithful, each and every

one. How frequently we hear from one another, "be ready to receive the truth; if it is contrary to our feelings—let it be ever so opposite to our own feelings or affections—receive the words of counsel from those who are appointed to lead us." How my heart longs to see the brethren and sisters in a condition that when the words of truth and virtue—righteous words of counsel—are poured upon them, they will meet like drops of water meeting each other. How I long to see the brethren, when they hear the words of truth poured upon them, ready to receive those words because they are perfectly congenial to their feelings, and every soul exclaim, "those words savor of the Spirit that is in me; they are my delight, my meat, and my drink; they are the streams of eternal life, how congenial they are, instead of their being contrary to my feelings."

If I, or any other man, give counsel that meets with opposition, that intrudes upon the affections, meditations, and feelings of the people, and is harsh to their ears, bitter to their souls, it is either not the words of truth, or they have not the fountain of life within them, one of the two. If the Lord speaks from the heavens, reveals his will, and it comes in contact with our feelings and notions of things or with our judgments, we are destitute of that fountain of truth which we should possess. If our hearts are filled with the Spirit of truth, with the Spirit of the Lord, no matter what the true words from heaven are, when God speaks, all his subjects shout "Hallelujah, praise God; we are ready to receive those words for they are true." Much has been said in regard to the government in which we live. We say that it is the best form of human government upon the earth. The laws and institutions are good, but how can a republican government stand? Did you ever ask yourselves this question? I wonder whether our great men of the nation have ever asked themselves this question. The heads of different departments, governors, judges, cabinet officers, senators, representatives, presidents, I wonder whether they ever ask themselves the question—"how can a republican government stand?" There is only one way for it to stand; it can endure, but how? It can endure, as the government of heaven endures, upon the eternal rock of truth and virtue, and that is the only basis upon which any government can endure. Let the people become corrupt, let them begin to deceive each other, and they will all deceive themselves, as our government has. When we made application to the general government for a restoration of our property and rights in Missouri, if Martin Van Buren had said, "Yes, I will restore your lands to you and will defend you in the possession of your rights, if I have power; and if I have not, my name shall not remain as President of the United States," he could have re-instated us in our rights. A few words from the general government to the government of Missouri would have restored to us our lands and stayed the operations of the mob. If Van Buren had said, "be still, or I will chasten you and keep sacred the oath of my office," we should not have been mobbed, and the nation would not have been as it is to-day.

Our present President, what is his strength? It is like a rope of sand, or like a rope made of water; he is as weak as water. What can he do? Very little. Has he power to execute the laws? No. I am an American-born citizen—born under the Green Mountains in Vermont, from whose summits you can look down upon the Atlantic States, and I feel chagrined and mortified when I reflect upon the condition of my nation. Of late, at times, I have almost wished that I had been born in a foreign nation. I feel disgraced in having been born under a government that has so little power, disposition and influence for truth and right, but I cannot help it. What is the cause of their weakness and imbecility? They have left the paths of truth and virtue, they have joined themselves to falsehood, they have made lies their refuge, they have turned aside the innocent from their rights, and justified the iniquitous doers. They have justified thieving and lying and every species of debauchery; they have fostered those who have purloined money out of the public treasury—those who have plundered the coffers of the people—and have said, "let it be so; you secrete my faults, you assist me to plunder and deceive, and I am with you to cover up your iniquity." Shame, shame on the rulers of the nation! I feel myself disgraced to hail such men as my countrymen, though I think I shall live through it. I will endure it as well as I can, but the corruption, the iniquity, and the deception of men in high places no man can tell.

I have previously related one little circumstance, which occurred not long ago, illustrative of the mode in which payment of claims against the government is sometimes secured. A certain gentleman had attended many sessions of congress, trying to get payment of a claim due to widows and orphans, but could