

THE DESERET NEWS: WEEKLY.

DISCOURSE.

By President BRIGHAM YOUNG,
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REPORTED BY DAVID W. EVANS.

To the Latter-day Saints the gospel of life and salvation is worthy of particular attention. In my reflections upon the great work that the Lord has commenced, its operations appear marvelous to me. I look upon those who have separated themselves from sin with a great deal of pleasure and delight; they are a very peculiar people. When the elders go and preach the gospel, all who have the privilege of hearing, with a very few exceptions, are convinced of its truth in a greater or smaller degree. Perhaps there may be a few who have received traditions to that degree that the truth cannot find the way to their hearts; but such persons are very rare. When a man preaches the gospel by the power of God sent down from heaven, it is hard for me to believe that they who hear him are not convinced of its truth. Then when I look upon the few, of the blood of Ephraim, scattered among the people who have the courage, fortitude and self-will to acknowledge the truth of the gospel and to yield obedience to it I think they are very peculiarly organized.

This gospel is adapted to the capacity of the whole human family. Why are the principles of truth and the people who embrace them so ridiculed? I can attribute it to nothing but sin, or a determination to do that which is wrong. Go to those portions of the world where the elders have labored their lives almost out to preach to the people the words of eternal life and to put them in possession of that which would save them here and hereafter, and it has been the fact that hardly a word of truth has been told about us. This is astonishing. And this work, according to the words of the prophet, is "a marvelous work and a wonder." It appears to me that if the human family had the least conception of the principles of life and salvation, they would not do as they do, or they must believe that they would be chastened, like disobedient children, who many times, seemingly, are disobedient expressly to be corrected. There is no need of this, especially among the Latter-day Saints. What few words I have to say to them is upon this wise,—be perfect, wise, pure holy; and fear and revere the word of the Lord, His commandments and requirements.

When we look at the Latter-day Saints we ask, is there any necessity of their being persecuted? Yes, if they are disobedient. Is there any necessity of chastening a son or a daughter? Yes, if they are disobedient. But suppose they are perfectly obedient to every requirement of their parents, is there any necessity of chastening them then? If there is I do not understand the principle of it, I have not yet been able to see the necessity of chastening an obedient child, neither have I been able to see the necessity of chastisement from the Lord upon a people who are perfectly obedient. Have this people been chastened? Yes they have.

Although we preach the gospel of life and salvation to the inhabitants of the earth and tell them that this gospel is calculated to save every son and daughter of Adam and Eve who will hearken to it, whether it be those who have lived, those who are now living, or those who may hereafter live. Will the present generation have this gospel? No they will not. Why? Because they have so much religion already that they do not know what to do with it. I have often said to them, "If you will not believe the gospel, because you say you have religion already, will you not please repent of your religion?" Is there any need for them to repent of their religion? Yes. Why? Because it is not correct. The whole world of mankind is full of religion, and if they do not worship one object they worship another. It is just as natural for the children of men to worship and revere something as it is to breathe, hence the Christian world is full of religion, and it is the same with the heathen world. We, too, have our religion, and it is adapted to the capacity of the whole human family. It does not send a portion of the people to howl in torment for ever and ever, but it reaches after the last son and daughter of Adam and Eve, and will pluck them

from the prison, unlock the doors, and burst the bonds and bring forth every soul who will receive salvation.

I ask the nations of the earth what objection is there to this? "Oh," say they, "you are different from us." How different? "Why you have many doctrines we do not believe in." We cannot help it. We have taken this book, called the Old and the New Testament for our standard. We believe this book and receive it as the word of the Lord. Not but there are many words in this book that are not the words of the Lord, but that which came from the heavens, and which the Lord has delivered to us, we receive, and especially the sayings of the Savior. We receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and we believe in Him as our Savior. There are many persons in this city who ridicule the idea that Jesus was the Christ; but take those very individuals, both male and female, and let them square their course through life in all respects according to the words of the Savior, and would they not be better men and women than they now are? Yes, they would. Then where is the harm or evil of believing in a character whose doctrine from beginning to end is perfectly pure and holy? Although the children of Judah, universally, and many others ridicule the idea that Jesus is the Christ, yet take the doctrines that He taught His disciples and which they preached to the people, and endeavored to practice, and let any people live in accordance with them, and you will find a pure, holy and perfect community. There would be no wars, bloodshed nor contention among them, as nations, communities, neighborhoods and families.

It has been said here that there are some whose feelings can not accede to all that is taught by the Latter-day Saints. But let me say there never was a doctrine taught by Jesus Christ and His apostles, by the prophets before them, or by Joseph Smith and this people, but what, if followed out, brings peace to every family and individual who observes it. Do we enjoy peace? A great many do not. What is the reason? Because they do not faithfully carry out those doctrines.

I am going to ask a question—Is there any necessity, my brethren and sisters, that you and I should suffer persecution to perfect us? Are we willing to be obedient, and to sanctify ourselves and to sanctify the Lord God in our hearts without the rod of chastisement? If we are, we shall bring in the doctrine that has been taught to the people on temporal matters. We say, and profess, that we are one, and in a great measure we are. In our religious and political sentiments we are one; but in the pursuit of life and happiness, as individuals and families, we are not one. Now, if we will believe the gospel, which can do no harm to anyone—I say this for all ears—it does not contain a single doctrine but what is true. You may ask the question: Has no one elder in Israel ever taught false doctrine? Yes, but no man has who has been authorized to teach, guide and direct the Saints. Did Jesus, Peter, James, John or Joseph Smith ever teach a false or incorrect doctrine? Not that you or I know of; we cannot find it. Now, if we have got correct doctrines, and will fashion our lives by them, we may sanctify ourselves without being chastened.

We look forward to the day when this people will be pure, holy and sanctified, and when we will be prepared to build up Zion. Are we prepared now? No, we are not. We are only professedly Latter-day Saints; practically, we are only so in part. To be a Saint is to be as Jesus was; to be assimilated to the spirit and character which He exhibited while here on the earth. Now, I exhort the Latter-day Saints to live so that each and everyone may enjoy the spirit of the Lord Jesus day by day, that we may be one in all things, in temporal matters as well as spiritual.

As I have but a few minutes that I want to speak, I shall now come to temporal matters. You and I wish to live, and to have the privilege of pursuing, unmolested, the path that leads to happiness. Now, I can not say it of you all, but I can of a few here, that they have been trying to serve the Lord for nearly forty years. During that period we have passed through scenes we do not wish to behold again. Five times many of us here have been broken up, and have left our houses, gardens, farms, orchards, vineyards and all we had, and have had to run for our lives. What for? Because we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ—and tried to practice the doctrine He taught. For anything else? No. Were all perfect? No. Did some sin? O yes, we were all sinners. Why were we obliged to leave our

homes? Did we disturb our neighbors, or pilfer and purloin their substance? No. What did we do? We taught the gospel of life and salvation. Not that all were righteous, but our sins—of worldly-mindedness, covetousness and selfishness—were between ourselves and our God, and for this the Lord suffered us to be chastened. The faith that we profess is the best and the only doctrine calculated to save the children of men.

I say, five times some of this people have been broken up, and the last time, when we left the State of Illinois, we cut our road through the timber, we hunted our path over the prairies, and dug our road through the cañons, for fourteen hundred miles to this place, because we were obliged to go somewhere.

Our prophet, before us, told us that if we could get out of the way of Christianity, so called, and civilization, we could serve God and build up His kingdom, and we could be happy. We came here to these isolated and lonely valleys. Who led us here? Did our nation hold out a fostering hand to us? No: to this day they never gave us a dollar; but now we expect they will give us our homesteads here. Have the wicked become more righteous? No. Has the world become more enlightened in the things of God? No, it has not; and the enmity that did exist, exists still, and has grown, increased and strengthened, and this warfare between the power of the devil and the power of Jesus Christ will continue until Jesus obtains possession of the kingdom. These words are meant for the ears of all, both Saints and sinners.

Did we ask any of the outside merchants in this City to come here? They are called "gentiles," but we do not know whether they are "gentiles" or not, for a gentile is one who has none of the blood of Israel within him. There may be some of this class among the Israelites. But what do these outsiders follow us up for? They say "we know you, Latter-day Saints are a very nice people, very kind, very free, generous and benevolent; we know you believe in helping the stranger, and that is not all, we know you believe in giving all your substance to your enemies." Is this proved? Yes, right here before our eyes. Now, I would say to every man and woman on the earth if I could speak to them, it is no matter what men say, but it is how they say it. I will tell you what we want—and we know what you want—we want the privilege of building up the kingdom of God on the earth, and of living in peace one with another. We want our streets so that we can traverse them in safety by day or by night, and so that if a midwife is called up at midnight, or one o'clock in the morning to go to a neighbor's house she can go there without being plundered or destroyed before she gets to the place of her destination. And if our daughters are out visiting until nine, ten, eleven or twelve o'clock at night, that they can pass along these streets without molestation. We want a community that does not take the name of God in vain; that does not lie, or purloin that which is not their own, and that will live day by day, week by week and year by year in perfect peace. This is not according to the feelings of a great many, they would rather see quarrelling and strife. I have learned of so many facts that exist in the world in relation to contentions, speaking of them in a family capacity, that to my certain knowledge there is more there with but one wife than here where there are ten, where this obnoxious doctrine our brother has just referred to is practiced. So don't worry about contentions any of you, for they exist all over the world. Look at the kings and queens, and then at the lower classes; and from them to the House of Representatives, the lords, dukes, knights and every grand character you can mention or think of, and how do they live? We know how they live, they live in jeopardy, in fear, and jealousy, which is the mother of torment. And the inhabitants of the earth are jealous of one another, and they have reason to be. Have we any facts in the case? Yes, thousands of them, all over the world. Take the king upon his throne, he must pay a doctor more than anybody else, or he will be poisoned to death. It is so with the queens, if they have not power to buy everybody around them there is no knowing what day poison will be put into their coffee or their tea or some of their food. If the husband step out of doors, she don't know where she is; and if the lady is left alone in the house or rides out, the husband does not know where she is. But you come to the Saints and you know about them. If we send an elder to preach the gospel

and he travels the earth over, when he returns we know where he has been and what he has been doing, and if he has been guilty of that crime to which the world is so much addicted he can not keep it, he must confess it; then he is not a fit character to be a member of the church or an elder in Israel, and we deprive him of his standing and licence. But you take an elder in Israel who honors his calling, and though he may travel the world over, his wife at home says: "I am perfectly satisfied with regard to my husband, he would suffer his head to be taken from his shoulders before he would violate his covenants with me, they are sacred before God." It is so with our women as well as our men; it is so with Israel in the Latter-days. Here I pause, and say, not with all Israel.

Our sisters need not be worried about any doctrine. Brother Penrose said it would be better for them if they believed in the doctrine of polygamy. But they do believe it; they know it is true, and that is their torment. It perplexes and annoys many of them, because they are not sanctified by the spirit of it; if they were there would be no trouble. I want to say this much—the sisters do believe it. Where is the proof? You take a woman in this church who does not believe in the doctrine of celestial marriage or plurality of wives, and she does not believe anything at all about the gospel, and she will soon manifest this by her unwise course, and by and by she drops off and away she goes. But our sisters believe and know that this doctrine is true, and consequently they feel bound to abide it.

Now, I will return to my remark about our present condition. We do not wish to be broken up and compelled to leave our homes again. What do you want, outsiders? You want all the money the "Mormons" can make. I do not blame you for it, I never did. It is reasonable and right, and you are as much entitled to it as to any other money you can get. But we are not going to let you have it. Is there any harm in this? "Exclusive," are we? We are not half exclusive enough. There is no other way to save this people from being broken up again than by trading with ourselves. I know this as well as I know the sun shines. I have passed through it, and know all about it. Now, I do not wish to see this people, of whom I am proud, and in whom I delight, pack up their goods and go off again. Where should we go? When we were in Missouri we had a place we could go to; when we were in Illinois we had a place we could go to, but now, that we have come here to the middle of this continent, where can we go? Is there another place we can go to?

If I were to say to the financial world, we have taken it into our heads to do our own internal business, and not foster those in our midst who are not of us, what would they say? They would say this is the first step the Latter-day Saints ever took that manifested wisdom. How exclusive do we want to be? Just enough so to sustain and preserve ourselves, to build our own houses, make our gardens and orchards, our carriages and our own places of amusement, like our theatre. I built that theatre to attract the young of our community and to provide amusement for the boys and girls rather than have them running all over creation for recreation. Long before that was built I said to the bishops "Get up your parties and pleasure grounds to amuse the people." This brings my former experience and that of my friends right to me. Whenever we get into the kingdom of Heaven, where God and Christ dwell, we shall find something more to do than to "sit and sing ourselves away to everlasting bliss." The mind of man is active, and we must have exercise and amusement for the mind as well as the body.

You go into that theatre, and what is there behind the curtain that would disgrace the most perfect lady on the face of the earth? Not the least in the world. I have to watch some who come here as actors and actresses, and if they do not manifest the marks and traits of a lady and gentleman, I say, "Stop a moment. I want to tell you something. Your course will lead you wrong, and if you persist in it you cannot present yourself before the public." So much for that.

We say to the bishops and to everybody, exercise yourselves, provide innocent amusement for the youth, attract the minds of the children, and get the upper hand of them and be on the lead. I see mothers right among us whose course is very imprudent with their children. You ought always to take the lead of your children in their minds and affections. Instead of being behind with the whip, always be in advance, then you can say "Come along," and you will