

DISCOURSE

By President Heber C. Kimball, Tabernacle
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REPORTED BY GEO. D. WATT.

We have a little business to lay before the brethren, and we might as well do this forenoon, as to do it in the afternoon. We many times leave our business matters for the afternoon, to transact in the time of the sacrament, though the administration of that ordinance has been omitted for a time. There are a great many people in this congregation and in this valley who could justly and beneficially partake of the sacrament, but they are prohibited for the present in consequence of the wickedness of some who would also partake and thus eat and drink to their condemnation.

You talk about such persons being asleep; you call it sleep; well it is, comparatively speaking, the sleep of death that is on a great many individuals, and they do not realize it, and you cannot make them realize it. They think they are awake to their duties; they think they are living their religion, and when we speak to this people in a mass, as you are here, almost every man and woman will go home and say, "that sermon does not touch me, the coat, or the jacket, does not fit me." I am aware of this, for if it did fit you and you would acknowledge it, you would put it on and wear it; and the coat you would put on would be sackcloth and ashes; it would be a cloak that would be wet and soaked with ashes, and it would be so strong it would eat off the rust and filth that are on you, yea, eat them off with ashes put on with a cloth, so as to open the pores of life that the Spirit of God may penetrate through your systems.

There is a little matter of business that we want to lay before this congregation in regard to John Hyde, who went to the Sandwich Islands on a mission. There are a couple of letters that the brethren have received; we shall read a little from them, and give you to understand the course he is taking. (The letters were read.) You hear the letters and the testimony of our brethren in regard to John Hyde. Such matters, many times, have passed along and we have not noticed them but have let men deny the faith, speak against it and deliver lectures through the world. Many times we have let them run at large, but the time is now passed for such a course of things. By the consent of my brethren I shall move that John Hyde be cut off from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and I will put the motion in full, that is, that he be cut off root and branch; that means pertaining to himself. When this motion is put, I want you to vote, every one of you, either for or against, for there is no sympathy to be shown unto such a man.—Br. Wells has seconded the motion I have made. All that are in favor that John Hyde be cut off from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and that he be delivered over to Satan to be buffeted in the flesh, will raise their right hands. (All hands were raised.)

When there was a vote of this kind taken before the congregation in regard to Thomas S. Williams, it caused a great deal of sympathy with some, for they looked upon it as though it had cut off his family, his wives and his children. I will ask the congregation, was a motion put to cut off his family? No, there was not.—A motion has been put, and unanimously carried, that John Hyde be cut off root and branch, that is, himself and all the roots and branches that are within him; this has no allusion to his family. He has taken a course by which he has lost his family and forfeited his priesthood; he has forfeited his membership. The limb is cut off, but the priesthood takes the fruit that was attached to the limb and saves it, if it will be saved. Do you understand me? His wife is not cut off from this Church, but she is free from him; she is just as free from him as though she never had belonged to him.—The limb she was connected to is cut off, and she must again be grafted into the tree, if she wishes to be saved; that is all about it.

When a limb that has got two or more branches or shoots is cut off, those shoots and branches, and their fruit, if any, are cut off with the limb. Why? Because they are attached to it. But they can all be taken and grafted right back again into the tree, or into the priesthood.

I do not wish to say much this morning, without I feel a great deal of liberty; and my liberty will be in proportion to the liberty and freedom and life there is in this people. If our Father and our God was to come here, or Jesus, or Peter, or Joseph, or br. Brigham, or any other man, he could not speak to this people and advance light to them, only in proportion to the light that is in this people and their willingness and readiness to receive more.

Have not br. Brigham and his Counselors cried unto this people, as with a voice of thunder and earthquake, for years and could not wake you up? You did not believe but that you were all the time living your religion, every one of you, men and women. Can br. Brigham advance any farther than this people strive to follow, and at the same time retain his present connection with them? Can br. Heber rise any faster than br. Brigham? No. Can br. Wells? No he cannot. Why? The church of God is compared to the body of a man; there is the head, there are the arms and every part of the body. God has joined them together, and they are brought up as an illustration to compare with the church. Now if my legs and feet and arms and hands and other members of my body give up and lose their strength and power, become paralyzed or benumbed, how is it possible for my head to rise up, without the use of those members? It cannot, because the head is attached to them. On

the other hand, if the arms, which are designed to defend the head, and all the members below the head lose their power and have gone to sleep, what can those members do? Can they rise until the rest of that body rises? No. I use the figure of the body of a man, just as the Apostle Paul did in ancient times:—

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole body were the hearing, where were the smelling?

18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?

20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

24 For our comely parts have no need; but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked:

25 That there should be no scism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

30 Have all the gift of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

31 But covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. 1 Cor. chap. 12.

There is one way in which the Presidency of this church can rise, but it would be greatly to the injury of the body, and I will tell you how. If you will go to work and reject them, you will see them rise quickly, but you will also see this body go down to death and hell, while the priesthood of this church would go to heaven. You can liberate them in this way, but not in any other except through obedience, unless that Presidency rises up and cuts you off. They can do that, for they have as much power to cut you off as you have to reject them. I want you to understand this. They are an independent body, still they are attached to you as the head of the body of Christ for the purpose of saving the whole body, that all might be a perfect system. You will find in the Bible what I am talking about, only I am applying it to this people, as Paul applied it to the people in his days.

Jesus says, in the 15th chapter of St. John, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman," or, in other words, my Father is the root and I am the vine springing from the root, and it is for me to abide in that vine. And when he abode in it he received the same nourishment, the same fatness and the same power that proceeded from the Father, or from the root from whence the vine sprang. Then if the twelve Apostles abode in him, they received the same nourishment that he did and had the same power; then those that believed on the Apostles' words, if they abode in their words, received the same power the Apostles received from the vine, they becoming branches of that vine in common with the Apostles. Jesus is that vine, the Apostles were the branches that sprang from him, then the Seventies and other members, or those that sprang from them.

Joseph Smith sprang from Peter, James and John, and br. Brigham and br. Heber, and br. Hyde sprang from Joseph; and you sprang from that authority now existing, did you not? Do you not see that you are all in the same vine? There are different branches, and every different branch springing out of the same vine.—There are hundreds of lesser branches connected to the main branches of the vine, others again extend from them. There are the Seventies, the High Priests, the Elders, &c., they are all branches, are they not, belonging to the same root, the same vine?

1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2 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.

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in me; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 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.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin.

23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.—St. John, 15th chap.

I want to show you your connection with the church, and then you can see what an effect it has when there is a dead member attached to the head of any limb, or at its junction with the trunk. When you go into your gardens and look at your peach trees do you not see many great and important limbs, also many branches to those limbs? Now if a main branch is partly dead or lifeless where it joins the trunk, the sap has to go through there to support the limb and of course affects its nourishment, for the sap becomes partially dormant, and when it goes into the rest of the members they are dormant; like unto the sap that has passed through those dead parts. You may say that the Presidency of the Seventies are at the junction of one main limb with the trunk, and when the members that pertain to that department of government are partly dead, it affects the whole limb and every branch pertaining to it.

That is the connection we have got to form with each other, or we shall be severed from the tree and lost. We will say that here is a peach tree, and that there is one limb extends away yonder, and that away at the far end of it are six or eight peaches, and that there is not another particle of fruit on the whole tree. Now is not that one fruit bearing limb worth more to the master than all the rest, except the trunk and root to which it is connected? Why? Because it brings forth fruit. God looks upon this matter just as I am trying to explain it to you. Jesus calls his true followers his disciples, because they bring forth much fruit.—How can you be reckoned the disciple of Christ, the disciples of God in the last days, except you bring forth fruit?

I talked very plain to you, three weeks ago. The power of God ran through me just as City creek would run through this city, provided there was no obstruction to its course. Such would be the case to-day, if there was no obstruction to the manifestation of the power of God, and every member would receive his full supply. Is there an obstruction? There is.—Was there on that day? There was; but the power of God was there sufficient to penetrate a stone, and it did penetrate the hardest and most corrupt men in the congregation, and they did not know what was the matter with them. Did you see any particular difference with me? Nothing more than you generally see. I was calm and composed, and the truth kept pouring out without creating any convulsion, because there was no obstruction to it in me.

The more of the Spirit of God a man has, the more composed he is. You will not hear him rage and tare, saying, "Oh, the holy Ghost is in me; I shall die; hell and the devil is to pay." [The speaker mimicked the manner of wild enthusiasts.] I am trying to show you the folly, wild spirit and devil that gets into some men, and they try to make the people believe that it is the Holy Ghost, when it is not any such thing. You never see br. Brigham operated upon in that way; you never see br. Heber so affected. I have had to fire here.—Why? Because the enemy was so strong against me that I had to force the word of God to-

wards the people to effect them in any way, shape, or manner.

There is more danger of people's getting wild fire, than there is of their getting the true fire of God. There is danger of going too far, and of pressing this people too far. There is a medium in all things. It would be but a little while, let some men lead and dictate, before the people would be as they are in London.—How are they there? They have been excited, with everything that could be raked and scraped, to such a degree that there is nothing now that will excite them one particle. In like manner some would get this people in a little while so that you could not create an excitement that would move them.

I will ask this congregation if they do not know that God was with me three weeks ago, and they will admit that he dictated me. I did not say anything about it, but all the tassel I had was to get out of this stand, for it seemed as though I was held by some power visible or invisible. I had hard work to get out of this stand. Did I resist the spirit? Yes, I resisted the spirit and power of this people who were holding me. "Why did you leave the pulpit?" Because I had spoken long enough. The judgment that God gave me said I had spoken long enough, and if I had spoken any longer it would not have had so good an effect upon you as it did. Was I not calm? Did I tell any of you that the Holy Ghost was in me? I did not say one word about it; I let every one judge for himself.

Some men in this town come pretty near tearing down the stands and benches, and the roofs off from the houses, crying out, "the Holy Ghost is in me," &c.

[The speaker jumped and threw his arms about.]

I am mimicking those persons, in order to show the folly of their conduct. I want you to understand, and not let men get these powers on them. It would not be any wonder if br. Gifford were to get into that spirit, because that is the spirit he had before he came into the Church; and he had it a while after he came into the Church, and he feels as though he had lost all his religion, because he is not actuated by that wild spirit. I have seen the manifestations of those spirits both in America and England; they were in this Church in the first commencement of it in Kirtland.

In the commencement of this Church the devil came along, and there were men that saw written letters come down from the heavens in their presence; that was in Kirtland, Ohio, 25 or 26 years ago. Some enthusiastic spirits received those letters as revelation, and they would read them to the people. A spirit would come on those individuals and they would begin to run around the house, and be thrown into all manner of shapes and convulsions, saying it was the operation of the Holy Ghost. If you do not look out, you will here get such spirits as those. I merely speak of them to give you a check, that you may be aware of the course you are taking.

I will tell you what kind of characters will have those kinds of revelations, they will be men who have committed whoredom in our midst, and women who have played the whore. Good, virtuous men and women are not actuated by those spirits, because they ask the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, to give them his Spirit, and not those wild, enthusiastic spirits manifested by some. How was it with those men in Kirtland? Almost every one of them denied the faith and went over the board, and afterwards we found out that they were adulterous persons.

As for the gift of tongues, I do not speak in tongues often. Can I speak in tongues? Yes, I can speak in a good, beautiful language to this people at any time. Why? Because God gave me the gift, and he does not give gifts to men and then take them away again, so long as those men are doing their duty. They are gifts, and God gives them to men and women; and so long as they improve upon them they do not forfeit them. If they do not improve upon them, the devil takes the advantage and will make it appear like the gifts of God which they have possessed, as nearly as possible, and thus they go overboard.

I do not know why it is that I am led to speak so to-day, but I am led as I am, and you may judge whether it is right or wrong. Can I interpret tongues? Yes, because that gift is in me, and I have not forfeited it. Is it in br. Brigham? Yes, and so is every gift that God ever gave to his ancient Apostles. God has given them to br. Brigham, and he will never take them away from him. He has the Spirit in him, and so have his Counselors, that can discern your spirits and gifts, whether they are of God or of the devil. When any of you get up to speak in tongues, whether you do so by the power of God or of the devil, I can tell you which source that tongue came from, and if it is from the Lord I can interpret it.

Are the gifts of the gospel given to you to fool with? No, neither are they given to dictate the Church, nor the priesthood. Have such things been done? Yes, thousands of men and women have received revelations and stood up to dictate the President, the Prophet, the Seer and Revelator, in his priesthood. When we came to find out who such characters were, we learned that they were men and women who had been in the habit of committing whoredom. You cannot refer me to an instance of the kind, but what I can show you that that is their character, more or less. Is it not singular? Those gifts and those blessings are for the priesthood to dictate, and it will dictate them.

When persons get the religion of Christ and enjoy the Holy Ghost, they will never see any of that wildness which I have spoken of, unless, in the progress of this work, our President should be moved upon to bring it into