

words, and I know it." By and bye he dreams about it, the Lord gives him a vision: "I dreamt last night I saw the Lord, and he told me that preacher is a true servant of God." He goes forth into the waters of baptism, he receives the laying on of hands, and is confirmed in the faith by the power of the Holy Ghost.

Thus the Spirit keeps all the time working and co-operating with us, and by and bye this mass of drift wood, prejudices and false traditions will vanish from the honest mind, enlightened by the Spirit of truth; and the man thus inspired is able to witness and declare before the congregation things that he never before heard, and the people shut their mouths at him in astonishment.

Twenty-five years ago we declared things to our brethren we never heard; bro. Kimball knows this. The power of God was in it; and O how good we felt, and O how humble.

I have borne testimony of Mormonism when there was not a Saint within a hundred miles of me; and I felt that I was as ready to die as to live. Says I, "My good friend, you need not oppose me," and I talked to them so kindly; O how it would astonish them; they could not resist it. It was a heavenly time, and God manifested his power through his servants in that early period of our history. It was to confirm them and give conviction to others, and to lay the foundation of this work. There was great power and glory upon the servants of God.

May God bless you, and what I have said this morning, and bestow upon you every blessing and attribute necessary for you, and give us all the victory, and crown us with eternal lives in his presence, is the prayer of your humble servant, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

DISCOURSE

By Elder Lorenzo Snow, Tabernacle, Sunday Afternoon, March 1, 1857.

[REPORTED BY J. V. LONG.]

I am not much in the habit of taking texts, especially of late years, and more especially since the commencement of the reformation. However this afternoon I think I will take a text, as a subject for the few remarks that I may make on this occasion, and that one was presented to me this morning when in conversation with br. Kimball, and that text is embraced in one word, which is Union.

I expect that a great deal might be said on this subject, and probably a great deal has been said, but more may yet be said, and that which intimately concerns us at the present time. If we would rightly understand things as they are, a more interesting subject could not be introduced at the present time, and it embraces a great deal more than what we should be enabled to say in one hour, or in one day. Unless that we go into the practice of paying more attention and more regard to the interests of others, we shall not get along as a people near so well as perhaps many of us have been anticipating.

In the Gentile world where the gospel first reached us, our manner of training, our habits and our education all went to influence our minds to look after self, and never to let our contemplations or meditations go beyond that which pertained to ourselves. In making any exertion that would in any way tend to benefit ourselves, to exalt ourselves, and assist us in amassing riches, or in gathering information that would conform or aid in the bringing about this object we considered we were doing first rate, for that was the object of life with us.

We then depended upon ourselves almost entirely, and thought that we should have means around us gathered for the purpose of securing ourselves from the evils that we found we were continually exposed to, in regard to poverty and in regard to the lack of friends. We were all looking within ourselves, we regarded our own dear selves in all our meditations, and directed all our exertions for our own individual benefit. This is what our parents taught us to a great extent, and it mattered, with us, but very little how or what course was pursued if we could gain those things we desired, if we could secure to ourselves those things which were necessary for our own comfort, and for our own individual temporal convenience.

This is the education of the world, and this is the way they are taught, this is one reason we have so much difficulty in acting upon the principles of union. Then it should not seem so very strange that the same feelings that were in the minds of the people around us, that were instilled into us by traditions, should linger around us at the present time, and become a blind or a barrier against receiving those blessings and privileges that we might otherwise receive, and be injurious to us when we receive the gospel and endeavor to become Saints of God.

I can discover that these things have extended, and spread themselves in the feelings and hearts of the Saints pretty extensively, and they act very powerfully in hindering the Saints from obtaining the blessings and privileges which it is their right to receive. Until these feelings are removed we shall be liable to be baffled in regard to the blessings that are promised to the people of God.

We talk considerably in regard to the principle of loving our neighbors as well as we love ourselves; we talk about it and we sometimes think about it, but how much do we really enter into the spirit of these things, and see that the difficulty lies within ourselves. We must understand that we have got to act upon certain principles by which we can bind ourselves together as a people, to bind our feelings together that we may become one, and this never can be accomplished unless certain things are done, and things that require an exertion on our part. How would you go to work to bind yourselves together?

How would a man go to work to unite himself with his neighbor? If two men were associated together who had never been acquainted, how would they go to work to secure each other's friendship, attachment and affection one towards another? Why something would have to be done, and that not by one party only, but would have to be done by one as well as by the other. It would not answer for one to do the business alone; it would not do for one to answer those feelings and do the work himself, but in order to become as one in their sentiments and affection—the action of both would be requisite.

Now it is so ordered and so arranged that we are dependent, in a great measure one upon another. For instance take us as a people, we are dependent upon a being that is above us to secure our peace, our happiness, our glory and exaltation; we are individually dependent upon the exertions of an individual who is above ourselves.

For instance we are all dependent upon Jesus Christ, upon his coming into the world to open the way whereby we might secure peace, happiness and exaltation. And had he not made these exertions we never could have been secured in these blessings and privileges which are guaranteed unto us in the gospel, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, for he made the necessary exertions.

In order to accomplish the gathering of Israel out of Egyptian bondage there had to be something done to liberate them from their thralldom, and this something had to be done by a higher power, by an individual that had more wisdom, more intelligence, more understanding, and more power and means within his hands for the purpose of securing those blessings which they needed. They never could have got out from their difficulties nor from their bondage unless this power had been exerted by one who had more intelligence, more knowledge, more information in relation to the means of their deliverance.

It is just so in a thousand other cases, there has to be a power exercised for the benefit of the people, there has to be exertions made, and they never can receive the blessings and privileges that are for them unless those exertions were made by an individual possessing more knowledge, more wisdom and greater power than themselves.

Jesus on a certain occasion, speaking to Peter, said to him, "Simon Peter lovest thou me?" he answered that he did. Well then, replied Jesus, "feed my sheep." Jesus interrogated him again, saying, "Simon Peter lovest thou me?" Peter answered, "I do Lord." Jesus said unto him "feed my lambs." In this case we perceive there was an exertion to be made for the benefit of those that had not that power and information, but this alone is not sufficient.

Had Moses, for instance, having done all that he did, had he delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage, and having done all that he could and all that mortal man could do for their redemption, having done all in his power, and been willing to lay down his life and to sacrifice everything that he had to accomplish that work, would he have secured the people to himself, and have brought about that union which was so necessary without any exertion on their part? No, most assuredly it would not have been accomplished, for there had to be a return, an exertion on their part in order to secure that union and that love, and to secure that fellowship between them and him, which it was necessary should exist, and so it is in reference to Jesus Christ, though he has sacrificed himself and laid the plan for the redemption of the people, yet unless the people labor to obtain that union between him and them, their salvation never will be accomplished. Thus we see that something has to be done by either party in order to secure each other's friendship and to bind us together as a community.

Now let an individual possess information and intelligence, and let that individual be one who holds the Holy Priesthood, a man who has been in the Church for years and years, let him be one that is filled with knowledge and understanding, and let him go to work and look about him, or in other words let him consider there are others around him that are less favored than himself and that they are not all so strong, nor so forward in the blessings and graces of the gospel as he is. Let him reflect that those around him desire the intelligence and blessings that God has given him through his greater experience in the things of the kingdom; then begin to impart that information to those around him and to communicate his strength to those that are weak, and shadow forth his light to those who are in darkness. Then so far as regards himself he is doing that which is necessary for him to do to secure their good feelings and affections to himself.

But let him take the opposite course, and think of improving his own dear self, and that there is only himself to be saved, that all he has to accomplish is to secure life and salvation for himself, and only think of his own sins, to reform himself and to take care of himself. A man who takes this course is going upon a principle that will always keep him bound up and contracted in his feelings and contracted in his views, and will never accomplish the thing that is desired.

As for instance you let an individual keep his ideas and knowledge to himself, in going on to acquire any information in relation to any particular branch of study or business, will he ever accomplish the thing that is required?

A great many pursue this course in reference to their mechanical skill, but this is not the right way.

In pursuing any kind of study a man has to continue to work, and after going through one course he has to go through again, and keep to work in order to make himself master of them, and he never will master them near so well as by communicating his information while engaged in gaining it. Let him go to work and gather up his friends and endeavor to give them the same knowledge that he has received, and he then begins to find himself being enlightened upon those things

which he never would have known unless by pursuing that course of teaching and imparting the information he is in possession of unto others. Any one that has been a school teacher will understand me well upon this point.

So you perceive that he who indulges in this narrow contracted kind of feeling; instead of benefiting himself in keeping the knowledge he possesses within himself, he is the loser in considering that by keeping all he has received to himself he would be exalted in spirit, in knowledge and intelligence.

Let a man remember that there are others that are in darkness and that have not advanced so far in knowledge, wisdom and intelligence, and let him impart that knowledge, intelligence and power unto his friends and brethren, inasmuch as he is farther advanced than they are, and by so doing he will soon discover that his mind will expand, and that light and knowledge which he had gained would increase and multiply more rapidly.

I have heard br. Kimball state that when he was very much downhearted he would find somebody worse than himself and endeavor to comfort him up, and by so doing he would comfort himself, and increase in spirit and in life. It is upon this principle that I am speaking.

If you want to secure the friendship and affections of your friends go to work and comfort them with that light which you have received, remembering those blessings came down from God, and that by doing this you are only doing what every man should do.

Those of you who have got the priesthood, go and make friends among the individuals by whom you are surrounded; or select one and try to start his feelings, his faith, his circumstances and his mind and try to enlighten them and if they are sinners, endeavor to save them from their sins, and bring them from their bondage in which they are placed to participate in the light and liberty which you participate in, for in this way you can do good through the information which the Lord has imparted to you. In this way you will discover that their minds will be drawn out towards you, and their affections will be gained and centered upon you.

In order that this thing may be accomplished and in order that those blessings which are necessary may be secured, and that the feelings and faith that we want as a people may be secured to us, we have to go to work individually and more anxiously, more ambitiously than we have done before to bind each other's feelings together.

Now for instance, take a shepherd who has charge of a large flock of sheep: he goes into his field and his flock hastens to gather around him, and follow after him. How is this accomplished? The shepherd has gone from day to day and from time to time with plenty of salt, and they discover that he has it with him every time he makes his appearance, and that he has those things that are necessary to supply their wants. They learn by experience that he has looked after their welfare, and they appreciate his kindness; it is a good deal so among men.

If you will allow me to carry out the figure, tho' perhaps it may not apply quite so well as some other, but it is the one now upon my mind. You let the President of your settlement, or the Bishop, or President Brigham Young for instance—continue to administer incessantly among this people, and let them do all that individuals will call upon them to do; they will be worn down, and as brother Kimball was speaking, unless there is something done by the people as a return for that which is done by those men there never will be a perfect people, but will be very far off from perfection. And it is still more so in regard to the cultivation of that feeling which is necessary for us to have one for another.

In regard to the shepherd's flock of sheep what do they do in reference to making a return for the good that is done to them? Is it sufficient for them to return one tenth part of their wool, which would be a very great source of benefit providing they only give that? If one of them could speak and say we will give you one tenth part of our wool for the purpose of manifesting unto you our gratitude, would not that be a very good and proper acknowledgment?

But they do more than this, they do as Br. Kimball was speaking, they put every thing into the reservoir, they return their entire fleece. This secures a very good feeling in the shepherd or in the bosom of the farmer towards the sheep that he had been administering to, and they find themselves, after the next year comes round, in possession of a great abundance.

Well, I was thinking of these things as Br. Kimball was speaking this morning. If the people had confidence in the things which are taught, and if they would let their minds expand, and throw in their substance for the establishment of Zion and the extension of the kingdom of God, they would learn that it is the very principle upon which they would receive stores of those things which they are after.

But there is a fearfulness in the minds of the people, they are afraid to trust their substance in the hands of the Lord, but if we expect acts of kindness and affection; if we understand our true position and want to secure the affections of the Almighty and all good men so that they will be bound to us we have got to do something that will secure to us those affections, and other manifestations of that kindness which we have previously participated in.

If individuals would look upon this principle as they should look upon it, view it in its proper light they would take much more pains than they do, for they would see the necessity of binding the feelings of their brethren together, they would see and understand the importance of this more than they do at the present time, and they would enter into the spirit of it. We might carry this principle into families, and illustrate upon it quite largely.

For instance if you ever secure a union in any family in Zion, if you ever secure that heavenly

union which is necessary to exist there you have got to bind that family together in one, and there has got to be the Spirit of the Lord in the head of that family and he should possess that light and that intelligence which if carried out in the daily life and conduct of those individuals, will prove the salvation of that family, for he holds their salvation in his hands.

He goes to work and associates his feelings and affections with theirs as far as lies in his power, and endeavors to secure all those things that are necessary for their comfort and welfare, and they on the other part have got to turn round and manifest the same feeling, the same kindness and the same disposition, and to the utmost of their ability manifest feelings of gratitude for the blessings which they receive.

This is necessary that there may be a oneness of feeling, or oneness of sentiment and a corresponding affection, that they being one may be bound together in this way. Now it is just the same in regard to ourselves as neighbors, as saints of God, as individuals that hold the priesthood, and that have traveled in the light of truth and got the power of God upon them, and who know what salvation is.

The things of God have been revealed to this people that they may go to work and obtain more faith and more confidence in God than any other people upon the face of the whole earth. We have to eat, drink, and clothe ourselves, as well as other people, but in gaining these things we should regard sacredly each other's rights. When two individuals are bound together, as they eventually must be if they ever stand in the presence of God, rather than to take a course to injure each other's feelings, when they are united as they should be and as they will be, they would sooner have a limb severed from their body, they would sooner suffer anything that could be executed upon them than to disturb or hurt each other's feelings. There would be the same love that existed between David and Jonathan. Before David would do anything to disturb the feelings of Jonathan he would have suffered a hundred-fold of trouble to come upon himself. I think we sometimes pass by those things which are of such great importance. I often think of the little anecdote that is recorded in the Bible about the sons of the prophets. On a certain occasion when the sons of the prophets were cutting timber, it appears that the axe fell off the handle into the water, and it seemed there was a great disturbance in the feelings of the young prophets.—Why, says one, master, the axe was borrowed' and it seems there was quite an anxiety about the axe on account of its being borrowed property.—I have thought that had the circumstance transpired in these days the expression would have been on this wise, 'O it is no matter master, the axe was borrowed.' But in those days they had feelings in regard to their neighbors, and in consequence of this the power of God could be manifested for the purpose of raising the axe from the bottom of the water. Thus we see they had feelings of interest for the welfare of their neighbors and friends as well for themselves.

Now an individual in order to secure the highest and greatest blessings to himself, in order to secure the approbation of the Almighty, and in order to continually improve in the things pertaining to righteousness he must do all things to the best advantage. Let him go to work and be willing to sacrifice for the benefit of his friends. If he wants to build himself up, the best principle he can do it upon is to build up his friends. This is the same principle I wish to refer your minds to in relation to the master who wished to make himself perfect in those sciences which he had partially studied, and he did it by communicating to his scholars that information which he had obtained, and he did it again and again, and by teaching them he improved himself.

You brethren that are going forward in any undertaking, and that want to get rich, and that want to make large farms, to get many wives and to extend your household and your popularity, you make up your minds to make your wives comfortable, to feed and clothe your children and do those things that are required of you, but while you are engaged in this let your minds be expanded to comprehend and look after the interest of your friends that are around you, and where it is in your power to secure benefits to your friends do so, and in so doing you will find that those things which you need will come into your hands quicker than if you labor entirely to secure them to yourselves independent of regarding the interests of your friends. I know this is a good and important principle.

Now if a man has been blest of the Lord, and has got information from the eternal world, has been endowed with much grace and knowledge from on high, and is one to whom the Lord has imparted many great and glorious blessings, when he comes in contact with his friends that are around him, and that have not had this advantage and this experience, if they in their arrangements should run across his track let him exercise those godly feelings which will tend to secure their confidence and good will. And just so far as he exercises them above that of his fellows he exhibits the education that he has received in the principles of righteousness, and just in proportion as a person does this to those that are ignorant around him, just in that proportion will he secure the good feelings of those individuals; it cannot do otherwise. Peradventure in a future day when through the mercy of the Lord that darkness is taken away, and they receive the knowledge that you have they will discover that you have acted upon the principles of mercy and salvation, and in consequence of that you secure their good feelings, their faith, their prayers and their confidence; this is upon natural principles. You will find that wherever you exhibit a feeling of brotherly love you secure that brotherly friendship and kindness which is so desirable. I can refer you to your own experience in this; I can think of a thousand instances of the kind. I can think of thousands of instances where br. Brigham and br. Heber imparted to me certain