

blood of any of the human family; and when the books are opened in the day of judgment these things will be proven to heaven and earth. Perhaps I had not ought to enter into these things, but it came to me. Men are in danger sometimes in being adopted to others, until they know who they are and what they will be. Now, what are the feelings of Israel? They have felt that they wanted to be adopted to somebody. President Young was not satisfied in his mind with regard to the extent of this matter; President Taylor was not. When I went before the Lord to know who I should be adopted to (we were then being adopted to prophets and apostles,) the Spirit of God said to me, "Have you not a father, who begot you?" "Yes, I have." "Then why not honor him? Why not be adopted to him?" "Yes," says I, "that is right." I was adopted to my father, and should have had my father sealed to his father, and so on back; and the duty that I want every man who presides over a Temple to see performed from this day henceforth and forever, unless the Lord Almighty commands otherwise, is, let every man be adopted to his father. When a man receives the endowments, adopt him to his father; not to Willard Woodruff, nor to any other man outside the lineage of his fathers. That is the will of God to this people. I want all men who preside over these temples in these mountains of Israel to bear this in mind. What business have I to take away the rights of the lineage of any man? What right has any man to do this? No; I say let every man be adopted to his father; and then you will do exactly what God said when he declared He would send Elijah the prophet in the last days. Elijah the prophet appeared unto Joseph Smith and told him that the day had come when this principle must be carried out. Joseph Smith did not live long enough to enter any further upon these things. His soul was wound up with this work before he was martyred for the word of God and testimony of Jesus Christ. He told us that there must be a welding link of all dispensations and of the work of God from one generation to another. This was upon his mind more than most any other subject that was given to him. In my prayers the Lord revealed to me, that it was my duty to say to all Israel to carry this principle out, and in fulfillment of that revelation I lay it before this people. I say to all men who are laboring in these temples, carry out this principle, and then we will make one step in advance of what we have had before. Myself and counselors conversed upon this and were agreed upon it, and afterwards we laid it before all the Apostles who were here (two were absent—Brothers Thatcher and Lund, the latter being in England,) and the Lord revealed to every one of these men—and they would bear testimony to it if they were to speak—that that was the word of the Lord to them. I never met with anything in my life in this Church that there was more unity upon than there was upon that principle. They all feel right about it, and that it is our duty. That is one principle that should be carried out from this time henceforth. "But," says one, "suppose we come along to a man who perhaps is a murderer." Well, if he is a murderer, drop him out and connect with the next man beyond him. But the Spirit of God will be with us in this matter. We want the Latter-day Saints from this time to trace

their genealogies as far as they can, and to be sealed to their fathers and mothers. Have children sealed to their parents, and run this chain through as far as you can get it. When you get to the end, let the last man be adopted to Joseph Smith, who stands at the head of the dispensation. This is the will of the Lord to this people, and I think when you come to reflect upon it you will find it to be true.

Another principle connected with this subject I want to talk about. A man has married a woman, and they have a family of children. The man lays down in death without ever hearing the Gospel. His wife afterwards hears the Gospel and embraces it. She comes to the temple and she wants to be sealed to her husband, who was a good man. The feeling has been to deny this and to say, "No, he was not in the Church, and you cannot be sealed to your husband." Many a woman's heart has ached because of this, and as a servant of God I have broken that chain a good while ago. I have laid before every woman this principle and let her have her choice. Why deprive a woman of being sealed to her husband because he never heard the Gospel? What do any of us know with regard to him? Will he not hear the Gospel and embrace it in the spirit world? Look at Joseph Smith. Not one of Joseph Smith's fathers or brothers or sisters were in the covenant when he received the keys of the kingdom of God and translated the Book of Mormon. They afterwards received it. Every brother and sister that he had, and his father and his father's brothers, except Uncle Jesse Smith, embraced the Gospel. Now, suppose that any of these had died before they had the opportunity of entering into the covenant with the Lord through the Gospel, as his brother Alvin did; they would have been in the same position as Alvin, concerning whom the Lord, when Joseph saw him in the celestial kingdom, said:

All who have died without a knowledge of this Gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom of God; also all that shall die henceforth without a knowledge of it, who would have received it with all their hearts, shall be heirs of that kingdom, for I, the Lord, will judge all men according to their works, according to the desire of their hearts.

So it will be with your fathers. There will be very few, if any, who will not accept the Gospel. Jesus, while His body lay in the tomb, went and preached to the spirits in prison, who were destroyed in the days of Noah. After so long an imprisonment, in torment, they doubtless gladly embraced the Gospel, and if so they will be saved in the kingdom of God. The fathers of this people will embrace the Gospel. It is my duty to honor my father who begot me in the flesh. It is your duty to do the same. When you do this, the Spirit of God will be with you. And we shall continue this work, the Lord adding light to that which we have already received. I have had friends adopted to me. We all have, more or less. But I have had peculiar feelings about it, especially lately. There are men in this congregation who wish to be adopted to me. I say to them today, if they can hear me, Go and be adopted to your fathers, and save your fathers, and stand at the head of your father's house, as saviors upon Mount Zion, and God will bless you in this. This is what I

want to say, and what I want carried out in our temples.

The Almighty is with this people. We shall have all the revelations that we will need, if we will do our duty and obey the commandments of God. When any of us get so that we cannot receive these revelations, the Lord will take us out of the way and put someone in our places who can. I am here today, on borrowed time, I may say. I would have been in the spirit world today, mingling with the spirits in the presence of God, had it not been for the cry of this people for my life when I lay at the gates of death a year ago. I have been preserved by the power of God. How long I shall live I do not know. It does not make any difference to me. But while I do live I want to do my duty. I want the Latter-day Saints to do their duty. Here is the Holy Priesthood in these mountains. Their responsibility is great and mighty. The eyes of God and all the holy prophets are watching over us. This is the great dispensation that has been spoken of ever since the world began. We are gathered together in these mountains of Israel by the power and commandment of God. We are doing the work of God. This is not our home, as far as mortality is concerned. We shall soon pass away. But while here let us fill our mission. I want to say to Brother L. Snow, Brother M. W. Merrill, Brother J. D. T. McAllister and Brother D. H. Cannon, and all associated with you, carry these things before the Lord and see for yourselves. If you are not satisfied with this order of things, go and ask the Lord about it, and the Holy Ghost will reveal to you the truth of these principles.

This is all I ought to say at this time perhaps upon this subject. I am glad to meet with you. I have had a great anxiety over this matter. I have had a great desire that I might live to deliver these principles to the Latter-day Saints, for they are true. They are one step forward in the work of the ministry and in the work of the endowments in these temples of our God. When you get to the last man in the lineage, as I said before, we will adopt that man to the Prophet Joseph, and then the Prophet Joseph will take care of himself with regard to where he goes. A man may say, "I am an Apostle, or I am a High Priest, or I am an Elder in Israel, and if I am adopted to my father, will it take any honor from me?" I would say not. If Joseph Smith was sealed to his father, with whom many of you were acquainted, what effect will that have upon his exaltation and glory? None at all. Joseph Smith will hold the keys of this dispensation to the endless ages of eternity. It is the greatest dispensation God ever gave to man, and he was ordained before the world was to stand in the flesh and organize this work. He was martyred for the word of God and testimony of Jesus, and when he comes in the clouds of heaven he will wear a martyr's crown. Those of you who stand here—I do not care whether you are Apostles or what you are—by honoring your fathers you will not take any honor from your heads; you will hold the keys of the salvation of your father's house, as Joseph Smith does. You will lose nothing by honoring your fathers and redeeming your dead. It is a glorious work. When I returned from England in 1841 and heard Joseph Smith give this revelation,