

## DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BY

## ELDER MOSES THATCHER.

At the General Conference, on Tuesday Afternoon, April 8th, 1879.

REPORTED BY GEO. F. GIBBS.

In trying to address so large an audience, I earnestly desire an interest in the prayers of my brethren and sisters, that the few remarks I may offer may be dictated by the Spirit of God. There are many things that we as Elders in Israel, should always be pleased to speak of, and particularly is this the case in reference to the kindness of our Father in heaven towards us as a people. We are permitted to dwell in peace, surrounded with the blessings of life and liberty, having pleasant homes wherein to dwell, and God to be our Father and Friend. When I look around upon the homes of the Latter-day Saints and see how the elements have been changed and made so propitious, enabling us to produce food and clothing, the necessities and many of the luxuries of life, my heart is exceedingly grateful, for I must confess there is no land with which I am familiar where the blessings of God are so abundantly bestowed as in our own. It appears to me that every bud is not only willing, but does blossom, and where seed by man is broadcast in the ground it comes forth bearing twenty, thirty, or fifty fold. This, my brethren and sisters, is not the result of the work of man; but it is the blessing of our Heavenly Father. And how any human being can look upon the mountains by which we are surrounded, and gaze upon the beautiful fields and smiling nature seen on every hand, and not be able to acknowledge God in all these things is beyond my comprehension. In speaking to the young people particularly I have had sometimes pleasure in referring to the works of man, comparing them with the works of God. And while I believe it proper for us to look with pleasure upon the accomplishments of art and science, and upon the skilled workmanship of man, yet I would have our young people always realize that God is the originator; I would have them understand, as the arts and sciences are being developed and new discoveries are being brought out by what we call the genius of man, that God understood all these things before they were made known to us. And while having them admire and wonder at the grand achievement of man in chaining the lightning, thus making it to serve his purposes; and while it was the work of man that moulded and fashioned the metal into the wire over which intelligence is transmitted by the power of electricity, I would help to lead their minds beyond, so that they may comprehend that the material of which that wire is composed was the creation and work of God, and that the electricity itself is at the bidding and mandate of the great Jehovah.

I believe, my brethren and sisters, if we take proper pains in the education of the young, employing the right kind of men and women to be their preceptors, that, instead of the seeds of infidelity being sown in their minds we will have faith, and in that faith we will have the manifestations of power.

In talking with the learned of the world we find that they have but a faint conception of God and Godliness. Were you to tell them that they hate God, or that the carnal mind is at enmity against God, they would not understand you. And yet, when we come to the actual facts, we find that the learned and many professors of Christianity really do hate God. I do not mean to say they hate the God they themselves picture in their own minds; but that they hate and fight against him whose attributes and character are portrayed within the lids of the Bible. The Supreme Ruler of the universe, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, is not only the tender and loving being that the pious Christian of the 19th century pictures him to be,—he is not only willing to love and cherish and save the human family, but he is also a Being of justice and judgment, having always power enough to inflict punishment upon the breakers of his laws. Yet modern divines think with horror of a God who would inflict punishment, on the plea that such would be revengeful; and yet, neither they nor

any of our professed Christian friends would for a moment find fault with the judge of an inferior earthly court for passing judgment on a criminal, though it might lead even to the loss of the life of a fellow creature.

Having but a very short time to occupy this afternoon my remarks must necessarily be brief. But before closing I feel to bear my testimony that here in Utah is a people who are trying to serve the Lord. And I testify too, that Joseph Smith was and is a prophet of the living God, chosen of Him to open up the last dispensation to man—the dispensation of the fullness of times; and that his successor, Brigham Young, was an apostle of the Lord Jesus, and a prophet, seer and revelator. And I feel to bear my testimony that this same power and revelation rests upon his servant, Brother John Taylor. If we would live for the light of God's Holy Spirit we might see not as with eyes through a glass darkly, but with eyes that see clearly, having also ears capable of hearing, and hearts full to understand.

It is our duty, as young men, as middle aged men and as aged men to bestow great care and attention on the education of the young. It is not particularly the duty of the father, as I understand it, to place in the hands of his son the writings of Payne and other infidel authors unless they follow up the reading of such works with good sound argument, and then place the Bible and the Book of Mormon in their hands to be read and studied, and when necessary correctly explained showing wherein the Lord has wrought out the literal fulfillment of many of the predictions therein recorded. If they would do this with prayerful hearts, and with the wisdom God may give them, there will be little or nothing to fear from the reading of infidel works. I take the broad ground that in infidelity is ignorance. You meet the infidel and you will find him, as a general thing, ignorant in regard to that which is laid down in the Bible, which he claims to disbelieve. It has been so from the beginning. It is a truth that has been uttered on many occasions by the servants of God, that it is easier and more natural for mankind to believe a hundred falsehoods than to accept a single truth. It must be apparent to all, that it is more in harmony with our fallen nature to do wrong than to do right. Let six boys be taken, for instance, and be carefully taught in the principles of morality, virtue and truth; and another six in the follies and wickedness of the world and see which of the two sets will make the most rapid progress, those in the right, or those in the wrong? All will readily agree with me that immorality is more easily acquired than the virtues, and hence we may conclude that we are in a fallen world, and that we have the battle against sin to fight.

May the blessings of God rest down upon the Latter-day Saints. And by way of conclusion I will say, if we want to dream dreams or see visions, it is our privilege to do so, but we must first purify our hearts and seek to love the Lord our God with all our might, mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves; and to do unto others as we would have others do unto us. And permit me to say that in all my experience in life I have found as yet but one thing that can afford true happiness and true enjoyment, and that is a consciousness of keeping the commandments of God. And if we, Latter-day Saints, will live near unto him, he will be near unto us. And instead of having to call in physicians to minister to the members of our families when sickness makes its appearance, the power of God will be upon us in such rich abundance as to enable us to rebuke it from our dwellings, and to invoke the blessings of health and life to attend us and ours, which was the case years ago in the primeval days of the Church. If we have lost any of these blessings it is not through any fault in the Lord, or that there is less power and efficacy in the priesthood we bear, but rather in our own lack of faith in the promises made to the faithful. Amen.

The British troopship *Euphrates*, with 2,700 soldiers has left Queens-town for Natal.

An attempt to blow up the court where the military tribunal is sitting in Kieff has been discovered and frustrated.

## Correspondence.

Arizona Items.

MESA CITY, Maricopa Co., Arizona, May 18, 1879.

Editors Deseret News:

I feel it my duty to write a few lines to you to let you know something about the country that I have traveled through in the past two weeks.

I started from Forest Dale on the 1st day of May, for the purpose of visiting the Indians and Spaniards on the upper Gila River. I traveled by Camp Apache and crossed the head waters of Black and White Rivers. On the 4th inst. I arrived on the head waters of the Gila, 30 miles above San Carlos. I visited a great many of the Indian camps, also some American and Spanish camps on my way. On the 5th, I arrived at San Carlos. On the 6th, I continued my journey. On Sunday, the 11th, I stayed on Tonto Creek. There are four Gentile families settled here; they were anxious to have me preach to them, which I did. They seemed to be much pleased with the preaching, and treated me very well while I stayed with them. On Sunday they were very anxious that some "Mormon" families would come and settle near to them, as there is plenty of room on the upper Salt River, 10 miles from here. On Monday, I continued my journey for the lower Salt River, and on the 14th inst. I arrived at Brother Jones' camp on the Lower Salt River. Brother Jones has some good land here. The crops looked good, some of the wheat being ready to cut. There are 75 Indian families here; they belong to the Pimos and Maricopas, and are farming at this place. With the assistance of Brother Daniel Jones they are doing very well and will raise a good crop this year. Brother Jones deserves great credit, for the good he has done the Indians, helping them to farm, giving them food, and in fact being a father to them.

On the 15th I left Brother Jones and family to go to Mesa City, which is three miles from Brother Jones' ranch, and on arriving there was glad to see the brethren feeling well and building and improving as fast as could be expected considering the disadvantages they have had to contend with. It is the best situation for a city I have ever seen. The land is perfectly level for many miles each way. The Saints in this place are enjoying good health. The California Railroad has been finished as far as Maricopa Wells, 30 miles south. At present 20 families of the Saints are settled here, and there is room for 200 or 300 more. Fruit of all kinds can be raised here, including oranges and lemons.

There is no doubt but there can be a beautiful city built here. The wheat crop will be ready to cut in five or six days. The brethren in this place would be glad to have some of their brethren from Utah come and see this place before they locate elsewhere, as they are very anxious for more settlers to come to this valley. There is good land here and plenty of it and plenty of water to irrigate with. All kinds of grain and both sweet and Irish potatoes can be raised here. There is plenty of good land in this country for all that want to come and make them good homes, but there will be a little labor to be done before they can expect to have everything just to suit them. But I will say that those who will come to this land with the spirit of the gospel will be satisfied with the country.

The ruins of cities and villages are found all over the country where I have travelled, and are of three kinds—stone, adobe and cement. To all appearance, this country was once densely populated, but the inhabitants have passed away, and their houses have been left unto them desolate.

Your brother in the gospel,  
LLEWELLYN HARRIS.

ST. GEORGE, May 28th, 1879.

Editors Deseret News:

Last Sunday at 10 a. m., a large assembly of people congregated in our tabernacle, to witness the services of the Catholic Church, Father Scanlan, of Silver Reef, officiating. After mass, he preached a very interesting discourse in regard to the principles of their

faith, expounding some of their doctrines, and claiming that their power and right to preach was on account of direct succession of priesthood from the Apostles of our Savior. Many of our children were present and the meeting was very orderly; many no doubt attended through curiosity. Mr. Scanlan appears to be a man of considerable information, and considering his faith appears to be liberal in his views. In his opening remarks he said: "I think you are wrong, and you think I am wrong, but this should not prevent us from treating each other with due consideration and respect." It is to be hoped he may ever retain this feeling in practice as well as sentiment.

After attending service, a young girl of 16 summers, remarked to her mother, "Ma, I am converted." Her mother asked to what she was converted. Her reply was, "That I shall never be a Catholic." Listening to other creeds and faiths seems to increase the interest of our youth in the gospel as revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith.

President Snow started yesterday to attend the Parowan Conference. He will be absent about two weeks.

Weather still dry, no prospect of rain, and yet this spring thus far is the coolest I have ever experienced in Dixie.

Our Sunday schools are in a very good condition. The 3rd Ward gives a jubilee to the children next Saturday. The mutuals have adjourned their meetings until next fall. Business is dull, money scarce. Our crop of lucerne that always brings cash here will be very light. Flour is beginning to rise in price. Beef is so poor that it is scarcely eatable, yet all feel cheerful, knowing in whom they trust and acknowledging the hand of God in all things.

AMRAM.

## Sevier Stake Conference.

RICHFIELD, Sevier Co., U.T., May 25, 1879.

Editors Deseret News:

The Seventh Quarterly Conference of Sevier Stake has just closed, after a continuous session of two days commencing, pursuant to adjournment, on Saturday at 10 a. m. On Friday evening a joint session of the Young Men's and Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Associations was held, when all present listened to most interesting addresses delivered by Sisters Eliza R. Snow and M. I. Horne. The stillness of the assembly on this occasion was intense and signified the due appreciation and welcome given to our distinguished visitors.

There was a High Priests' meeting on Saturday evening, meetings in council, held by the Presidency of the Stake with the Bishops and counselors of the several wards, a meeting of the board of trade and other meetings in council held by the Sisters of the Relief societies, etc. All organizing for business in their several callings, that good may be done.

Presidents Spencer and Thurber were busily engaged throughout the whole, and manifested a more than ordinary zeal in the work of God. Much good instruction was given by them and others of the brethren influenced by the good Spirit.

The general authorities of the Church, and local authorities of the Stake were presented in the usual way, and sustained without dissent. The condition of our Sunday Schools was highly commended. Believing that great good will accrue as the result of well directed effort, and praying that the blessing of God will follow in the peaceable fruits of righteousness, I remain your friend and brother in the gospel.

WM. MORRISON, Stake Clerk.

P. S.—Sisters Snow and Horne hold other meetings here to-morrow, and in the evening of the same day at Glenwood. God bless them.

W. M.

## Reply to "Viator."

DESERET, Millard County, U. T., May 25th, 1879.

Editors Deseret News:

Noticing an article in the NEWS of April 30th, "Viator," I wish to correct it a little, as it does not state the facts in the case as they should be. Viator says that it is with difficulty the water is kept in our ditches, through the malicious actions of some of our residents. The case of damages before L. E. Crop-

per referred to could have been settled very easily without going to law, as the defendant wished to leave it with the teachers to settle, but plaintiff did not wish to do so. The ditch in dispute was the property of Ephraim Western. James Day borrowed the ditch last season promising to repair and clean, but failed to do it, to the injury of Ephraim Western. Plaintiff rowed the ditch again this spring promising to clean it, but neglected to do it, so Ephraim Western him he should shut the water until he cleaned the ditch, hence the suit for damages. Ephraim Western is the oldest settler having lived in Deseret five years and James Day has not lived here quite two. The ditch runs through Western's land and is an old race made by the old settlers of Deseret. Ephraim Western suffered considerable damages from overflow and soaking of the ditch and would like to know if when man takes up a quarter section and there is an old ditch on it, if it does not belong to the land?

"Viator" says that the defense was ably represented by worthy Bishop, J. S. Black. "Viator" is correct in saying "worthy" but Bishop Black did not come to court to plead law but to counsel the brethren to settle their difficulties and drop this lawing and counsel has always been of that nature to those whom he presides over; we have very little use of lawyers in Deseret and hope have less. We have a good people here, generally, who are trying to live their religion.

The health of the people is generally a spirit of improvement prevailing, and if we would follow the counsel of our worthy Bishop we would get along very well, spiritually and temporally.

Respectfully yours,

FILLMORE, May 21, 1879.

Editors Deseret News:

The second term of our school ended yesterday with a public examination in the State House. In manner in which the teachers, A. Greenwood, Mrs. D. Olsen, Miss E. Crane handled their subjects, and conducted their class showed that they understood the business. The exercise in primary geography by Miss Crane drew admiration of all present. Drawing, locating and answering questions would have been creditable to older pupils, and the teacher is deserving of high commendation for the pains she has taken more especially as she was without the use of wall maps. During the term 212 pupils have been enrolled, 47 have discontinued, leaving 165 at the close. The results of the quarter have, in every particular given general satisfaction to all concerned. During the quarter remarks were offered by President Hinckley and Partridge, E. Benson, of the board of trustees, and A. Greenwood.

As a teacher Brother Greenwood has done more to advance the interests of education, and help moral and social condition of society, than any other person more ever had. Opposition, ever, has made itself manifest our community, by the "Liberal" (which means sore heads) to moral instructions given by Greenwood, in the school, wishing to be known as supporters of educational interests (of which it is said our people not), they managed to vote the generous proposed tax to a small figure, at a recent meeting the taxpayers.

The schools are adjourning nine weeks, to be resumed time in August next, when calculation of the proper rates, to do all they can for our young people, fit and fittest for the world, and futurefulness in the kingdom of God regardless of any opposition.

LUKE L.

## THE DIVINE AUTHORITY OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

BY ELDER W. H. H. SHARP.

NO. II.

Before entering further into historical evidences connected with this subject I will condense history of the Book of Mormon as few words as possible to the demands of the subject. From Bible date of one hundred and