PART 2

DESERET EVENING NEWS.

9 TO 12

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

SATURDAY, MAY 26, 1894. SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

DUTY OF PARENTS TO CHILDREN.

Remarks at the General Conference of the Church, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Friday, April 6th, 1894, by

ELDER HEBER J. GRANT.

[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

It is always a pleasure to me to have the opportunity of meeting with the Latter-day Saints, and I rejoice in being present here today. I have rejoiced in the counsels that have been given, and I earnestly desire that while I may stand before you this afternoon I may have the benefit of your faith and prayers to assist me in speaking. I rejoice exceedingly in the Gospel of Jesus Christ that has been revealed in this day, and I earnestly desire that I may be able, in connection with the rest of the Latter-day Saints, to so order my life that my mind may never become darkened, that I may never depart from the truth, or break any of the covenants which I have made with the Lord. I earnestly wish to know the mind and will of my Heavenly Father and to have the ability and strength of character to carry the same out in my life. I have the same desire for all of the Latter-day Saints. I appreciate fully the fact that in proportion to our diligence, faithfulness and humility in keeping the commandments of God, He will bless us and assist us in our labors; and it is the duty of every one to seek earnestly of the Lord to learn His ways.

When I heard Brother Merrill this morning say that he had met many of the Latter-day Saints who thought it was not obligatory upon them to teach their children the plan of salvation, and to baptize them when eight years of age, he who proposed to allow their children to grow to years of accountability and then to present to them the Gospel and allow them to receive or reject it—I could not help but feel that such individuals placed their judgment and their ideas as superior to the commandments of God, that they lacked faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and that they did not have as strong testimony of the divinity of the work in which they are engaged. A man who has a testimony that we are engaged in the work of God values that testimony more than his life itself, and I believe I am safe in saying that the most earnest desire at every true Latter-day Saint is that his children may grow up in the nurture and the admonition of the Gospel, keeping the commandments of God, so that they may be saved in His kingdom. It is simply absurd to imagine that if a child has the seed of falsehood and evil sown in its mind through life, you will all at once be able to sow in that mind one crop of truth and have it bring forth a harvest of truth. I remember remarking recently at a conference that we would look upon a person as a natural born idiot who would call upon everybody who passed his farm to throw in a few seeds of weeds, to do this for a period of twenty-one years, and then expect we could now a crop of grain and expect to get a good harvest. I believe in the multiplication table, and my wife may also, but I cannot on that account expect my children to be born with a knowledge of the multiplication table in their heads. I may know that the Gospel is true, and my wife may know it, but I do not imagine for one moment that my children will be born with this knowledge. We receive a testimony of the Gospel by obeying the laws and ordinances thereof; and our children will receive that knowledge exactly the same way; and if we do not teach them, and they do not walk in the straight and narrow path that leads to eternal life, they will never receive the knowledge. I do not believe that because their children were born heirs to all the promises of the new and everlasting covenant, and that they would grow up in spite of themselves, with a knowledge of the Gospel, I want to say to you that this is not a true doctrine, and it is in direct opposition to the commandment of our Heavenly Father. We find that it is laid down to the Latter-day Saints, not as an entirety, but as a law, that they should teach their children:

> And again, inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes scattered, they shall teach them how to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, when eight years old; for on them will I lay the sin of the parents.
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> For this shall be a law unto the inhabitants of Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized.
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> And their children shall be baptized for the remission of their sins when eight years old, and receive the gift of the laying on of hands.
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> And they shall also teach their children to pray and to walk uprightly before the Lord.
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> And the inhabitants of Zion shall also observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
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> And the inhabitants of Zion, also, shall remember their labors, inasmuch as they are appointed to labor, in all faithfulness; for the idler shall not be counted among the faithful, saith the Lord.
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> Now, I the Lord, am not well pleased with the inhabitants of Zion, for there are idlers among them, and their children are growing up in wickedness, they also took not heed unto my word; for their eye was not single to my glory.
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> Therefore, things must come to be, and may be from now even from among them.

And again:

> Wherefore, I, saith the Lord, that have commanded and have not fulfilled, behold, I, the Lord, will take upon me to fulfill.
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> I command, and the hearts are opened, and their souls are enlarged, and their minds are enlightened, and their bodies are strengthened, and their tongues are loosed, and their lips are sealed, that they cannot speak, and their knees are weakened, that they cannot stand, and their feet that they cannot walk, and their arms are broken, and their eyes are dim, that they cannot see, and their ears are stopped, that they cannot hear, and their hearts are pierced, that they cannot receive, and their souls are darkened, that they cannot receive the things which I have prepared for those who love me, and keep my commandments, saith the Lord your God, even Jesus Christ, your Redeemer, the light and the life of the world, even that light which shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth not, even that light which I gave unto Moses, even that light which I gave unto my servants, even that light which I gave unto Abraham, even that light which I gave unto your father, even that light which I gave unto your father, even that light which I gave unto your father