

IT NEVER PAYS.

BY PERCIVAL STOCKMAN.

It never pays to fret and growl
When fortune seems our foe;
The better bred will push ahead
And strike the braver blow.
For luck is work,
And those who shirk
Should not lament their doom,
But yield the play
And clear the way
That better men have room.

It never pays to wreck the health
In drudging after gain,
And he is sold who thinks that gold
Is cheapest bought with pain.
An humble lot,
A cosy cot,
Have tempted even kings,
For station high,
That wealth can buy,
Not off contentment brings.

It never pays! a blunt refrain
Well worthy of a song,
For age and youth must learn this truth,
That nothing pays that's wrong.
The good and pure
Alone are sure
To bring prolonged success,
While what is right
In Heaven's sight
Is always sure to bless.

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BY

ELDER ORSON PRATT,

AT A

Special Conference, at Logan,
on Sunday Morning,
May 20th, 1877.

REPORTED BY GEO. F. GIBBS.

I WILL read a few items from scripture spoken by Mormon, which will be found on the 484th page of the Book of Mormon, European edition—

"And now there cannot be written in this book, even a hundredth part of the things which Jesus did truly teach unto the people; but behold the plates of Nephi do contain the more part of the things which he taught the people; and these things have I written, which are a lesser part of the things which he taught the people; and I have written them to the intent that they may be brought again unto this people, from the Gentiles, according to the words which Jesus hath spoken. And when they shall have received this, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, and if it so be that they shall believe these things, then shall the greater things be manifest unto them. And if it so be that they will not believe these things, then shall the greater things be withheld from them, unto their condemnation. Behold I were about to write them all which were engraved upon the plates of Nephi, but the Lord forbid it, saying, I will try the faith of my people; therefore, I, Mormon, do write the things which have been commanded me of the Lord."

The reason why I have read these words is to show to the people more fully, or to impress upon their minds the way and manner in which the Lord deals with his people. It is within his power, if he see proper to do so, to pour out upon the people a vast amount of knowledge all at once, that their minds may be completely surfeited with the abundance of the knowledge communicated to them. But the Lord has not seen proper to thus deal with the Latter-day Saints. He has another object in view than this. He intends to instruct them little by little, here a little when it is needed, and there a little when it is needed; giving them a line upon this subject when it is necessary, and there a line upon another subject, leading them along, step by step, just as a wise, careful parent would his little children, until they become instructed in every principle that would be for their good. It is not because the Lord is not willing that his intelligent children should enjoy this greater amount of knowledge; it is not because he does not desire the human family to be placed in possession of all the wisdom that their hearts are prepared to receive. He is willing, on his part, that the people should become very intelligent in regard to everything, pertaining to their future welfare. He is willing that they should know more concerning

himself, his attributes and their own, to learn concerning the glories of his kingdom and the mysteries thereof and everything that would be essential for their comfort and happiness in this world. This the Lord is willing to do in behalf of his children. But he knows far better than we do, what the people are prepared to receive, and what they are not prepared to receive; and we can see this illustrated by the words which I have read. Mormon informs us that he was about to write all the things which Jesus had taught, but the Lord expressly forbade it, and the reason, as given to Mormon for not permitting this was, that he intended to try the faith of his people in the latter-days, and of whom he said that if they would believe these things and hearken, then should the greater things be made manifest to them; but if, on the other hand, they should not believe these few things, then should the greater things be withheld from them, to their condemnation.

This reminds me of a certain saying, given in 1829, before the rise of this Church. Hyrum Smith had left his home in Manchester, N.Y., and had gone down to Susquehanna, Penn., about a hundred miles, to visit his brother Joseph, the Prophet, who was then in the act of translating the Book of Mormon. When Hyrum arrived he felt very anxious to know about his calling and ministry—whether he could not go forth to preach these glorious things. It would be very natural for a person to feel very anxious about this, for the things contained in the manuscript, so far as he had become acquainted with them, were so glorious, that he wished everybody to know about them. As will be found on page 93 Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord told Hyrum not to be in a hurry. In other words, the Lord had his own time to ordain to the ministry, his own time to send forth missionaries among the people. "Don't you be in a hurry in this matter." But said the Lord to him, "I will tell you what you may do; you should study my word which has gone forth among the children of men, and also that which shall come forth, even that which is now being translated." "Seek first to obtain my word, then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my spirit, which shall enable you to convince men of the truth." Another lesson to be learned from this is, that Hyrum, instead of being in a great hurry in this matter, was required to store up the word of God in his mind, to be thoroughly acquainted with the Jewish record, as well as that which was then being translated, until he had obtained all that the Lord should grant to the children of men in the generation that was then living—1829. We may learn that the Lord did intend to give only about so much to the generation then living.

A great many have supposed that there must be a great lack on the part of the Latter-day Saints, because spiritual knowledge is not all the time being poured down from heaven, like a flood in their midst; some become doubtful and feel to murmur and complain, one to another, carrying the idea among the people that God has forsaken Zion, that God has, in a measure, withdrawn his spirit from us; saying, "Where are the revelations such as were given in the days of Joseph?" The Lord then poured out upon us of his spirit continually; we then received record after record, book after book, etc." The reason is clearly defined here; the Lord, in his own time, will fulfill and accomplish his purposes, and he was determined, not only in these days, but he had the same determinations some fifteen centuries ago, when he talked with Mormon the prophet, that a people who should live on the earth in the last days, should have just about so much information, and no more, as far as sacred records and books are concerned. Do not misunderstand me by this expression, and carry it to the other extreme, and say, that God determines to give about so much, and then shut down the gate and give no revelation at all. But he intended, so far as the great principles of the gospel are concerned, the fundamental principles of salvation, that we should have the Bible and the Book of Mormon. Then he determined, still further, that there should be a sufficiency given from year to year, during the life-time of the prophet Joseph, to know how to properly organize the church. These further revelations

were published in the Doctrine and Covenants. These having been given as a pattern, for the commencement of the organization, the Lord has seen proper to withhold, for the time being, the giving of additional sacred records, that the saints might show their faith. "I will try the faith of my people, I will see whether they will be obedient to my commandments, and the laws which I have revealed to them. If they will be faithful—if they will practice upon that which I have given, then shall the greater things be made manifest to them. But if they will not do this, they shall be withheld from them, to their condemnation."

There will be a point, in the history of this people, when they will be counted worthy to receive all that knowledge and intelligence which the Lord has held in reserve for them, from before the foundation of the world. Such is the glorious destiny of this people, to be realized in due time. But our present work is to comply with that which God has already given, and which he may hereafter give, through the living oracles that he has placed within our midst.

Now the Lord has not shut down the gate; he has not closed up the spirit of inspiration, as all these people are witnesses. What man, unless he had been under the spirit of inspiration, and the wisdom that comes down from heaven, could have led forth this people from the midst of the wicked, and established them here in this mountain desert, and created the wonders we now behold? No man, however great might be his natural wisdom and ability, could have accomplished a work of this nature, unless aided by direct revelation. The Spirit of the living God, from the time of the death of Joseph to the present, has rested upon President B. Young, urging him forward, first to organize the people and lead them forth from the midst of their enemies, and, second, to establish them here in these mountains. He had not the experience, beforehand, to do this; he had never lived in a country where the people were accustomed to irrigate their farms; he had never lived in a country where the people necessarily were compelled to live compactly together, as we have had to do here. But he had been accustomed to live in a country where the people spread abroad wherever they took a notion to; consequently it was just as new to him, when entering these valleys, as to the rest of us. And nothing but the Spirit of the living God, the inspirations of the Holy Ghost, could have enabled him to do what he has done, and to direct all this people throughout this Territory, in regard to their settlements, not only here, but wherever the Latter-day Saints have been located. Consequently, you perceive that God has not forsaken us, the spirit of revelation has been with us. But then it has not been wisdom in God, that all this revelation should be written and published; because many things the servants of God are inspired to do under one set of circumstances, would not be required of them, under a new condition of circumstances; hence, such revelations would not become a standing law for all future time. For instance, in order to form new settlements, the circumstances are very different from what they are after you have enlarged your settlements and become numerous in population, and other duties become necessary. Consequently the Lord has imparted a little here, and a little there, and instructed and counselled the people, through his servants, what should be done in the incipient stages, or in the forming of settlements, in this mountain region.

In the midst of all this continuous organization that has been going on, ever since the rise of the Church, it is not to be wondered at, that many things have been left apparently at loose ends, for the time being, in order that the people might prove themselves. Men have been sent, year after year, to form new settlements, and to do this kind of work, and that kind, without being specially ordained to accomplish those particular duties. What for? To see whether they would manifest that the Spirit of the living God was with them, and that they were worthy of ordination; and if so, then afterwards they should be ordained and set apart, as bishops, as presidents of Stakes, etc. But one may inquire, "Why not perfect these organizations at once?" Because there is a day of

calling, which is distinct from a day of choosing. And when the Lord has called his servants and appointed them to perform a certain work, if they manifest a willingness, on their part, to exercise the wisdom that comes from God, in the performance of their duties, then perhaps the day of choosing may come, and they be set apart and ordained, according to the law contained in the Book of Covenants. It means, at this present stage of the work, having toiled now about thirty years in these mountains, that the Lord is about to "right up" the people; and he has inspired him who presides over us, to organize us more fully. Let those be chosen who have fulfilled their appointments in faithfulness; let them be ordained, and have their counselors; let them act now in a higher sphere, with more power, because they have proven themselves faithful over a few things, therefore let them be made rulers over many things. This is after the order of heaven; this is after the order of that judgment that will be more fully carried out in the great day of the Lord. Things will pass along here in time, as a pattern of things in regard to his future kingdom. They will pass along for years, until, by and by, in the great judgment day, these persons will have gained an experience and knowledge that will qualify them to act efficiently in the duties and callings to which they have been called; and they will act, not as those who are ignorant, but as men who have had a practical experience, year after year, having used their stewardship to the glory of God.

Brother Erastus Snow spoke to us very plainly, last evening, in relation to all the officers, from the commencement of the Church down to the present time. When we have done all we can do, towards organizing as far as possible, according to the written law of God, as given to us, in our weakness, have we completed the organization? By no means. The organization is only perfect as far as the people are prepared to receive it, and no further. To say that there will be a stated time, in the history of this church, during its imperfections and weakness, when the organization will be perfect, and that there will be no further extension or addition to the organization, would be a mistake. Organization is to go on, step after step, from one degree to another, just as the people increase and grow in the knowledge of the principles and laws of the kingdom of God, and as their borders shall extend. For instance, to illustrate my ideas more fully upon this point. We read, in the scriptures of truth, concerning the latter-day Zion; we read that Zion is to become a great people, "a small one to become a strong nation." We also read that out of Zion shall go forth the law. We also read that Zion is to become so glorious, in times to come, that the nations that are afar will say one to another, "Surely Zion is the City of our God, for the Lord is there; his power is there, his glory is there," etc. Now if there be a time, in the history of the latter-day Zion, that the power of God will be made manifest in their midst, so as to stir up the nations afar off, causing them to exclaim that Zion is truly the City of God; her laws are divine; let us become subject to her laws; do you suppose that we, with our present organization, after perfecting it as much as we can expect to, could be ready and prepared to send forth laws to foreign nations for their government? No. There would then be persons ordained and set apart for various purposes, not to bestow any new priesthood, for it is all included in the everlasting and eternal priesthood, after the order of the Son of God; but to set apart persons already holding the priesthood in the great organization; to receive divine laws; or, in other words, to regulate the nations, according to the laws of Zion; that they may understand her laws, and know what the divine government is, by which they are to be governed; in other words, ministers or plenipotentiaries are to be sent forth to transact business among all nations and peoples who willingly shall become subject to the laws of Zion. As to the rebellious nations, there will be none left alive. As it is written, "that nation or kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish." "Those nations shall be utterly wasted away," consequently, the nations left, who are not totally destroyed will be anxious to be governed by the laws of Zion. Hence there will be an organization before the winding up scene that will control the nations politically, giving them the privilege of remaining in their own land if they choose to do so, but subject to the laws of Zion.

I will not, however, confine the future organizations of the Church of God to the political matters of the nations. There is to be a more perfect organization between the living and the dead of all former dispensations, which organization is just as necessary as that which exists among the living, on this side of the grave. This organization will be fully completed, at a certain period, pointed to by the prophet Daniel, who says, that he saw in a night vision, and beheld until the Ancient of Days came; and he describes his great and glorious appearance; his face was like a flaming fire, and the hair of his head was white as wool; his chariots were like unto chariots of fire, and thousands thousands ministered unto him and ten thousand

times ten thousand stood before him; and the books were opened. And many things are to be accomplished when this great general assembly of immortal beings come from heaven, communicating with those who are mortal here upon the earth. In other words, every man in that immortal host, among those that shall come down from heaven, and every man among the mortal host, will understand his place and calling in this great, grand organization of the Ancient of Days; and you will find no unbroken links there. The Ancient of Days is the father of all; he is our first progenitor, and when he shall reveal himself, to set in order all of his righteous sons and daughters, he will not forget those who have already passed through former dispensations. Every dispensation will be connected; and the last dispensation of the fullness of times will have given to them the keys and powers, knowledge, and understanding, and revelations to know how to weld every link, in order that the entire chain may be completed and made perfect.

Moreover let us now come back to the living. We are commanded to build temples. Why? what is the great object of building temples in this dispensation? It is to effect the accomplishment of the very work I have hinted at; the very work of organization that must be completed, by the time the Ancient of Days shall come; the very work that must be introduced, that the children may be more perfectly cemented with the fathers of all the former dispensations; and that the Saints of all former dispensations may understand the work that is being done by their children on their behalf, so that when the heavens shall reveal them, they will find things ready to receive them. Before that time, I have no doubt, the generation will have passed away that were living in 1829; but all things will be added to those revelations that the Lord gave to that generation, namely, the records of the ancient Nephites; they existed in great numbers and are of great importance, records kept by their kings, records of the history of the Nephites for over a thousand years, records of their proceedings and of the things that God had revealed to them, records that were secret, and not permitted to come forth in the days of weakness, records that revealed all things from the foundation of the world to the end thereof, records that were kept when Jesus administered to the Nephites, the ninety-ninth part of which was not written by Mormon, all of which are to come forth. What for? To teach the Latter-day Saints how to organize, how to be prepared for the things that are coming. Then we will know something about what is termed the United Order, when we get hold of these records of the experience of the Nephites for 165 years in the Order; the experience of the people of this great western hemisphere, from the northern to the southern extremity; they will have left some records of their acts and doings that cannot fail to be of great worth to the people of these latter times.

But first, says the Lord, "I will try my people; I will perfect them; I will see whether they will be obedient to my commandments; I will reveal to them little by little; I will give them line upon line; I will impart a little light upon this subject and upon the other subject; and if my people shall enquire of me, in relation to these things, then I will teach them still more, giving them another line and another precept; I will issue forth another commandment; but if they do not inquire of me, and their hearts be found full of covetousness, and they feel in their hearts to slight these things which I have given to them, then I will withhold the greater information; I will not let them know the law which I gave to the ancient Nephites; I will withhold many things calculated to benefit them, until they learn the things that they are already taught. But when they become obedient students, obedient men and women of God, obedient to my commandments, hearkening to the voice of my servants, giving heed to the whisperings of my spirit, doing away with covetousness, then I will reveal more; I will introduce more and more of the principles of the United Order, necessary to govern the people, and to prepare them for the great day of the Lord, which is to come.

In the beginning of the dispensation it is necessary that there should be chosen vessels, raised up on purpose to bear witness of the things of God, to lay the foundation, and to establish the Gospel in the earth. To do this, it is necessary that these witnesses, though inexperienced, should receive revelations and administration of angels, that they may testify, that there may be sufficient evidence, or sufficient number of witnesses sent forth, that the Lord may be justified, in the great day of judgment, in judging the people. But how dangerous it is for people to see heavenly visions, and receive the ministrations of angels in their ignorance. How dangerous for people in their ignorance to obey the gospel! Yet shall we say that they shall not obey it, because they are very ignorant? No. Let them step forth with all their hearts and obey the Gospel, that they may be put in possession of the Holy Ghost; then if they will seek to cultivate their minds, cherishing that Spirit in their hearts, and developing every principle of righteousness, and doing away every iniquitous practice, they shall receive more and more of the Holy Spirit, with its gifts. So in regard to these heavenly manifestations.

In the year 1829 Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer and Martin Harris were chosen as witnesses to behold the angel of God; to behold the plates in the hands of the angel; to gaze upon the ancient engravings, and to hear the voice of the Lord, at the same time, proclaiming to them, that the plates had been translated correctly, and commanding them to bear record of the same to all peoples, nations