

# FUNERAL SERVICES OF ELDER WILLIAM CLAYTON.

THE funeral services of Elder William Clayton were held on Sunday morning in the Seventeenth Ward meeting-house.

There were present on the occasion many of the old-time acquaintances of the deceased, among whom were President John Taylor, Elders D. H. Wells, Jos. F. Smith, Bishop E. Hunter, H. S. Eldredge, James Cummings, Bishop Alexander McRae, M. G. Attwood, S. F. Attwood, Capt. W. H. Hooper, A. H. Raleigh, A. M. Cannon, Bishop E. Woolley, D. O. Calder, Jacob Weiler, Bishop Sheets, Jos. E. Taylor, Dr. Bernhisel, Bishop Kesler, Wm. C. Staines, Z. Snow, Jos. Horne, Geo. B. Wallace, John Pack, John Cottam, Wm. F. Cahoon, and others. In the absence of Bishop John H. Smith, his Counselor, J. Tingey acted for him in conducting the services.

The opening hymn—

"Thou dost not weep, to weep alone."

Was sung by the choir.

Prayer was offered by Elder James Cummings.

Singing by the choir—

"We have met, dear friends and brethren"

Apostle Joseph F. Smith then made the following remarks:

By request of President John Taylor, I arise to make a few remarks. I deeply and sincerely sympathize with the family, the wives and children of the deceased, Bro. William Clayton, who remain to mourn the loss of the society of their husband and father for a little season. And yet, when we consider all the circumstances, we may conclude that we have not very great cause to mourn. For when a man has lived to a good old age, worn out as it were through toil, passes away, we can realize at least that he has accomplished his mission, that he has performed his work on this earth, and is ready to return to the father from whence he came; behind the veil.

Bro. Clayton had reached a ripe age, after laboring unceasingly among his brethren from his first connection with the Church.

He has had a long and varied experience among this people. He was a friend and companion of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and it was to his pen, to a very great extent that we are indebted for the history of the Church—that is, the history of the Prophet Joseph more particularly, during his acquaintance with him and the time he acted for him as his private secretary, in the days of Nauvoo. We have the journals which he kept during that time, in the Historian's Office, from which—in connection with those of Elders Willard Richards and Wilford Woodruff and the *Times and Seasons*, a publication of the Church at that time—we have obtained the history of the Church during that period. It was his pen that wrote for the first time the revelation in relation to the eternity of the marriage covenant and of a plurality of wives. Although that revelation had been given to the Prophet Joseph many years before, it was not written until the 12th of July, 1843, at which time Elder William Clayton, acting as scribe for the prophet, wrote it from his dictation.

I am happy to say that he has left on record a statement in the shape of an affidavit, prepared by himself, in relation to this important subject, for it is a subject that is of the most vital importance, not only to the Latter-day Saints, but to the whole world; for without the knowledge contained in that revelation we never could consummate the object of our mission to this earth, we never could fulfil the purposes of God in this estate.

I have this paper in my possession and have had for a number of months past. In fact it was written at my request and then given into my care; and I have preserved it with a view, when thought proper, to have it published. And as it is a sermon of itself, it would perhaps be more interesting than anything I could say on the present occasion, and therefore, with Pres. Taylor's permission, I will read it to the congregation.

[The affidavit was then read by Elder Smith, but as he intends shortly to publish it in connection with other papers, it is for the present withheld.]

He then continued:

As I before said, I felt to read this document because of the in-

struction it would afford, and for the further object of showing that although "he is dead, he yet speaketh." For this testimony of Bro. Clayton will stand for ever, though his body moulders into dust. And I am, and so was the deceased when living, at the defiance of the world to dispute those statements. They are made from personal knowledge derived from personal associations with the Prophet Joseph Smith himself, not with a view to gain notoriety, but rather to leave behind him his testimony with regard to this important principle. He has done so. And as he has here stated, as having come from the mouth of the Prophet, this doctrine of eternal union of husband and wife and of plural marriage, is one of the most important doctrines ever revealed to man in any age of the world. Without it man would come to a full stop; without it we never could be exalted to associate with and become gods, neither could we attain to the power of eternal increase, or the blessings pronounced upon Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the fathers of the faithful.

There are but a few witnesses now living in relation to the coming forth of this revelation; there never were many that were intimately acquainted with the Prophet and his teaching upon this subject. I look around me and see a number of persons in this assembly whose heads have grown bald and grey in the service of God, and who had an intimate acquaintance with our martyred Prophet; but few, if any of them, were so closely identified with him in this matter as Brother Clayton.

There are, however, enough witnesses to these principles to establish them upon the earth in such a manner that they never can be forgotten or stamped out. For they will live; they are destined to live, and also to grow and spread abroad upon the face of the earth, to be received and accepted and adopted by all the virtuous, by all the pure in heart, by all who love the truth, and seek to serve him and keep his commandments; they are bound to prevail because they are true principles.

Now we are called upon to pay our last respects to Brother Clayton. His spirit has taken its flight; it has gone to the Father from whence it came, as is taught in the Book of Mormon. When the spirit leaves the body, it returns, says the prophet, immediately to God to be assigned to its place, either to associate with the good and the noble ones, who have lived, in the Paradise of God, or to be confined in the "prison" house to await the resurrection of the body from the grave. Therefore, we know that Brother Clayton has gone to God, gone to receive the partial judgment of the Almighty which pertains to the period intervening between the death of the body and the resurrection of the body, or the separation of the spirit from the body and their uniting together again. This judgment is passed upon the spirit alone. But there will come a time which will be after the resurrection, when the body and spirit shall be reunited, when the final judgment will be passed on every man. This is in accordance with the vision of the Apostle John the Revelator.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. That is the second death.

And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

That is the final judgment, which we will all receive after we have performed this our earthly mission.

The Savior did not finish his work when he expired on the cross, when he cried out "It is finished." He in using those words had no reference to his great mission to the earth, but merely to the agonies which he suffered. The Christian world I know say he alluded to the great work of redemption. This, however, is a great mistake, and is indicative of the extent of their knowledge of the plan of life and salvation. I say he referred merely to the agonies of death and the sufferings he felt for the wickedness of men who would go so far

as to crucify their Redeemer. It was this feeling and this alone that prompted him to cry out in the agony of his soul, "It is finished," and then he expired.

But his work was not completed; it was in fact only begun. If he had stopped here instead of his being the Savior of the world, he, as well as all mankind, would have perished irredeemably, never to have come forth out of the grave; for it was designed from the beginning that he should be the first fruits of them that slept; it was part of the great plan that he should burst the bands of death and gain the victory over the grave. If therefore his mission had ceased when he gave up the ghost, the world would have slumbered in the dust in interminable death, never to have risen to live again. It was but a small part of the mission of the Savior that was performed when he suffered death; it was indeed the lesser part; the greater had yet to be done. It was in his resurrection from the tomb, in his coming forth from death unto life, in uniting again the spirit and the body that we might become a living soul; and when this was done, then he was prepared to return to the Father. And all this was in strict accordance with the great plan of salvation. For even Christ himself, though without sin, was required to observe the outward ordinance of baptism, in order to fulfil all righteousness. So after his resurrection from the dead, he could return to the Father, there to receive the welcome plaudit, "Well done; you have done your work, you have accomplished your mission; you have wrought out salvation for all the children of Adam; you have redeemed all men from the grave; and through their obedience to the ordinances of the Gospel which you have established, they can also be redeemed from the spiritual death, again to be brought back into our presence, to partake of glory, exaltation and eternal life with us." And so it will be when we come forth out of the grave, when the trumpet shall sound, and these our bodies shall rise and our spirits shall enter into them again, and they shall become a living soul no more to be dissolved or separated, but to become inseparable, immortal, eternal.

Then we shall stand before the bar of God to be judged. So says the Bible, so says the Book of Mormon, and so say the revelations which have come direct to us through the Prophet Joseph Smith. And then those that have not been subject and obedient to the celestial law will not be quickened by the celestial glory. And those that have not been subject and obedient to the terrestrial law will not be quickened by the terrestrial glory. And those that have not been subject and obedient to the telestial law, will not be quickened by a telestial glory; but they will have a kingdom without glory. While the sons of perdition, men who had once been in possession of the light and the truth, but who turned away from it and deny the Lord, putting him to an open shame, as did the Jews when they crucified him and said, "Let his blood be upon us and upon our children; men who consent, against light and knowledge, to the shedding of innocent blood, it will be said unto them, 'Depart ye cursed, I never knew you; depart into the second death, even banishment from the presence of God for ever and ever, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched, from whence there is no redemption, neither in time nor in eternity.' Herein is the difference between the second and the first death, herein man became spiritually dead; for from the first death he may be redeemed by the blood of Christ through obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel, but from the second there is no redemption at all.

We read in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, that the devil tempted Adam and he partook of the forbidden fruit, and transgressed the commandment, wherein he became subject to the will of the devil because he yielded unto temptation, and because of this transgression he became spiritually dead, which is the first death "even that same death which is the last death, which is spiritual, which shall be pronounced upon the wicked when I shall say, depart ye cursed!"—Book of Doc. and Cov. p. 147.

But who will receive such punishment? Only those that deserve it, those that commit the unpardonable sin.

Then there is the banishment of the transgressor, (not the sons of perdition) into the prison house, a place of punishment, with no exaltation, no increase, no dominion, no power, whose inhabitants after their redemption may become servants of them that have obeyed the laws of God and kept the faith. That will be the punishment of such as reject the truth, and such as abide not in the faith, but sin not unto death.

But as touching the terrestrial kingdom, as the stars differ from each other in lustre, so those who enter into the telestial kingdom differ in glory.

"Well, now, how is it with Bro. Clayton?" He was not without faults in the flesh? But what were they? Were they such as partook of a deadly character? Did he ever deny the Lord? Did he ever deny the Prophet Joseph, or did he deny the truth or prove unfaithful to his covenants or to his brethren? No, never! I can in all truthfulness before God and man bear that testimony of our departed brother, for I have known him from my youth. Yet, he was not without his failings; but then, they were of that nature that injured nobody perhaps except himself and his own family. But notwithstanding his unflinching integrity, and his long life of fidelity and usefulness, let me say to you, that for his faults, however trivial, or important, he must answer. But he will be able to pay his debts and to answer for his failings, and he will come forth, and all that has been pronounced upon his head by Joseph Smith and by the Apostles will be confirmed upon him through all eternity; and there is no power on the earth or in hell that can deprive him of them. For as it is said—and, indeed, I need not refer you to the revelation on celestial marriage; but will quote from the words of Christ, as given in the New Testament: "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men, neither in this world neither in the world to come." Our departed friend and brother whose remains are now before us, has not sinned unto death. I would not have it understood, for a moment, that I or any of the Elders attend funerals to smother over the weaknesses of the departed dead, trying to make it appear that they were without faults, and therefore will not have to answer for any. We know that every man will be judged according to the deeds done in the body; and whether our sin be against our own peace and happiness alone or whether it affects that of others, as the Lord lives we will have to make satisfaction or atonement; God requires it, and it is according to his providences, and we cannot escape it. We must comply with the provisions of the law, which Brother Clayton, in my belief, is abundantly able to do. And when this shall have been done, he will come forth to receive his crown, his glory, dominion and kingdom, and the blessings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob which have been pronounced upon his head.

Then, let me say to the family of our deceased brother, Follow in the footsteps of your husband and father, excepting wherein he may have manifested the weaknesses of the flesh; imitate his staunch integrity to the cause of Zion, and his fidelity to his brethren; be true as he was true, be firm as he was firm, never flinching, never swerving from the truth as God has revealed it to us; and I will promise you, in the name of the Lord, that you will rise, to meet your husband and father, in the morning of the first resurrection, clothed with glory, immortality and eternal lives. Which may God grant, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

The following hymn, which was composed by the deceased, under the peculiar circumstances that attended the church in its early rise, was then sung with marked effect, by the choir and congregation.

When first the glorious light of truth  
Burst forth in this last age,  
How few there were with heart and soul  
T' obey! did engage!  
Yet of those few how many  
Have passed from earth away,  
And in their graves are sleeping  
Till the Resurrection day!

How many on Missouri's plains  
Were left in death's embrace—  
Pure, honest hearts, too good to live  
In such a wicked place:

And are they left in sorrow  
And doubt to pine away?  
Oh, no; in peace they're sleeping  
Till the Resurrection day.

And in Nauvoo, the city where  
The Temple cheered the brave  
Hundreds of faithful Saints have found  
A cold yet peaceful grave;  
And there they now are sleeping  
Beneath the silent clay.  
But soon they'll share the glories  
Of a resurrection day.

Our Patriarch and Prophet too  
Were massacred, they bled  
To seal their testimony,  
They were numbered with the dead  
Ah, tell me are they sleeping?  
Methinks I hear them say,  
"Death's icy chains are bursting!  
'Tis the Resurrection day!"

And here in this sweet, peaceful vale,  
The shafts of death are hurled,  
And many faithful Saints are called  
To enjoy a better world.  
And friends are often weeping  
For their friends who pass away,  
And in their graves are sleeping  
Till the Resurrection day.

Why should we mourn because we leave  
These scenes of toil and pain?  
O happy change! the faithful go  
Celestial joys to gain;  
And soon we all shall follow  
To realms of endless day,  
And taste the joyous glories  
Of a Resurrection day.

ELDER ELIAS SMITH

Then said it was at the request of President Taylor he arose to make a very few remarks, which he would do if he could overcome the feelings which then pervaded his bosom, which arose from his long and intimate attachment to his departed friend, and the infirmity from which he had suffered nearly the entire period of his life.

This solemn occasion brought fresh to his memory many things that had transpired in the history of himself and the deceased. He apologized to the family who were called upon to mourn the loss of their beloved husband and father, for not visiting the deceased during his last sickness. It was not because his love and esteem for him had abated in the least, but rather from infirmities from which he himself had been suffering, together with the press of business that had of late crowded upon him. He sympathized with the family in their bereavement, and said that when everything was considered in the light of the glorious Gospel, there was really nothing to mourn for after all. Bro. Clayton was a true man all his days. He never denied his God or his religion, he never betrayed a friend. In his long and intimate acquaintance with him, whether in private conversation or otherwise, he found that he could always depend upon his word; when Brother Clayton told him anything he always believed it, he could take his word just as confidently without being under oath as he could with.

There were some things connected with the history of the deceased and himself which were known only to themselves. One of them was associated with his (the speaker's) refusing to do what he was counseled to, which, he said, was the first and only time he ever did such a thing; he had his motives for so refusing, for which, he said, if he had done wrong, he expected to pay the penalty. Elder Smith said he was pleased to hear Brother Joseph F. remark that Brother Clayton was able to atone for any and everything he might have done that was wrong; he (the speaker) hoped to be able to do the same. That little incident in his early life, however, had changed his circumstances ever since he had been in this country, and sometimes he thought he was paying the debt; if so, it was all right, he would rather his sins go before him than follow after.

The speaker concluded by invoking the blessing and mercy of God upon the family of the departed dead, and hoped his children would remain true and faithful to the cause of God, and live to emulate their father's virtues.

ELDER DANIEL H. WELLS.

I cannot well let the opportunity offered pass without adding my tribute of respect to the memory of our departed friend. Brother Wm. Clayton was a friend to this people, a friend of God, a friend of the Prophet Joseph, and a friend to the Priesthood. A very companionable man to talk with. I was frequently in his company while in this Territory more particularly, and it always afforded me