

THE MARRIAGE FEAST.

The following song which used to be sung to the air of "A life on the ocean wave," is reproduced by special request.

O come to the marriage feast,
Where the glittering tables wait,
Where the great shall be the least
And the least shall be the great;
From the street and the bleak highway,
From hovel and hut and shed,
'Tis the feast of the Lord to-day,
The giver of life and bread.

Oh, stay thee, thou proud Pharisee,
Oh, stay thee, thou changer of gold,
Thou' gorgeous thy garment may be,
There's a stain on its glittering fold.
See, there is the tear of the child!
See, there is the blood of the poor!
The feast of the Lord is defiled;
Away with him out from the door.

Oh, stay thee, thou hypocrite priest,
Who of religion hast made a mock,
Whoever bid thee to my feast
O'ergorged with the spoils of my flock?
Thou sinner of all most abhorred,
Thy temples of Baal are no more,
Come seize him ye Saints of the Lord,
Away with him out from the door.

Oh, stay thee, thou scourge of the brave,
Oh, stay thee, thou proud sceptred thing,
'Twas not mine the unction they gave,
Of thee, the devil made king.
Thou has ruled by the axe and the sword,
Thou hast lived by the blood of the poor,
Not for thee is the feast of the Lord,
Away with him out from the door.

Who art thou, with thy parchment and gown?
Who of justice hast made a trade,
In the gospel my laws are writ down,
I know not the laws ye have made,
Who art thou, with thy forehead accursed,
Deep tinted with blood to the knee?
I doomed the one Cain at the first,
The last shall perish as he.

'Tis thus they are cast from the door,
And the doom they preached of so fast,
With which they long frightened the poor,
Is reserved for themselves at the last.
And the hell that of earth they have made,
And the heaven we knew but by name
Since this manifold man, Satan, fell,
Are found to be one and the same.

Without there is gnashing of teeth,
Without there is wringing of hands,
'Twixt His servants' dread life and death,
The Lord of the universe stands.
From before him they flee, priest and king,
All the lords of land, labor and gold,
They come from each new tyrant thing,
From each canker worm privileged old.

Then come to the marriage feast,
Where the glittering tables wait,
Where the great shall be the least
And the least shall be the great,
By the borders where Adam once trod,
The garden of Paradise spread,
The God of our praise is the God
Of the living and not of the dead.

DISCOURSE

BY

PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR

DELIVERED

In the Tabernacle, Ogden City,
Sunday Morning, July 18th,
1880.

REPORTED BY JAMES TAYLOR.

I AM pleased this morning to have the opportunity of meeting with the Saints in this place. If you will try to be still, I will endeavor to lay before you a few principles on the subject, concerning which your President enquired of me a few days ago. It seems that there have been, some where in this Stake, difficulties existing between the Bishop of a Ward and certain members of his Ward. Failing to arrive at an amicable settlement, the parties appealed, against the Bishop, to the High Council. President Peery sent a telegram desiring my answer to the question "Whether a High Council had authority to try a Bishop." I could have answered yes, and I could have answered no, to that question; but it was a matter that would require some explanation, and on which the brethren, in many instances, are not very well informed, I knew it would be almost useless to give an answer of that kind, without making some little explanation thereto, because there are some things with which more than one truth is connected.

If you were to ask me whether I am dressed in woolen clothes or cotton, I could not give you an answer, in the simple words yes or no, because part of them are woolen, part of them cotton, and part of them linen; and I should need time to explain.

There are many questions pertaining

ing to the Priesthood, which cannot be answered categorically without further explanation, and as this is a conference, I wish to make a few remarks concerning some of them; but I do not propose to enter into all the details of these matters; there would not be time, nor half time, nor a quarter time. I simply propose to make a few remarks in regard to the question that was asked me by your President.

I will here read on this subject a passage that people take up some times, without understanding it, and, consequently, when they do so, they are apt to make quite a number of mistakes. The passage to which I will refer you, is the 22nd verse of the 68th section, in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. After reading it, you would think you had got the whole answer, but then you might not have it, although you might think you had.

"And again, no Bishop or High Priest who shall be set apart for this ministry, shall be tried or condemned for any crime, save it be before the First Presidency of the Church."

Now, does not that look very plain? It does, when apart from the context, and if we do not examine the other parts associated therewith. I will further read some more pertaining to this matter, which will be found in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, page 249, section 68.

"Ver. 14. There remaineth hereafter in the due time of the Lord, other Bishops to be set apart unto the Church, to minister even according to the first;

"15. Wherefore they shall be High Priests who are worthy, and they shall be appointed by the First Presidency of the Melchisedek Priesthood, except they be literal descendants of Aaron;

"16. And if they be literal descendants of Aaron, they have a legal right to the Bishopric, if they are the first born among the sons of Aaron;

"17. For the firstborn holds the right of the Presidency over this Priesthood, and the keys or authority of the same."

Now, I desire to draw your attention to one thing very distinctly, that you may comprehend—"For the first born holds the right of presidency over this Priesthood." Over what priesthood? The Bishopric. There is a presidency in that Priesthood; and this first born of the literal descendants of Aaron would have a legal right to that Presidency. No man has a legal right to this office, to hold the keys of this Priesthood, except he be a literal descendant of Aaron, and the first born among his sons. Then, he would have a legal right to it. I could tell you the reason why, but it would take too long a time; and these things will be spoken of hereafter more fully. But I wish to speak of one or two leading principles pertaining to this subject; and as a High Priest of the Melchisedek Priesthood has authority to officiate in all the lesser offices, he may officiate in the office of Bishop, when no literal descendant of Aaron can be found, and it is stated, "And they shall be set apart under the hands of the first presidency of the Melchisedek Priesthood." To what authority? To what power? To what calling? To what Bishopric? To the Presiding Bishopric. This is what is here referred to:

"Verse 20. And a literal descendant of Aaron, also, must be designated by this Presidency, and found worthy, and anointed, and ordained under the hands of this Presidency, otherwise they are not legally authorized to officiate in their Priesthood;

"21. But by virtue of the decree concerning their right of the Priesthood descending from father to son they may claim their anointing, if at any time they can prove their lineage, or do ascertain it by revelation from the Lord under the hands of the above named Presidency."

Without that the Presiding Bishop could not be set apart, because there is where the authority is placed.

"22. And again, no Bishop or High Priest who shall be set apart for this ministry, shall be tried or condemned for any crime, save it be before the First Presidency of the Church."

In regard to what ministry? Why the presidency of the Aaronic Priesthood. That is what is here spoken of.

"23. And inasmuch as he is found guilty before this Presidency, by testimony that cannot be impeached, he shall be condemned;

"24. And if he repents he shall be forgiven, according to the covenants and commandments of the Church."

Now, then, I will read you something more on the same subject, which will be found in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, page 383, section 107:

"Verse 1. There are, in the Church, two priesthoods, namely, the Melchisedek and Aaronic, including the Levitical priesthood.

"2. Why the first is called the Melchisedek Priesthood, is because Melchisedek was such a great High Priest.

"3. Before his day it was called the holy priesthood after the order of the Son of God;

"4. But out of respect or reverence to the name of the Supreme Being to avoid the too frequent repetition of His name, they, the Church, in ancient days, called that priesthood after Melchisedek, or the Melchisedek Priesthood.

"5. All other authorities or offices in the Church are appendages to this Priesthood."

"6. But there are two divisions or grand heads—one is the Melchisedek Priesthood, and the other is the Aaronic, or Levitical Priesthood.

"7. The office of an Elder comes under the Priesthood of Melchisedek.

"8. The Melchisedek Priesthood holds the right of presidency, and has power and authority over all the offices in the Church in all ages of the world, to administer in spiritual things."

Now here is a principle developed that I wish to call your attention to, and that is, that it is the especial prerogative of the Melchisedek Priesthood and has been "in all ages of the world, to administer in spiritual things," and to have the right of presidency in those things.

But then, here is another distinction that I wish to call your attention to, at the same time, which is found in the next verse:

"9. The Presidency of the High Priesthood, after the order of Melchisedek, have a right to officiate in all the offices in the Church—spiritual or temporal."

But there is a difference between the general authority of the Melchisedek Priesthood and the one that is designated, that presides over them all; and that which presides over the whole has the right to administer in all things. The Aaronic Priesthood is an appendage unto the Melchisedek Priesthood, and is under its direction.

I mention these things that you Bishops, and you Seventies, and you High Priests, and you Elders, and you High Councilors, and you Presidents of Stakes and Councilors, may comprehend the position of things, as here indicated; and, as was said formerly, I think it was by Paul, "that you may be able to rightly divide the word of truth, and give to every man his portion in due season."

These principles are written here, and are very plain, if they are understood, but if not understood, then they are mysterious, and it is required of us to make ourselves acquainted with the principles inculcated and herein developed. The things that I have mentioned are plain to the minds of all intelligent Latter-day Saints, who have studied the Doctrine and Covenants on these points.

"Ver. 10. High Priests after the order of the Melchisedek Priesthood, have a right to officiate in their own standing, under the direction of the Presidency, in administering spiritual things; and also in the office of an Elder, Priest, (of the Levitical order,) Teacher, Deacon, and Member."

That is the reason why, as soon as they possess this Priesthood and right, if they are appointed to any particular office in the Church, they have a right to administer in that office.

I will now speak a little upon the High Priesthood. This High Priesthood, we are told, has held the right of Presidency in all ages of the world. But there is a difference between the general powers of the Priesthood, and the particular office and calling to which men are set apart; and you, when I tell you, will understand it very easily. For instance, the Presidency of the Priesthood, or the Presidency of the Church, are High Priests. The Twelve are High Priest. The Presidents of Stakes and their Councilors, the High Council of a Stake, and of all the Stakes, are High Priests. The Bishops are ordained and set apart through the High Priesthood, and stand in the same capacity; and thus Bishops and their Councilors are High Priests. Now, these things you all know. There is nothing mysterious about them.

There is another question associated with this matter. Because a man is a High Priest, is he an Apostle? No. Because a man is a High Priest, is he the President of a Stake, or the Counselor to the President of a Stake? No. Because he is a High Priest, is he a Bishop? No, not by any means. And so on, in all the various offices. The High Priesthood holds the authority to administer in those ordinances, offices, and places, when they are appointed by the proper authorities, and at no other time; and while they are sustained also by the people. Now these are the distinctions that I wish to draw, simply to classify them. And when there is anything said about a High Priest, you say, "I am a High Priest, and if such a man has authority, I have it!" You have it if you have been appointed to it, or you have not if you have not.

You have it if you are appointed to fill the office, and are properly called and set apart to that office; but unless you are, you have not got that office, but still you are a High Priest; and "High Priests after the order of the Melchisedek Priesthood have a right to officiate in their own standing under the direction of the Presidency, in administering spiritual things;" but they must be under that direction of Presidency. Now

here is where the question comes in. Is it not plain when you look at it? To me it is very distinct and pointed, and it is to you who are intelligent and have studied these things. It is not because a man holds a certain class of Priesthood that he is to administer in all the offices of that Priesthood. He administers in them only as he is called and set apart for that purpose. Hence, as you are organized here, you have a Presidency. They were presented here for you to vote upon, and after that they were set apart to administer in that office. But supposing Brother Peery and his counselors had not been called and set apart, would they have a right to administer in the office of the Presidency? No, they would not; and you can all see it when you reflect upon it.

Now then, as we have read, a High Priest, after the order of the Melchisedek Priesthood, has the right to administer under the direction of the Presidency, in all spiritual things, and also in the office of an Elder, Priest, Teacher, Deacon and member. And in the following verses we read that:

"11. An Elder has the right to officiate in his stead when the High Priest is not present.

"12. The High Priest and Elder are to administer in spiritual things, agreeable to the covenants and commandments of the Church; and they have a right to officiate in all these offices of the Church when there are no higher authorities present.

"13. The second Priesthood is called the Priesthood of Aaron, because it was conferred upon Aaron and his seed throughout all their generations.

"14. Why it is called the lesser priesthood, is because it is an appendage to the greater or the Melchisedek Priesthood, and has power in administering outward ordinances.

"15. The High Priest is the presidency of this Priesthood, and holds the keys or authority of the same."

We will read a little further:

"16. No man has a legal right to this office"—To hold the keys of this Priesthood—"Except he be a literal descendant of Aaron."

That is, he has no legal right; but in regard to certain conditions pertaining to this right, I do not propose to enter into an investigation this morning.

"Ver. 17. But as a High Priest of the Melchisedek Priesthood has authority to officiate in all the lesser offices, he may officiate in the office of Bishop when no literal descendant of Aaron can be found, provided he is called and set apart, and ordained unto this power by the hands of the Presidency of the Melchisedek Priesthood."

To what power? To hold the keys of this Priesthood, and to preside over the Aaronic Priesthood.

"Ver. 18. The power and authority of the higher or Melchisedek Priesthood, is to hold the keys of all the spiritual blessings of the Church."

"19. To have the privilege of receiving the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven—to have the heavens opened unto them—to commune with the general assembly and Church of the first born, and to enjoy the communion and presence of God the Father, and Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant.

"20. The power and authority of the lesser, or Aaronic Priesthood, is to hold the keys of the ministering of angels, and to administer in outward ordinances the letter of the gospel—the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, agreeable to the covenants and commandments.

"21. Of necessity there are presidents, or presiding officers, growing out of, or appointed of or from among those who are ordained to the several offices in these two Priesthoods.

"22. Of the Melchisedek Priesthood, three Presiding High Priests, chosen by the body, appointed and ordained to that office, and upheld by the confidence, faith and prayer of the Church, form a quorum of the Presidency of the Church.

"23. The twelve traveling councilors are called to be the Twelve Apostles, or special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world; thus differing from other officers in the Church in the duties of their calling.

"24. And they form a quorum, equal in authority and power to the three Presidents previously mentioned.

"25. The Seventy are also called to preach the gospel, and to be special witnesses unto the Gentiles and in all the world; thus differing from other officers in the Church in the duties of their calling.

"26. And they form a quorum equal in authority to that of the twelve special witnesses or Apostles just named.

"27. And every decision made by either of these quorums, must be by the unanimous voice of the same; that is, every member in each quorum must be agreed to its decisions, in order to make their decisions of the same power or validity one with the other.

"28. (A majority may form a quorum when circumstances render it impossible to be otherwise.)

"29. Unless this is the case, their decisions are not entitled to the same blessings which the decisions of a quorum of three Presidents were anciently, who were ordained after the order of Melchisedek, and were righteous and holy men.

"30. The decisions of these quorums, or either of them, are to be made in all righteousness, in holiness, and lowliness of heart, meekness and long suffering, and in faith and virtue, and knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity.

"31. Because the promise is, if these things abound in them, they shall not be unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord."

Again, we read in the same section, page 389:

"Ver. 60. Verily, I say unto you, says the Lord of hosts: there must needs be presiding Elders to preside over those who are of the office of an Elder."

"61. And also Priests to preside over those who are of the office of a Priest."

"62. And also Teachers to preside over those who are of the office of a Teacher in like manner, and also the Deacons."

"63. Wherefore, from Deacon to Teacher, and from Teacher to Priest, and from Priest to Elder, severally as they are appointed, according to the covenants and commandments of the Church."

"64. Then comes the High Priesthood, which is the greatest of all:

"65. Wherefore it must needs be that one be appointed of the High Priesthood to preside over the Priesthood, and he shall be called President of the High Priesthood of the Church;

"66. Or, in other words, the Presiding High Priest over the High Priesthood of the Church;

"67. From the same comes the administering of ordinances and blessings upon the Church, by the laying on of the hands.

"68. Wherefore the office of a Bishop is not equal unto it; for the office of a Bishop is in administering all temporal things;

"69. Nevertheless a Bishop must be chosen from the High Priesthood, unless he is a literal descendant of Aaron;

"70. For unless he is a literal descendant of Aaron he cannot hold the keys of that Priesthood."

You see the keys of this Priesthood are specifically mentioned whenever the Presidency is mentioned; and whenever the rights of the literal descendants of Aaron are mentioned, it is to hold the keys of this Priesthood.

"Ver. 71. Nevertheless, a High Priest that is after the order of Melchisedek, may be set apart unto the ministering of temporal things, having a knowledge of them by the spirit of truth,

"72. And also to be a judge in Israel, to do the business of the Church, to sit in judgement upon transgressors, upon testimony as it shall be laid before him according to the laws, by the assistance of his counselors whom he has chosen, or will choose, among the Elders of the Church.

"73. This is the duty of a Bishop who is not a literal descendant of Aaron, but has been ordained to the High Priesthood after the order of Melchisedek.

"74. Thus shall he be a judge, even a common judge among the inhabitants of Zion, or in a stake of Zion, or in any branch of the Church where he shall be set apart unto this ministry, until the borders of Zion are enlarged; and it becomes necessary to have other Bishops or judges in Zion, or elsewhere.

"75. And inasmuch as there are other Bishops appointed, they shall act in the same office."

"76. But a literal descendant of Aaron has a legal right to the presidency of this Priesthood, to the keys of this ministry to act in the office of Bishop, independently, without Counselors, except in a case where a President of the High Priesthood after the order of Melchisedek is tried, to sit as a judge in Israel.

"77. And the decision of either of these councils, agreeable to the commandment which says:

"78. Again, verily, I say unto you, the most important business of the Church, and the most difficult cases of the Church, inasmuch as there is not satisfaction upon the decision of the Bishop or Judges, it shall be handed over and carried up unto the Council of the Church, before the Presidency of the High Priesthood."

"79. And the Presidency of the Council of the High Priesthood shall have power to call over High Priests, even twelve, to assist as Counselors; and thus the Presidency of the High Priesthood and its Counselors shall have power to decide upon testimony according to the laws of the Church."

"80. And after this decision it shall be had in remembrance no more before the Lord; for this is the highest Council of the Church of God, and a final decision upon controversies in spiritual matters."

"81. There is not any person belonging to the Church who is exempt from this Council of the Church."

"82. And inasmuch as a President of the High Priesthood shall transgress, he shall be had in remembrance before the Common Council of the Church, who shall be assisted by twelve Counselors of the High Priesthood."

"83. And their decision upon his head shall be an end of controversy concerning him."

"84. Thus, now shall be exempted from the justice and the laws of God, that all things may be done in order and in solemnity before Him, according to truth and righteousness."

I will read you a little more on this subject: (Doctrine and Covenants, sec. 124, page 431.)

"Ver. 20. And again, verily I say unto you, my servant George Miller is without guile; he may be trusted because of the integrity of his heart, and for the love which he has to my testimony I, the Lord, love him;

"21. I therefore say unto you, I seal upon his head the office of a Bishopric, like unto my servant Edward Partridge, that he may receive the consecrations of mine house, that he may administer blessings upon the heads of the poor of my people saith the Lord. Let no man despise my servant George, for he shall honor me.

I would remark here that Edward Partridge was the first Bishop of the Church, and that he was appointed at an early day to go to the land of Zion, and to preside over the Bishopric in that district of country. He was to purchase lands for the people that should gather there; he was to receive the consecrations of the people when they should present themselves to him; he was to divide up the inheritances for the people, and to sit as a common judge, in Israel and hence he held charge, not as the Bishops do here, over a particular ward, but over the whole of that district of country in the land of Zion. I would remark, again, that Bishop Whitney was chosen and set apart as a Bishop to manage the affairs in Kirtland, Geauga County, Ohio, and not only there, but to preside over all affairs associated with that Bishopric in all of that country, and occupied the position of a general Bishop, presiding over a large district of country, the same as Edward Partridge did in Zion. But