

## PROVO CONFERENCE.

REMARKS BY PRES. BRIGHAM YOUNG, BOWERY AT PROVO, SATURDAY MORNING, JULY 14, 1855.

[REPORTED BY J. V. LONG.]

I have a few words to say concerning one item of doctrine that I seldom think of mentioning before a public congregation; I refer to the doctrine pertaining to raising up a royal priesthood to the name of Israel's God, for which purpose the revelation was given to Joseph concerning the right of faithful Elders in taking to themselves more than one wife. I frequently hear from others that this doctrine is laughed at and ridiculed; I heard yesterday of its being laughed out of doors, even jeered and sneered out of a Bishop's house.

I am not personally cognizant of any one's jeering at and deriding this doctrine, still I hear that there are some few who are opposed to it. Once in a while sentiments reach my ears which sound very curious and strange, and when I hear them I do really wish that some were possessed of better sense; I will therefore tell you a few things that you should know. God never introduced the Patriarchal order of marriage with a view to please man in his carnal desires, nor to punish females for any thing which they had done, but he introduced it for the express purpose of raising up to his name a royal priesthood, a peculiar people. Do we not see the benefit of it? Yes, we have lived long enough to realize its advantages.

Suppose that I had had the privilege of having only one wife, I should have had only three sons, for those are all that my first wife bore, whereas I now have buried five sons and have thirteen living.

It is obvious that I could not have been blessed with such a family if I had been restricted to one wife, but by the introduction of this law I can be the instrument in preparing tabernacles for those spirits which have to come in this dispensation. Under this law I and my brethren are preparing tabernacles for those spirits which have been preserved to enter into bodies of honor and be taught the pure principles of life and salvation, and those tabernacles will grow up and become mighty in the kingdom of our God.

I believe that our children will become mighty in faith, be powerful in defending the truth, and will soon have to take important places in the great work of this dispensation. They may be rude at present, yet you will find within them the true principles of 'Mormonism,' and when our sons become men they will be men of God, and be useful in accomplishing a good work upon the earth.

The spirits which are reserved have to be born into the world, and the Lord will prepare some way for them to have tabernacles. Spirits must be born even if they have to come to brothers for their fleshly coverings, and many of them will take the lowest and meanest spirit house that there is in the world, rather than do without, and will say, "let me have a tabernacle, that I may have a chance to be perfected."

The Lord has instituted this plan for a holy purpose, and not with a design to afflict or distress the people, hence an important and imperative duty is placed upon all holy men and women, and the reward will follow, for it is said that the children will add to our honor and glory.

It hurts my feelings when I see good men, men who love correct principles and cling to the counsels of the church, who have lived near to God for years and have always been faithful, with not a child to bear up their names to future generations, and I grieve to reflect that their names must go into the grave with them.

It would please me to see good men and women have families; I would like to have righteous men take more wives and raise up holy children. Some say, "I would do so, but br. Joseph and br. Brigham have never told me to do it."

This law was never given of the Lord for any but his faithful children; it is not for the ungodly at all; no man has a right to a wife, or wives, unless he honors his priesthood and magnifies his calling before God.

I foresaw, when Joseph first made known this doctrine, that it would be a trial, and a source of great care and anxiety to the brethren, and what of that? We are to gird up our loins and fulfill this, just as we would any other duty. (High wind and clouds of dust prevented speaking for several seconds.)

It has been strenuously urged by many that this doctrine was introduced through lust, but that is a gross misrepresentation. (A thick cloud of dust prevented speaking for about two minutes.)

This revelation, which God gave to Joseph, was for the express purpose of providing a channel for the organization of tabernacles for those spirits to occupy who have been reserved to come forth in the kingdom of God, and that they might not be obliged to take tabernacles out of the kingdom of God.

We are commanded to overcome all our lustful desires, also our pride, selfishness and every evil propensity that pertains to the flesh, to keep the commandments of God and all the commandments pertaining to the holy priesthood.

It is important that we get a victory over our earthly passions and learn to live by the law of God.

I am aware that care and other duties are greatly increased by the law which I am remarking upon, this I know by experience, yet though it adds to our care and labor we should say,—"not my will but thine, O Lord, be done."

As far as my acquaintance extends, the brethren who have entered into this order, with a pure heart, have enjoyed full as much worldly prosperity as they did before the prophet Joseph revealed this holy law and order to the Latter Day Saints.

The Lord intended that our family cares should be greater, he knew they would be, yet he is able to bless us in proportion. I know quite a number of men in this church who will not take any more women, because they do not wish to take care of them; a contracted spirit causes that feeling. I have also known some in my past life, who have said that they did not desire to have their wives bear any children, and some even take measures to prevent it; there are a few such persons in this church.

When I see a man in this church with those feelings and hear him say, 'I do not wish to enlarge my family, because it will bring care upon me,' I conclude that he has more or less of the old sectarian leaven about him, and that he does not understand the glory of the celestial kingdom.

Says one, "how will you explain this to me?" We understand that we are to be made kings and priests unto God, now if I be made the king and lawgiver to my family, and if I have many sons, I shall become the father of many fathers, for they will have sons and their sons will have sons, and so on, from generation to generation, and in this way I may become the father of many fathers, or the king of many kings. This will constitute every man a prince, king, lord, or whatever the Father sees fit to confer upon us.

In this way we can become king of kings and Lord or Lords, or father of fathers, or prince of princes, and this is the only course, for another man is not agoing to raise up a kingdom for you.

If I did not feel disposed, in my poverty, to enlarge my family and to build up the kingdom, I could not be acquainted with the difficulties thereof, neither should I be counted worthy to enjoy the blessings conferred upon those who are faithful.

This should be the view taken of this matter by the whole of this people, and, when a man or woman sees that this principle should be introduced among the Latter Day Saints, they should cease their murmurings.

It is not through lust that men and women are to practice this doctrine, but it is to be observed upon righteous principles; and if men and women would pay attention to those instructions I would promise, in the name of the Lord, that you would never find them lustful in their dispositions, and you might watch them as closely as you pleased.

Plurality of wives is not designed to afflict you nor me, but it is purposed for our exaltation in the kingdoms of God. If any man had asked me what was my choice when Joseph revealed that doctrine, provided that it would not diminish my glory, I would have said, "let me have but one wife;" not because it is not a great comfort to me to have children, but if I have not children I know them not.

Some of these my brethren know what my feelings were at the time Joseph revealed the doctrine; I was not desirous of shrinking from any duty nor of failing in the least to do as I was commanded, but it was the first time in my life that I had desired the grave, and I could hardly get over it for a long time. And when I saw a funeral I felt to envy the corpse its situation, and to regret that I was not in the coffin, knowing the toil and labor that my body would have to undergo; and I have had to examine myself, from that day to this, and watch my faith and carefully meditate, lest I should be found desiring the grave more than I ought to do.

You will probably wonder at this, and that such should have been my feelings upon this point, but they were even so.

Now if any of you will deny the plurality of wives and continue to do so, I promise that you will be damned; and I will go still further and say, take this revelation, or any other revelation that the Lord has given, and deny it in your feelings, and I promise that you will be damned.

But the saints who live their religion will be exalted, for they never will deny any revelation which the Lord has given or may give, though, when there is a doctrine coming to them which they cannot comprehend fully, they may be found saying, 'the Lord sendeth this unto me, and I pray that he will save and preserve me from denying anything which proceedeth from him, and give me patience to wait until I can understand it for myself.'

Such persons will never deny, but will allow those subjects, which they do not understand, to remain until the visions of their minds become open. This is the course which I have invariably pursued, and if anything came that I could not understand I would pray until I could comprehend it.

Do not reject anything because it is new or strange, and do not sneer nor jeer at what comes from the Lord, for if we do we endanger our salvation. It is given to us, as agents, to choose or refuse, as br. S. W. Richards has set before you, but we are agents within limits; if it were not so there would be no law.

There are limits to agency, and to all things and all beings, and our agency must not infringe upon that law. A man must choose life or death, and if he choose death he will find himself abridged, and that the agency which is given to him is so bound up that he cannot exercise it in opposition to the law, without laying himself liable to be corrected and punished by the Almighty.

A man can dispose of his agency, or of his birth right, as did Esau of old, but when disposed of he cannot again obtain it; consequently it

behoooves us to be careful and not forfeit the agency that is given to us. The difference between the righteous and the sinner, eternal life or death, happiness or misery, is this, to those who are exalted there are no bounds or limits to their privileges, their blessings have a continuation, and to their kingdoms thrones and dominions, principalities and powers there is no end, but they increase through all eternity; whereas those who reject the offer, who despise the proffered mercies of the Lord and prepare themselves to be banished from his presence and to become companions of the devils, have their agency abridged immediately, and bounds and limits are put to their operations.

The power of the devil is limited, the power of God is unlimited, therefore let us be cautious how we use our liberty and agency, and be careful to choose that which is good and right before the Lord, and then our exaltation is sure.

I now wish to say a few words concerning your meeting house. When br. Geo. A. Smith concluded to make his home here, for a little while, we thought we would erect an old fashioned meeting house, believing that it would look so good, and we thought to have a bell put in the belfry, and I believe that the foundation for such a building was commenced three years ago.

I was just thinking what a smart people dwell here; three years ago they threw out a few shovels full of earth to prepare for a foundation, and at that the labor ended. I was talking to some of the brethren about it to-day, and was wondering, if I were to come here to live this summer, whether I could not get this meeting house built; I think that I have lightning enough to accomplish it. Tell the people what I wanted and they would come with the timber, and the adobies would be piled up and the building finished.

But I wish to tell you how it can be done without my coming here, that is if you have a man here in whom you have confidence, though I do not know whether there is a man in this settlement that you have confidence in, but if there is such a man you can come out every Saturday and work at erecting this meeting house. Draw together the sand and lime, the timber and all the other materials, then employ the masons and carpenters for two or three months and the house will be completed.

If this had been done you would have had a good meeting house, and at least been just as well off as you are now, and I think that you would have greatly increased the value of your property and been better off.

Has the house stopped because there is not a man here who knows how to do the work, or what is the cause? I think that there are men here who know how to do all the work. If you wish to know my mind, I say, haul the materials together, employ men to lay the stone and adobies, to cut the timber, and to put on the shingles, and if I were you I would go right to work and do it; and if you will, we will come and preach to you at the dedication.

Before the commencement of this conference I ought to have come here with as many of the Twelve and other brethren as I could have handily picked up, and to have held prayer meetings, for two or three weeks, in all the wards of this city; then I think you would have heard something that you will not now hear.

I do not feel that there is any requirement in this congregation for fresh teachings, or new revelations, if I am mistaken, all right. I do not believe that all the brethren pray in their families, or in secret, and I do not believe that all the women are strict enough in their families, for the spirit of the gospel should be as a constant flowing stream. True I have not yet heard a man speak here but what has given you good, yes the best of teaching, and first-rate discourses and ideas, and all has been systematic and calculated to draw us to the line.

Still I hope that you and I will get warmed up, and that the fire of the Spirit will burn in our hearts so that we may be refreshed.

We will now bring the meeting to a close. Benediction.

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**THE GREAT FALLS OF YO-SEMITE VALLEY.**—The editor of the *Mariposa Gazette* describes a trip he recently made to the famous Yo-Semite, or Paradise Valley, lying far up the mountains, near the head waters of the Merced:—[Sac. Union.]

Our party consisted of eight persons. We started from McNeil & Reynold's Camp, on the morning of Wednesday, the 15th instant, keeping an eastern direction for about eight miles, and crossing the heads of the North and Middle Forks of the Chochillas, we came upon the South Fork of the same river, up which we ascended in a direction nearly north to the top of the divide between the Chochillas and the South Fork of the Merced. Descending from that river, we camped for the first night in a deep valley, known as Spring Valley, distant from Mariposa about twenty-five miles, and at an elevation above tide water, as shown by the barometer, of 1,650 feet. On the next day, following down the South Fork of the Merced about five miles—keeping thence to the right, crossing a number of high divides, and as often descending into deep valleys, over a difficult and often times dangerous trail, we arrived at the top of the mountain overlooking the valley. At 4 o'clock p. m. descended about half way. A point destitute of trees revealed the object of our journey, lying far below us, embosomed in green. A wall of circumvallation enclosed the whole valley, and, rising perpendicularly to the height of thousands of feet, a waterfall in the distance, flowing over an abrupt precipice of more than seven hundred feet, presented

a view at once awfully grand and beautiful, unsurpassed we believe on earth.

We descended to the valley and encamped, weary and worn, after a fatiguing day's travel of about twenty miles. The valley is about eight miles in length, and lies east and west, and from three-fourths of a mile to a mile in width. It is covered by a heavy growth of pines and oaks. Grass is luxuriant in all parts of the valley. The first fall is upon the south side of the valley, one mile from the entrance. It was judged to fall seven hundred feet. The volume of water is small at this season, compared to what it must be in the season of melting snows; but there is now quite a stream running. The water comes over the fall in a broad sheet; but immediately forms itself into large bunches of globules, which come wavering through the air, leaving behind a train of mist which follows like the train of a rocket. About three miles further up the valley there is a fall upon the north side, which is much higher than the one spoken of. A small amount of water is now running, but swelled by melting snows it must be a sight beyond description.

**WALKER'S LAKE.**—In our last number we gave a description of Walker's River (lying to the east of the Nevada mountains) from its sources among the Sierras to its most northern bend, distant about twenty miles in an easterly direction from Carson Valley. From this point it flows nearly south a distance of twenty-five miles to Walker's Lake, about one half the distance among barren hills and ridges, with but little of alluvial land on either side, though cottonwood trees generally line the banks. The other half, before reaching the lake, is much of it a barren plain on either side, covered in many places with a crust of alkaline and saline substances, sometimes purely white, that imparts similar properties to the water, though not to a degree that prevents it from being a favorite resort of the natives for the purposes of fishing. Speckled trout are exceeding numerous in all its rapids and pools. They are taken in great numbers by the natives, in nets made entirely of rushes and a long tough species of grass. As you approach the lake the cottonwood disappears, and a low wet marsh is formed by the spreading of the water over it.

The lake is about twenty miles in length, and from three to six wide. It is not entirely a fresh water lake, nor is it very salt, for fish are numerous in its waters. This lake has its own peculiarities. There are other small mountain streams that during the rains of winter empty their waters into this lake, and for a few days the waters rise rapidly to a certain height; it then ceases to rise, no matter how great the quantity of water flowing into it. And yet has no visible outlet; but at a distance of three and a half miles, in a southeasterly direction, to the east of a high dividing ridge of scoria, slag, and all manner of vitrified rocks, there breaks out a large stream of water, that flowing easterly for many miles, is at length lost in the sands of the desert; and this flow of water, as it only occurs when the waters of the lake reach a certain height, and entirely ceases when it recedes to a certain level, is believed to be the escape water from the lake through some subterranean channel.

The lake is surrounded by barren hills and even mountains, nearly all of them bearing unmistakable evidence of the action of volcanic fires.

Lake Mono lies about forty miles to the south of this, a body of salt water, clear and beautiful, and will be the subject of a future notice.—[Placerville American.]

**THE CULTIVATION OF HUMANITY.**—"This bringing sickly children into the world by thousands is rather serious business. A very large number of them have not vitality enough to carry them through the adverse influences that hover around their childhood. The grave-yards are full of little children, of infant children. Some last a year, many less. Some just blossom into a beauty as short lived as it is wonderful—the beauty of the premature peach with a worm in it—and fall from the stem where they hung. 'Too beautiful for earth' such children are called, and the phrase has a fearful significance upon which we will not enlarge.

"But what shall be done? Will baby-shows remedy this evil? Probably not. A baby-show is a joke. The joke was perpetrated in the first place with no idea of making money out of it; but Barnum got hold of it. What shall be done then? We are not of the opinion that much will be done, if any, but certain things might be done. In the first place, good writers in physiological and other works should fully explain the natural laws in relation to the subject. The newspaper press might, if it would, and necessarily should, while speaking of the improvement made in the breed of horses, neat cattle, sheep, swine, and poultry, hint occasionally, in a manner not to offend, that there is a possible mode of very much improving the race of men, entirely in advance and independent of Webster's Spelling Book, Murray's Grammar, and the Dairyman's Daughter. Men and women in marrying should not be afraid to ask themselves questions. This raising up a family to repent of one's sins is nothing but wrong. Blind love may perpetuate itself in blind eyes, and weak will in a weak back; and there are more blind eyes and weak backs that had their origin in loves and wills, with corresponding adjectives, than we should care to answer for.

"Parents should be very thoughtful. We are none of us the soundest and most beautiful specimens of humanity possible, and much, very much may be accomplished, in the management of our habits and health and those of our offspring to elevate the race and make it better, braver, and more beautiful than it is now.—[Springfield Republican.]

**FURNITURE.**—As in dress, so in furniture—a little taste is better than much money without it. There are certain articles which, if good, cost much, such as carpets and mirrors. But couches, lounges, ottomans, and chairs may be