

THE DESERET NEWS.

TRUTH AND LIBERTY.

NO. 39.

GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 1863.

VOL. XII.

REMARKS.

By Elder GEORGE A. SMITH, Tabernacle, Wednesday morning, Oct. 8, 1862.

[REPORTED BY J. V. LONG.]

Brethren, there is a subject which has been spoken of during this Conference in regard to the mission to the cotton growing district of our Territory, to which I desire to again call your attention.

We have been instructed in the principles of the kingdom to a wonderful extent during this Conference. The instructions which we have received have been of a character that they may be reduced to practice by every person whose feelings are so disposed.

The President remarked that he desired to strengthen the missions to the cotton country by sending down two hundred more families. It will be recollected that a request was made last year for the brethren to volunteer to go on that important mission. There were a few who came up and gave in their names, but the great mass of the brethren did not feel to do so. They were aware that it was the wish of the Presidency that certain things should be done, but they seemed as though they needed taking by the ears and shaking to make them sensible of the great importance that ought to be attached to this mission. It appeared as if some of the brethren (to use a figurative expression,) had become fastened to the earth with tremendous roots, so that it was with considerable difficulty that they could be got up, but they had to be taken up root and branch.

We as a Conference voted that the President should call, but none of us felt like volunteering. (President B. Young: I volunteered, on the condition that the people would consent to it.) Yes, the President volunteered, but it is well known that the Presidency are required here; most of the time they must be present to superintend the building of the Temple, and direct the affairs of the church in all the world, but the Elders are set apart to go into all the earth and labor as directed by the Presidency. It is also well known that the master builder has influence and power here, and that he understands how the foundation, the walls, the timbers, the roof and all connected with the Temple of our God should be put together. It is likewise well known that the Presidency never ask a man to do a service except that their labors are required in that new position. One particular remark which I wish to make is that notwithstanding the unprecedented high water in Washington county and the damages and disappointment consequent upon the flood, the settlements made by the last year's mission have proven a decided success. That mission has proven the nature of the climate more perfectly than it had before, it has tested the soil, and accomplished many other things of immense advantage and worth. It was stated by many that the mission would prove a failure, that there was no country there, but the truth is that the elements, including the water, the soil and all that surround them are actually aching for the brethren to combine them together and make them into good cotton and other choice productions of a mild climate; all these elements are ready to render aid to build up Zion.

I consider that we all should feel ready and willing to do anything that may be required of us, to lend our exertions to establish the kingdom of God permanently upon the earth.

When the people first settled in San Pete valley some were discouraged, they never thought that wheat could be produced in such a country as that; they did not believe that anything would grow there; the white colored soil alarmed them, but it is now the granary of the mountains. Now there has recently been just such a feeling in regard to Washington county, but the past year's experience has demonstrated more fully that most excellent cotton, sugar cane, grapes, peaches and many other commodities of life can be successfully raised there, in that desert looking country.

There are quite a number of men who have remarked to me that they would willingly go if they were called on. I wish to say to such brethren that they are called on now, and I sincerely wish that two hundred brethren would volunteer to-day by giving in their names to me at the Historian's office. By going this fall you have all winter to prepare and the advantage can be taken of the early spring season, thus giving the brethren an excellent opportunity to raise a crop of cotton the first year. By sowing wheat in October tolerable crops can be raised, and by planting corn early in March two crops can be raised in one year, or one good crop of cotton. The fact in brief is that so far as the country has been tried it has proven a success, and many of the brethren have said that the country is a great deal better than they expected to find it.

I hope all that has been said by the brethren in reference to the culture of hemp, flax, indigo, and in fact all that will tend to build

up Zion will be attended to, for let it be remembered that it is coming to this necessity of producing for ourselves or to go without, and the question resolves itself into the simple proposition: "clothes or no clothes." We must make our own woollen, flax, hemp and cotton goods or we must go naked. We cannot get these articles much longer from the States, according to the present prospect. The vengeance of the Almighty is sweeping the land with the besom of destruction; millions of men are forsaking their industrial pursuits for the purpose of destroying each other. Let us each and all attend to this that the beauty of our garments may be the beauty of the workmanship of our own hands, or we shall find ourselves without many of the necessities of life altogether.

May God bless the people, in the name of Jesus: Amen.

DISCOURSE

By Elder JOHN TAYLOR, Tabernacle, March 1, 1863.

[REPORTED BY G. D. WATT.]

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is perhaps one of the most comprehensive subjects that mankind can reflect upon. It not only embraces things as they now exist, associated with the human family; but it takes us back to days that are past and gone, to the organizations of this world and of other worlds, and by the principle of revelation it develops, unfolds, and makes manifest unto the human family the great purposes of God as they shall transpire throughout every succeeding age. There are thousands of details or minutiae mixed up with these great projects, purposes, and designs, some of them we comprehend correctly, or think we do; others are not so clear and comprehensible to our minds.

There are some things we, as a people, have to do with perhaps more than any other people that exist, though they have to do with all people, if the people would have to do with them. But in relation, more particularly to the position that we occupy before God, before the world and before each other; and the faith we have in God, in his work, in his ordinances, in his laws and in his kingdoms; and the reasons of that faith are to me, and to all Latter Day Saints matters of very great importance. We are led to inquire upon what is our faith based, why are we Latter Day Saints? why do we believe, as we do, in the doctrines of this Church? and whence do we obtain our faith or our knowledge, as the case may be, in relation to these matters? Why is it that there has been so singular a religious movement as that which has taken place within the last thirty years; introducing views that are contrary to the commonly established views of the whole religious world? Why is it that this people, say in this Territory embracing a scope of country of some five hundred miles of extent, with a population that comparatively speaking, may be called dense, for a country like this, has assumed the proportions of a body politic if you please, that have organized themselves into a Territory, and have asked for admission as a State into the great American Confederation? Why is it that a thing so singular as this has taken place? Is it because there has been a desire among the originators of this work, or any part of them, to establish a political power? I am not aware that this is the case. If there has been any such feeling and desire apart from other leading principles it is something I am not acquainted with. We have commenced to gather ourselves together under certain influences, certain principles, and under a certain faith. We have gathered ourselves together from various parts, and although there has been a strong influence used to separate us, to scatter us abroad, to produce disunion, to sever us one from another; yet no influence, no power, no reasoning, nor anything whatever that has been brought to bear on this people, to accomplish that object, has succeeded; there is some cause, some reason for this. There are mighty motives underlying, overruling and overreaching all motives of a political character. The first thing that ever was proclaimed by the Elders of this Church was the Gospel of peace on the earth, and good will towards men, has continued to be preached, and among other influences there has been a certain influence that has gathered the people together. There has been no influence that could be brought to bear upon this people that could sever or separate them.

There must be therefore some reason for movements of this kind. Such movements are not very common in the world. It is common for various religious societies to arise in the world; but generally they are very narrow and contracted in their notions. They are not adhesive or co-hesive, they do not unite or combine. You may take the Methodist society, the Presbyterian society, the Baptist society, the Episcopal Church, the Roman Catholic Church or any other you please, and

you will find that motives of a political character will separate them, and make them enemies to one another, and make them take up arms against one another, fight one another, and shed each others blood. They not only seek to destroy each other but they all pray to the same God to help them to do it. There is nothing strange or singular in this; for there is no motive, principle or power to cement or unite them together, further than a sort of fancied religion which does not possess the principles of union; for instance in some of the great wars that took place in Europe some years ago; one of the last with which we are the most familiarly acquainted, was between Russia, England and France. Who took up sides in the struggle? There was the Greek Church under the Russians, Protestant England, Catholic France, and the Mohammedan or Turk fighting against each other. The Catholics were Christians, the Protestants were Christians, the Russians were of the Greek or Christian church, the Turks were Mohammedans; all worshippers of the same God, under different forms. These were arrayed against each other in deadly strife all praying to the same God to give them power over their enemies, and their enemies were also Christians, then they went to slaying and destroying each other. Let us notice the difficulties between France and Italy against Austria. In this case there was two Catholic powers engaged against another power which was also Catholic. Religious considerations do not confine or control them in the least. They fought just as hard to kill their fellow Christians, as the Mohammedans or any other people would fight to kill their enemies. They were all in the same church, all partaking of the same sacrament, all believing in the same doctrines and worshipping the same God.

How has it been in the United States? Precisely the same. Who were the first to separate? It was the religious communities of the country that separated first, Baptist from Baptist, Methodist from Methodist, Universalist from Universalist, etc. The churches made a division long before the States divided, showing that there was less virtue or unity in churches than in the state or body politic. The Northern and Southern armies are composed of members of these different sects that exist in the Federal and Confederate States.

I mention these things to show you that there is no adhesive principle sufficiently powerful to unite the people of any portion of the earth, similar to the one that has sprung forth in our day, and right among this people; if there is anything of that sort abroad in the world I am not acquainted with it. Then it follows as a natural consequence, that if there is nothing to unite the people together they are deficient in some principle, doctrine, faith or practice. Philosophy has not united the people together, politics has never done it; no social principles have ever accomplished it.

Freemasonry is one of the strongest binding contracts that exists between man and man, yet Freemasons are mixed up in those different armies, trying to kill each other, and so they have contended against each other for generations past. There must be something then to control this people, different from that which seems to control other people socially, religiously, politically or any other way, there is some kind of a co-hesive power, some kind of an attractive principle, something that unites, and concentrates this people together in a manner altogether different from that of any other people under the face of the heavens; and so singular is it that it attracts the attention of philosophers, of statesmen, of politicians, and of leading men of every grade, they wonder at it, as they wondered at Jesus when he was upon the earth, they wonder what this state of things will grow to, they are fearful of the consequences and results of this Union. We are naturally led to inquire how these things originated, from whence springs this principle, this influence, this power, for it is a very important one. It has dragged us from our homes, it has sent hundreds of elders wandering up and down the earth, for these ten, twenty and thirty years past. It has made us in the estimation of our friends we used to associate with, laughing stocks, and fools, and it has finally brought us together in this place. It has also assumed a political power as a natural consequence or result; simply because there was no other course for us to pursue. Whenever a body of people are thrown together, the inevitable consequence is a political power. It cannot be otherwise. They must have organizations, representation, laws, and administrators of law; there must be a body politic formed whenever a body of people are gathered together as we are; and the very fact of our organization, religiously and politically, the very fact of that oneness that so universally prevails among this people is that it produces a terror to evil doers, and to those who are opposed to us. Why is it that a principle of this kind should exist among this people? for we can readily discover, in

looking abroad in the world that it does not exist any where else. Is it because we are more learned than they are? Is it because we are more intellectual and refined? because we are greater philosophers, better statesmen, more acquainted with cause and effect, have studied more extensively the position of the world generally, and its government and laws? I do not so understand it. There is something besides this; naturally we are no smarter than other men, and no more intelligent than they are; but there is a kind of principle of some sort that infuses itself into our very nature, is a great principle in our body politic, and is mixed up with our religion, and with our morals; it is a sort of secret spring of some kind, that governs, actuates, controls, unites and cements us together in a manner that no other people under the face of the heavens are united. I would like to try and make it plain to others, if the Lord will help me, why it is that these things have taken place. To begin, we will go back to the time when this movement first commenced. It would seem that a record had been hid up upon this continent for generations past. It would seem that a people had lived upon this continent, who were full of the Holy Ghost, who had a knowledge of God, who possessed revelation, who had prophets inspired by the Spirit of God, as they were on the Asiatic continent, or in any other part of the world. It would seem that those prophets, in common with the prophets on the Asiatic continent, and with the men of God in former ages, had looked forward to a time that we read of in the Bible, called the "dispensation of the fullness of times; when God would gather together all things in one, whether they be things in the heavens or things upon the earth."

It would seem that these prophets had recorded these things in this record, that in the time of the dispensation of the fullness of time, when God should commence his great latter-day work, that among other things men should be taught the laws of life, and the knowledge of God, and that the coming forth of this work was to be the starting point of a great event, one of sufficient magnitude to have attracted the attention of all the ancient prophets that ever did live, one of sufficient magnitude to influence the attention of the Gods in the eternal worlds, one of sufficient magnitude to cause that a medium of communication should be opened between the heavens and the earth, that light should again burst forth from the heavenly world, that the spirit of prophecy and revelation should again be unfolded, that an era should be inaugurated pregnant with life, light, and intelligence unto those that then lived, that they might have an opportunity of becoming acquainted with God, of knowing his laws, purposes and designs, his gospel, the principles of eternal truth, the laws of life, that men should again be acquainted with; things that had been, with things that were, and with things that were to come.

The ancient prophets of the two continents foresaw that the issuing forth of that record was to be the commencement of the latter day work; one said, "Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven." "The meek shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." It is one of those sticks that Ezekiel saw should be written upon, even the stick of Joseph which should be written for Ephraim, and be united with the stick of Judah, and become one stick—one in prophecy, one in revelation, one in doctrine, one in ordinances, one in unfolding the purposes and designs of God, and in leading mankind to a knowledge of the truth, as it was to be introduced in the times of the restitution of all things spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world began.

The revealing of those records was to be one of the starting points in relation to this matter. Then it needed some instrument, some individual, some messenger, some communication, because it would be impossible without something of this kind, that these things could transpire. There needed some authorized messenger, some communion from the Lord to reveal, unfold, and make these things manifest. To talk about the world as it is, and the authority they have to preach the gospel, and administer ordinances, and dictate the affairs of the kingdom of God, is foolishness to reason upon; but we will merely give it a passing notice. Where did the different religious sects get their authority from? who ordained them to administer in the name of God? who gave them that authority? The Church of England gave authority to all the seceding sects that have sprung out of her, and they left her because she was corrupt. Where did the Church of England obtain her authority? From the Church of Rome, which they say is the mother of harlots, and the abomination of all things. Where does the Church of Rome obtain her authority? They tell you that they get it down in an unbroken chain of descent from the Apostles' times. Their statement is the most reason-