

## DISCOURSE

By President HEBER C. KIMBALL, Tabernacle, p. m. of March 23, 1856.

[REPORTED BY J. V. LONG.]

Through my labors in giving the brethren and sisters their endowments and superintending the laborers from the different wards, in addition to seeing to those affairs more directly personal, my body is considerably wearied, and that is the reason why I have requested the Bishops to come with the brethren of their respective wards, and to bring the necessary tools and labor with the men, thus setting an example and not place that burden upon my back. I bless those Bishops who came and labored with their brethren during the past week. I should be relieved from such duties, but I am often compelled to attend to them, or they would fall upon br. Brigham. I am always willing to do all in my power to relieve him, but such cares and labors do not all belong to him, nor to me, nor to br. Grant, but it belongs to Bishops, and to those who are appointed to take the immediate oversight of the labors pertaining to public improvements, to look after such matters; under the directions of the First Presidency of this Church.

As br. Grant has just remarked, and as others have often taught, br. Brigham has understanding, through the power and influence of the Spirit, sufficient for teaching the saints their duty, and if they do not perform it, if this people do not save themselves by obeying his counsels, they are bound to go to hell. I know this perfectly well, and so does every one who has the Spirit of the Lord dwelling within them.

Compared with the hosts upon the earth, only now and then one will receive the gospel, and after that, only now and then one of those who do receive the truth will be saved by it and obtain celestial glory. If all the saints would obey counsel, doing as they are directed, is there any difficulty in their being saved? No, no more than there is raising a crop of grain. We have only to take a wise, judicious course, listen to counsel and obey those instructions which we receive from this stand from day to day, from Sabbath to Sabbath, and from year to year. Can I save you? No, I can only advise a righteous course and encourage and aid in walking therein, it then remains for them to take the course which I advise; and I always advise people to adopt that policy which Joseph taught and advocated, and which br. Brigham now lays before us from day to day. This is what will save you, and you cannot be saved upon any other principle. I have power to save myself, and if I do not save myself who will save me? All have that privilege, and naught can save us but obedience to the commandments of God. You say that you have repented and been baptized for the remission of sins, that you have received the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, that you pray, pay your tithing and day by day fulfill all the duties required at your hands; such a course is saving in its nature. The most of those present have received their endowments, their washings and anointings, and have made covenants to their God and their brethren, before witnesses, that they would be faithful that they would be true, that they would listen to the counsels of the Lord's servants and cease to do evil. All who have done this have been pronounced clean, and will they then go and pollute themselves with the wicked? I am sorry to say that a few are unwise enough to do so.

Both men and women have also covenanted that they will have no unlawful intercourse with each other. After all this do any of you make a practice of speaking evil one of another, of cheating one another, of lying and deceiving? Yes, some who are under the covenants just named actually indulge in those evil practices, and I say to all such that if they do not repent of their follies and sins, their washings and anointings will prove a curse instead of a blessing, and will expedite their condemnation.

If a man sins to that degree that he is cut off from the church he forfeits the blessings promised on condition of keeping his covenants. When a man loses his membership in this church he also loses his priesthood, and of course the blessings of his endowments. Do not flatter yourselves that you can retain the blessings of the gospel and at the same time pursue a wicked course, for you cannot do it.

I feel the importance of these truths, and my mind is often exercised and profited by contemplating upon them. The other night, as I lay in my bed so weary that I could not sleep, I reflected much upon the principle of obedience, and the government of God in this church, I then in my reflections applied the principle to families in every way, shape and manner which I could think of, and said, in my heart, I wish I had the skill of a ready writer and power to write what passes through my mind. In the morning I called upon br. Carrington and mentioned the circumstances to him, and I told him that I wished he would write upon the subject of obedience, which he promised to do at the earliest opportunity. I feel the importance of this, for I know that this people cannot continue to prosper as they have done, unless they do as they are counseled; all must be obedient to the powers that be ordained of God.

If it is necessary for me to be subject to my file leaders, I wish to know whether it is not equally for you, and for every high priest, elder, seventy, apostle and all others, to be obedient to the priesthood of those who are appointed to direct them? Is it not right for all men to be obedient to their superiors? And if so, is it not right for women and children to abide the same principle? My spirit, my body, my family and all I possess in this world are devoted to this kingdom, and so I may say in regard to br. Brigham. These are my feelings upon this subject and I have had no different feelings during the last twenty-five years.

Is there any difference in the wickedness of the world now and thirty or forty years ago? I think there is. I do not now recollect of having then

heard of a divorce in all the region where I lived, and as for a whore or a whoremonger there were few, if any, known in that locality, and if such were found they were considered unfit for civilized society. But now look down and see what the world is! I have traveled over some of it; I have traveled through most of the enlightened portions of the United States and much in England, and I have generally found that those who are called the most enlightened are the most corrupt. Does the sad condition of the world hurt my feelings? Not particularly, for that is their own affair; but when the saints transgress I feel sorrowful. When br. Brigham comes here and chastises us through the spirit of revelation, or is moved upon to instruct the saints to their profit, if any portion applies to me I treasure it up and humble myself before my God.

I will give you a key which br. Joseph Smith used to give in Nauvoo. He said that the very step of apostasy commenced with losing confidence in the leaders of this church and kingdom, and that whenever you discerned that spirit you might know that it would lead the possessor of it on the road to apostasy. If then you have got this spirit in your hearts or in your families, and if brethren and sisters, husbands and wives are contending and quarrelling one with another, I say there is the spirit of apostasy, there is a place where the Spirit of God does not abide in its fullness. Do you suppose that God, his Son, the Holy Ghost, or angels will dwell in a house where there is quarrelling and loss of confidence in the leaders of his appointing? Would you stay in such a habitation? Then let us banish all strife and contention; let not children contend against their parents, nor wives against their husbands, nor any one against the authorities which God has established. This should be the course in every family and in every quorum, and let all be actuated and governed by the pure spirit and principles of eternal truth. Let my family take my counsel as I take the counsel of my President, and they will go into celestial glory, where I am bound to go by walking in that path.

Say to all the legions of devils between this and hell, 'walk in your own course,' and they will not have much power over us, nor over our children. Why? Because we should live above their allurements and they would be obliged to go about more congenial business, and God would defend us so long as we did not give way.

It is for us to learn to be obedient in our callings and to the priesthood, in our several quorums and families, and in all circles where we associate together. This is a lesson which must be learned, and when you learn the doctrine of obedience you will have power to control the weaknesses of your nature, to control yourselves in every respect. But you never will learn this lesson and gain this knowledge, until you are willing to be controlled by those who lead you in this kingdom. I desire to stand in my place, to be beneficial to the saints, to go in and out before the house of Israel pure and holy. This is my character, and these are my wishes, notwithstanding my weaknesses which I admit; and this is the character of br. Brigham, and I know it. God bless his soul for ever, and he shall live for ever and go into the courts of glory, and enjoy the society of the Father, of Jesus and all the Apostles; and I will be along with him there, and so will my brethren who are faithful. We will stand so near each other that the devil cannot get between us, and let all our brethren do the same.

Every family should do so, and if they all did, what trouble would there be?

What could the wicked do if all the saints stood faithful in their own places?

Do you suppose that they could commit whoredoms?

If no woman would bow to wickedness where would be the whoredoms? Would there be any? No, there could not be any.

After you have received your endowments a wicked course will more seriously affect you, it will therefore be requisite for you to be much more careful how you trifle with holy principles and transgress your covenants. For this reason I wish the Bishops to take heed who they recommend as worthy to receive endowments, for we shall require a strict account from them.

We have placed Bishops in the different wards throughout this Territory, and they should be filled with the Holy Ghost, and know every man and woman in their Wards, that they may be able to discern who are worthy of receiving an endowment.

I have heard of some individuals saying that if the Bishops come into their houses and opened their cupboards they would split their heads open.

That would not be a wise nor safe operation, for there are some hard heads appointed to counsel and direct you in the path of righteousness.

Br. Brigham and I were raised in the midst of mountains, and we have never yet seen the time when threats would swerve us from the line of duty.

I would like to bless all mankind, if they would take a course that would justify me in doing so, and I have extended my hand to the lawyers, judges, military and civil officers of the U. S. and desire to treat them as I would my own children, but how have some of them treated us? They have endeavored, with a few honorable exceptions, to corrupt the morals of this people. I am opposed to those who strive to sow corruption for we wish to be pure, and this course leads to death, hell and the devil, while we desire to rise in the scale of life and happiness. Amen.

## DISCOURSE

BY PRESIDENT BRIGHAM YOUNG, TABERNACLE, March 23, 1856.

[REPORTED BY GEO. D. WATT.]

I rise desiring that what I may say may be instructive, edifying and beneficial to the people. At times when I think of addressing you, it occurs to me that strict sermonizing upon topics pertaining to the distant future, or reviewing the history of the past, would doubtless please and

highly interest a portion of my hearers; but my judgment and the spirit of intelligence that is in me teach that by taking such a course the people would not be instructed pertaining to their every day duties. For this reason I do not feel impressed to instruct you on duties to be performed a hundred years hence, but rather to give those instructions pertaining to the present, to our daily walk and conversation, that we may know how to benefit ourselves under the passing time and present privileges, and be able to lay a foundation for future happiness.

Still, I love to hear historical narrations, to hear the Elders vividly portray the important events which transpired in the days of the prophets, the Savior and the apostles, and it also cheers my heart to hear the Elders of Israel illustrate the beauties and glory of Zion in the future. Yet, when I reduce it all to the duties of the religion we profess, I realize that it is of vital importance for us to know how to lay a present foundation for our future destiny, that we may attain that exaltation, happiness and glory which we anticipate, hence I confine my remarks more particularly to the practical part of religion.

Again, we often have strangers in our midst, and perhaps some who never heard one of our elders preach, until they came to this valley, and no doubt they would like to hear a systematic sermon upon the first principles of the gospel, to have the speaker formally quote his text, divide it into four or five heads, and expatiate upon each part, and illustrate the beauties of christianity in former days, and picture the scenes of suffering, which the former day saints had to pass through, and then prescribe the duties that pertain to the people but not the individual. Some might prefer to have the speaker dwell upon the general duties devolving upon the community, but not upon duties pertaining to the individual, preferring something or other to please the natural feelings of mankind.

This does not suit my disposition, for I am in favor of that instruction which will enable us this day to receive the blessings offered and teach us to appreciate them, that we may be prepared to enjoy the glory that has been revealed. That is my 'Mormonism,' my reflections, my judgment, and the spirit in me dictates this course, not to speak merely to gratify those who prefer to hear pleasing, delightful discourses, which sound smoothly to the ear and lull the hearers to sleep.

What we heard from br. Frost this morning is that which I am upon all the time, it was practical religion. Suppose we should actually enjoy the light of truth to such a degree that we could always foreknow important events—that we had the spirit of prophecy inasmuch that we could foresee our future destiny, would we not lay a foundation to secure our best interests? We most certainly would. It would be the constant aim of our daily conduct to secure to ourselves and our families that happiness and comfort which we desire.

Is it possible for us to do this? It is. There are many who do not know and understand for themselves, now let each person of that class ask himself this question, 'Even though I do not know and understand for myself, is it reasonable that I should have confidence in those who do?' And through the weakness and blindness of fallen nature he would answer, "no." Still it would be best, could it be so, for those who are blinded to their own interest to have confidence in those who do know and understand what is for their good, to trust in them, take their counsel and do in all things as they are told. But, no, the spirit of apostasy, the neglect of duty, tend to cast a veil over the minds of people, and when they cannot see and understand for themselves they say, "I think I know as well how to dictate my own affairs as does br. Brigham, or any other brother."

They have no confidence in anybody, and can have none in themselves for they do not know themselves. They do not comprehend their existence, and were it not that they get tired, and wish to rest they would scarcely realize that they had a body; and when their stomachs become empty and crave food they are prompted, like the brutes, to seek for something to eat. This is the case with some in this congregation, they have but little more idea, of what they are, who they are, and what will be their future destiny, than has the stall fed bullock that is fatted for slaughter.

What is the matter with them? The god of this world has blinded their minds, they give way to selfishness, covetousness, and diverse other kinds of wickedness, suffer the allurements of this world to decoy them from the paths of truth, forget their God, their religion, their covenants, and the blessings they have received, and become like beasts made to be taken and destroyed at the will of the destroyer.

This is the situation not only of the great majority of the world but of many of the inhabitants of these valleys; they have no correct idea of the day of destruction, the day of calamity, they have no realization of the day of sorrow and retribution. They put these things far away and do not wish to think about them, but say, "let us eat, drink, and lay down and sleep, and that is all we desire," then like the brutes they are happy. It never enters the hearts of the mass of mankind that they are preparing for the day of calamity and slaughter.

This people have yet much to learn, even the best of them. For one I am aware that I know but very little, yet I know enough to do right today, as also do very many who are now before me. If sin present itself to them they know what it is, and know better than to give way to it. I know that it is not right to do wrong, and so do the most of the people, and all may and should, as have all who have received the Spirit of the Gospel, and if this knowledge has gone from them, it is because of transgression.

I have often referred to the wickedness of mankind, to how liable they are to step out of the way, how easy it is for them to sin and not know it, and how important it is that we should have compen-

sion upon them; yet mercy is not always to be extended to the people, judgment must claim its right.

If we wish this church and kingdom of God upon earth to be like a fine, healthy, growing tree, we should be careful not to let the dead branches remain too long. You have seen limbs which you supposed completely dead, yet when the genial influences of spring operate upon them only a twig or two of the branch proves to be winter killed.

The entire limb is not dead but still draws sustenance from the trunk, and partly lives and is partly dead. It is so with some of the members of this church and kingdom, they partly live and partly do not live. Sometimes they enjoy the spirit of the gospel and feel quite happy, and speak in prayer meetings and sometimes make confessions of their sins. Their hearts occasionally become a little warmed up, and at times they feel and act as though they wish to bear fruit, and perhaps among the twigs of the limb you may find here and there a cluster of fruit. Sometimes such members of this kingdom will be found performing good acts and doing their duty, and again they are overcome and turn away, that is for a time, and seemingly enjoy none of the spirit of their religion.

In this manner they pass along, first to the right and then to the left. By and by they will either receive nourishment from the trunk of the tree, shooting forth into the various twigs of the sickly branches, filling them with life and vigor and turning the diseased into thrifty growing limbs, or the twigs will continue to die until there are none left alive. Who can tell whether a limb is actually dead or not, without proper time to test the matter? This is a point which ought to be closely scrutinized by every Latter Day Saint. You see the failings of your neighbor, he has performed an act to-day which you know is dishonest and wicked, by and by he does something else which is wrong and you begin to lose confidence in that person. When you saw no evil and many traits of good in him, then you had a foundation for reposing implicit confidence, but he commits a wrong act and your confidence begins to be shaken. You see him commit another evil and another, but can you yet tell whether that limb is alive or dead? I think that we as a people, as individuals, have got to learn more and more of the mind of God than we now possess, before we are prepared to judge quickly, distinctly, and truly when limbs are dead and should be severed from the body of the tree.

When we have learned that they are really dead, then there is danger in suffering them to remain too long, for they will begin to decay and tend to destroy the tree. When we are satisfied that a limb is dead we clip it off close to the trunk, and cover up the wound that it may not cause any more injury. That is the principle which brother Frost has just been upon. But the nice point is for us to be able to determine when a limb is entirely dead! Twig after twig may die, and you may often see half the limbs of a tree killed by the severity of winter, yet in the course of the summer the living portion begins to rapidly put forth young and tender branches, and the increase may be as great, perhaps, as though no part had died. That proves the soundness of the trunk, even though many twigs and branches have died. It requires great discrimination to be able to rightly decide upon the condition of persons in their religious views, their honesty and integrity before God.

There are many in this kingdom who are as foolish as men and women can well be, so much so that it would seem as though they never had sensed moral instruction. They give way to wickedness and outrage the feelings of those who are truly moral; yet in their hearts they go all lengths for the kingdom of God on the earth. They are willing to stand in the front of the battle, to go to the ends of the earth to preach the gospel, or to do anything they are called upon to perform, yet when you examine their morality it highly outrages the feelings of those who are strictly moral and honest in all their ways. Do you believe this? Yes, and many of you know it.

Many of our boys who play in the streets and use profane language, know not what they are doing, but there are old men, members of the High Priests Quorum and of the High Council, who, when they get into a difficulty in the canyon and are perplexed, will get angry and swear at and curse every thing around them. I will insure that I could find High Priests who conduct in this manner. But on their way home their feelings become mollified, and they wish to plead with the Lord to forgive them. Could you place yourselves in some of our canyons, or in some other difficult places, out of sight but within hearing, and hear some of the brethren curse and swear at their cattle and horses you would not have the least idea that they had ever known anything about 'Mormonism,' but follow them home and you may find them pleading with the Lord for pardon. There are just such characters in our midst. Do you think they should be cut off from the Church? I think that if the Presidents of quorums would chastise them it might be beneficial, at any rate it would not hurt them, and if that will not do, disfellowship them and let them know that they must observe the laws of this kingdom, or eventually be cut off. If you do not wish to disfellowship them, you who are without sin, take such men into the canyon, where they may bellow and bellow in vain, and give them a good cowhiding, until they will remember and be ashamed of themselves when they take the name of God in vain, or lie.

You may take this counsel spiritually or temporally, just as you please. Such characters ought to be whipped so that they would remember it to the day of their death, and if they do not then stop their lying, swearing, cursing, and pilfering, I will tell them that sooner or later they will be cut off from the Church and go to hell.

No unrighteous person, no person who is filthy in their feelings will ever enter into the kingdom