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MEDITATIONS ON THE GOSPEL.

Discourse delivered at the General Conference of the Church, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Friday, April 6, 1894, by

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[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

I am deeply thankful to our Heavenly Father for the privilege of visiting this city, associating with my brethren in council and attending this Conference. My soul has rejoiced in the instructions given and the spirit that is here.

I left Colonia Juarez on the 3rd of March to attend two days' conference meetings at Colonia Dublan, of the Mexican Mission. We went from there to Sonora, visited Colonia Oaxaca on the Bavispe river, enjoyed very much the association of the Saints and organized a ward. It is a lovely country for those who desire plenty of room and a beautiful climate. We returned from Sonora to Colonia Diaz, held two days' ward conference meetings there, and then came to Deming, on our way to attend this Conference. We were very much blessed in our administrations. Apostles Brigham Young and John Henry Smith and myself have been laboring in the Mexican Mission, and have had a very profitable time with the Saints. We have five or six settlements in Mexico, and are growing and increasing. We consider that we have got over the worst of our experience in laying the foundation of new settlements. The brethren and sisters that are in Mexico went there because they believed that was where the Lord wanted their labors. One of the brethren, on some intimation of his being released from that Mission, stated that he had no desire to be released. Our Heavenly Father had opened his eyes to the understanding that that was where his labors were required, and he was perfectly willing to stay. I believe we should be satisfied in our own minds that where our labors are there is where the Lord wants us. Then we will build up and make glad the earth, beautifying it as well as we possibly can, and making it blossom like the rose. I will say for the benefit of those who are interested that we are prospering in the Mexican Mission, and that we are doing as well as we could hope to do. We have only been there seven years, and we have some very creditable buildings.

We have a good tannery and a flour mill. We have also a cannery that uses more fruit than we can supply. The progress that we have made there is certainly wonderful. Those who visit us are very much surprised. It is a good country for those who feel that that is the place of their mission. We are going the way the prophets have declared concerning that Mission and the future of Zion.

I desire to offer a few meditations this afternoon in connection with the principles of the Gospel that were spoken of by Elder John W. Taylor this morning. These words I wish to refer you to that he read:

"Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither of man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the death;)"

Paul, an apostle, "not of men". Did Jesus Christ ordain him? I think not. Who ordained him? Peter, I presume. And who ordained Peter? Jesus Christ. To what end was this ordination? In order that this Gospel might be preached by authority; that mankind might be called to repentance, and, repenting, have baptism for the remission of sins by authority, and hands laid upon them for the reception of the Holy Ghost. Why? Because this is the doctrine of Christ—the only way to be saved. The principles of the Gospel are eternal without beginning of days or end of years. The Lord Jesus Christ said:

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Again:

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

We believe that Jesus Christ understood the principles that He advocated. We believe that His is the only name under heaven whereby mankind can be saved; and when we appeal to our Heavenly Father for anything that we desire, we ask in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul, in speaking of the necessity of authority, said:

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things?

On another occasion, Paul, in speaking of the necessity of being called of God, to preach His gospel, said:

"No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron."

Paul declared that he was called of

Jesus Christ. Were not all the apostles called of Jesus Christ? And when one fell into transgression, and Mathias was chosen to fill his place in the quorum, was he not called of Jesus Christ? Was he not ordained by authority and sent forth to preach His Gospel? My brethren and sisters, it is necessary, if the principles of truth are preached, that they be advocated by men who have authority. In the formula given concerning baptism, the person having authority to baptize says to the candidate for baptism, calling him or her by name,

"Having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Now, this would be terrible blasphemy if he did not have the authority. He does not officiate in his own name, but in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, having authority to do so. I look upon the rejection of this Gospel as a very serious thing. I have wondered why the apostleship was taken from the earth, and why the church was not continued upon the earth, and the only answer that I could get to give me satisfaction was, because of the dreadful condemnation that rests upon the inhabitants of the earth when they reject the word of the Lord, through His authorized servants. We understand that the apostles were murdered and the world rejected them. Paul said, speaking of the organization of the Church of Christ:

"God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers."

What for?

"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God."

Jesus taught that to know God and Jesus Christ whom He had sent was eternal life, and this knowledge is promised unto the children of our Heavenly Father. When we go forth to preach this Gospel we bear testimony that our Heavenly Father has again spoken from the heavens; that He has organized His Church upon the earth, and that Joseph Smith was a true prophet sent of God; and we call upon the people to worship Him who made the heavens and the earth, the seas and the fountains of waters. We call upon men to accept of His doctrine and to repent, that they may obtain the remission of their sins by baptism and be prepared for the reception of the Holy Ghost, so that they may be guided by it and taught of God. Our Heavenly Father says:

"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth."

He encourages us to hearken unto