

## BE TRUE TO THYSELF.

Be true to thyself, in the right never falter,  
Though others prove false—as a mirage in  
air.  
Never swerve from the good, and time  
never can alter  
Thy peace by its sorrows,—thy love by its  
care.  
Be true to thyself, cherish every affection  
That's gentle, and noble, and truthful and  
pure,  
And the strength of the Highest shall be  
thy protection,  
So long as thy love for thy God shall en-  
dure.

Be true to thyself, though the past, with its  
sorrow,  
And all its lost hopes, are remembered by  
thee;  
Though the present be lonely, a brighter  
to-morrow  
May herald a future from sorrow set free.

Be true to thyself, and thy heart will for-  
ever  
Be true to all others; all truth is sublime.  
Be true to thy God, and his goodness shall  
never  
Desert thee, through all the mutations of  
time.

J. H. WARD.

Salt Lake City, May 12th, 1878.

## DISCOURSE

BY

PREST. JOHN TAYLOR

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REPORTED BY GEO. F. GIBBS.

I shall feel very much obliged, while I attempt to address you, if you will keep as quiet as possible; because it is quite a labor to speak to so large a congregation, and unless quiet and order is preserved, it is impossible for all the people to hear.

I have been very much interested and edified in listening to the remarks made by the brethren since we have assembled together in this conference. And I have been very much pleased in witnessing the union and general feeling of interest manifested among the people to attend these meetings. It is evidence to me that the people feel interested in these great and eternal principles developed through our holy religion, and that they have a desire to yield obedience to the law of God and to keep his commandments. And in that alone is our safety, our happiness, our prosperity and our exaltation, as a people; for we derive every blessing we enjoy, whether of a temporal or of a spiritual nature from our Heavenly Father; and without him we can do or perform no good work, for in him "we live and move and have our being," and from him, and through him we receive all blessings pertaining to this life, and we shall hereafter, if we possess eternal lives, inherit them and obtain them through the goodness, mercy and long-suffering of God our Eternal Father, through the merits and redemption of Jesus Christ our Savior.

It is not in man to direct, to manage and control affairs of the Kingdom of God. No man ever did possess that power, nor will he, unaided by the power of the Almighty. All nations and all peoples are more or less under his direction and control, although many of them do not know it. He raises up one nation, and puts down another, he debases the proud, and exalts the humble at his pleasure, and he pursues that course among all the peoples and nations of the earth, as seemeth best unto him; and all nations and all peoples are his offspring, and he is the God and Father of the spirits of all flesh, and feels an interest in the welfare of all the human family. He has been in the ages that are past, and he is in the present age doing all that he can to promote the happiness and well-being of the human family. This does not always appear to men of superficial minds, the dealings of God with man are not always comprehended. But he nevertheless does control the destinies of all peoples; and if in many instances it does not seem for their present benefit, yet as mankind are eternal beings, having to do with eternity as well as time, when the secrets of all hearts shall be developed and the actions of gods shall be made known and fully comprehended in the future destinies of the races of men, it will be found that the Judge of all the earth has done right.

The Lord has in these last days, for

his own special purpose, and also in the interest of humanity, revealed himself from the heavens, made manifest his will to man, sent his holy angels to communicate and reveal unto us his children certain principles as they exist in the bosom of God, and he has pointed out the way whereby we may secure our happiness and an eternal exaltation in the celestial kingdom of God. He has been pleased to restore again the everlasting Gospel in all its fulness, with all its riches and blessings and power and glory. He has organized his church and kingdom upon the earth; he has chosen men as he did in former times to be the bearers of his message of life and salvation to the nations of the earth. He has, through these instruments, instructed us, and gathered us together, as we are found here to-day, from the different nations where the gospel reached us. He has brought us here according to certain eternal principles which he had in his mind before the world was and according to certain councils that existed in the heavens among the Gods, who have been operating upon and with the human family from the commencement to the present, and will until the winding up scene.

The work that we are engaged in is not the work of man, it did not originate with man, it was not found out by him. It is the work that has been prophesied of by all the holy prophets that have lived on this continent, on the continent of Asia, and in the various portions of the earth. As the Apostle Paul describes it, it is "the dispensation of the fulness of times spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world was." And anything that we may have received—any light, any intelligence, any knowledge of the things of God, have emanated and proceeded from him. He saw and comprehended the fitting time for this work to commence; he prepared the way by once more opening the heavens, by revealing himself and his Son Jesus, and by afterwards sending holy angels to communicate his will and his purposes and designs to the human family. It therefore did not originate with us, nor with any sect or party or people, for nobody, not even Joseph Smith, or Brigham Young, or any of the Twelve Apostles knew anything about the great principles that were stored up in the mind of God. It was the mind and will and revelations of God, made known to the human family, in the first place to Joseph Smith, and through him to others. And when the elders of this Church went forth to the nations of the earth, as bearers of the gospel message, if they had gone upon their own responsibility they could have accomplished nothing. But having been chosen and set apart of the Lord, they went forth as his messengers, without purse or scrip, trusting in Him. And he opened up their way and prepared their path, as he said beforehand that he would. "Behold," said he, "I send you forth to the nations of the earth, and my Spirit shall go with you, and my angels shall prepare the way for you." I send you forth not to be taught, but to teach, not to be instructed by the world of mankind or the intelligence of the world, but by the wisdom and intelligence and power and spirit which I shall give you, and it is through and by this influence that we have been gathered together. And why are we gathered? These elders could not have gathered you unless God had been with them; they could not have influenced you to come here unless the Spirit and power of their mission had been with them. But the Lord said in former years through his prophets, "I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion. And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." And through the operation and influence of the Spirit of the living God, manifested through the priesthood, God's ministers on the earth, you have been brought together as you are to-day. But why should we be thus gathered together? That there may be a body of people found to whom God can communicate his will, that there might be a people who should be prepared to listen to the word and will and voice of God: that there might be a people gathered together from the different nations who, under the influence of that spirit should become saviors upon Mount Zion; that they might, under the

inspiration of the Almighty, and

through the power of the Holy Priesthood which they should receive, go forth to those nations and proclaim to the people the principles of life, that they might indeed become the saviors of men. And if we could fully comprehend our position, we should see things very differently from what we now do. If we could comprehend our relationship to God, to each other, to his church upon the earth, and also the greatness and magnitude of the work in which we are engaged, and the responsibilities that devolve upon us, as elders in Israel, as saints of the Most High God, we should see things in a very different light from what we now do. We are not here, as they say in the Church of England, to "follow the devices and desires of our own hearts;" we are not here to pursue our own individual interests and emoluments, we are not here merely to attend to our own secular affairs, but to learn the laws of life, and then teach the people the way of salvation. There was an old saying among ancient Israel: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt worship the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and him only shalt thou worship." And Jesus, in after time, added a little more to this: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." God is one, and they who dwell with him are one. Those who will inherit the celestial kingdom will be one when they get there; and we, as a people, ought to be one—one in faith, one in principle, one in practice, one in our interests, one in our associations with each other and in our families, one with God, one with the holy angels, one in time, and one in eternity.

To bring about a union of this kind, the principle of baptism has been introduced that we all might be baptized into one baptism, by the laying on of hands, and through the various orders of his priesthood, we all partake of the same spirit; and being brought into union and communion with God, that we all might feel after God, that the tens of thousands, and hundreds of thousands might be brought into connection with the Almighty, whose prayers could ascend into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. And for the accomplishment of this purpose, he selected Joseph Smith to be the first apostle in his church; he was called "not by the will of man," nor by the power of man, nor by the intelligence of man, but by God who revealed himself unto this young man, as also the Savior, committing unto him a mission to perform to the inhabitants of this earth. He was endowed with power and authority which was given him for that purpose, that he might be the legitimate representative of God upon the earth. He also taught him how to organize his church, and put him in communication with many of the ancient prophets who have long since passed away, who also communicated with him, and revealed unto him further the plan and design of the Almighty in relation to this earth, and the salvation of all who would listen to the principles of truth.

The nations of the earth have their representatives, their ministers, their plenipotentiaries, empowered and sent forth by the recognized authority of the several nations. He was the representative of God, his credentials came from God, and his mission extended not to one nation only, but to all nations; and he was authorized to establish and organize what was termed the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. And every step that he took, every principle that he inculcated, and every doctrine that he taught, came from God by the revelations of God to him, and through him to the people. He selected others by revelation—apostles, high priests, seventies, bishops, elders, priests, teachers and deacons, also high councils, and bishop's councils, and patriarchs, and all the various authorities and organizations of this church. Joseph Smith neither knew how to select men, whom to select, nor what their offices should be until it was communicated by the Lord. And yet we find that these principles revealed to him, agree with those that existed in former ages whenever God had a church or people on the earth. And hence the ushering in of the Gospel simply means the revelation of the will of God to man; it simply means the placing of mankind in communication with the Lord that he may not be governed by his own follies or notions or theories, but by

the will and word of God. And the examples that you heard referred to here, of our stakes, with their pre-eminencies, together with the bishops and their council, etc., is a part of the system of heaven, as it exists in the eternal worlds; and the priesthood that we hold is the everlasting priesthood, and it administers in time, and it will administer in eternity; and a knowledge of the works that we are now engaged in, in regard to the building of temples and administering therein, all came from God, and are a part of the eternal system. Who knew about them until God revealed it? Nobody. Who knows how to administer acceptably in these temples without revelation? Nobody but those to whom it has been communicated, it came from God. And our preaching to the living, and our administering for the dead are all of them parts and parcels of the same concern. The fact is, we are in a state of probation; we have enlisted under the banner of the Almighty; we have dedicated ourselves to him for time and for eternity, and he expects it at our hands that we be true to the trust conferred upon us, that we be faithful to our obligations and fulfill them, that we honor our God, that we magnify our callings and priesthood, and that we stand forth among the people and before the nations, as the representatives of God upon the earth. We have a similar view to that of the Apostle Paul, who said when addressing himself to the Corinthians: "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." We have enlisted in a work, have engaged in a warfare that will last while time shall be, and if we live our religion and keep his commandments, the principles that we are in possession of will bear us off triumphant over death, hell and the grave, and land us among the just, among the celestial host that dwell with our Father in heaven. We really have no time to attend to those trivial affairs, that some people seem to think ought to occupy so much of our time. I wish now, while we are together to talk upon some general principles associated with the priesthood which has been conferred upon us.

It was said of ancient Israel, if they had kept the commandments, that he would have made out of them a kingdom of priests. We are literally a kingdom of priests to-day. Our business is not to follow our own will, our own desires and plans, but to seek to know and to do the will of God, to carry out these principles which he has revealed, and in this is our happiness and exaltation in time, and will be throughout the eternities that are to come.

We ought to be operating with God, and with the holy angels; we ought to be feeling after them, we ought to be operating with the ancient priesthood that have lived before—the patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, and all those men of God who have lived and died in the faith who act with God our Heavenly Father, and with Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant. We ought to be operating with them in establishing righteousness throughout the earth, not nominally, but really; we ought to be laboring in conjunction with them in saving the living, not to make it a hardship and a trouble and a toil; something that we can hardly endure to go through; but on the contrary, feeling it an honor to be associated with the interests of God and bearers of the message of life and salvation, and also seeking for wisdom, and intelligence, and power and revelation from God to carry out his will and designs, and to accomplish his purposes upon the earth.

Will his purposes be accomplished? They will. Will the Gospel grow, spread and increase? I tell you, in the name of Israel's God, it will. Will the time come when every fictitious thing will be removed, when light and truth shall prevail, and when the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our God and his Christ? I tell you it will, and God will hasten it in his time. And this priesthood and this people are to be the instruments, in the hands of God, in connection with the priesthood who have gone before, who are now operating in their sphere, as we are in ours. The Lord hath so ordained, says the apostle, "that they, (referring to the dead) without us should not be made perfect;" neither can we without them be made per-

fect. There needs to be a welding and uniting together, that in all of our doings as God's servants and representatives, we may be influenced and directed from above, being united with the Gods in heaven we may become one in all things upon the earth, and afterwards one in the heavens. And says the Lord, "If ye are not one, ye are not mine." Everything that tends to divide the people, as you heard this morning; proceeds from beneath, and those that are engaged in it are the emissaries of the devil; for as he is the father of lies, so he is also the father of division, strife and discord. But union, peace, love, harmony, fellowship, brotherhood and everything honorable, noble and exalting, proceeds from God; these are the principles that we ought to seek after and to disseminate as far as we can everywhere and among all peoples. And then when we have done that work, turn our attention to the building of temples and minister in them for the dead, that we may operate with the fathers in the interest of their posterity, helping them to perform that for their posterity which they were not able to do.

And in regard to the world, what ought our feelings to be towards them? A feeling of generosity, a feeling of kindness, a feeling of sympathy, with our hearts full of charity, long-suffering and benevolence, as God our Father has, for he makes his sun to rise on the evil as well as the good; he sends his rain on the unjust as well as the just. And while we abjure the evils, the corruptions, the fraud and iniquity, the lasciviousness and the lyings and abominations that exist in the world, whenever we see an honorable principle, a desire to do right, whenever we see an opening to promote the happiness of any of these people, or to reclaim the wanderer, it is our duty to do it, as saviors on Mount Zion.

Will they have trouble? Yes. Will there be tribulation? Yes. Will nation be arrayed against nation? Yes. Will thrones be cast down and empires destroyed? Yes. Will there be war, and carnage and bloodshed? Yes. But these things are with the people and with God. It is not for us; we have a mission to perform, and that is to preach the gospel and introduce correct principles, to unfold the laws of God as men are prepared to receive them, to build up his Zion upon the earth, and to prepare a people for the time when the bursting heavens will reveal the Son of God, "and when every creature on the earth and under the earth will be heard to say, blessing and glory, and honor, and power, and might, and majesty and dominion be ascribed to him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever."

Will this people grow and increase? Yes. And the time will come—it is not now, we are not prepared for it—when calamity and trouble and bloodshed, confusion and strife will spread among all the nations of the earth. The time will come, and is not far distant, when those who will not take up the sword to fight against their neighbors, will have to flee to Zion for safety. That was true some time ago, and it is nearer its fulfillment by a great many years than at the time it was first uttered.

What are we here for? To build up or aggrandize ourselves? No, but to build up the church and kingdom of God upon the earth, and to spread the light of truth among the nations. That is our duty! and also to pray for the revelations of God, that the spirit and power of God may rest upon us, that we may comprehend correct principles and understand the laws of life, to guide and guard and protect the ship Zion from among the rocks and shoals and troubles that will sooner or later overcome this nation, and other nations, and prepare ourselves for the events that are to come. We ought to be men of honor, of honesty, of integrity; having our eyes single to the glory of God. That is the duty of these apostles, and not to act with a view for their own aggrandizement and for the obtaining of filthy lucre or anything else pertaining to this world! We brought nothing into this world, we can take nothing out. It is for us to operate for God, and in the interests of his church and kingdom.

And what of these other brethren? The high priests, they have a mission to perform, and that is to make themselves acquainted with the laws, doctrines, ordinances and government of the church of God upon the earth; that they may be prepared, when called upon, to fulfill the duties and responsibilities devolving upon them. I will here read part of a revelation which indicates the nature of these duties. "And again I give unto you, Don C. Smith, to be a president over a quorum of high priests, which ordinance is instituted for the purpose of qualifying those who shall be appointed standing presidents over the different stakes scattered abroad. Hear it, O ye high priests! This is the prominent duty devolving upon you. The position you occupy is a sort of a normal school, you please, to prepare those who are in