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CHILDHOOD.

BY REV. EDWARD C. JONES.

Drawing pictures on the slate,
Making houses out of cards,
Solving riddles all elate,
Peeping in the neighbors' yards,
Such is the part of childhood's game
Innocent of wealth or fame.

Blowing pencil dust away,
Some perchance may meet the eye;
Looking out for market day,
When comes home an extra pie,
Such is part of childhood's fun,
Ere the growing time is done.

On all fours about the room,
Personating cats and mice;
Saying of the weaver's loom,
Don't it match the carpet nice!
Fairy weavers, still themselves,
Dancing like the ancient elves.

Nodding when the prayer is long,
And the eyes are rubbed in vain;
In the morning up with song,
Holding hands to catch the rain:
Tom! come in! you roughish Will!
Go to school! and there be still!

Life a holiday of sweets,
Care a blue-beard not yet known;
Every day its joy repeats,
Rapture in one even tone.
Who that morn would wish to cloud?
Who that fairy land would shroud?

Hard their destiny who creep
Through a childhood full of gloom,
Sad awake and sad asleep,
Buried in a living tomb,
Old before their Spring is shed,
Grey at heart ere morn has fled.

SERMON

By ORSON PRATT, Tabernacle, Sept. 11, 1859.

[REPORTED BY G. D. WATT.]

It is my intention this forenoon, if the Lord will assist me by his Spirit, to say a few words upon the principles of the gospel, or, in other words, the first principles of that great plan of salvation which was devised before the foundation of the world for the benefit of the inhabitants of this earth. The gospel of Jesus Christ is of great antiquity; it was ordained in the councils of heaven before the world was, and all of its principles, ordinances, promises, and blessings were instituted in the beginning, before man was placed upon the earth. These principles have been revealed to the human family in various ages of the world, not only revealed in the meridian of time by Jesus and the Apostles, but to generations and ages before the apostles lived on the earth.

Before I commence investigating these principles to know precisely what they are, I will read from some new revelations which were revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith in the month of December, 1830: they are revelations concerning Adam, Enoch, Noah, and the gospel of salvation as it was made manifest to them. That which I am about to read is an extract from the prophecy of Enoch, a book revealed by inspiration to the Prophet Joseph Smith some 29 years ago.

"And Enoch spake the words of God and said, hath God made known unto my fathers that all men must repent. And He called upon our father Adam by His own voice, saying, I am God: I made the world and men before they were.—And he also said unto him—Turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, and believe, and repent of all thy transgressions, and be baptized even by water, in the name of mine Only Begotten Son, which is full of grace and truth, which is Jesus Christ, the only name which shall be given under heaven, whereby salvation shall come unto the children of men; ye shall ask all things in his name, and whenever ye shall ask, it shall be given. And our father Adam spake unto the Lord and said—Why is it that men must repent and be baptized by water? And the Lord said unto Adam—Behold I have forgiven thee thy transgressions in the garden of Eden. Hence came the saying abroad among the people, That Christ hath atoned for original guilt, wherein the sins of the parents cannot be answered upon the heads of the children, for they are whole from the foundation of the world.

"And the Lord spake unto Adam, saying,—Inasmuch as thy children are conceived in sin, even so when they begin to grow up, sin conceiveth in their hearts, and they taste the bitter that they may know to prize the good. And it is given unto them to know good from evil: wherefore they are agents unto themselves, and I have given unto you another law and commandment; wherefore teach it unto your children, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in no wise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there, or dwell in His presence; for in the language of Adam, man of Holiness is His name; and the name of His Only Begotten is the Son of Man, even Jesus Christ, a Righteous Judge which shall come.

"I give unto you a commandment to teach these things freely unto your children, saying, that inasmuch as they were born into the

world by the fall which bringeth death, by water and blood and the spirit which I have made, and so become of dust a living soul, even so ye must be born again of water and the spirit, and cleansed by blood, even the blood of Mine Only Begotten, unto the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; that ye may be sanctified from all sin, and enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and eternal life in the world to come, even immortal glory: for by the water ye keep the commandment, by the spirit ye are justified, and by the blood ye are sanctified, that in you is given the record of heaven—the comforter—the peaceable things of immortal glory—the truth of all things—that which quickeneth all things—which maketh alive all things—that which knoweth all things, and hath all power, according to wisdom, mercy, truth, justice and judgment.

"And now, behold, I say unto you, this is the plan of salvation unto all men: the blood of Mine Only Begotten, which shall come in the meridian of time. And behold, all things have their likeness, and all things are created and made to bear record of me, both things which are temporal and things which are spiritual; things which are in the heavens above, and things which are on the earth; and things which are under the earth, both above and beneath; all things bear record of me.

"And it came to pass when the Lord had spoken with Adam, our father, that Adam cried unto the Lord, and he was caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, and was carried down into the water, and was laid under the water, and was brought forth out of the water; and thus he was baptized, and the Spirit of God descended upon him; and thus he was born of the Spirit and he became quickened in the inner man: And he heard a voice out of heaven, saying—Thou art baptised with fire and with the Holy Ghost. This is the record of the Father and the Son, from henceforth and forever; and thou art after the order of Him who was without beginning of days or end of years, from all eternity. Behold, thou art one in me, a son of God; and thus may all become my sons. Amen."

I have read this that the Latter Day Saints who have not had the opportunity of reading these inspired translations of the Prophet, may have an opportunity of learning the fact, that the gospel was revealed unto man in the earliest ages of our world. I will read also a short extract from the prophecy of Enoch in relation to a commandment and a mission given unto him:

"And it came to pass that the Lord said unto me, look; and I looked and beheld the land of Sharon, and the land of Enoch and the land of Omner, and the land of Heni, and the land of Shem, and the land of Haner, and the land of Hanannihah, and all the inhabitants thereof; and the Lord said unto me—Go to this people, and say unto them—Repent, lest I come out and smite them with a curse, and they die. And he gave unto me a commandment, that I should baptize in the name of the Father, and the Son, which is full of grace and truth, and the Holy Spirit, which bears record of the Father and the Son."

Thus we see that not only Adam understood the principles of Faith, Repentance, Baptism, the new Birth, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, but Enoch also understood the same plan, and had authority given him to administer in the ordinances of it. We will now pass along to Noah, still reading from the new translation of the Old Testament, not translated by King James' translators, but by the Prophet of the living God; translated by the gift and power of inspiration from on high:

"And in those days there were giants on the earth, and they sought Noah to take away his life; but the Lord was with Noah, and the power of the Lord was upon him.

"And the Lord ordained Noah, after His order, and commanded him that he should go forth, and declare His gospel unto the children of men, even as it was given unto Enoch.

"And it came to pass that Noah called upon men that they should repent; but they hearkened not unto his words; and also, after they had heard him, they came up before him, saying—Behold, we are the sons of God. Have we not taken unto ourselves the daughters of men? and are we not eating and drinking, and marrying and giving in marriage? Our wives bear unto us children, and the same are mighty men, which are like unto them of old, men of great renown. And they hearkened not to the words of Noah.

"And God saw that the wickedness of men had become great in the earth; and every man was lifted up in the imagination of the thoughts of his heart, being only evil continually.

"And it came to pass that Noah continued his preaching unto the people, saying—Hearken, and give heed unto my words, believe and repent of your sins, and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, even as our fathers did, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, that ye may have all things made manifest; and if ye do not this, the floods will come in upon you. Nevertheless, they hearkened not; and it repented Noah, and his heart was pained that the Lord had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart."

You recollect King James' translators render it, 'and it repented the Lord that he had

made man on the earth,' but the translation given by inspiration says 'it repented Noah and his heart was pained that the Lord had made man on the earth. And the Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and the creeping things, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth Noah that I have created them, and that I have made them, and he hath called upon me; and they have sought his life.'

These extracts which I have read, concerning Adam, Enoch, and Noah, you will find in a little work, called THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE, published by F. D. Richards in England a few years ago. We might go on and read further extracts from the Book of Abraham, a book also revealed by inspiration to the Prophet Joseph Smith, showing that the gospel was revealed to him, and how he received the promise that all the children of men that would obey that same gospel, preached by him, should be justified and become his children—called his seed, and heirs according to the promise. But I have read sufficient for the information of the Latter Day Saints upon this subject.

I know it is customary at the present day to select some passage of scripture as a text upon which to make remarks. Sometimes I follow this custom and sometimes I do not.—I will just observe, however, that we have no examples on record that Jesus or his Apostles followed this plan in their preaching. Neither have we anything on record, showing that Jesus or his Apostles opened their meetings by singing, and then praying, and then singing again and then preaching; we frequently conform to the present day custom in this respect, and we often do not conform to them, as we feel led by the Spirit of truth. Neither was it customary in the days of the Apostles to make long prayers, but if they had something very important to communicate to the people, they did not wish the time occupied in any other way only in delivering the message they had for them; hence we generally find their prayers consisting of a very few sentences.

I shall select this morning a text of scripture, corroborative of those I have already read; I shall select it from King James' translation. You will find it in the gospel according to John, iii chap., 5 v.—"Jesus answered, verily, verily, I say unto thee—Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

There is much comprehended in this passage that is not fully realized and understood by the great mass of the human family. To fully understand it, it is necessary we should understand the true condition of fallen man, then we will see the necessity of a new birth; otherwise, perhaps, we would see no necessity for it. It is recorded in scripture history, that our first parents, while in the garden of Eden, transgressed a certain law and commandment of the Almighty, by partaking of a certain forbidden fruit, which transgression brought them under condemnation and subjected them to a certain penalty, which was, the death of their bodies of flesh and bones; "dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return" was the penalty pronounced upon Adam. Previous to this, Adam was a pure, innocent being; he was not contaminated with sin and was entirely destitute of the knowledge of good and evil. He was a being intended in his construction to endure for evermore. Death had no dominion over his tabernacle, the principle of blood which flows in the mortal tabernacles of men did not exist in his immortal body, but his veins and arteries contained a fluid of a far purer nature than that of blood, in other words, they were filled with the spirit of life which was calculated to preserve them in immortality. Though they partook of various kinds of fruit in the garden, yet there was no fruit in that garden, except one called the forbidden fruit, which would have had the least tendency to destroy the principles of immortality that reigned within them. They were organized to endure, bodies and spirits united, millions of ages. By the transgression of that simple law given to them they fell from immortality to mortality; their bodies partook of disease, the seeds of death were sown within them, and in the day that Adam eat thereof (reckoning according to the Lord's time), he passed away and returned to his mother dust.

The probability is, there were deleterious properties, or poisonous qualities in the food he ate, which were calculated to introduce into the system the seeds of mortality and so change it that various forces of nature should have power over it, that in time it should die and be dissolved to dust.

Was this the only penalty pronounced upon father Adam? No: this was only a part of the penalty. There was dwelling in each of the tabernacles of Adam and Eve, a personage of spirit, formed of more refined materials than flesh and bones, materials that were intelligent, immortal and eternal. Immaterialists of the present day may object to this; but we do not believe in an immaterial substance.

The spirits that dwelt in our first parents were capable of thinking, feeling, understanding, perceiving, acting, possessing a will and a judgment; in other words, they were a part of that great substance of life or spirit, which fills the immensity of space, that is in all

things, and through all things. The spirit of man had also a penalty pronounced upon it, because it yielded to disobedience, by giving heed to the tempter; for by yielding to his teachings, it became subject to him, as a servant.

If we become subject to a being, we are under his dominion and power, and he controls us, and exercises authority over us, whether good or bad. Adam and Eve had placed themselves in a condition that the tempter had complete control over their spirit; they became servants to the fallen angels to do according to their bidding.

Let us now examine how the fall affected their posterity. We do not inherit Adam's transgression, but the consequences of it.—There is a difference between inheriting the original sin, and feeling the consequences of it. To illustrate—we do not say, when the children inherit the diseases of their parents brought on by drunkenness, debauchery, lasciviousness, and wickedness of every description, that it is the effect of the children's individual sins. This is not so; they only inherit the consequences of the sins of the parents. So it is with all the posterity of Adam; the consequences of the transgression of Adam and Eve have flowed down upon us; hence we find that all the sons and daughters of Adam have become mortal; the seeds of dissolution are within our tabernacles, because our first parents sinned, and yet we are not guilty of their sins.

Furthermore, Adam and Eve became subject in the spirit to the being that tempted him. The children that were begotten by him, inheriting unholy, fallen tabernacles, also became subject to the same being, on the supposition that there had been no atonement provided. Hence you perceive the baneful consequences of the fall, considered separate and apart from any atonement which was to be made.

Next let us inquire as to the duration of the penalty. Was the penalty to cease at the end of a certain period? I want you to look at this independent of any considerations of the atonement. If there had been no atonement provided, the bodies of our first parents, as well as the bodies of all their children, would have crumbled back to their mother earth, to rise no more. Would not that have been an eternal death of the flesh and bones? If there were no atonement, there could be no resurrection. How could man, being fallen and corrupted, atone for his own sins? He could not do it. How could he deliver himself from the power of satan to whom he had made himself subject? He could not do it. Satan had claim upon him, and there was no power in man, not in the least degree, to redeem himself from that bondage.

This is what we call fallen man; and this is what we call spiritual death; not a dissolution or disorganization of the spiritual elements, but the subjection of the spirit to the power of satan as eternal in its duration as the subjection of the flesh and bones to death.

Now let us take into consideration for a few moments the great plan which God devised before Adam was placed in the garden of Eden in order to redeem man. God, by his foreknowledge, beheld that man would fall from his first estate, by turning aside from His commandments—that he would bring upon himself an eternal death both of body and spirit. Now is the opportunity for mercy to step in. Justice had consigned them to eternal death and misery, and mercy could not step in, without destroying the claims of justice, only upon certain conditions. And what may be those conditions? Would God accept the sacrifice of a corrupted, sinful, degraded, fallen being, as an atonement for his own sins? No, that would not satisfy the demands of justice. God could not exhibit the attribute of mercy, on any principle whatsoever, only for a sinless being to suffer in behalf of sinful man. Inasmuch as the sin was against an infinite being—a transgression of a law issued by an infinite being—the atonement must be an infinite atonement; hence God sent forth his only begotten Son, in the meridian of time, who took upon himself the form of fallen man, that is, he entered into a tabernacle of flesh and bones, altho' he had not been guilty of the original sin; this he did voluntarily on his part. For the edification of the Saints, I will refer you to a passage in the inspired translation of the Book of Abraham, where we read that in the councils of eternity, before the foundation of the world, the Lord devised the great plan of salvation; when he came to that part of it in relation to the future redemption of man, which pertains to a sacrifice, he made an inquiry, "Whom shall we send?" He did not feel as it were willing to say to any one of the council you are the person, and you must go and make this atonement; he did not seem willing to exercise this authority upon an innocent being, but looked around upon the assembly as tho' he would have some one to volunteer. "And one answered like unto the Son of Man, here am I, send me." Here then was an offer on the part of the Son of God—the first born, "I will go and redeem the human family upon the conditions that thou hast devised."

But how could he go and redeem them? He could not redeem them, unless he suffered for them, and in their behalf. The penalty of death had passed upon them. His Father might have reasoned with him, in words some-