

This World would be a Paradise.

BY J. C. BELL.

This world would be a paradise
If men would do his duty,
For all the works of God suffice
To fill our homes with beauty;
But we poor mortals do no prize
The lovely scenes before us;
From morn till night we utter sighs,
Thus casting shadows o'er us.

Why should we rail at fortune's freaks,
And yield ourselves to sadness?
True joy is his who for it seeks,
And 'tis alone his gladness.
Why should we look from day to day
For trouble and for sorrow?
Improve the present and be gay,
And fear not care to-morrow.

Too oft we think that we can see
Grove sorrows in the distance,
And thus we brood o'er misery
That has no real existence.
If we have no cares of our own,
We borrow of our neighbor;
We think, of all men, we alone
Perform the greatest labor.

If all would take life as it is,
Their minds from fancy freeing,
This world would be a world of bliss,
And many a happy being.
Yes, earth would be a paradise,
If we would do our duty,
For all the works of God suffice
To fill our homes with beauty.

SERMON

By Elder Orson Hyde, Tabernacle, Jan. 3, 1858.

[REPORTED BY G. D. WAIT.]

Brethren and sisters, I have fallen to my lot this morning to speak unto you a short time as I may be led by the Spirit of the Lord our God. It is very natural for me, when I arise to address a congregation, to speak pretty energetically and pretty loudly also; this you all know that are acquainted with me and that have heard me speak. I like to hear an energetic speaker, but one who speaks very loud is apt to injure himself. When I have spoken too loudly, I have done injustice to myself and probably to the congregation. I shall endeavor, the Lord being my helper, to modulate my voice according to the Spirit of God that I may have when speaking, and not go beyond it, neither fall short. At the same time, I do not want my mind so trammelled as br. Parley P. Pratt's once was when dancing was first introduced into Nauvoo among the Saints; I observed br. Parley standing in the figure, and he was making no motion particularly only up and down. Says I, br. Parley why don't you move forward? Says he, when I think which way I am going I forget the step and when I think of the step I forget which way to go.

I desire that I may watch myself, and while I may be thinking what to say I may not allow my voice to range unchecked nor uncontrolled; and while I may seek to govern my voice, I hope not to be forgetful of matter for your edification.

The principle of government among the Saints is the most important principle that there is for us to understand. If we apply it to individual capacity, it is the most important to us as individuals, not only in the government of the hand and arm, which are greater members than the tongue, but in the government of the tongue also. The tongue, though a very small member, is of all importance which we readily concede. And if we can govern the tongue, we may be considered qualified to rule; or the tongue, though a small member, sets on fire the course of nature, and is too often set on fire of hell.

It is the tongue that causes the evils that exist in the world; it is the tongue that sets nations at war; it is the tongue that causes broils in the domestic circle; it is the tongue that causes the fire of animosity and it will burn in our midst. If we can succeed in governing the tongue according to the mind and will of God we have got peace in our families, peace in our neighborhoods, peace in our community and what is more than all we have peace with our God; for he that offendeth not in word the same is a perfect man. Show me a perfect man that does not have peace with his God, and you will show me something I never saw or heard of. If we can govern the tongue we are prepared then to enter upon the government of other matters, but I think we shall have plenty to do, at least for the present, to govern our tongues even the best that are under the sound of my voice, for there is no person but that sometimes speaks unadvisedly with his lips, but that sometimes lets off an improper word, for the tongue or mouth is merely the valve of the heart, the place where the sentiments are discharged that have been confined in the heart, and that is the true index to the real inner man; hence, 'by thy words thou shalt be justified and by them thou shalt be condemned.' Who of us this morning can say that we have not offended in word even this morning? Can we say that we have not offended in word since the new year of 1858 began? 1857 has gone by, 1858 is now before us. Have we offended in word since this year began? For I am sure that you all prayed that, with the close of the year, your sins might be cancelled and swept away into the gulf of forgetfulness, that they be brought against you no more. Then I trust that you have entered upon the new year with a clean page, turned over a new leaf. Is there a spot or blemish upon that new page thus far until now? Have none of us offended in word? If we have not, so far we are perfect and able also to bridle

the whole body. It will do then, perhaps, for the regulation and control of the tongue.

There are other matters that I may be led to speak upon in relation to the government of the Saints as a body. By what law shall we be governed? By what rule are we to be controlled and managed? By the laws and powers of this world, or by the laws and powers of the world to come? We form a very important link in the chain of existence, we are occupying a very important place at the present time, and we are called upon to set an example. We are called upon to be the pioneers of a work that shall be everlasting. To be sure we are but weak and feeble; yet we are the strongest of all people on the earth if we have the God of heaven to be our helper, and we have him if we offend not in word, if we can govern the tongue.

It is said there is a great many imperfections among us as a people. Grant it. At the same time, it is said we are the best people on earth and the only friends God has. Admit it is to be so. We may not be so pure friends as he might desire, but we are the best there are; and if he suffers us to be cut off, he will have none left of any kind. This is verily so.

We know that if we want a certain work done, we select the most proper individual for that job, if he is not so good as we could wish, we take the best we have and use that individual. So the Almighty, if he cannot have a people exactly to his liking, I do not know but that he will take the best there is, and manage and get along with them according to the wisdom he possesses.

Now in relation to the Constitution of the United States, I want to speak a few words. There is a great deal of sacredness attached to the Constitution of the United States by this people; that is all right and good. The Constitution is well enough, and so is anything that serves the purpose for which it was created, provided that purpose be a good one. It was created and made with a good intention; if it serves the purpose and end of its creation it is good; and when it has served the end of its creation, the purpose and design of the Almighty are accomplished, and I do not know that he has any more particular use for it. He may then lay it aside as a relic to be respected and honored for the good it has done, for ought I know.

It is said that br. Joseph in his life time declared that the Elders of this church should step forth at a particular time when the Constitution should be in danger and rescue it and save it. This may be so, but I do not recollect that he said exactly so. I believe he said something like this: that the time would come when the Constitution and the country would be in danger of an overthrow; and said he, if the Constitution be saved at all, it will be by the Elders of this church. I believe it is about the language as nearly as I can recollect it.

The question is whether it will be saved at all or not. I do not know as it matters to us whether it is or not: the Lord will provide for and take care of his people if we do every duty and fear and honor him, and keep his commandments; and he will not leave us without a constitution. There is none of you will dispute that the temple of Solomon was built by the inspiration of the Almighty, and it was built to answer a certain purpose and design; it was built by the skill, wisdom, ingenuity and strength of man, aided by the inspiration of the Almighty. It was a beautiful structure and excited the admiration of all people; even the queen of the south came to behold the wondrous works of Solomon and his wisdom, and declared the half had not been told her.

The edifice stood for centuries, though it had become some like the boy's jack-knife, which had had three new blades and two new handles. In the days of our Savior the disciples were very anxious to show him the magnificence of that building. 'Master,' said they, 'see what stones, look at the grandeur, sublimity, strength, and skill displayed in the erection of this building.' I see it all; but I tell you one thing, and it is near at hand when there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down. 'You come out against this temple?' The Jews thought the Savior was a blasphemer when he said he would destroy this temple and in three days he would raise it up again. 'What! are you going to destroy this sacred place that was built by the inspiration of the Almighty?' They supposed he referred to the temple built by Solomon, but instead of that he referred to the temple of his own body.

This shows how the Jews viewed their temple, and the importance they attached to it; they considered it as a most sacred place, and this is why they misunderstood the Savior, and considered him a blasphemer for presuming to speak against the temple. You discover that the Savior says there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.

Why must this temple be razed to the foundation? Because it has answered the purpose of its erection, and another thing, it has been so grossly polluted that it has incurred the displeasure of the Almighty, and he will not see so noble a structure defiled and remain in the midst of the Jews to be used as a den of thieves instead of a house of prayer. The Lord went to work to purify it, and took a whip of small cords, and went in and cast out them that bought and sold, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and made quite an uproar in the midst of the Jews. Still they would resort there. There was the place they would buy and sell, despite the reproof the Savior had given them; then said he there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down. It is useless to endeavor to purify and cleanse it because it has been made the theatre of so much corruption and hypocrisy, I will sweep it out of existence and utterly destroy it.

Just so the Constitution of the United States. It was framed by the inspiration of the Almighty and readily grant; it has served a certain purpose,

been a partial shield to the church in its infancy, or it has been a check upon mobocracy that otherwise would have risen against it. It has not been a protection exactly but a check, and the Almighty saw fit to bring forth his work under this Constitution. It has served and fulfilled its purpose. Now look at the disgraceful rogues practiced under that Constitution. There cannot be an election of a President without bribery, betrayal, buying and selling votes. Under the Constitution there are all kinds of trade, traffic and commerce carried on in a political view. The Constitution now serves but little purpose other than a cloak for political gamblers, merchants and hucksters.

The Almighty looks down from heaven and sees it impossible to save the Constitution, to perpetuate it, and cleanse and purify it; for the wickedness of the people is determined to sweep it out of the way. Although it was framed by his wisdom and skill, and his power and goodness, yet with as much cheerfulness will it be overthrown as it was ever erected or framed. I presume that Titus the Roman Emperor when he entered Jerusalem, when he overthrew the temple and the city, was hisired by the devil as much to do it as perhaps, Solomon was by the Lord to build it, or those that did build it; because it had fulfilled its day, and its work, and had become corrupted and impure, and was the place in which corruption was practiced, and he would sweep it away. It is sometimes the case that in a city where a house of ill fame is kept the people will turn out and demolish the house. It is not because they have an antipathy against the house, but because it was the cover in which abominations were practiced, and they will not bear it, and they turn out once in a while and tare down the house. We do not suppose the Almighty had anything against the temple, but it was a place of resort for corrupt characters and he was determined to dispense with them by destroying their haunts of iniquity. We do not suppose the Almighty has anything against the Constitution, but it serves as a kind of cover under which corrupt characters hide themselves, and attempt to carry on all kind of barter and traffic in relation to politics, and the Almighty is determined to uncover and expose them.

What Constitution shall we be governed by, when unprincipled men have destroyed the Constitution of our Union? I will tell you what we shall have; while we walk in the favor of God, we shall have a constitution. The constitution written in the bible? No! In the Book of Doctrine and covenants, or Book of Mormon? No! What kind shall we have then? The constitution that God will give us. Do you suppose that Joseph Smith was permitted to be killed because the Almighty had anything against him? No! but he wanted the ungodly that rejected his testimony to fill up the cup of their iniquity; and hence they were permitted to take away his life after he had accomplished the work he came to accomplish and not before; they could not touch him before he had done the work he was sent to do, before he had laid the foundation of this kingdom. And when that was completed he might be taken from the troubles of this world that the ungodly might have the opportunity of filling up the cup of their iniquity. The blood of Joseph and Hyrum was shed, mingled too with the blood of br. Taylor who survived, and who is here a living witness to the facts that occurred in connection with their death. Has the nation atoned for that blood? No! Have they offered to do it? They never have. But if one poor scamp should happen to be killed in this country, in this region, the whole of the United States are ready to fly to arms to avenge the blood of that individual that never was worth the powder and lead to kill him. But the Prophets of God that are inspired of the Almighty to do a work for the benefit of the human family, can be killed, and no man lay it to heart. O, it is all very well; to be sure, it was an outrageous deed to murder them when they were in the hands of the law, when they were held as prisoners, it was a horrid act, at the same time we are glad it is done. That is the feeling, and the universal feeling almost throughout the United States. There was hardly a man, woman or child that did not assent to the death of Joseph and Hyrum, but objected to the way in which it was done. 'It is not exactly honorable or pleasing, but we are glad of it anyhow.' That is the sentiment of the nation, and by that very sentiment they have drawn upon themselves the anger of God, and that blood has to be atoned for, and it has to be atoned for upon all those that have said we are glad of it, that have secretly said so, and cherished that idea. It will extend to them all who have consented to the death of the Prophet of God.

Now says the Lord, 'to him that overcometh will I give power over the nations.' Did Joseph Smith overcome even unto death? Yes. Was God with him? Yes, he was. When they were about to cut off his head, behold the power of the Almighty came down, and the men stood as it were like marble statues, they could not move but stood there like Lot's wife not pillars of salt but pillars of petrified corruption. The power of the Almighty came down with the vivid glare of lightning's flash and they had no power to take his head off. Was God with him? Yes. Was his death glorious? Yes! What was his glory? One portion of it is, 'to him that overcometh will I give power over the nation.' A portion of his honor and glory will be to enforce his word and see it take effect among the people and nation that have said we are glad he is killed. They cannot avoid it by going through death. They will have to be arraigned under the government and jurisdiction of their murdered victims.

When we pass a law in the Legislature, and say that is the law by our acts, we also say that all laws and parts of laws conflicting herewith are repealed from this time henceforth. When Joseph takes his position all laws and parts of laws that shall conflict at all with him are hereby re-

pealed, and his word and his law will be the end of stripes. There is no dodging it, and I feel thankful for it. Well, brethren and sisters, let it be our happy lot, and our ambition so to live before our God and our superiors that have gone before us that they may take pleasure in saying to us, 'well done good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things.' I tell you Joseph holds the keys, and none of us can get into the celestial kingdom without passing by him. We have not got rid of him, but he stands there as the sentinel holding the keys of the kingdom of God, and there are many of them beside him. I tell you if we get past those who have mingled with us and know us best, and have a right to know us best, probably we can pass all other sentinels as far as it is necessary, or as far as we may desire. But I tell you the punch will be with those that have mingled with us, stood next to us, weighed our spirits, tried and proven us, there will be a punch in my view, to get past them. The other's perhaps, will say if br. Joseph is satisfied with you, you may pass. If it is all right with him it is all right with me. Then if Joseph shall say to a man, or if br. Brigham say to a man, I forgive you your sins, 'whoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them'; if you who have suffered and felt the weight of transgression, if you have generosity enough to forgive the sinner, I will forgive him; you cannot have more generosity than I have. I have given you power to forgive sins, and when the Lord gives a gift He does not take it back again. When He bestows a power He does not diminish it unless it is through transgression in the individual to whom this authority is given; but it increases in righteousness, the Lord will add to it instead of taking away. We see the position that br. Joseph stands in; we see that he has overcome, and that he has power over the nation. Now brethren and sisters, don't you think that br. Joseph feels for this people, feels an interest for us? Has he overcome, or has he not? We all say yes, he has, by the word of the Lord, by the truth of heaven, and by the word of his testimony. He has laid down his life for his brethren, and greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. He has overcome, yes; then has he power over the nation? Yes, then he loves this people does he? Yes, does he love that people that killed him? No, he feels towards them as the Lord does who is angry with the wicked every day, yet he does not smite. What shall he do with them? Break them to pieces as a potter's vessel. Then the love that he has for this people, and the anger that he feels towards the ungodly will be seen and felt by all classes; and if he has power over the nation, will he not exert it? He is armed with this power, which is reason sufficient why he should exert it in favor of his friends. Then we have no reason to fear.

When a man overcomes, he has power over the nation. I tell you we have no reason to fear if we are friends to that individual.

They thought if they could kill Joseph and Hyrum they would get the ascendancy and that it would be an end of Mormonism.

Do you not see that every means they devised for their own safety is so many steps towards their overthrow? They could not have struck a more fatal blow for themselves than when they murdered Joseph and Hyrum, because it made them rulers over their enemies; and by this bloody act they sealed, nailed and clenched their own doom, and there is now no possible chance of deliverance.

It is just so with our enemies at this time, if they let us alone we will prosper, and if they don't, we will prosper the faster, and bring them under subjection the sooner. That is just the way our heavenly Father will overrule it if we live to his honor and glory.

Now we have the living law. The voice of br. Brigham is heard from day to day and from time to time, and also the voices of his counselors, who are to him as Aaron and Hur were to Moses, lifting up his hands in the midst of the congregation, and sustaining and upholding him while his voice pours out the mind and will of God unto us. That is the law by which we are governed, and if we abide it we have no need to transcend our Constitutional rights. In that we are safe if we will honor and abide by it, and it is the only safe law and protecting power that will shield and screen us in the day of adversity and trial.

As Joseph stood to the people in his day, so does br. Brigham and his counselors stand to the people in our day. Now then, provided we can secure the favor, friendship and goodwill of them that hold the keys of the kingdom in our day, it will be all right. Suppose some of us did really sin and transgress in the days of Joseph, in our darkness and ignorance, in our stupidity and blindness, and grieve the Holy Spirit and the spirit of Joseph: he is dead and we are living, and by and bye br. Brigham comes up before Joseph. Well says Joseph, 'How did those ones get along in your day? Have they improved any, have they done right, even in your day, and secured your confidence and goodwill?' 'O, yes,' says brother Brigham, 'they have done well in my day. We have had no trouble with them; they have kept my word.' Says Joseph, 'if you can speak in their favor, I will not interpose any objections.'

It is for us, brethren and sisters, to secure the good will of those that hold the keys of the kingdom here. We do not care what they think outside of us; we ask no odds of them; they may think what they please, if we can only get the good will, faith and love of our brethren that preside over us, we shall not need the encomiums of the ungodly.

If we can get the good will of them that preside over us in our day, they will speak a good word for us. If you, Bishops, have a man in your wards that has been refractory and is put under your jurisdiction, the President calls upon you and asks, 'how does that man get along?' First rate; he is easily governed and control-