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GOSPEL MESSAGE.

By PRES. JOSEPH SMITH.

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The work that we represent is full of interest, and there is no single phase of it that I know anything about, or have ever heard canvassed, but what is prolific of good thought, and worthy to be remembered; and as was remarked upon one occasion some years since, in reference to one that was in the habit of addressing the people, an individual said of him, "He always talked as if there was something that he had not told." In the consideration of this gospel, as we understand it, it cannot all be told until the winding up of time and the end of eternity. It comprehends all

that has been from the beginning; all that lies between the opening scene in God's councils on high and the judgment seat, and the entering into everlasting life in the realm prepared of God for them who are worthy to be reigned and ruled over by his Son; and how can a man tell it all? How is it possible for any number of men to tell it all? More especially since, in the divine economy of God himself, he has given us due notice that the day and the hour of his coming is not known to the angels, nor to the Son himself, which God hath set in his power;—and who dares to say when he will come? Who dares to say when this winding up shall take place?

Under the influence of this thought we have been preaching for years the coming of Christ, but have distinctly affirmed all along the line of our ministry, that no man was authorized to set the day and the hour when he whom we regard as our Re-

deemer should come; and while we have stood shoulder to shoulder with many thousands who believed in the second coming of Christ, and who have from time to time set the day of his appearing, we have told them straightly he could not come; he would not come until things which had been predicted by himself should be accomplished; for if he did, it would unfortunately prove him to have been a false prophet, which we could not afford to accept.

If a text is necessary tonight, I have chosen the opening words of the gospel according to St. Mark; and while it is but a starting point, I do not know where the end may be, for I do not know in what special direction my thoughts may be led; and so wide is the field, and so great the good to be culled from this open field, that it matters but little, if the Spirit lead; and we are commanded that if the Spirit does not lead we shall not teach;

hence we should be wise enough to avoid continuing if we feel no leading of the Spirit.

The testimony of Mark as we have it in the first chapter is like this:

“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God: As it is written in the prophets, Behold I send my messenger before thy face which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

No more effective text could be chosen than this, from which to discuss the differences that exist among modern religionists, if this were the theme for discussion, and no more prolific text could be discovered if it were intended to discuss the gospel by which God purposed to save man, and the methods by which this gospel should be communicated to man. And lest I may be misunderstood by some who may not be acquainted with our faith,

I make the premise at the start, that it is our belief, as a people, that the gospel, in order to be effective for salvation among men, must be authoritatively declared; and, if there be ordinances connected with the gospel by which men are administered unto by human hands, those who minister unto them must be authorized of the Master; and if they be not authorized by the Master, then is their ministration ineffectual unto the fulfillment of the hope which may have been excited in the breasts of believers through the words of the prophet.

It may and does sound strange to many, as I have good reason to know, that a people should come presenting a gospel, declaring it to be the gospel of Jesus Christ, and at the same time make the declaration that they are directly authorized of Jesus Christ to preach the gospel and minister unto their fellows in its ordinances. It was my fortune only a

few weeks ago, to meet with an individual who had held long connection with one of the largest denominations of religionists in the United States, who, after examining our faith for a number of weeks, had been able to compass all that we believed and accepted, except that he could not entertain the thought that the priesthood was necessary. All the balance of the views that we declared in his hearing and sustained from the Word, he was quite willing to accept; but he could not see the necessity that in the time in which we live; the time of such wondrous advancement in learning, in science, in art; the seemingly great advancement in spirituality, that man had made, that there should be any contra-distinctive difference between individuals who preached from the sacred desk in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, I would like to make this proposition sufficiently plain, if I can, in order that we may have an

understanding of it. I ask the question, What does the individual who stands in the sacred desk to preach what he believes to be the gospel, represent? And everyone who has an intelligent conception of the situation would declare at once that he is representing a philosophy, a belief in which will consecrate the lives of men unto the service of God. That is the thought. I ask the question, What does he represent? I must be answered, he represents the power of Christ unto salvation. And when I make the inquiry, Whom does he represent? Every man must answer, He represents Christ. Predicating the thought upon that, suppose that such a man *misrepresents* Christ? Is Christ, then, properly represented to the world, and can a misrepresentation of the Redeemer be effective to suggest to the minds of men a correct belief, or lead them in the ways by which, if they follow them, they shall reach salvation?

There is a plain statement of the case and no man, it seems to me, ought to misunderstand it.

Mark, in this presentation here, says that this was the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God. Now, if the historian is worthy of belief; if he knew whereof he was making affirmation in his history; it follows that by reading after him we can discover what he understood to be the ways of God; and we believe that he has distinctly made such a declaration at the opening that neither you, nor I, nor anybody else has a right to suppose that God walks in crooked paths; for the declaration of this one in the wilderness was, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." What we complain about, is, that many men in the world have been industriously endeavoring to make the ways of the Lord crooked, and we want them to come back and make them straight.

It is an easy matter to start a

religious controversy, we have discovered, and when we undertake to read about the ways of the Lord and about his paths we come right into the field in which men are purposing to represent him, and assuming to represent him; can we stand to be judged by our fellow-man and acknowledge before them that we expect sooner or later to stand before that great throne on which the Judge shall sit to judge the families of men, and answer for what we do and what we say, and as a result, what we believe? If we are to answer there, pray tell me how are our consciences to be so educated that we may absolve ourselves from blame while upon the earth, that we may stand a fair chance not to be fearful when we stand before that great throne? I answer in the language of the Master himself, "Straight is the gate, narrow is the way that leadeth unto life and few there be that find it, but broad is the gate and wide is the path that leadeth

to destruction and many there be that go in thereat." The poetic declaration by Dr. Holland is at work in my brain:

"Straight is the gate, the path un-
kind
That leads to life immortal;
And few the careful feet that find
The hidden portal.

"While wide the gate and broad the
way
That leads unto perdition
And countless multitudes are they
Who gain admission."

Here we have the statement agreeing with Mark; the path is narrow and the gate is straight. Enter ye in at the straight gate. And, pray tell me, can you find a straighter gate than that which the Master himself set and of which he made the statement in the tenth chapter of John in which he says, "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door, the same is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his

voice." I am not responsible for the language, I give it as it is in the Word.

When the Savior came, one of the first things that he did, when he went out upon his gospel mission, was to go to one who was baptizing in water, and placing himself before him, said, "I want to be baptized." I do not wonder that John refused to baptize him; that the idea of baptizing the one of whom the Spirit had borne testimony to him, that he was the Son of God, should have struck him with awe; I do not wonder that he should have declined to lay hands upon this august Son of God; but mark the pleading of him who was to be the Redeemer,—the one whose ways were to be declared by this voice crying in the wilderness,—“Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.” I, as a representative of this man who thus stood pleading with John that he might be suffered to fulfill all righteous-

ness, and knowing the mission upon which he had been sent by his Father; knowing the character of the council that had been held in heaven and that as a result of which he came to earth; knowing that in no other way would there come this salvation to man, which God had designed should save them from the grasp of death and hell; knowing that the only manner of life which could give them all that they desired and sought, he demanded of John an administration; because John had been sent by his Father, and as a consequence, to prove himself to be an obedient Son, one worthy to have the burden of the salvation of man rest upon him, God's principles of truth and righteousness, he demanded that he might become a fulfiller of the law and not a breaker of it. I plead with you then, my friends, whoever you are, no matter what may now be your belief; I plead with you to stand for a moment upon Jordan's

banks and see what kind of work would be done there; the beginning of the gospel of the Son of God. Who am I; who are you; that in this period of time when the earth is peopled so densely, when for many thousands of miles from that sacred spot on which the Son of God stood then; far from the waters of Jordan in which his royal body was buried in baptism; in the midst of a country that has been brought out of the wilderness in which God had designed a people should flourish and a nation be born that should serve the principles of righteousness and peace, by which men might have political liberty and freedom; here in this land so many thousand miles away from that spot; who are we that we can sit in judgment and say that that which God enacted through Jesus Christ is not essential for our salvation? Who of us has a right to say that we can fulfill righteousness with anything less than that which

moved this royal Son of God? This is one of the things which came borne upon the wings of the morning by this angelic messenger who came to bring to us the record of the people of this land. I hold in my hand a book upon the back of which is inscribed "The Two Records." To every reader of the Book of Mormon this single statement is fraught with the thought that these books are prophetically made one. The stick of Judah and the stick of Joseph should grow together in the hands of Ephriam, and these should be carried to the people that they might have life. After thirty-six earnest years of inquiry, teaching the religion of this book, called the Book of Mormon, I am more ready, tonight, to give it credence and support than I have ever been before. While I have been engaged in the ministry I have found no single allegation against this work that could stand under strict examination. I confess be-

fore you, that if in my early manhood, in my inquiries, I had found that it had been foisted upon the people through fraud, I should have been delighted to have disclosed that fraud to the people. And when Brn. William and E. L. Kelley started on their mission east some few years ago, and told me what they intended to do, to hunt up the place whence Mormonism came, and if they could, discover the source whence it sprung, and asked me what I thought about it; and it struck me as being peculiar that they should come to me and ask me such a question as that; and so I said to them: "Brethren, I like the idea upon which you are going; and if in your investigations, using every means that lies in your power to upturn the stones that may lie scattered along the pathway of the record which this people made over this religion until now, you, with your crow-bars of inquiry, and hammers of investigation, can find the

place that it originated in fraud, return to me and I will join you in exposing it to the world." And to my astonishment one of the brethren said, "Is that the way you feel about it?" I answered, "Yes, sir. The reason is this: we can better rectify an error this side the grave than we can the other; and if we find that we have been following a mistake, now is the time, and here is the place to confess that error and set about making it right. I am not interested in fostering a lie, neither for my own good, nor for the good of those whom I love, in continuing to support that which is an error. As soon as it can be made apparent to me, I am prepared to go before the public and disavow it." These men went far east, along the line that the men had pursued with whom the work originated and they, through every means in their power, tried to discover whence it came; and when they returned they were more confirmed in their belief of

the faith than they were when they started out. Such has been my experience, and I take pride in the thought that if I had found that the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ as announced by words to which our attention was called in this Book of Mormon, and it so straightly charged upon us as a people that we could not have life and salvation except through faith in him who was the Christ, in the very face of that statement, if I had discovered, or if I should now discover that the doctrine enunciated by the Savior as the record, had been kept by those who bore testimony, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, did not harmonize with the angelic message I would be prepared to say that that message was not binding upon us, and the sooner we got rid of it the better. But, and if that which came to us as a result of the angelic message held up to us and declared positively that the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as found in the

record of the Jewish people shall become the gospel of our salvation, I am authorized to say for myself, and I represent many this night, and I am authorized to say for them, we accept it because that it agrees and corresponds with the truth which has been certified to us by the Master.

This may be something of a lengthy premise, but it is essential unto the consideration of all the subjects that grow out of this. For instance: The Savior in the twenty-eighth chapter of Matthew, and in the sixteenth chapter of Mark, in giving that great royal commission to his disciples that sent them abroad everywhere to preach the gospel, said to them, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The anti-thesis or opposite of that is true, "He that believeth not and is not baptized shall not be saved." Who of you can say that I have misrepresented a word in that?

Mark, writing of the beginning of the gospel of the Son of God, and in reference to it, stated that John did preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And so we read along from leaf to leaf, from page to page, in this historical statement of the work done by him, until we find the Savior baptized, after that going abroad and preaching everywhere; and when they besought him to stay in a certain city, he said, "I must preach this gospel of the kingdom in other cities." If that gospel of the kingdom was intended to be scattered so widely as the commandment in the twenty-eighth of Matthew and the sixteenth of Mark contemplated, it had the whole world for its field; and who shall now circumscribe it, either in the extent of its operation or in the force and the power of the accomplishment whereunto it was sent? In other words, if it was effective for salvation then, is it now?

I am aware that some of those who are pleased to say that they do not regard our message with favor, say that we truly present to our hearers what seems to be a phase of reasoning that they cannot easily dispose of; or, in other words, it has been said of myself, that I kind of take them captive by a species of captious reasoning. That reasoning is this; that if God, on a certain occasion, did do a certain thing, he can do it again; that like causes produce like effects. "Then just as soon as they get you to listen to them they read you certain things out of the Book of Books, and they make plausible argument concerning it, but then it is all a mistake." That is the curious way of getting rid of the force of the argument we make. For instance: John did baptize in the wilderness and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. What did John do that for? What object had he in doing that? And

what object can we think he had in doing that? After we read the declaration made by him, "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight," then the very first thing he does is to say that John did preach in the wilderness for the remission of sins. The burden of preaching baptism had been laid on John. Did he know anything about the object he was sent to accomplish? Certainly he did. He was one sent of God, and, as a consequence, he studied this and went abroad teaching it. Did the remission of sins follow the baptism by John? I am curious to have some people who believe in the Bible but who do not believe in it as we say we do, just answer that question to themselves, and I know there are some listening to me who would gladly accept the word of God if they could see it clearly. Now, I ask them the question, did the baptism of John bring to pass

the remission of sins? I pray you to think of it a little bit for the reason that when a similar question was presented to the people, or they presented a question unto the Master and asked him by what authority do you these things, he said, "I also will ask you, the baptism of John, was it from heaven or was it of men?" I do not put the question just in that form, but it is practically the same thing. The baptism of John, was it effective for the remission of sins? A curious thing took place there. Those people were afraid to answer him. What was the character of their fear? It was this: They did not like to say that the baptism of John was not from heaven, because all men counted John a prophet; and they did not dare to say that the baptism of John was from heaven, because if they did, as they had denied the baptism of John, they had rejected the counsel of God against themselves. Are you willing to put

yourselves in that condition, any of you, tonight? You will pardon me for putting the question plain, but I am getting too old to be misunderstood, and I ask you the question plainly, "Are you willing to put yourself in this position of those people who did not dare to say that baptism was from heaven, that they did not care to say that it was from man, because all men counted John a prophet? I will leave that right there.

Is this gospel to be effective now? If so, how? All over this wide land, this last week, there has been representative gatherings to commemorate the birth of the Redeemer, and why? Because on Bethlehem's plains a star had shone, and in its shining was followed by the wise men, whom it led to the cradle of the Redeemer of the world; the one upon whose shoulders was placed the great burden of redeeming the human race; the one in whose name life and salvation were to

be preached everywhere; the one the only one, who was to be the Counsellor, the mighty God of Jacob, upon whom was laid the stripes that mankind had deserved; the one upon whom was to fall the sinful sicknesses of human nature; the one upon whom the task was bidden to be laid to go down into the prison house and there turn the keys that should open the doors and let the captives go free; the one upon whose broad love was to rest the redemption of the human family and prepare them for the great judgment which was to come. Ah, think of it, my friends! This man, in the matchlessness of his goodness; a man clothed in the humility in which he came to serve his Father, wrought as his Father bade him to work; accomplished what he did do because he kept the counsel of the Father. And think you that his gospel is inoperative now, if it was operative then? Think you that his power has

been broken, if it existed in strength then? Think you that his loving kindness is worn out, if it was in existence then? In the greatness of his loving heart he would have accomplished the salvation of all the human race, and would have gathered them in his arms long before this; but now, as then, those to whom the message came, stand afar off and will not come, because this man did not come as their fathers and themselves anticipated he would. Wiser men were those who listened to the language and the pleading of the Messiah. Wiser men were those who, among the Jews and the Gentiles, were willing to hear the language of the disciples, and hearing, loved to obey, and obeying, found refuge with him of such a character that from that time to this, they are admired among all the believers. Representing them to you, tonight, let me ask you if the gospel of the Son of God is operative for your salva-

tion and mine, how is it applicable to us as it was to them then? Shall we do as man has so ordered it now, in a different phase, in a more convenient way from that; or shall we do as they did, go down into Jordan? Shall we seek the banks of the rivers and pools in which men may be dipped and rise to walk in newness of life? I witnessed today an act of resignation unto the commandment of God. I witnessed the covenant of a man, strong in his early manhood and promise, going down into the waters of baptism to make a covenant with the Father in the way in which he believed it had been ordered by the Master. I witnessed the consecration of the life of a child when it had come to the years of discretion, who, in her youthful condition, desired to make covenant with God in the waters of baptism, as did the Master. Think you that she is not wiser than those haughty ones of the earth who refuse to

put themselves side by side with their Redeemer and go down with him in the waters of baptism? I sometimes think, "Shame on this haughty human nature of ours!" Shame on the hearts who cannot, who will not say they will accept the Master as he has presented himself, and follow him as he stands upon the other side beckoning with all the force of his divinity and his humanity combined, "Come ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Follow me."

I gather a few words from this record to show you what I mean, and that this joining of the two records, the records of the Jews in the old country and the records of the saints upon this land, a prehistoric race; the records which we are making in our own period and among ourselves, that these records will be those that shall judge us in the great day which is to come. To show you that the uniting of these records

in one and presenting their testimonies to men is not an idle and vain thing, conjured up in the brain of any wild and visionary man, but, through the visitation of the Spirit, has been issued by reason of Divine design and intention, to be presented in such a way that men may comprehend that the loving kindness of God did not proscribe the people there in the old world, or in the new, and will not until the time shall come that every man everywhere may recognize in every other a brother and a friend. All shall be able to look up unto God and cry, "My father which is in heaven." The word "Mormon" is applied to people in derision, and it is stated by some who think they are wiser in regard to the history of the church than we are, wiser in regard to the books we believe than we are; wiser in relation to the people and their intentions than we are; that the word "Mormon" represents a mythical person who is invested

with sacred characteristics by a deluded people. Let us see what one of these deluded men, the man from whom the book takes its name, has to say in reference to it. Now, mark it, you who claim to be Christians believing in the word. "And now, I, Moroni, write [I am quoting from the seventh chapter of the Book of Moroni] a few of the words of my father Mormon, which he spake concerning faith, hope and charity; for after this manner did he speak unto the people, as he taught them in the synagogue which they had built for the place of worship. And now I, Mormon, speak unto you, my beloved brethren; and it is by the grace of God, the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ," [How like the Apostle Paul that is, when he says that he wrote unto those everywhere, called to be saints, by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ] and his holy will, because of the gift of his calling unto

me, that I am permitted to speak unto you at this time; wherefore I would speak unto you that are of the church, that are the peaceable followers of Christ, and that have obtained a sufficient hope, by which ye can enter into the rest of the Lord, from this time henceforth, until ye shall rest with him in heaven." Is that the hope of a wild, visionary man; a man entitled to no credence among his fellows; a man whose memory should be held in execration among those who came after him? "And now, my brethren, I judge these things of you because of your peaceable walk with the children of men." Is that the character that should mark those men who preach the gospel in these latter days, in this way? "For I remember the word of God which saith, by their works ye shall know them; for if their works be good, then they are good also. For behold God hath said, a man being evil, cannot do that which is good; for

if he offereth a gift, or prayeth unto God, except he shall do it with real intent, it profiteth him nothing." Ah, says the Apostle Paul, "Though I give all my goods to be burned and have not charity I am as sounding brass and a tinkling symbal." "For behold it is not counted unto him for righteousness. For behold, if a man being evil, giveth a gift, he doth it grudgingly; wherefore it is counted unto him the same as if he had retained the gift; wherefore he is counted evil before God."

Let me enforce this language by telling you a little anecdote of that which is said to have occurred in the church over in England where they used to pass a contribution box—a basket at the end of a staff. A Scotch deacon passing this basket one morning, the light being a little dim, the weather cloudy outside, one of the occupants of one of the pews dropped a piece of money into the basket which he

had fingered from his pocket, and as he dropped it, he discovered by the glint of the light that it was yellow instead of white, and he says to the deacon, "Stop, stop, I have made a mistake, I dropped the wrong coin into the basket." The deacon was about to stop when the man says, "Never mind, I will get credit for it anyhow." The deacon said, "Thee'll get credit for the shilling which thee intended to give and not for the sovereign thee did give." The deacon told the man the truth; he would get credit for the shilling which he intended to give and not for the sovereign which dropped unintentionally from his fingers.

How is it with our gifts? If this book has taught us nothing more, it has taught us this thought, when a man brings his gift unto the altar he must come with righteous intent and purpose, and if he does not it will not be counted unto him for

righteousness. "And likewise also, is it counted evil unto a man if he shall pray, and not with real intent of heart; yea, and it profiteth him nothing; for God receiveth none such; wherefore a man being evil cannot do that which is good, neither will he give a good gift. For behold, a bitter fountain cannot bring forth good water; neither can a good fountain bring forth bitter water; wherefore a man being a servant of the devil, cannot follow Christ; and if he follow Christ he cannot be a servant of the devil. Wherefore, all things which are good, cometh from God. [I want you to mark this because it is one of the exciting things told by the early ministry.] And that which is evil cometh of the devil; for the devil is an enemy unto God, and fighteth against him continually, and inviteth and enticeth to sin and to do that which is evil continually. But behold, that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually;

wherefore, 'everything which inviteth and enticeth to do good and to love God and to serve him, is inspired of God.'" Do you not see in this an exhibition of the profoundest charity, the building of that which enticeth man to do good, one of the grandest foundations that could possibly be wrought for the faith of man in what was claimed to be a revelation from God, that was calculated to give him a better insight into the ways of the Master by which they could come to Him? If you do not, you have not that discretion which I have been pleased in my thought today and this evening to give you credit for.

I suppose we are privileged to enforce our teaching by what is called the deductive method, and hence a question or two may be profitably asked here. In the presentation of Christ and his salvation to man now, ought there to be any hesitancy of men who stand behind the sacred desk and invite men to come un-

to Christ to tell them that which they find in his record? And I suppose I am answered by every person present whether they think as I do in regard to religion or not, unless they are afraid to compromise themselves, "Why, certainly; Christ must be represented as his book represents him, else we are not entitled to believe in the one who essays to represent him." Very well; we take that for granted now and proceed a little further. I find in this book, this New Testament Scripture a statement like this: "He that is ashamed of me and of my words on the earth, of him will I be ashamed before my Father and the holy angels." Now, let us see the force of this if we can. In Paul's writings unto the Thessalonians, if my memory serves me right, there is a statement made like this in regard to the resurrection, and it is, in substance, this, that we that may be alive and remain at his coming will not prevent those

that are asleep, or that are in the grave, for when he shall come, we shall be caught up in the air to meet him and shall come with him and so shall we be ever with the Lord. Now, when he is come, according to the teachings of the New Testament, he is to come with all his holy angels, and as a consequence that bright radiant throng is to compose a part of those who shall come with him. Then we shall all stand to be judged in the presence of him and his holy angels.

Now, I have a question to propound that affects me and every one of you, and that is this: How do we expect to stand in that day? I know that the people will say, we expect to stand to be judged, we cannot help ourselves. I believe it with my whole heart, but then comes in this condition, the question may possibly be asked of me, "Did you hear the words of Christ?" and what think you would be the answer that I would make from what you have heard

of me this morning and tonight, and the record that you know I must have been making for the last thirty-six years in preaching what I understood to be the gospel? When I have stood in the valleys of the west there, and have taken the three books of the church that we hold to be the books of record and have said to the people, "These are to be the things upon which I predicate my hope of the judgment, and these and their teachings are to be the things by which I expect to be judged in that day, and as I shall have either built loosely, or carelessly, or righteously, I shall fare in that judgment day. Now what think you might be the question that will be asked of me? Did you hear the words of Christ? How could I say, acknowledging as I have done before the public that I believed in the record called the New Testament Scriptures, and in the record called the Old Scripture; how could I say, when I have told the people publicly

that I believed in the Book of Mormon, and in the angelic messenger that came with the message containing the words of Christ, how could I say in reference to these when I have said that God has spoken in the period in which I live and has reiterated by his Spirit the words of the Master spoken in Galilee and in Jerusalem? How could I say that I never had heard his words? If the question was asked me, "Were you ashamed of me and my word?" what should be my answer then? Should I avoid answering the question fairly and frankly, standing before that August Judge and in the blaze of effulgent glory surrounding that throne and looking upon the blazing garments of him who offered the one who trod the wine press alone? How could I in the presence of those who kept those books as august secretaries, endowed with authority and ability to keep these records? How could I dare to think I could

blind the eyes of those who sat there upon the throne? I must answer, "I did hear thy words." How happy must I then feel in my heart, I heard his word, I was not ashamed of him nor of his words on the earth. That is one of the things that makes me so earnestly present from time to time, the obligations of men, who hear, to obey this word. Let me tell you, there is no room for subterfuge there; there will be none for excuse; we cannot, in that presence, hide in these society trained muscles of our countenance, that intent and purpose that are lurking underneath. We may deceive our fellow man here; we may with oily tongues deceive them, but we cannot deceive the Judge. We will stand as naked souls in that presence there and we must answer; if we have heard and been ashamed, may God pity us now as he must pity us then. To me, this thought is not an idle one. It rises before me every day of

my life. I am soon to pass over to the multitudes gone before, and could have sung this day with truth the closing verse of that hymn:

“Soon I must pass this gloomy vale,
 Soon all my mortal powers may fail:
 Oh, may my last expiring breath
 His loving kindness sing in death.”

We may be able to sing that song; but how can we, unless we shall have proved ourselves worthy by not being ashamed of the Master, nor of his words; and if he spoke them eighteen hundred years ago, or if he stands tonight, and in this desk, either by himself, or by his representative, speaks his word, what right have we to shelter ourselves in doubt or unbelief? What can we say if we are ashamed of him or his words?

In the eighth chapter of John's Gospel, somewhere about the thirty-second verse, we have something like this: this Master speaking unto the Jewish believers, those who believed in him, said to them, “If ye continue in

my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free:" Let me paraphrase that in its antithesis; "If ye continue *not* in my word, then are you *not* my disciples indeed, and you shall *not* know the truth, and the truth shall *not* make you free." I know that these things are written, I know that they present themselves with force; we must follow them from time to time, when in our better natures we are looking up unto God and feeling the burnings and wooings of his Spirit bidding us to come out from our contact with sin, to avoid becoming subject to it. We can feel it lifting our better natures higher and preparing us to answer to him, and if that is the case, how much better and wiser it is for us to accept the word as may be found on record clearly and unmistakably, no matter what may be the consequences to us regarding our preconceived notions, our religious teachings,

or other utterances of the ministers among whom we may have passed our lives.

I will try to point this thought by calling your attention to something that is transpiring. I see that there is to be a literary here some evening this week, and the subject is to be "Cuba." I suppose the speaker will endeavor to present a picture of that island and the people who have been struggling to free themselves from the condition in which they have been, and to relieve themselves of the tyranny that that cursed thing has had over them. The sentiment that sent Pizarro and Cortez to this continent, and robbed, murdered and destroyed the Peruvians and the Mexicans; that same spirit is in the Spanish rule today, and Cuba is resisting against it, and striving with all her force and power to conquer her freedom; and you, and I, in the enjoyment of the law of liberty, in a land of freedom, our hearts are bleeding in sympathy

with Cuba, and we mourn that there shall be such scenes of bloodshed and tyranny going on, and we lift our hearts in prayer to God for that oppressed people, and anxiously desire that they should be made free. But pray tell me, what is het political influence, what is the freedom of this body, under human laws, compared to the freedom of the soul that is made free by the obedience to the law of God by his commandments? And where is the comparison between the oppression under which they in Cuba are laboring and the oppression of sin and death? I do not wonder that the Savior should have tried in his hour of extremity to have enforced the lesson of freedom upon those hearts that were listening to him. The tyranny and oppression that bringeth death, and that which takes man down to degradation and final destruction, that tyranny is much worse than that which killeth the body. And our Cuban friends

may suffer in the flesh, but they may rise in the glory which is hereafter unto everlasting freedom. And so I point you this moral. I strive to present before you that by which, when men are prepared to live, they are prepared to die, and point you to a better and higher liberty that the Savior has made possible for each and every one of us, and it is to be sought and obtained only through his word.

I sympathize with Cuba. I don't pretend to say what I would do if I had the power of our National Executive. He may be pursuing the wisest and best policy, he and Secretary Olney, but I feel a good deal like I did when they passed the fugitive slave law, when a man came along to me one morning and said, "Have you seen a yellow boy this morning?" And at once the rebellious spirit in me took fire, and I says, "What do you mean, sir?" "Well," he says, "I mean that a yellow boy has

escaped from over in Missouri here, and I didn't know but what you might have seen him." "Well," I says, "If I had seen a boy this morning, I wouldn't have noticed whether he was black, green, blue nor yellow, and I wouldn't tell you if I did." It was soon after that Dred Scott decision had been made, and that disgraceful scene over there in Boston, you remember, that made those Bostonians come to time. Then I said to him, "These United States cannot make laws fast enough to make me a slave catcher," and so my heart still rebels against it. That would be the language of my human soul sympathizing with those men over yonder fighting for this political liberty. But I am a representative of liberty in Christ, the power of peace by which men may be brought into subjection to him that is the way of life and glory and peace; and telling men that they by obedience to his word may bring themselves into sub-

jection to his will that they may be free indeed. Where is the man or woman so free as the one that has been made free in Christ? Against him no human law is enacted that can bring him to the bar to punish him, no law upon the statute book of God that can write him down a felon and condemn him to death. That man is the freest of all men. That is the freedom of the Son of God. That is the freedom of the people of the covenant.

Now I make no apology for feeling earnest about this. The Spirit has impressed it upon a good many that I was moving slowly but surely, and when I found upon your desk this book in my hand, the two records bound in one, the Inspired Translation and the Book of Mormon, my heart was glad; for I knew in my soul that we of the Reorganized Church were fulfilling prophecy, while many that were talking about fulfilling prophecy were standing idle, or resting up-

on their oars and finding fault with us because we were going forward. I tell you, men should go forward. I would a little rather, mind you, that a man should go a little wrong and make mistakes now and then, than never to move at all. It seems to me to be far better for men to go forward. We have been for a long time hearing people pray about the gathering. The Reorganization went quietly to work and made the gathering possible and practicable. And one brother when he met me up there in the land of Iowa, on one of the roads leading out of what was then Fisher's Grove, said to me, "Can I go down into Missouri and settle and be undisturbed?" I said, "Yes sir, you go down and make selection of a home anywhere, plant your hearthstone and erect your roof tree, and there at your family altar engage in the worship of God, and live before God as you should do, and so far as human agency shall go,

you will be able to stay there until Gabriel blows his horn." Some of the brethren thought I was not giving good counsel at that time, but how have you found it brethren? All over this land a people are being collected together here and there; and they are preaching the gospel of the Son of God, that which I foresaw would be done years ago, and I told the people that the name of Latter Day Saint would be made honorable before men. How? By honorable teaching and honorable acts. Anything less is not up to the high privilege of those that are to be made free in Christ. In order to be free they must live in such a way that there is no condemnation against them in what is written against them in the laws of either God or man.

I point this section of reading from the Book of Covenants. (I notice you folks have got new books, I am rather glad to see them in good trim). "Let no man think he is ruler, but let God rule

him that judgeth according to the counsel of his own will; or in other words, him that counselleth or sitteth upon the judgment seat. Let no man break the laws of the land, for he that keepeth the laws of God hath no need to break the laws of the land; wherefore, be subject to the powers that be, until he reigns whose right it is to reign, and subdues all enemies under his feet. Behold, the laws which ye have received from my hand are the laws of the church, and in this light ye shall hold them forth. Behold, here is wisdom."

The contrary of that is "unwisdom," or in other words, the opposite of that is "foolishness." Who among you desires to be wise, or foolish? My reason for making this statement and pointing you to this portion of the law is this: It has been said in reference to us that one of the reasons why we don't engage in these heresies that bring destruction is because of the hold of the

law upon us. I use this because we are counselled by the revelation of God's will unto us as a people that we were to live in subjection to the law of the land. My understanding of that, is this; that God designed through the bringing to pass the fulfilling of prophecy, a prophecy of the promise of this country to be discovered and peopled. He intended to conserve his royal design to furnish an arena upon which this great gospel message might be given, and this work develop until it should spread from the rivers to the ends of the earth. And I think that when he has made a prediction he is just like some people used to say of the people whose work I represent, that they first make a prophecy and then go to work to fulfill it. Now God had made this promise, and he has gone to work to fulfill it. He has intended to make every means conserve to the ends of accomplishing his words, agreeing with that found in the

old-time Book that that which he shall utter with his mouth shall not come back to him void. That no weapon forged against him or his work shall prosper.

This gospel was to be preached to every kindred, tongue and people, so said the angel, so says the prophecy in the fourteenth chapter of John's revelations. And I, tonight, am representing it in this sense. That prophecy is partially fulfilled tonight, because I am preaching to Welsh and Scotch and English and Irish, and men from the east and west, representatives in the second degree of nearly every nation that is called a Christian one on the land everywhere. What has brought this about? The cosmopolitan character of the land, the intention of its political organization, the effect of the principles that have been certified to here under this republican rule; and, as a consequence, it was intended of divinity. It was designed by him from the start, and hence,

the putting of this record down in the ground to be brought to light in its own proper time, the conjoining of the two records that there might come a unity of testimony from two competing testimonies, one from one nationality at one period of time, and another from another nationality at another period of time. The communication of God to us as a people in our own time that our records should be placed alongside with these toher two, and then compared in that great judgment day and either condemn or save us. And let me tell you, if we preach greater privileges we preach a greater opportunity for our failure and condemnation. As I told them out yonder in Salt Lake City upon one occasion when I was a little hardly pressed by those who said in regard to some of the things of the church that I was teaching, that I was teaching contrary to the things which my Father taught. In reply, I said, "When I am brought

up there in that day of judgment, I am going to go there and present myself with these books that the Savior gave to his people of the old world and of this, and I am going to say to him that sitteth upon the throne, 'Your Son gave these books to me in my own period of time to be the man of my counsel, and which bear record in at least two of them, that the things contained in them are true. Now if you can conscientiously condemn me for having stood by the records so given to the church and to me, I will be content and abide the judgment that you will pass upon me.' "

Some thought that that bordered on blasphemy, but did it? Have I not put myself directly in accordance with the words of God, and said to people, "Here is the word of God?" And should I be afraid to say that to Him, if I have the opportunity upon that august occasion? Think you that he will condemn me? No, friends, no, for he will stand by the Gentile

nation upon the one record that beareth record of the Father and Son, for the Gentile nations are rejoicing in their belief of hope and salvation. Pray tell me where will you and I, who believe in the three records all bearing testimony of the same thing, where will we be in that period of safety?

I am content, my brothers and sisters, to go on rejoicing in this work, and bearing testimony from time to time as I am permitted, And may the peace of God be with you. My faith is still the same.