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WHICH IS THE CHURCH?

BY ELDER HEMAN. C. SMITH.

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I wish to invite your attention tonight as a basis for my remarks, to the 5th verse of the 13th chapter of Paul's 2nd epistle to the Corinthians.

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”

The latter part of this text we may not have sufficient time nor an inclination to notice, but to the first part of the verse we wish to call your especial attention. “Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith.” This admonition is always in order, and there are a great

many phases of this subject. There are numerous ways in which we may, and ought to examine ourselves. There are many ways in which we may depart from the faith, and we are liable to depart if we are not very careful in our examination, and very cautious in our conduct. But there is one particular phase of the subject that I want to consider tonight, and that is, the examination necessary from the standpoint of church identity. Nor do I propose to speak of this subject in regard to the church as compared with what we call the sectarian world.—I presume that I am talking to Latter Day Saints tonight, that is, the majority of you are such. It is not necessary that we should discuss the subject from this standpoint, or to claim that we are nearer the pattern laid down in the New Testament, than churches which we call sectarian, I think that you will take that for granted; but

from a Latter Day Saint standpoint, are we in the faith?

It is a matter of history well known to us and to all other people who have ever heard regarding the subject, that we are not the only organization calling ourselves Latter Day Saints; we are not the only people who believe that God restored a dispensation of the gospel to men, and that the church was organized on the sixth day of April, 1830, by command of God; we are not the only people that preach what we call the first principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ, namely, faith, repentance, baptism, laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment; we are not the only people who recognize that form of organization that was established by Christ and his apostles. There are several organizations, or have been in the past, who have accepted this; there are a few today who accept of all that we believe in

regard to first principles, and they contend as earnestly, and, I am willing to believe, as sincerely that we are wrong, as we do that they are wrong. Now we want to examine tonight from this standpoint, and ask the question, Are we in the faith from the standpoint of church identity, are we the people that are recognized of God? Are we the people of whom the Lord has spoken in prophetic declarations of the past, that should be his chosen people? Are we the people that shall fulfill the destinies of the church, and do the work appointed for the people of God to do in the latter days? I wish that these other organizations were willing to meet us on the platform and canvass this subject as brethren should.

The church, as I have said, was organized in the year of our Lord, 1830, on the sixth day of April, and for a time they had hard struggling to maintain an existence as a body—they didn't

have the officers that we have now—they were but very few in the beginning—there were more afterwards, but within that little circle that composed the church then, was all that they knew anything about, that were in harmony with them in the faith. They could not look abroad as we can do today, and be assured that in other parts of the land the gospel was represented as they believed it. They had no press from which to send out the literature that would teach the world the gospel of Jesus Christ; they had no ministers abroad to represent them; they knew that all there was of the movement was right there. They were surrounded by a hostile people, a people who believed they were doing God's service when they persecuted that handful of Saints, but they grew rapidly and wondrously, and the power of God, we believe, was with them; men of education and ability rallied around the

standard that was raised by the young prophet, and the work moved on in grandeur and simplicity, but we are not here to say that these men made no mistakes; I believe that they were mortal and fallible, but when I recognize the fact that they were fallible, the work looks all the more stupendous to me; when I recognize the fact that it was in the hands of fallible men, I wonder that it progressed as it did, and that it grew and prospered and became as great as it did. I shall not discuss, only by way of mention, the church in its organization, but you know that it was of slow progress in one sense of the word. While they taught that the church should be organized as in ancient times, with apostles, prophets, etc., they realized that this was prospective, and that they had not the material from which to form these quorums of the church; they looked forward to this, and even after the revela-

tion was given that there were to be such quorums in the church, and their duties were pointed out, the church remained for years without them, but gradually, one by one, strong, spiritual men came into the church, God-fearing men came forward and took the places which were provided for them, before they knew anything about it. Now then to say that this thing was a fraud in the beginning, is to say that though a fraud concocted by a few men, they had the sagacity to know that they could reach out and gather the material for the organization that was only then prospective. Had they done this in their own wisdom, their ideal in regard to an organization would never have been realized. But it was done, and men who never knew of the work in the beginning, came forward and helped form the organization.

From New York they removed to Ohio, and from their headquarters in Kirtland, Ohio, they

removed to Missouri, and after they were driven from Missouri, they located in Illinois. You are acquainted with the history, you know of the privations and troubles through which the church passed; you know of what transpired, and now I want to come down to the days when they were gathered together at Nauvoo, the beautiful city where they expected to build a stake of Zion, and to erect a great Temple unto the Most High God. When they had been there for a time, wondrously blessed as they were, they were placed in a very peculiar situation; they had been dilatory to some extent, in regard to doing the work of the Lord, but the Lord gave them a certain time to do a certain work, and he told them if they did not accomplish the work within the time, that they would be rejected as a church, and that they should not be acknowledged of him. The doctrine of baptism for the dead was revealed there at

Nauvoo, and the Lord gave them the privilege of practicing it in the river, until they had time to build the temple unto the Most High God. And when they had sufficient time, he said their baptisms in the river should be no longer acceptable, and nowhere else, only in the temple that God had told them to build, and if they did not do it within the time, that they should be rejected as a church with their dead. That was a peculiar position to put them in—it was a critical condition; they had it in their own hands to perpetuate the organization in acceptance with God, or to be a rejected people. The Lord would not require anything of them which they could not do; he would certainly have given them all the time needed, but they failed to do what the Lord required at their hands. Let me read to you an abstract from a revelation upon this subject. It was given Jan. 19, 1841, and in the tenth

and eleventh paragraphs of Doctrine and Covenants, section one hundred and seven: "But I command you, all ye my Saints, to build an house unto me, and I grant unto you a sufficient time to build an house unto me, and during this time your baptisms shall be acceptable unto me. But, behold, at the end of this appointment, your baptisms for your dead shall not be acceptable unto me; and if you do not these things at the end of the appointment, ye shall be rejected as a church with your dead, saith the Lord your God. For, verily I say unto you, that after you have had sufficient time to build an house to me, wherein the ordinance of baptizing for the dead belongeth, and for which the same was instituted from before the foundation of the world, your baptism for your dead cannot be acceptable unto me; for therein are the keys of the holy priesthood ordained, that you

may receive honor and glory.” Now no one should misunderstand this language. That people was to continue in acceptance before God, or be rejected, and they had to do a certain work in a certain time or they were rejected as a church. They never did do it, that temple never was built to a finish, it never has been completed, and today there is not a vestige of it remaining in its place. The enemy came upon them and drove them from their beloved city, and they discarded their temple; it finally was destroyed, and not one stone has been left upon another; then if there is any truth in the language of this revelation, they were rejected as a church with their dead.

From the time that this rejection took place there were many who claimed to be the chosen leaders sent of God, and several, at least, I don't know how many there were, that claimed to be the successor of

Joseph Smith. Right at this peculiar time, right at the time when they were laboring to finish the temple, and doubtless after the time was expired that was given them to build it, Joseph the prophet, and Hyrum the patriarch, were slain at Carthage at the hands of a ruthless mob. Then with that trouble upon them, and their temple unfinished, they found themselves in a very peculiar situation, a situation, I believe, which had been brought upon them by their own mistakes, they were mistakes, by whosoever made,—I am not going to say who made them,—but their consequences followed, and the people had to suffer because of it.

They were unprepared for the event of the death of the prophet, they would not believe it, though they were told that he would be removed from their midst. They anxiously hoped, and hope was father to the belief, that Joseph Smith would live to the coming

of the Messiah, and there would be no such thing as a successor to him. They ought to have considered the subject more seriously than they did; they ought to have thought along the lines of the revelations of God in regard to this matter, and if they had considered it as it was their duty to do, they might have been better prepared to act, and act wisely in the emergency. It had been stated several times that he would possibly be taken away, the word "if" was often used in connection with it, it suggested the possibility that he might be, and they were told as early as 1831 that that possibility might confront them sometime, but they were not willing to consider it. The Lord stated, as found in section forty-three, Doctrine and Covenants:—"Oh hearken, ye elders of my church, and give an ear to the words which I shall speak unto you: for behold, verily, verily I say unto you, that ye have received a

commandment for a law unto my church, through him whom I have appointed unto you, to receive commandments and revelations from my hand. And this ye shall know assuredly, that there is none other appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations, until he be taken, if he abide in me." That amounts to almost a positive assertion that he would be taken, there is no condition connected with it, and yet they overlooked the thought, they did not believe it and were not willing to consider it, and when it came upon them suddenly, like a pall, they were not ready. They had made absolutely no preparation. There was an opportunity then for designing men to come in, and there was an occasion for men to be deceived, and that honestly. I will not say that any of these men designed to lead the church astray—I have private opinions but I shall not express them now—but some,

either honestly or dishonestly, tried to lead the church. The Lord had told the church here in this same revelation, wherein he indicates that Joseph would sometime be taken away, "that there is none other appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations until he be taken, if he abide in me. But verily, verily, I say unto you, that none else shall be appointed unto this gift except it be through him, for if it be taken from him he shall not have power, except to appoint another in his stead; and this shall be a law unto you, that ye receive not the teachings of any that shall come before you as revelations, or commandments; and this I give unto you, that you may not be deceived, that you may know they are not of me."

That is prophetic and taken in connection with subsequent events it is very remarkable. It is plain that the Lord foresaw danger that deception would be

practiced in the church. There was a time after Joseph Smith had been taken away when revelations came, and we were asked to believe that these revelations came through Joseph Smith; one in particular, which was said to have been locked up somewhere. The church was asked by Brigham Young and those who followed him, to believe that such a revelation authorizing plural marriage had been locked up, and kept from the eyes of the world; given through Joseph Smith to be revealed in future time. They were also told by James J. Strang that "The order of the kingdom" had been committed to John C. Bennett, and that he had locked it up, and finally it came forth and was placed in the hands of Strang; these revelations came, claiming to have been given through Joseph, but in relation to this, God says, "And this shall be a law unto you, that ye receive not the teachings of any

that shall come before you as revelations, or commandments, and this I give unto you that you may not be deceived, that you may know they are not of me." Now, the successor could not teach these things unless they agreed with the revelations given before. No man could teach opposite doctrines and be consistent; besides, this same revelation said he should "teach those revelations which you *have* received and *shall* receive through he whom I have appointed." If then, Mr. Young ignored, or failed to teach the law of marriage taught in former revelations, he could not be the rightful successor of Joseph Smith. The only man claiming to have been duly appointed was James J. Strang. He challenged the Brighamites, so-called, to meet him in public debate, and upon the platform to canvass the subject. He was willing to meet them anywhere, but they, as they have done ever since, avoid-

ed the issue and would not meet Strang. They did not dare to canvass the subject then even with Mr. Strang. He claimed to have been appointed by a letter written to him by Joseph Smith a few days prior to his death, and came nearer making his claims in harmony with this revelation than any other at that time. But he made the same mistake of teaching contrary to the revelations going before, with which the successor was to be in harmony; not only did he teach polygamy, but he was not content with the claim of being a prophet, seer and revelator, but made claims that Joseph Smith never made; he claimed to be the Holy Ghost incarnate, the Holy Spirit tabernacleing in the flesh. He was not content even to stay where his purported letter of appointment placed him, but suffered himself to be crowned king. It was, however, a time of perplexity, a time that tried men's souls, when dark-

ness was in the church everywhere, and men were groping for the light, striving to obtain it, and seeking for it. In consequence of this condition of darkness, some honest, noble men of God have received the name of being vacillating and changeable, simply because they were honest; they went from one to another, they tried to find the light of truth, first in one organization and then another; when they found that it was not as they expected in one place, they went somewhere else. They have received a reputation because of this that they do not deserve; it was because they were honorable enough when they found the wrong existing in one place, that they would not stay there, they walked out and went somewhere else, and thus they went from place to place until men thought they had no stability of character. It took more courage to do this, than to drift with the tide. The Reorganiza-

tion is not ashamed of the fact that many of these men finally found rest with them, and that when they came they were satisfied, and were willing to abide, and that they helped to form the organization which we now have the honor to represent before this intelligent audience.

We have been told by the people in the valley that we of the Reorganization originated the thought that the church was rejected, that such a thought never was expressed in earlier times; that the Reorganization, to make a room for themselves, had trumped up that doctrine that the church was rejected, and put that construction upon the revelation that we quoted above. I want to show you that there was such a thought entertained long before. There were some who believed even then, that the church was rejected of God. One of the apostles at least believed it. Lyman Wight, who was one of the Twelve in the days of

Joseph, wrote an address from Hamilton's Creek, Texas, December 17, 1851, and I have the manuscript before me tonight just as originally written. I want to read to you what he said in regard to the church, and what he thought would have been the proper way to have conducted affairs after the death of Joseph Smith. I present it to you for your consideration. I do not present it as the doctrine of the church, but simply for you to know that the Reorganized church was not the first to teach that the church was rejected. He gives a sketch of the church in Kirtland and then adds: "The church mostly went from there to Missouri, where they commenced another house from which they were driven to the state of Illinois, where we were commanded to build a house or temple to the Most High God. We were to have a sufficient time to build that house, during which time our baptisms for our dead

should be acceptable, in the river. If we did not build within this time, we were to be rejected as a church, we, and our dead together. Both the temple and baptizing went very leisurely, till the temple was somewhere in building the second story, when Bro. Joseph Smith from the stand announced the alarming declaration, that baptism for our dead was no longer acceptable in the river. As much as to say the time for building the temple had passed by, and both we and our dead were rejected together. Bro. Joseph then called all the councils together, and chose what he called a grand council of fifty persons, himself and counselors among the rest, as also the Twelve. More than once did he exclaim after this organization that if he should be taken out of the way, the church would remain organized. We remained in a gloomy, fearful situation, for a short time, when the death of Bro. Joseph took place

by the hands of the mob as above described, on the 27th of June, 1844, showing to us much plainer than language could tell, that the church was rejected if the head was taken from it. The church now stands rejected together with their dead. The church being rejected, now stands alienated from God in every sense of the word. This being the case, what should now be done? I will here state, the first thing to have been done, would have been to have called the fifties together from the four quarters of the earth, which contained all the highest authorities of the church, as you will readily see that had not the fifty constituted the highest authorities, it would have been a species of weakness to have ordained all the highest authorities into that number. The fifties assembled, should have called on all the authorities of the church down to the lay members, from all the face of the earth as much as was

convenient, and after having taken sweet council together, in prayer and supplication before God, acknowledging our sins and transgressions which had caused our head to be taken from our midst, and then have called on young Joseph and held him up before the congregation of Israel to take his father's place in the flesh. Then should he have received intelligence of our forgiveness of our sins and transgressions, and we had then went on and finished the temple according to the revelations of God and the words of his servants."

So at least one of the quorum of the Twelve believed that the church was rejected and that this council of fifty was organized to provide for an emergency in case the quorums were no longer acceptable to God, and that it was the duty of this council to provide for a reorganization, or re-adjustment by upholding young Joseph before the congregation and accepting and

sustaining him in his father's place; and then to have humbled themselves, and repented of their sins and transgressions, trusting that the young prophet would receive assurance from God of their forgiveness. The ideas, then, of the rejection, or the reorganization of the church, did not originate with us, they were taught by members of the highest remaining quorum of the church. The idea of a reorganization was incorporated in a revelation through Parley P. Pratt when he was returning to Nauvoo after the death of Joseph. He claims, at least, that he received a revelation from God, and relates it with connecting circumstances on pages 37 and 371 of his autobiography, as follows:

“As I walked along over the plains of Illinois, lonely and solitary, I reflected as follows: I am now drawing near to the beloved city; in a day or two I shall be there. How shall I meet the

sorrowing widows and orphans? How shall I meet the aged and widowed mother of these two martyrs? How shall I meet an entire community bowed down with grief and sorrow unutterable. What shall I say, or how console and advise two hundred and fifty thousand people who will throng about me in tears, and, in the absence of my president, and the older members of the now presiding council, will ask counsel at my hands? Shall I tell them to fly to the wilderness and deserts? Or, shall I tell them to stay at home and take care of themselves, and continue to build the temple? With these reflections and inquiries I walked onward, weighed down as if it were unto death. When I could endure it no longer, I cried out aloud, saying: 'O Lord! in the name of Jesus Christ I pray thee show me what these things mean, and what I shall say to thy people?'" He need not have asked the ques-

tion whether he should tell the people to fly to the desert or not, if it had been true as now claimed, that Joseph Smith had predicted that the church should go to the valleys of the mountains and it was all arranged for them to do so. But he did not know it, it seems, and so he asked the Lord if he should say that. But he continues: "On a sudden the Spirit of God came upon me, and filled my heart with joy and gladness indescribable; and while the spirit of revelation glowed in my bosom with as visible a warmth and gladness as if it were fire, the Spirit said unto me: 'Lift up your head and rejoice; for behold! it is well with my servants Joseph and Hyrum. My servant Joseph still holds the keys of my kingdom in this dispensation, and he shall stand in due time on the earth, in the flesh, and fulfill that to which he is appointed. Go and say unto my people in Nauvoo, that they shall continue to

pursue their daily duties and take care of themselves, and make no movement in church government to reorganize or alter anything until the return of the remainder of the quorum of the Twelve. But exhort them that they continue to build the house of the Lord which I have commanded them to build in Nauvoo.' ”

Here is a revelation indicating that there must be a reorganization sometime and if that revelation be true, the Lord said to Parley P. Pratt that they were not to take immediate steps, but wait until the Twelve returned before they reorganized. B. H. Roberts, in quoting this revelation in his book called the “Successor,” did not like that little prefix “re” before the word organize and so he left it out and said “organize”—it is so published in his book which is endorsed by the Utah Church. I am sorry Mr. Roberts did that, but he did. So here are indications

or intimations by two apostles that they believed the church was rejected and their belief that a reorganization would be necessary sometime.

That the Twelve, as early as December 13, 1841, recognized the danger of church rejection, is evident by the first words of their epistle written on that date and published in *Times and Seasons*, volume 3, pp. 625-627. They state: "The building of the temple of the Lord, in the city of Nauvoo, is occupying the first place in the exertions and prayers of many of the Saints at the present time, knowing as they do, that if this building is not completed speedily, '*We shall be rejected as a church with our dead,*' for the Lord our God hath spoken it," etc. This was signed by nine of the Twelve as follows: "Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Pratt, William Smith, Lyman Wight, Wilford Woodruff, John Taylor, Geo. A. Smith, Williard Richards." Certainly

then, the idea of rejection did not originate with the Re-organization. If the Twelve were right in 1841, they were under obligations to *complete* the temple *speedily*, or be *rejected as a church*. They *did* not comply with the requirements, they *should* not deny the consequences.

I need not relate their travels to the westward. After getting the body of the church which followed them, to Winter Quarters, they sent out a detachment with Brigham Young at their head, to explore the country in the west. Some others of the Twelve Apostles went out there, and they recognized the fact, too, that the church was disorganized, and thought it necessary to renew their covenant, and not only their covenant of baptism, but also their ordination to the apostleship, and so they did. I don't take it from any publication of the Reorganized Church, but I take it from the "Life of Brigham Young," by Tullidge.

He quotes from the journal of Wilford Woodruff, now president of the church there, who states that "on the 6th of August, the Twelve were re-baptized." "This," he said, "we considered a privilege and a duty. As we had come into a glorious valley to locate and build up Zion, we felt like renewing our covenants before the Lord and each other." (Pages 180, 181 of the Life of Brigham Young.) Why did they do this, if they had not been rejected? If their covenant that they had made in former time held good, why should they be baptized and renew that covenant? They recognized the fact that the time had expired for the special work to be done, and they were rejected; they felt a need of a renewal, and they tried to gain a standing before God, by renewing their covenant. And that is not all. Hear him: "We soon repaired to the water, and President Young went down into the water and baptized all

his brethren of the Twelve present. He then confirmed us, and sealed upon us our apostleship, and all the keys, and powers and blessings belonging to that office." Now, he re-baptized these Twelve Apostles, and then here-ordained them apostles: they did not recognize that the former baptism or the former ordination was sufficient. They were creating material for a new organization, and so they continued.

When he had baptized the Twelve and ordained them, Woodruff says: "Bro. Heber C. Kimball baptized and confirmed President Brigham Young. The following were the names and order of those present: Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Pratt, Willard Richards, Wilford Woodruff, Geo. A. Smith and Amasa Lyman. Ezra T. Benson had been dispatched several days before to meet the companies on the road, etc." All these were re-baptized, and re-ordained, and

then they went to work and re-baptized all the camp that was with them. I read farther over here on page 182: "On the next day (Sunday, August 8th,) the whole camp of Israel renewed their covenants before the Lord by baptism. There were two hundred and twenty-four baptized this morning, making two hundred and eighty-eight re-baptized in the last three days." They were getting out of the church just as fast as they could, re-ordaining, re-baptizing, re-confirming the apostleship and preparing for a re-organization. All of these apostles went back to Council Bluffs, or Winter Quarters. After arriving there, Brigham Young wrote, under date of December 23, 1847, to Orson Spencer, then editor of *Millennial Star*, as follows: "We now have it in contemplation soon to re-organize the Church according to the original pattern, with a First Presidency and Patriarch."—*Millennial Star*, vol.

10, p. 86. Prior to this, however, the first steps were taken toward a re-organization.

From the Life of Brigham Young, pages 188, 189, we read the following: "On the 3d of December a conference was held on the east side of the river, but after having resolved to build immediately a large tabernacle for the congregation, it adjourned for three weeks. There was a feast and a grand council December 5th, at the house of Elder Hyde, who had been in charge at Winter Quarters during the absence of the pioneers. In this council of the Twelve Apostles, their president first expressed his views concerning the re-organization of the quorum of the First Presidency, and wished those present to do the same in their order, when Heber C. Kimball, Orson Pratt, Wilford Woodruff, Willard Richards, Geo. A. Smith, Amasa Lyman and Ezra T. Benson spoke to the question. President Young closed. Orson

Hyde then moved that Brigham Young be president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and that he nominate his two counselors to form the First Presidency. Wilford Woodruff seconded the motion, and it was then carried unanimously. President Young then nominated Heber C. Kimball as his first counselor and Willard Richards as his second counselor, which was seconded and carried unanimously. The Twelve again met the next day, and appointed Father John Smith presiding patriarch of the whole church. The conference re-assembled on the 24th of December, and lasted four days. In the 'Log Tabernacle' one thousand persons assembled, and chose Brigham Young 'President of the Church of Jesus Christ in all the world.' This was re-confirmed at the October general conference the following year in Salt Lake City."

Thus we see that the First

Presidency was provided for by that re-baptized, re-ordained quorum of the Twelve Apostles. They had renewed the covenant, been ordained again, not recognizing the former authority as being sufficient, and now they had the material ready and they organized the Presidency out of it; but they had not a majority of those composing the Twelve at the death of Joseph Smith. That is, they did not have the required majority of the quorum there without the men concerned voting for themselves. Wm. Smith, John E. Page and Lyman Wight had refused to follow them from Nauvoo, and John Taylor and Parley P. Pratt were in the valleys of the mountains, there were seven there, including Brigham Young. He, Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards had each to vote for himself when they took this action. They did not mention it until the 5th day of December, this record says the president of the quorum

first expressed his views concerning it then. Just nineteen days afterwards, it was presented to the Conference. There were no telegraphs, no railroads; hundreds of miles from these means of communication and the Church scattered to the four quarters of the earth. They had a thousand people there out of about one hundred and fifty thousand then belonging to the church. This thousand people said they would accept these three men as the Presidency of the Church, and the remainder of the church was expected to accept the action of this small minority, when the majority did not know that such a thing was contemplated. Seven of the Twelve were there, and the rest were absent. We simply present this as an evidence that the idea of reorganization is not peculiar to us. I told the people in Utah, in Salt Lake City, when I was there, that I regretted the necessity of a reorganization as much as they

did, and I thought it was a misfortune that such a necessity existed, but we were not responsible for that necessity, it was created by their failing to keep the commandments of God in Nauvoo, and by the church being rejected. This was virtually admitted by the people in those days, for they went out there and were re-baptized, re-ordained and got new material ready to reorganize the church, and finally consummated it. They called it a reorganization then, but when we talk about a reorganization they think it a terrible thing. Some of them do not know that they were the first to present it. If we cannot have the reorganization we cannot have anything, for the old church has been rejected and they know it, and by their acts have acknowledged it. The only hope there is, is in a reorganization of the church. They have gone back on their own record and disclaim a reorganization, hence are out of the consideration.

Some years after that, a handful of people started what they called the Re-organized Church up here in Wisconsin. They were the people who failed to accept these irregular proceedings that had been entered into by Strang, Brigham and others; they did not believe such things were right, and they would not accept of this work. I want to make a point right here, it is this: that while they did re-baptize sometimes when people asked it, yet they were the only people upon the face of the earth who accepted the baptisms administered by the hands of Joseph Smith and his colleagues in the earlier days of the church, as being all sufficient. There are men and women here today who stand identified with this church who were baptized in the days of the Seer, and they have never been asked to renew it; nowhere else is the baptism of the old church accepted by an organization; nowhere else can those who obeyed

the gospel under the ministration of the prophet find a place where they can go and commune and be on an equality with the other members. Go to the valleys of the mountains, you are required to be re-baptized; go anywhere else and the baptisms of the old church are not accepted. They are accepted here, and here only. The revelations authorizing this Reorganization came to men that had become disgusted with what they had seen, and had cried unto the Lord to know what to do. In 1854, when a dissension had come into their midst and some of them, tired of waiting for the promised heir, thought perhaps he had neglected his duty, and they would need to appoint some one else, a revelation came through him who was acting as president of the church in the place of the legal heir. It was as follows:

“Ye ask truly, but ye ask amiss; cleanse ye yourselves of all bitterness and come before

me as one man, and prove me hereby, saith the Lord, by the voice of his Spirit; and lo! I will scatter the darkness, and thy watchmen, O! mine Israel, shall see eye to eye, and this remnant shall arise out of obscurity and out of darkness."

Here was a revelation given when they were but very few and they were told that they were to be faithful and humble and get rid of all bitterness, and that this remnant should rise out of obscurity and darkness. Has it done this? Have they not come to the front and has not the world awakened to the fact that there is such a thing as the Reorganization? That this little remnant has become a prominent feature in the history of the world, and that they have been a menace to all that have attempted to teach corrupt doctrines in the name of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints; that they have been in the halls of Congress, that they have peti-

tioned for recognition and have received it, and that they have been instrumental in teaching the world that the revelations that were presented after the death of Joseph Smith, and which they were warned not to accept, were not a part of "Mormonism proper." They have warned the world and the world has awakened to the fact, and every organization that adopted that accursed doctrine of polygamy has abandoned it, in theory at least; if they have not done so willingly, they have been forced to do it; while we stand today where this remnant stood, only we have risen out of obscurity and darkness and we also stand where the original church stood. That prophecy has been fulfilled—you may think what you please about it. I believe that revelation to have been inspired of God. It continues:

"Uphold the first elder, or senior, by your faith and prayers, and I will give you knowledge

and strength, even hidden wisdom, concerning this remnant, of whom I have spoken in days of old, whom I have appointed to speak comfortably unto the captives, and give them bread and water in their journey. [Now that remnant up there was recognized as the remnant whom the Lord had spoken of in the times that were past.] Therefore seek the preparation, for that which I have promised, even power over false spirits and disease; and if you seek it in unity, with all your hearts, I will bless the sacrifice, and you shall have peace and joy, beyond that which you have before tasted in Zarahemla.”

That was the promise of God to that remnant and it has been largely fulfilled. We have evidence of it today.

I want to call your attention to a statement made in regard to the redemption of Zion. I do not know whether I shall agree with you in regard to the application

I am going to make, but I am going to make what I believe to be the correct application. There was a prediction made that shows that this organization, this residue of people left here in the states, are the people through whom God will do his work. This revelation was given in December 1833, and in those times they used to apply it unto the gathering together of what they called the Camp of Zion that went up to Missouri to reinstate their brethren. If it does apply there I believe it has a greater significance, and may be applied in a two-fold sense, to them, and to something future, for some features of this parable will not apply unto the Camp of Zion. It did not fulfill all the conditions. They had been driven out of Jackson county and while they were considering the matter, the Lord gave them the parable about the redemption of Zion, and they had the idea it was going to take place immediately and that they were

going to fulfill it. I read from section 98 of the Doctrine and Covenants. The Lord says, "And now, I will show unto you a parable that you may know my will concerning the redemption of Zion." That was the thing they were anxious about, how Zion was to be redeemed. Of course they looked for it in a few days, they did not expect it was going to be so long.

"A certain nobleman had a spot of land, very choice; and he said unto his servants, go ye into my vineyard, even upon this very choice piece of land, and plant twelve olive trees; and set watchmen around about them and build a tower; that one may overlook the land around about, to be a watchman upon the tower; that mine olive trees may not be broken down, when the enemy shall come to spoil, and take unto themselves the fruit of my vineyard. Now the servants of the nobleman went and did as their lord commanded them; and plant-

ed the olive trees, and built a hedge around about, and set watchmen, and began to build a tower. While they were laying the foundation thereof, they began to say among themselves, what need hath my lord of this tower, and consulted for a long time, saying among themselves, what need hath my lord of this tower, seeing this is a time of peace? Might not this money be given to the exchangers? For there is no need of these things! And while they were at variance one with another, they became very slothful, and they hearkened not unto the commandments of their lord, and the enemy came by night and broke down the hedge, and the servants of the nobleman arose, and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works and broke down the olive trees."

Without going into particulars, you see in a general sense, they did that very thing. They went into just this choice piece of land

that had been pointed out for them to build this tower upon. When they went into Missouri they became slothful, and they were driven to Nauvoo, and they were so slothful that the Lord said, "I will give you so much time to do this work and if you do not do it I will reject you with your dead. They had *sufficient* time, yet did not complete the work, and the servant of the Lord finally announced to them that their baptisms in the river were no longer accepted; the enemy came upon them and destroyed their works, and the servants of the Lord were affrighted and fled out of the land. The enemy came and destroyed their works, and broke down the olive trees, but the Lord felt after them, and further than that, he did not reject them entirely, as individuals, though as a church they were rejected. He called upon these servants again and labored with them, and the blessings of God followed them for a

while, and that is foreshadowed here:

“Now, behold, the nobleman, the lord of the vineyard, called upon his servants and said unto them, Why, what is the cause of this great evil? Ought ye not to have done even as I commanded you? And after ye had planted the vineyard, and built the hedge round about, and set watchmen upon the walls thereof, built the tower also, and set a watchman upon the tower, and watched for my vineyard, and not have fallen asleep lest the enemy should come upon you? And behold, the watchman upon the tower would have seen the enemy while he was yet afar off, and then you could have made ready and kept the enemy from breaking down the hedge thereof, and saved my vineyard from the hands of the destroyer.” Now, if the statement which we read from this manuscript of Lyman Wight’s was correct, that Joseph Smith made a provision for the

emergency, the quorums of the church were not recognized as quorums because of the rejection of the church, but these fifty were to meet together, and had they done just what they were commanded to do, and had they presented the young prophet that had been pointed out by the departed one, the church might have been saved, and they might have remained there, but they did not do it—they rejected the counsel of fifty. Brigham Young took that rejected quorum that he was at the head of, and sought to make it the head of the church. They were not then willing, however, to acknowledge that the organization would be perfected or a reorganization attempted, but they passed along as easily as they could until they got out on the frontier with about a thousand people, away from the body of the church, and then they dared to reorganize, and after all that, the Lord felt after them for a time, and he said they might

have saved that goodly land, but they didn't do it. Now he is going to speak to somebody else. They have fled from the country, and the Lord has felt after them, but they would not repent. The revelation reads farther: "And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants, Go and gather the residue of my people." Somebody is going to be called upon after this fleeing (because this is after they departed from the place that God had appointed to them, of which they had lost possession because of their selfishness and neglect.) He is going to call upon one of his servants, and say, "Go and gather together the residue of my servants; and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are of middle age also, among my servants, who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry; and go ye straightway unto the land of my vine-

yard, and redeem my vineyard for it is mine; I have bought it with money." Here is a man that rose up and began to gather together the residue, a remnant, and they went straightway into the place where the Lord had appointed, and they began to build up in the regions round about, gathering together as the Lord predicted that they would, and here they are today, a residue of the people once here; here are those who have been with the people in the mountains; here are those who have been with Strang; that have been with Brewster, and with others, and here are those who stood aloof from all organizations; here they are gathered together as the residue, as a remnant, and they are presenting a mighty phalanx; the strong, the humble, are assembled here together, and under the direction and counsel and instruction of one of God's servants who testifies that the Lord called upon him to do that work,

and so this revelation is fulfilled herein. Now one of the servants was to be authorized to call together the residue, the remnant, and was told, "Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; break down the walls of mine enemies, throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen; and inasmuch as they gather together against you, avenge me of mine enemies; that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land." It is a parable of course, and the language used to illustrate the mighty courage of the people of God, might indicate to some that they were to use carnal weapons; but it is only figurative, illustrating the work that they were to do in spiritual light and power. This servant was to hesitate somewhat, and you know this man did. Why didn't he come sooner? is a question often asked. "And the servant said unto his lord, when shall these things be?" We have heard the prophet of

the Reorganization found fault with, because he did not tell when all these things should be, and because he didn't move fast enough. But this indicates that he is not to know. The answer to his question is to be: "*When I will.* Go ye straightway: and do all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and this shall be my seal and blessing upon you; a faithful and wise steward in the midst of mine house; a ruler in my kingdom. And his servant went straightway and done all things whatsoever his lord commanded him, and after many days all things were fulfilled."

Now it is in process of fulfillment as I understand it; the servant has been called upon to gather together the residue, and the Lord said this servant would be a ruler in his house; that ruler is the man, no doubt, that has been instrumental in gathering together all those who have come up from different parts of the

earth, and they will accomplish the work under his leadership, and after many days it will be fulfilled, as predicted here. God says, he shall be a ruler in my kingdom. Now we need not look for the ruler anywhere among those bodies of people that fled out of the land of their possession; this servant is going to come from among the residue of his people, the remnant, and I think he has come, and I think his past record shows that the Lord has been with him, and that out of this condition of obscurity the people under his leadership have risen and have done a grand work in the name of the Master, and the Master says, "This shall be my seal and blessing upon you, a faithful and wise steward in the midst of mine house." I can say that he has been, though I am just as free to say in regard to him as I was in regard to his father and other men, he is fallible; I shall not say that he has made no mistakes, but I do say

that he has been a faithful and wise steward in the midst of Israel, and that God has by his hand done a work, and we are here as the residue, the young men and the middle aged men—men of God are coming forward to take hold of this work, and it will move on in grandeur. The question as to when shall these things be, was not to be answered directly, but it was to be in the Lord's own due time. With this we should be satisfied. We cannot, in the light of that prophecy, in the light of history, go anywhere else and look among these large bodies that fled away, for a ruler in the kingdom of God; we can only look for somebody whom God would call, to gather together the remnant of the church, the residue that were left behind. I am not going to talk about the rights of lineal priesthood tonight, nor about the sins of the people that have gone away from the land of their inheritance; I am not here to portray be-

fore you their wickedness, mistakes and transgressions, perhaps all have sinned to some extent; but here we find the church, and when we examine ourselves to see whether we are in the faith from a Latter Day Saint standpoint, so far as identity is concerned, I find nothing else that will fill the requirements. Here we have all that they have that is good; we have renounced the evil practices that have found a place among scattered Israel; here we stand upon the platform that was laid down by our fathers, we accept their work. I am asked by the friends in the outside world sometimes, if I am not ashamed to represent this work; they point me to the fact that in the valleys of the mountains and elsewhere disgraceful things have been done in the name of the church, and they say, "I'd be ashamed to bear the name of Latter Day Saint after all this." They ask me because other men have

stepped down off the platform and trailed the colors in the dust, that I go down to. No, sir. It warns me that I had better stay on the platform, and if the banner of King Immanuel has been soiled by others, let us, as new recruits, rally around it, take the old flag from where it has been trailing in the years that are past, and hold it to the breeze. We will welcome any wind of opposition that will shake the dust from its folds, but we believe that it will triumph, and that the prophecy given to the church in the early days will be fulfilled, and this work will go grandly on and on and on until the purposes of God are fulfilled, and *this* Reorganization, if we are faithful, shall stand when all others shall have passed away. They are all reorganizations, that is the reason I use the term *this* reorganization.

I want to say to you tonight, I have as much confidence in the prophetic calling of our present

president of the church, as I have in the calling of his father. I believe if he should, before the close of this conference, present to us the word of God, that we may conclude that he has communed with God as certainly, as absolutely, as his father ever communed, and the law that shall come through him will be the will of God concerning us and we can afford to stand by it; we have never yet been called upon to take a position that we had to abandon—I trust we never shall be. We are willing, as sons of the old Mormons, to stand where our fathers stood, and we believe, as we have said in this place, that they builded better than they knew.

May we continue in the work until it shall be consummated, or we shall depart from this life and never, while the banner is entrusted to us, let it be disgraced by the hands of its representatives; let us take warning, be careful, learn by the experience

of others, and our own observation, be more humble, faithful and diligent than we have been, and God Almighty will strengthen us for the conflict, and victory is ours.

