

SUPPLEMENT.

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SERMON,

BY ELDER COLUMBUS SCOTT, DE-

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In the second chapter of the book of the Acts of the Apostles, we read from the memorable language of the Apostle Peter: "Therefore, let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Expectation and hope have moved the hearts of this assembly to gather to this place and be here to-day. Expectation and hope are the chief power that moves the world, whatever the purpose sought may be; and I trust that the object sought by us to-day, is in the nature of the benefits to be derived by a consideration of the gospel of Christ, the Son of God. Such an expectation as this is worthy of men created in the image of God, and also a little lower than the angels. The mission of the Lord Jesus Christ, is worthy of the aspirations of men in a mortal state, as well as in an immortal state. Christ as we believe has been the hope and the expectation of the world, and still is. I think one of the prophets refers to the Savior and his mission as the coming desire of all nations. Angels from the courts of glory have been moved into expressions of angelic grat-

itude, when they have considered the mercy and condescension of the Heavenly Father in providing this great atonement; and we believe the prophet has given expression to the sentiment of all hearts in proclaiming him as the desire of all nations. And when it is considered that he left his glory and descended to the earth, to become the teacher and the example in a higher life for the children of men than they were able to attain unto by their own powers and ability, even the heavenly hosts in the stillness of night come within the hearing of the children of men, and give forth poetical and musical testimony to the divine character of this being, who is declared in the language of the text, to have been made both Lord and Christ; and also testifying to the wondrousness of his mission. "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ, the Lord." "We bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people;" "Peace on earth, good will toward men." The Jews had been expecting this. The divine testimony after the revealing of the Savior and his entrance upon his mission was, that many prophets and wise men have desired to see these days which you see, said Jesus, addressing his followers, and have not been permitted the glorious privilege.

The evidence as we have it in the record, is to the effect that by some degree of foreknowledge given to worthy men and women from time to time, in the days prior to the coming of the Son of Man, they were looking for him and expecting him. Hence the attention of these men and women was easily arrested. They were looking forward and were moved with expectation: and the language I have read is that used by one of those chosen by the Savior as an ambassador to publish the great mission to the children of men on which he came. This language is authoritative evidence, because it is the language of the Apostle Peter, to whom had been delivered the keys of the kingdom of heaven. He had also been instructed for about three years from the lips of the Master himself in relation to the principles of the gospel of Christ from this the prophetic teacher, whose teachings were rendered more authoritative and powerful if possible, by his expression and example in life—this person now duly empowered and commissioned to go and declare this “peace on earth and good will to men,” tells a large audience of his countrymen, “Let all the House of Israel, therefore, know assuredly, that God hath made this same Jesus whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

□ So far as we are aware, wherever we have a record with reference to the dealings of God with the children of men, it is found giving an account of the mission of Christ into the world and the establishment of the gospel of peace, and guaranteeing the Kingdom of heaven as a grand and holy institution. So far as the past history of the

world is concerned, the work done in that dispensation seems to loom up as the grandest. It seems to have been necessary that it should be so. It is true we have evidences of a wondrous character concerning the latter days, and examples of prophets in former times. We have several instances of the work accomplished among men, beginning perhaps with the ministry and work of Abel and those associated with him, indicated by the Savior’s early morning of work. Those also afterward associated with Noah in proclaiming righteousness and holiness unto men, and submissiveness to the divine will, indicated perhaps by the third hour of the day. Also the work accomplished through God’s anointed ones, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as they went from one nation to another, and from kingdom to kingdom declaring righteousness and truth, culminating if you please in the deliverance of God’s chosen people from Egyptian bondage, their liberation from servitude, and their being placed by divine direction and laws, and their establishment by divine guidance, in the land of Canaan, perhaps to be recognized as the sixth hour referred to by the Savior. But as the great world’s sun shone down in all its brilliancy, indicating harvest time, the Savior, the great teacher, the leading character among all prophets, the apostle and high Priest, came, bringing if it were possible, into more perfect relationship before the minds of men, all the laws and truths to be embraced by the children of men in order that they might be exalted to a higher sphere of life; hence we begin to consult the teachings

and the laws delivered through Christ, the holy commandments delivered to man, and note the character of the work God designed man should do for himself, as well as the nature and character of the work that the Heavenly Father designed to do for us through Jesus Christ. This is the way Christ begins to be developed to the mind; and we are informed at once, that these are the principles by which the nations are to be regenerated, religiously speaking. It is fitting, then, that as this great ambassador for Christ commissioned with authority and endowed with power to teach the means by which man shall be exalted to the enjoyment of that which the human heart has been yearning for during the ages that have gone—it is fitting, I remark, that this apostle should tell the people the principles they were commissioned to teach, and also inform them of the character of the one ordained to give directions, to give laws to guide in the attainment of that to be obtained. He announces to us, that God had made this being both Lord and Christ.

I understand that Christ would simply signify, that he had been anointed of the Father to accomplish the work designed to be accomplished through him. Lord would indicate an additional characteristic of his power, authority and dominion, as being the law-giver. Hence it was no presumption upon his part in giving commission to his earthly ambassadors, to say to them; "All power in heaven and in earth is given into my hands. Goye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the

Son and of the Holy Ghost." It might be well enough for us for a moment to consider the fact, in order that we may be enabled to properly appreciate our privileges, of our inability, so far as our own strength and powers are concerned, abstractly considered, separated from the power of God, to save ourselves. Note the fact that the history of the race of man, if looked upon with reference to their actions and conduct with reference to some standard—the standard of right and wrong—that history has been one of mistakes, has been a kind of prominent failure. It seems that it is essential for us to make failures sometimes in these regards, that we may be made to feel our dependence upon a higher power; our dependence upon aid from the Almighty.

The Savior, therefore, in making his advent into the world, discovered that mankind to a great extent had lived in opposition to the laws that God had previously given. Not only the people as a mass, but the leading individuals—the Elders, the priestly Pharisees and Saducees, whom he rebuked when he said to them, "In vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men." But again, when the people in the observance of the tradition of the Elders, departed from the law of God, he said, "why do you make void the law of God by your traditions?" By turning to the books of kings and chronicles, we may make the discovery that the statement is positively made, that Judah fills the statutes of Israel which they had made. They had made statutes of their own. Man is prone to do this. We are rest

less, uneasy, not satisfied, and as the exhibition of this grows stronger and more prominent, we make out something monstrous in the law of the Lord, and seek to exalt our own ideas and statutes, framed at the natural dictates of the heart. The Lord often sent to Israel prophets, raising them up early and late, with the burden of the word of the Lord, saying, "Return unto me, and I will return unto you." And you need not be particularly startled, if we should make the announcement for brevity's sake, that by reference to the Bible we may find clear evidence, that when judgments were visited by the Lord upon his own people, it was by reason of the fact that they had entered into covenant relation with him, had agreed to observe his laws, but were found failing to observe them. Then God withdrew his appointed and commissioned servants from among them. The people did not like to receive the reproofs that the Spirit always brings when it is essential that the people be reprov'd. It is one of the characteristics of the economy of God, and of the very spirit of that economy, to reprove, and many times if possible to encourage by reproof. If we wish to move along in that wonderful life, whereby we may be most exalted, we must not follow in the way that seems to us most pleasant; but we must take up our cross and follow in the way directed. And because Israel had misused God's prophets had persecuted his servants and rejected their message, it is said that they were in such an irredeemable condition, that when the Lord looked upon their condition, their relation to him and his

law, the Bible emphatically says there was no remedy.

There is a practical thought connected with this that may apply to us to-day. Shall we allow that disposition to grow up in us following the mistakes of the nation of Israel; and because forsooth the way seems narrow and the gate is straight, refuse to enter? We repeat, that we should be regenerated, we should become new creatures in Christ. Because we are taught that we should be transformed by the renewing of our minds, shall we make these mistakes and go in the wrong way, the way contrary to the one pointed out by the Savior, until there be no remedy?

We look then upon the Savior from the statement made by this authoritative minister of Jesus Christ, as being the one whose laws delivered to us we should strictly observe. Whenever the inquiry is made, What must I do? Which way shall we go? What path shall we pursue? we should then turn our attention to the statement of the Savior. But lest you should take exception to the statement made a moment ago, one of the characteristics of the Spirit of the Lord is, that whenever it comes, there cometh with it power to correct, purify, alleviate, sanctify and reprove. We should remember that one of the important offices of the Spirit is described in the language of the Savior, "When the Holy Ghost is come, it will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." This language comprehends the whole operation of the law. The reprov'g office of the Spirit of the Lord may be found by reference to the history of the

seven churches of Asia, referred to perhaps in the first two or three chapters of the Book of John's Revelations.

In this dispensation that was introduced by the Savior, the object and purpose of which was to establish that form of government designed to lift up and alleviate the children of men, and bring them into a higher sphere of life than they could otherwise be enabled to occupy, the Kingdom of Heaven was established, its laws carefully set forth, its provisions plainly revealed, and the history of this to some extent is left upon the record. And so far as we have that history we should appeal to it as the guide, as the source of direction in our spiritual means used in the great work of being regenerated and prepared for that condition of glory and peace that the scriptures set forth God designs we should attain to. In consequence of the making of mistakes upon the part of the children of men as already alluded to, it has become necessary that the Almighty should not only speak fully, but that he should speak plainly with reference to the right as contradistinguished from the wrong. And in consequence of the fact of these mistakes being often made not only by leading individuals; but leading individuals having that degree of influence over the masses that enabled them to lead them into wrong, it has become necessary that the Lord speak often; and consequently we draw the conclusion, and it is but the legitimate conclusion that should be drawn from the premises, that had God a people on the earth today, he would so recognize them as to

give them directions suited to their capacities and their circumstances. This is a legitimate conclusion from the character of the Almighty, as set forth in the revelations that he has given; and as a people we have accepted it as one of the fundamental principles of our faith as I understand it, that God is unchangeable, and without variability or the shadow of turning; and also that he is no respecter of persons. Among the attributes of God we may mention infinite knowledge, infinite wisdom, infinite truth, infinite love, as well as mercy and justice. Accepting the history of the past we find that this being has spoken, whenever necessity demanded; and we legitimately draw the conclusion, that it is a law of nature to communicate; that one of the laws of all beings that have life if you please, is a law of communication, the law of the interchangeability of thought and intelligence. And when you and I begin to think, and to observe the various grades of life, beginning with the very lowest grade, there seems to be an interchange of thought, or a sort of common understanding clear up until we come to man. Should we expect to find this law to be an exception among those beings who had so much interest in man's welfare as to come down here and minister by the exercise of that very law of communication, when they began to sing, "Peace on earth, good will towards men." We reason then, that everything in our knowledge; everything we can observe leads to the conclusion, that such is the nature and character of God; and it would be only through permitting some attributes to become imperfect that he might change at all. If such, therefore, be his nature and character from the fact that the perfection of his attributes is characteristic of his being, we would be compelled to conclude that if the Lord had a people in this age of the world, or for that matter, if he did not have a gospel peo-

ple, yet was interested in the human family, if he did not speak to them, it would be because one of the very laws of his nature had changed. Therefore the conclusion from the observation of God's perfection, that he is what he is, because he is perfect, leads to the thought, that unless God is quite deaf or is becoming dumb, that he exercises this law of his nature, hears the petitions presented to him, and where an answer is necessary he responds, giving the necessary communications. Hence, when I think of the work that to-day we are endeavoring to be engaged in, though known as the latter day work, in some sense it is but a very fragment of the work of God. It is I was going to say, a counter part of the work of the past. It is more than that. If there is such a thing as a-from-the-beginning work, it is that. It is a counterpart, or an expansion of that work; and the grandeur of the results appear as the work progresses; and we are merging, not to the mere counterpart of God's work, but are approaching the grand principle of considering it as a whole. And when I consider this work, founded in the very nature of an eternal, unchangeable, perfect deity, it is surely something to give comfort to those who trust in the mercy of a God, with whom change is impossible in the very nature of his being. We need not be astonished, then, if the announcement should be new to us, that we worship a being who has designed to recognize us, and give us blessings and directions; and if in the very nature of the case, I should say, we claim, as all Christians do, that the gospel is an extraordinary work, then we may also look for an extraordinary manifestation in the calling of men to perform that work. I do not look then simply to the fact of revelation's being submitted as to God's laws, but to revelations as issuing from that eternal and unchangeable

fountain in accordance with the laws of its being. We look to this unchangeable source as the one from which every revelation for man's eternal welfare has come from age to age, and from generation to generation. The only thing then for the intelligent mind to do, is to observe the harmony between the purported revelations of God now, and those given by the Son of God himself personally so far as they have been reported to us. There may be some additional principles in the latter revelations; but where you see there is a logical harmony and agreement between the suggestion and the end to be served by these revelations, it would seem to be an evidence of their divinity, though given in this age when the wisdom of the world says, deity speaks no more. We are given to understand that God has given us an everlasting kingdom that is pure; and there may be times when the children of men may not be in exact harmony with the provisions of that government; but the fact that men sometimes rebel does not change or alter the unchangeable and eternal character of God. It might seem at times as though the kingdom were not everlasting, because among certain ones its provisions are not observed, its requirements are not carried out, its precepts not exemplified. That does not prove that that everlasting kingdom is not an everlasting kingdom, any more than the fact that some states during the late unpleasantness refused to recognize the government, actually brought it to a legitimate end. The government was in fact just the same. In this sense, and in harmony with the illustration given, we look upon the truthfulness of the statement of the sweet singer of Israel, when he sings in enraptured poetry, and declares that the "Kingdom is an everlasting kingdom." It must be in order to comport with the nature and character of the great governor. He is not governed

by the emergencies that govern among men, but he is governed by those opportunities and acts which are coupled with the agency of man. The Lord could save every human being, and could do it in advance for that matter. He could lift them up into harmony with his own being; but it is not in harmony with his eternal nature and character to save us unconditionally. It is from this standpoint that I judge that the Lord in one sense of the word, can not save a sinner. It is inconsistent with the eternal provision before announced, I need not say made. I do not know whether it was made, but it has been announced at least to us. Hence it is that the messengers of the gospel were endowed by the great teacher with the Holy Spirit, to say to the sons of men, Repent, turn from your wrong; we have come to tell you that there is a condition of regeneration for you; there is a change to be wrought upon you, upon your very nature, moral and spiritual, and not only that, physical likewise in its results. And this change can not come to you, as long as you rebel against it, and at last fail to accept it. It would be inconsistent with the nature of the government, consequently the cry to the nations to repent.

When we come down to this work of the eleventh hour as indicated by the Savior, it is an hour when he has gone out and said to men, "Why stand ye here idle all day long." Some had allowed the idea to encroach upon them, that men were idle all the day long, because no man had hired them. That looks just like our age does it not, in its relation to the preachers. They say we have worked all the day. Even good Paul's language is used, "Woe is me, if I preach not the gospel." But unless the people respond in the nature of good security, they let the wolf come on themselves and the flock also. It looks like we live in that age of the world. It looks like this work mapped out in the outlines given by the Savior,

when the householder should employ laborers to labor in his vineyard in the eleventh hour, the hour when the sun was only an hour high, when five sixths of the afternoon is gone, and there is only one hour to labor; that is evident from the language. And when the steward calls the laborers and begins to deal out the rewards, these men who served under the heat of three o'clock when the sun was hot, who preached Christ when the world rebelled against it and responded with opposition and persecution, these men looked at the justice of it from their standpoint, and murmured, "These men have wrought but one hour." When the time of that hour has moved the great pendulum, and the moments as they pass have moved the hand upon the world's dial, which indicates that the sun is nearly set, God's work nearly accomplished after the manner of those unchangeable principles brought to light and acknowledged by the divine revelations of a work designed to prepare a people to receive him in accordance with his purposes and intentions, the time is short it is said. We should labor then diligently, to teach these holy precepts to the world in a time of darkness and gloom, religiously speaking; so much so, that inspiration was seemingly nowhere among men and the world was drifting and wandering in consequence of wrong teaching, incorrect inculcation of religious principles, and the result is division, in the time when the Lord would work a marvelous work and a wonder among the people, indicating to some extent the nature of that work, by stating its results. "They who erred in spirit should come to understanding, and those who murmured should learn doctrine." It is evident that God designs the doctrines of holiness to be taught; and hence everywhere to make the thought practicable. If you find men trying to deprive you of the privilege of investigating doctrines, and a great many times dictating to you the

very words you shall utter, when you speak a word for Christ, in order if possible to keep you from getting at the truth of the word of God, we may know by this that they do not represent the people of God. Jesus taught doctrine. He further said, "my doctrine is not mine." It is the doctrine of God then, "his that sent me." Well may John say, "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." You need not go where there is no doctrine to find God. God's work is hedged in, or I should say is beautifully protected by the doctrine of Christ. And the protection is, that we who have murmured and have found ourselves mistaken; we who have dreamed we ate, and have awoke and found it was but a dream, and ourselves hungry. Those of us who have dreamed that we partook of the waters of life, and find it but mythical; those who erred in spirit should come to understanding, and those who murmured should learn doctrine. But the idea of doctrine, should not be confounded with the idea of various, or contradictory doctrines. If we are in the spirit and are serving God according to his plan, we are all right. We are all right provided the Spirit we have is of God, There is the difficulty; and the only way I have found of reaching some cases, when they seem to have some kind of a spirit, and you would think from their declarations that they were the embodiment of God, was to plant myself right upon these fundamental principles and not be shaken therefrom—these six principles of the doctrine of Christ, which are enumerated as faith in God and Christ, repentance from dead works, baptism in the name of Jesus by one authorized of him in water for the remission of sins, the doctrine of the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Spirit, coupled with the belief and hope of the resur-

rection of the dead, and eternal judgment. I have found this to be the unmovable anchor; and let the storms rage never so fiercely, or the waves move along with all their fury and power, the ship keeps away from the rocks, and stands firm and fixed. The only difficulty the people find with our platform is, that it is too broad; there is no difficulty about its being too narrow, no difficulty about its being too exclusive. The world scarcely sees the necessity of preparing for their own safety by stepping upon this great, broad and glorious platform, submitted to us of God through this Christ, who has also been made Lord.

Let us be wise, those of us who have been elected and chosen to exemplify these principles in our lives and teachings to-day. Let me exhort that we do not indulge ourselves in our natural propensities to the discredit of these doctrines and principles. Let us unite with our ministry, and let the ministry preach and live by the same doctrines. Then let us all follow their preaching and their lives, and the light of the gospel will brighten our way. Sometimes when in the testimony meeting you have liberty and the evidence that your words will do good and that you are accepted of God. Can you ask for a greater reward for the sacrifice required to be made? May the Lord bless and guide and save us.

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