

## COUNSELOR DANIEL H. WELLS.

I have ever felt loth to bring before a public congregation the misdeeds of a few, lest a credulous public be led to suppose that evil is more prevalent among us than it really is; and for this reason, perhaps, if for no other, I feel ashamed that such things as have been referred to should exist. I have felt rather that people should turn away from evil and cleave to the Lord, and maintain that better character before him, before one another and before the world. It would seem as though it were necessary to bring up such matters, on the principle, perhaps, that a wound in order to be healed should be probed. But it would seem, too, that such things that have been referred to to-day, if they do exist in the church, that while they should not pass unrebuked, there is certainly a more proper time and place to deal with them than before a public congregation.

We are gathering out from the midst of the people of the earth to be taught in the ways of the Lord, and to walk more perfectly in his paths, that we may learn righteousness, and come to a knowledge of the the mind and the will of our Father who is in heaven. God has decreed that he will redeem the earth from sin and wickedness, and establish his own rule and dominion thereon. And it is necessary in order to build up the kingdom of God on the earth that the Lord should have a people prepared with whom he can work, and who will be submissive and ready to do his will. We pray to our Father, saying, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven." Now, how can this come to pass until the Lord has a people who shall be willing to do his will, and who shall be desirous to walk in the path that he marks out for them. Do we realize how very far we are from the Lord's ways; how we have been instructed in the ways of the world through the traditions and false teachings of generations that are passed, and which we have inherited. We had been taught the precepts of men instead of the commandments of God. Now, however, it is plain that the Lord is endeavoring to work a reformation in the midst of his children; and for this purpose he has made known his laws again, laws which are calculated to redeem the people from the thralldom of sin and iniquity so prevalent in the world; and he has made them applicable to this generation, hence they are in force upon the human family. He has brought them home to our senses, and it is with delight that we behold them in contrast with the erroneous teachings we have received from men who have professed to be the teachers of religion, who have professed to be the servants of God, who have professed to stand in holy places and to lead the people in the way of life and salvation—I say, they have proposed to do all these things, whereas they have neither the authority nor the knowledge to do so, because they have not been called of the Lord for that purpose, nor have they the revealed will of heaven to direct them. They have sought to teach their own will; they themselves are blind, and they lead the blind, and they must sooner or later fall into the pit together. Our minds, however, have been touched with the Spirit of the living God, made manifest unto us. And this is what inspired us to come out from the midst of the world to these valleys of the mountains, where the Lord has appointed to build a Zion unto his holy name, where he has condescended to establish his authority, and also to build temples in which to attend to the ordinances of his house. We have

been gathered from the midst of the nations with this object in view, under the inspiration of the Almighty, to do his will and to bring to pass his purposes and establish his purposes upon the earth. Is not this what has actuated us and brought us together to these valleys? If there was any other motive or design I do not know what it was. There are places more desirable to men than these sterile valleys; there are places where the land is richer and where better seasons prevail, and where more profitable results can be obtained in many respects; for this is not so very desirable a country, in fact a great portion of it is very undesirable and unprofitable to man for settlements. But it is not for the sake of wealth that we have come here; it is to be taught in the ways of the Lord, and to walk in his paths; it is to keep his commandments, to do his will that it may be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

Reference has been made this afternoon to the words, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that he receive not of her plagues." Now, we have gathered bodily, but if we have brought with us the evils that are so prevalent in the world, have we gathered in the spirit as the people of God should gather? No. We might just as well have stayed in the world, and it would have been better indeed to have done so, than to drag the evils of the world into the midst of Zion. Any people who will corrupt their ways before the Lord are bound for destruction, according to the words of the Lord through the prophets. The principles of truth and virtue, and of temperance and honesty are the foundation of exaltation, and just as certain as people will practise them they will be exalted; and just as sure as they indulge in iniquity, it will lead them down to death and destruction, and that, too, upon natural principles. There is the way of life, and there is the way of death set before us, and it is for us to choose the course we will take; it is through obedience to the principles of life we shall obtain an exaltation in the celestial kingdom and upon no other. If a person ever inherits a celestial glory can he inherit it upon any other principle than that of obeying the laws of that kingdom? No; because all kingdoms have laws, and a person can only attain to the glory and benefit of that kingdom, the laws of which he observes to keep. This is the way I read and understand the revelations of the Lord.

Now, would it not be better to endeavor to find out the will of God our Heavenly Father concerning ourselves, and live so as to enjoy the light of his spirit to guide us in the duties of life? I think it certainly would. The best investment a man can make is to give his all into the kingdom of God, to hold himself on the altar ready for the Master's use, to place his ability, his time and means at his command to further the purposes of his Father in Heaven, and thus accomplish his design and purpose in bringing him into this state of existence. It is no haphazard matter that we have been born in this day and generation, a day in which God has revealed his mind and will to the children of men. He has withheld these spirits to come forth when he should again reveal the laws, that peradventure there might be those upon the earth who would receive his laws and assist to bring to pass his purposes and designs, because it is through the instrumentality of his children that he will bring forth his kingdom and prepare the way for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to rule. For he will rule, even from the rivers to the ends of the earth, for the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; it belongs to him; it is his

right to rule, dictate, and lead forth; and it is only a question of time when he will do so.

I feel well in this work. I cannot express the gratitude that I feel to the Lord that he has made manifest unto us his law, his will, the principles of the holy gospel, and that he has brought them home to our understanding. We have the privilege of learning to know God, whom to know, the Apostle says, is life eternal. Now, if to know him is life eternal, we cannot attain to eternal life without a knowledge of him. And how can we become acquainted with God unless he reveals himself? He has, however, revealed himself to man in this our day. We have partially become acquainted with him; we know who he is, and who we are, and we know his purpose and design in bringing us into this state of existence. It is for us to learn the will and design of God our Father concerning us as his children in this probation, that we may fulfil the full measure thereof, and be worthy to return into his presence from whence we have come. No second or third rate glory will satisfy the Saints of God. Nothing short of a full and complete salvation in the celestial kingdom of God, can answer their desires and aspirations. But how do we expect to attain to that glory? As I have already observed, there is no other way save that of keeping a celestial law. This is plainly set forth here in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, it having been revealed to the servant of the Lord in the day and age in which we live. We do not go back to the mysterious ages in order to attain this knowledge. God has revealed it to us in this our day; and although we do believe in the Bibie, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants, nevertheless we have also the living oracles here day by day to teach us in the ways of truth and righteousness. Can we govern and control ourselves? We can partly, but I can conceive that in a great many instances we could do much better. Many of us, no doubt, are doing as well as we can, and yet we are not doing as well as we know how. We, perhaps, know a great many things which may be utterly impossible for us to bring into actual practice owing to surrounding circumstances; but yet many are doing the best they can, and we should all the time try to do as well as we know how. Our struggle should be to progress in the knowledge of God and the things pertaining to eternal life, that our course may be onward and upward until we "all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." It is true we are imperfect; the traditions of our fathers are upon us, and I know of and could point out a great many things that are erroneous which our fathers in their ignorance taught and practised. But there is one thing that people who live in this day will have to account for, and that is, their presuming to administer in sacred places the precepts of men instead of the ordinances which pertain to the house of God, thereby leading people away from the truth.

We live in a peculiar age of the world. We live in a day when the God of heaven is establishing his kingdom to bring to pass his purposes, preparatory to the millennial reign. We live in a day when we are building temples in which a work may be performed for those who have died in ignorance of the gospel, that they may also be saved. The gospel plan reaches out to and includes all the children of men; it is ample to save all who will bow and live

in obedience to its teachings. If a person has not had an opportunity of receiving the gospel in this world, he will have an opportunity of doing so in the next, in the place of departed spirits. And the labor of the Elders of Israel who die and pass into the Spirit world, clothed upon with the authority of the holy priesthood—is to preach to them the principles of the holy gospel, that they may live according to God in the spirit and be judged according to men in the flesh. But there are ordinances which have to be performed for them on the earth. It is for this purpose we are building temples.

Well, I pray God to help us to live our religion, because in it there is life and salvation—I was going to say, in this world, as well as in the world to come. And so there is. The principles of the gospel are calculated in their nature to elevate mankind in the scale of human existence, and are fraught with salvation to men in this time as well as in the time to come. I pray God to bless all those who seek to work righteousness in all the earth, and especially to remember the household of faith, I pray that he may preserve us from stepping into bye and forbidden paths; that we may be instruments in his hands in bringing to pass his purposes and in upholding the principles of truth, because there are but few who are disposed to do this. The great tendency of the age is to wickedness and corruption, and there are but few comparatively who will receive the truth. Let us sustain these principles like an unbroken phalanx, standing shoulder to shoulder, that the enemy may not make an inroad in our midst. In union there is strength. If therefore we can carry out these things unitedly, we will be able to exert a greater power not only in the world but before the Lord.

May God bless us to this end is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

The choir sang an anthem.

Elder ERASTUS SNOW dismissed by prayer.

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2 P. M.

On Monday afternoon the Assembly Hall was again completely filled.  
Singing by the choir.

Prayer by Elder JOSEPH E. TAYLOR.

#### PRESIDENT JOSEPH YOUNG.

He recollected the day when the Church consisted of a mere handful of people scattered over two or three States of the Union. In traveling to visit them an Elder was greeted with the sound, "There goes a Mormon!" Now, from Idaho to Arizona, through hundreds of miles, the settlements of the Saints extend and the people greet an Elder with joy and friendship. It was the work of the Lord and caused astonishment. He was the Author of it, and his hand was over all, guiding the destiny of the greatest, and caring even for the sparrow. By his Spirit we were guided, and it was to carry the tidings of