

neighbor, for he has all the opportunity of doing good that is necessary.

Now, I would like to impress one thought upon your minds, my brethren and sisters who preside in the stakes and in the wards, in the quorums and in the auxiliary associations; that we be chaperones, that we be guardians of the people, that we, indeed, be fathers unto the people, and give unto them that which they most need. Let us cultivate in ourselves this spirit, a desire to teach, to encourage, counsel and advise wherever we have opportunity, wherever we see that it is needful. I promise you, if you engage in this work, it will increase your own faith; it will be an anchor to your souls; it will bring joy and satisfaction to you, and your hope of eternal life will be greatly augmented. Thus engaged, our confidence in the Lord will be increased, and also our assurance that our lives will not be spent in vain, but that we will obtain, in the end, the promised blessing of eternal life. God bless us to this end, I pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

#### **ELDER ORSON F. WHITNEY.**

The President of the Church and the President of the Nation.—God finds and qualifies His servants.—The power of Presidency.—No officer chosen for personal reasons.—An abundance of material for the Lord's work.—President Taft's "sermon."—Christ's doctrine.—A mission of Salvation.

"Our President." I see these words confronting me, in letters of colossal size; and I can think of no better text for the few remarks that I shall make on this occasion.

The motto hung in the eastern end of the Tabernacle was placed there in honor of the President of the United States, who recently paid Utah a visit, and spoke to the assembled citizens from this stand. I desire to refer to him before I complete my discourse; but for the present I wish to speak of our other President, if he will pardon me for being personal in his direction—I mean President Joseph F. Smith, the leader of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

While President Smith was speaking, yesterday morning, with such earnestness and power—a greater power than any of his brethren can hope to command and exercise—I was reminded of some conversations that I had not long ago with two of the brethren numbered among the general authorities of the Church. Each one said, in substance, "I would not know where to look to find another man to lead this Church; if I should survey the land from one end to the other, I do not believe I could find as good a man, a man as well qualified for that position, as President Joseph F. Smith." I agreed with my brethren; but I thought then, and the thought has recurred to me now: it is not my business to find the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; that is the Lord's business. I have full confidence that the Lord could find a man to preside over this Church at any time, and that He would qualify him and equip him to the performance of his duty to that degree that the people would feel, as they feel now towards our honored President, that he is the right man for his time and place.

I presume this question arose during the lifetime of the Prophet

Joseph Smith, the first President of the Church. Doubtless many of the Latter-day Saints then asked themselves the question: What would we do if the Prophet were taken away? Where would we find another president, another leader? The Prophet seemed absolutely indispensable to his generation; but when the Lord saw fit to take him, another man arose—up to that time not noted, any more than several of the brethren with whom he was associated. He was a mighty man, and they were mighty men. But when the mantle of Joseph fell upon him, when God had chosen Brigham Young to be His prophet, and the Saints had sustained him with the uplifted hand and with the power of their faith and prayers, as their president, where was the man in all Israel who could compare with President Brigham Young? He had all the natural gifts before he was President that he had after he became President; but it was not his right, not his prerogative to exercise the power of presidency until it had been duly placed upon him, until the people had sustained him in that position and signified, by their uplifted hands, that they proposed to be loyal to him, to uphold him and make him strong. God chose Brigham Young and placed the power of presidency upon him. That was the secret of his might—the secret of his success. This is the Lord's work, and it is the Lord who makes His servants mighty. When President Young drew near to his end, many were asking themselves the question: who will take his place? Where is there another man of his sagacity, his wisdom, his executive ability? Brigham Young had made himself almost indispensable to the

Latter-day Saints, and in the world, among the Gentiles, speculation was rife, and predictions were numerous to the effect that when Brigham Young died Mormonism would be at an end. I remember an utterance of one reverend gentleman who never bore the Latter-day Saints any good will—Dr. T. DeWitt Talmage. In the Brooklyn Tabernacle, just after President Young died, this reverend gentleman called upon the government to strike at Mormonism. "Now is the time," he said, "while they are scattered and confused, while they are without leadership. Now is the time for the government of the United States to strike." On another occasion he said, "Thunder into them the seventh commandment, with shot and shell and cannon of the biggest bore." But the "confusion" that the reverend gentleman imagined, did not exist. There was no confusion. There may have been some question as to who was qualified to take the place of Brigham Young at the head of the Church; but when John Taylor had been sustained as President, when the people had united their prayers in his behalf, and God had clothed him with the power of the presidency, it was perfectly apparent to the Latter-day Saints that another leader had been provided, and that he, from that time, would be the strongest and mightiest man among them.

It was the same when President Taylor died; it was the same when President Woodruff died; and when President Snow passed away, the man for the time and place was found; as he always will be. It is the Lord's business to find him and to qualify him for His work; and the Lord has never failed. This is

my testimony concerning all the leaders, of Israel including our honored and beloved President Joseph F. Smith.

I remember when the Salt Lake Temple was dedicated—Wilford Woodruff was then President of the Church—Wilford Woodruff, that humble man, who did not deem himself fitted, if I am correctly informed, scarcely believed himself worthy to be the President, and shrunk, in native modesty and humility, from presenting himself to his brethren as their leader, and would fain have retired and had some one else hold the reins of power. But, when his brethren united upon him and sustained him, and the people gave their prayers and their votes in his behalf, who could compare with President Wilford Woodruff, the Prophet of God? I saw him arise, day after day, in the dedication services of the Temple. There were gifted men around him—mighty men, strong and capable—but none could approach him in power and majesty. There were times when he towered like a mountain among hills; because God was with him, and it was not the prerogative of any man, while he lived and held the reins of authority, to exercise the same degree of spiritual power.

I do not believe, brethren and sisters, that the Lord ever exalts any man or woman to office for his or her own sake. I do not believe that I am standing where I stand today because of any desire on the part of our Heavenly Father to glorify me, or to glorify my father's family; and I do not believe it of any of these men, my brethren. I do not believe it of President Smith. I do not believe it of the Lord—that He has pets and favorites, and

that He is interested in advancing the private fortunes of any man. He is thinking of His people, of the general good, of the salvation of the world. When He chooses men and women and places His power upon them it is because they can better be used in the places where He puts them, than anywhere else, for the general welfare. The reason President Smith presides over us, and exercises greater power than any other man can hope to exercise, is because the Lord wants him where he is, and can work through him there to better advantage than through any other man at the present time. I believe this is the principle of promotion in the Church of Christ.

I believe there are just as good men down in the ranks as occupy high positions—and some strong men are needed in the ranks. They cannot all be Apostles; they cannot all be High Councilors; they cannot all be Bishops; but they can all be men of God. I have never believed that the all-wise Being who made this earth—and who had made millions of earths like it, and had peopled them, redeemed them, and glorified them—would fail to provide Himself with enough material to carry on His work. I believe there is an abundance of material, in the various quorums of the Priesthood, and scattered through the twelve tribes of Israel—an abundance of material out of which to make Bishops and Stake Presidents and Apostles in the due time of the Lord, according to His will. When an ax-handle breaks, there is a forest of timber from which to select a new one. I do not believe that our Heavenly Father is impoverished; that He has left Himself without men and without

resources to carry out His great and beneficent designs. Therefore, we can be comforted, we can afford to take an optimistic view, and face the future with hope and confidence, knowing that God is at the helm, that the right man is at our head, and that the right man will always be found at the proper time and in the proper place.

I believe, also, that the right man is now at the head of this nation. I felt honored in being one of the congregation that assembled here, a week ago yesterday morning, to hear our other President deliver his so-called sermon to the citizens of Utah—Mormon, Jew, and Gentile. I rejoice that I have lived to see the day when the President of the United States could come here as the guest of the whole people, and speak to the whole people, and be the friend to all the people. I believe President Taft is the right man for the place he occupies, and that he is entitled to our friendship and sympathy. He has more power and more prestige, at this time, than any other man throughout the nation,—and he has a right to have it. There are eighty or ninety millions of people praying for him—such of them as do pray, at least—Democrats as well as Republicans, and all others. They are loyal to the head of the nation; and that loyalty and love and sympathy cannot fail to contribute much toward making him our wisest and strongest man in civic affairs. It ought to be so, and it is so. I rejoice that he is a friend to Utah and to all her people, and that Mormons, Jews, and Gentiles could assemble here on that notable occasion, to honor him and receive instructions at his hands.

Now I wish to read two short

paragraphs of President Taft's so-called sermon, based upon the text which he chose from Proverbs: "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger." In the course of his remarks, the President said:

"My dear friends, this matter of hatred and resentment which accompanies the attributing of bad motives to those who differ with you, is a source of a waste of nervous strength, of time, of worry, without accomplishing one single good thing. I don't know how it has been with you, but it has happened, time and time again, with me, that some man has done something that I didn't like, which I thought had a personal bearing, and that I have said in my heart, 'Times will change, and I will get even with that gentleman.'—O, I don't profess to be free from those feelings at all—but it has frequently happened, I may say generally, that the time did come when I could get even with that man, and when that time came, it seemed to me that I would demean myself and that it would show me no man at all, if I took advantage."

Later on he said:

"So, my friends, what I am urging is less acrimony in public discussion, more charity with respect to each other, as to what moves each man to do what he does do, and not to charge dishonesty and corruption until you have a real reason for doing so. I am the last man to pardon or mitigate wrongs against the public or against the individual. I believe, and I regret to say, that throughout this country the administration of the criminal law, and the prosecution of crime, is a disgrace to our civilization. But it is one thing to prosecute a

criminal when you have the evidence, and it is another thing to ascribe motives to an act of a man, when you have not any evidence and are just living in your imagination in respect to what you say."

I am not going to waste time in any speculations as to how much of this sermon was intended for the Mormons and how much of it for the Gentiles. I think it was intended for me; I think President Taft meant me—I saw him looking at me when he said it. (Laughter); and I saw him looking at you, too; and he meant you, every one of you that was here, and a great many more that were not here. Speaking for myself, brethren and sisters, I want to say that I am in full and hearty sympathy with these noble sentiments uttered by the Chief Magistrate of the Republic. I desire to be charitable to my brethren and sisters and to my fellow-men. I don't want to live in my imagination as to their motives and their acts. I don't want to think my neighbor a worse man than he is; I want to be just to him, and I desire, also, to be merciful. I believe this to be in consonance with the principles that our Savior died to introduce. The mission of Christ would have been a failure if it had not been a mission of love, of forgiveness, of charity to all mankind; and Mormonism, as it is called, is no more nor less than the Gospel of Christ. It teaches us to be charitable to all men. It teaches us to return good for evil—not to retaliate. If we get a man into a corner who has injured us, we cannot afford to condescend to his level, and treat him as he has treated us. We ought to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us. That is Christ's doctrine.

President Taft was but paraphrasing the Savior's teachings upon this point. To love God with all our might, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves—upon these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets; and that man or woman who cannot forgive, who seeks revenge and has no higher conception of duty than to cherish hatred and practice retaliation—has a small soul and needs to have it expanded and enlarged by the Spirit of Christ. We cannot afford to descend to base levels. We are here to save men; we have been chosen and sent into the world for this purpose, and we must show men that we love them—not their wickedness; God does not love the wickedness of the world, but He loves His sons and daughters, and is anxious to save them. He is not trying to damn a single soul. Our mission is a mission of peace, of charity, of forgiveness, and love; and the Gospel that we preach and try to practice is the power of God unto salvation. Amen.

#### ELDER DAVID O. M'KAY.

The care and training of children.—The blessing of work.—Hugo's admonition to a young man.—Exhortation to officers and members of the Church.—Good work of three Elders.

Yesterday morning when our President suggested to this vast assemblage that they move nearer together in their seats, in order to give brethren and sisters who were standing a little room to sit down, there was a universal movement throughout this tabernacle. It was surprising to those who could look