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Conference, am

I hope there may be faith enough in this congregation of Saints to still the wind, and strengthen me so that I may be heard by all of this vast assemblage of people:  and in order that my voice may extend, and be heard by all it will be necessary for the brethren and sisters to be as quiet as possible, and I will do my best to speak that you may all hear and understand.

We shall devote this day to preaching--exhortation--singing\_-praying and blessing children, (such as have not been blessed), and all those who have not been able to come to meeting:  such women may be, who have not had their children blessed, and have the privilege this afternoon.

Last Sunday I proposed to the Saints, to speak to day on the subject of baptism for the dead in connexion with other items, that the Saints may be satisfied--that all doubt and darkness may be removed with regard to certain principles of the doctrine of redemption.

But before I undertake to explain or give correct views upon this important subject, I would say to all those who are satisfied with all the knowledge they have, and want no more:  to you I do not expect to be an apostle this day; but for those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, I pray, that they may be filled and satisfied with the intelligence of God, even his glory.

What I have stated in the winter past relative to the baptism for the dead, has been a matter of discussion among the elders, and among the brethren and sisters in general, but I will endeavor to show to this congregation of Saints the propriety of it; and that the people could not run at hap-hazard, and without order to attend to this ordinance and at the same time it be valid, and recognized in heaven.

We are building a house at present unto the Lord in the which we expect to attend to the fulfillment of this doctrine; you all believe that this is a doctrine revealed by God to his servant Joseph.  Admitting this to be the fact, that he has revealed through him a plan by which we may bring to life the dead, and bless them with a great and glorious exaltation in the presence of the Almighty with ourselves; still we want to know how to do these things right; to . do them in a manner that shall be acceptable to the Almighty, if otherwise he will say unto us at the last day, "ye have not known me right, because of your slothfulness and your wickedness depart from me for I know you not." O ye Latter-day Saints!  I don't want one of you to be caught in that snare, but that you may do things right, and thus be enabled to make your calling and election sure.  I might say the plan of salvation is perfect of itself--it is a system that can save, redeem, honor and glorify all who are willing to apply themselves to it according to the pattern--it is a plan of salvation to all men both male and female; it has been handed down, and known from the days of Adam, and those who will open their eyes to see, their ears to hear, and their hearts to understand, they will acknowledge at once that it is a perfect system; but those whose eyes, ears and hearts are shut up by incorrect tradition and prejudice, they acknowledge by their lives, by their practices, by their walk and conversation, and by their actions in general, that they do not understand it, yet they plead the atonement, and say we believe the atonement is sufficient for all--only believe and he will save you; yet at the same time the bible, reason, common sense and every other righteous principle positively testifies that there must be means made use of to put you in possession of the blessings of the atonement, as well as any other blessing.

I believe the plan of salvation is comeatable, and may be understood-and the inhabitants of the world who will come to God can be made acquainted with all the ordinances and blessings by which they may know how to save themselves and their friends, as we know how to build a house, or as the mechanic knows how to make any piece of mechanism; but mechanism is not to be compared with the perfection of the machine of salvation, or with the beauty of the plan of redemption:  it is the most perfect system of any other creature under heaven.

The gospel is adapted to the capacity of all the human family, whether they be high or low, rich or poor, bond or free, black or white, young or old, it is adapted to their capacities, all can understand and be saved:  no comparison of its purity can be made; you may investigate the laws of nations, and gather together all the laws of the kingdoms of this world, and make a selection of the best part of the purest principles of the laws of justice and equity, and they would not compare, nor would there be any resemblance to the purity of the laws of heaven.  He who gives that law is perfect, and reduces it to the capacity of finite beings in order that they may understand it and then receive more:  thus the infinite being gives line upon line, reveals principle after principle, as the mind of the finite being expands, and when he has learned all his life he will then begin to see, that he has not yet entered upon the threshold of the eternal things that are to be gained by the children of men.  I have now about got through with my preliminaries, and shall occupy your attention with some items in relation to the doctrine of the baptism for the dead.

I do not say that you have not been taught and learned the principle; you have heard it taught from this stand from time to time, by many of the elders, and from the mouth of our beloved and martyred prophet Joseph:  therefore my course will not be to prove the doctrine, but refer to those things against which your minds are revolting.  Consequently I would say to this vast congregation of Saints, when we enter into the Temple of God to receive our washings, our anointings, our endowments and baptisms for the saving of ourselves, and for the saving of our dead; that you never will see a man go forth to be baptized for a woman, nor a woman for a man.  If your minds should be in any dubiety with regard to this, call to mind a principle already advanced, that when an infinite being gives a law to his finite creatures, he has to descend to the capacity of those who receive his law, when the doctrine of baptism for the dead was first given, this church was in its infancy, and was not capable of receiving all the knowledge of God in its highest degree; this you all believe.  I would keep this one thing in your minds, and that is, that there is none, no not one of the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve, that ever received the fullness of the celestial law at the first of the Lord's commencing to reveal it unto them.

The doctrine of baptism for the dead you have been taught for some time, and the first account that I heard of it was while I was in England; it was there I got the glad tidings that the living could go forth and be baptized for those who had fallen asleep.  This doctrine I believed before anything was said or done about it in this church; it made me glad when I heard it was revealed through his servant Joseph, and that I could go forth, and officiate for my fathers, for my mothers, and for my ancestors, to the latest generation who have not had the privilege of helping themselves; that they can yet arise to the state of glory and exaltation as we that live, have a privilege of rising to ourselves.  The next year I came home and requested Brother Joseph to preach upon the subject, which he did, I also heard many of the elders preach upon the same subject.

There has been many things said, and notions imbibed concerning this doctrine.  Allow me to advance an idea, and it is this:  except we attend to this ordinance according to the law of heaven in all things it will not be valid or be of any benefit either to the living or the dead; when it was first revealed all the order of it was not made known, afterwards it was made known, that records, clerks, and one or two witnesses were necessary or else it will be of no value to the saints.

The Lord has led this people all the while in this way, by giving them here a little and there a little, thus he increases their wisdom, and he that receives a little and is thankful for that shall receive more and more, and more even to the fullness of the eternal Godhead:  there is no stopping place, but the weak capacity of man cannot understand it unless the spirit of the eternal God is in their hearts, and then they can comprehend but a little of it.  In this is the glory, power, and excellency of the gospel of the Son of God to poor weak finite man.--Look, O ye Latter-day Saints, at the nations of the earth; Christendom, look at them; but look at ourselves (although we have received a great deal) yet who is there here that has seen Jesus Christ, that have beheld angels, that have conversed with the spirits of just men made perfect, and the assembly of the church of Enoch, and with God the judge of all?  who is there here that has been caught up to the third heavens and gazed upon the order and glory of the celestial world?  don't you see brethren we have yet a great deal to learn, but is it not our privilege to be filled with all the fullness of Godliness?  (cries of yes.) When you receive all that is for you, you will say O the blindness of Christendom!  O the ignorance of the world!! even the Latter-day Saints that have assembled themselves together at the April conference in the year eighteen hundred and forty-five, will say, what am I?

Joseph in his life time did not receive every thing connected with the doctrine of redemption, but he has left the key with those who understand how to obtain and teach to this great people all that is necessary for their salvation and exaltation in the celestial kingdom of our God.  We have got to learn how to be faithful with the few things, you know the promise is, if we are faithful in a few things we shall be made rulers over many things.  If we improve upon the small things, greater will be given unto us.

I have said that a man cannot be baptized for a woman, nor a woman for a man, and it be valid.  I have not used any argument as yet; I want now to use an argument upon this subject, it is a very short one; and I will do it by asking this congregation, if God would call a person to commence a thing that would not have power and ability to carry it out?  Would he do it?  (no.) Well then, what has been our course on former occasions?  Why, here goes our beloved sisters, and they are baptized in the river or in the fount for their uncles, for their fathers, for their grand-fathers and great grandfathers.

Well, now I will take you and confirm you for your uncles, for your fathers, for your grand fathers, and for your great grandfathers, and let you go; after a while here comes our beloved sisters, saying, I want to be ordained for my uncle, and for my father, and for my grand father, and great grand-father; I want my father ordained to the high priesthood, and my grandfather, I want to be patriarch, and you may ordain me a prophet for my uncle!  What would you think about all that, sisters, come now you have been baptised and confirmed for your father, wont you be ordained for him?  You could cast on a stocking and finish it.--You could take wool and card and spin it and make it into cloth, and then make it into garments.  A person that commences a work and has not ability and power to finish it, only leaves the unfinished remains as a monument of folly.  We will not commence a work we cannot finish:  but let us hearken to the voice of the spirit and give heed to his teachings and we will make ourselves perfect in all things.

I would now call your attention to some of the sayings of the apostle Paul.  I hope you will not stumble at them.  Paul says, "nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord, for as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman, but all things of God." The same Apostle also says, "The woman is the glory of the man." Now brethren, these are Paul's sayings, not Joseph Smith's spiritual wife system sayings.

And I would say, as no man can be perfect without the woman, so no woman can be perfect without a man to lead her, I tell you the truth as it is in the bosom of eternity; and I say so to every man upon the face of the earth:  if he wishes to be saved he cannot be saved without a woman by his side.  This is spiritual wife ism, that is, the doctrine of spiritual wives.

Lest these my sisters should think I give power into the hands of their husbands to abuse them, I would say there is no man has a right to govern his wife and family unless he does it after the order of the church of Christ, unless he does it upon this principle he need not expect to receive a celestial glory.  He that does not govern as Jesus governs his church, breaks his bonds and solemn obligations to his family.

Now ye elders of Israel will you go and beat your wives?  will you neglect and abuse them?  You may ask, is that anything about being baptised for the dead, or the laws of the celestial kingdom?

With regard to the laws of the celestial kingdom, I say it always was, and is, and always will be, a system of beauty and order.  When the angel visited Cornelius, and commanded him to send men to Joppa for Peter, who should tell him words whereby he and his house should be saved.  Would it not have saved a good deal of trouble if the angel had told these words to Cornelius?  It certainly would, but it was not the angel's privilege, it remained for Peter to do, because it was Peter's calling; it was Peter's duty.  In this case we see the principle of order.  Again, in the case of the Savior, did he offer to baptize Paul?  No, he had to go to Damascus, to a certain street, in order to find Ananias, who administered to him.  Thus you see the angel honored Peter, the Savior honored Ananias by permitting them to attend to the calling they had received power to act in.  So let fathers honor their families, husbands honor your wives, honor your children that they may learn to honor you; and if you come and are baptised for the father of your wife, and you want your mother baptised for, let your wife do it; give honor to her.--Ananias had the glory and honor of ordaining Paul and sending him to preach.  Christ had done his work, and then gave honor and glory to his servants; when the elders have done their work, let them give their wives honor, and let them say to them, come and be baptised for my mother, and for my sister, and save them, and I will preside over the whole of you.

Thus let every person stand in their own order, and do that which belongs to them to do, that there may be no confusion, but let order and beauty be the characteristics of this people.  I used to think that the sectarian world would certainly get to heaven for they tried hard enough.  And we boys would frequently wish ourselves in heaven with our backs broke that we could not get out again.  The sectarian world is just like that, they are scrambling up in the greatest confusion, saying to each other, I hope you will get to heaven, and may your back be broke that you cannot get out again, and that is all they know about it.

The religion of heaven teaches us to give every man and every woman their due, that rightly belongs to them.  And he that walks up to his privilege and duty, he has honor and glory, and shall never be removed out of his place.

I have shown to the brethren and sisters that Brother Joseph did not tell them all things at once, consequently you may expect to hear and see many things you never thought of before.  One thing is that we have taken down the wooden fount that was built up by the instructions of Brother Joseph.  This has been a great wonder to some, and says one of the stone-cutters the other day, "I wonder why Joseph did not tell us the fount should be built of stone." The man that made that speech is walking in darkness.  He is a stranger to the spirit of this work, and knows nothing.  In fact he does not know enough to cut a stone for the house of God.  There is not a man under the face of the heavens that has one particle of the spirit about him, but knows that God talks to men according to their circumstances.  God knew that old Abraham could not build a temple, therefore he said unto him, go to the mountain I shall tell thee of, and there offer up your sacrifice.  He tells us to build an house here in this place, according to our means.  And when we get a little more strength, he will say, go now and execute your means upon the next house we have got to build, and it is just to stretch our faith until it shall become exceeding great, that we can command the elements and they will obey.  And when we get into Jackson county to walk in the courts of that house, we can say we built this temple:  for as the Lord lives we will build up Jackson county in this generation, (cries of amen.) and we will be far better off with regard to temporal things, when we have done, than ever we were before.  If we had the means to build a fount in that house, say one of marble, the Lord would just as like as not tell us to cover it with gold just to stretch our faith.  Brother Joseph said to me with regard to the fount, "I will not go into the river to be baptised for my friends, we will build a wooden fount to serve the present necessity; brethren does that satisfy you?  This fount has caused the Gentile world to wonder, but a sight of the next one will make a Gentile faint away.  This brings to my memory a circumstance that transpired in the temple at Kirtland.  A very pious lady came to see the temple, she walked up and down in the house, with her hands locked together, and after the escape of one or two of the sectarians most sanctified groans, she exclaimed, "The Lord does not like such extravagance." Poor thing, I wonder how she will walk upon the streets when they are paved with gold; she could not bear to see the temple of God adorned and beautified, and the reason was because she was full of the devil.

I would put you on your guard against those who wear a long face, and pretend to be so holy, and so much better than every body else--They cannot

look pleasant because they are full of the devil.  Those who have got the forgiveness of their sins nave countenances that look bright, and they will shine with the intelligence of heaven.  If you don't believe it, try yourselves and then look up into the glass.

We will have a fount that will not stink and keep us all the while cleansing it out:  and we will nave a pool wherein to baptize the sick, that they may recover.  And when we get into the fount we will show you the priesthood and the power of it:  therefore, let us be diligent in observing all the commandments of God.  Put away all fears of mobs, let not these things trouble you, for I say to the people I believe myself we shall have a healthy season, and that we shall have a summer of peace--The devils will growl without, and if they could get in here they would growl, but if they do they must look out.  And I dare venture to say, that there could not be found as healthy a looking congregation in all the United States as I see here this day.

Brethren and sisters, for the sake of your dead and for the sake of yourselves, be faithful and have no feelings in your hearts against one another, but learn to suffer wrong rather than do wrong, and by so doing we will outstrip all our enemies and conquer the evil one, for know ye not that here is Zion?  know ye not that the millennium has commenced?  We have had Zion upon the earth this fourteen years.  Peace reigns among this people which is Zion.  Union and true charity dwells with this people:  this is the most orderly and peaceable people upon the face of the whole earth.  Well, this is Zion, and it is increasing and spreading wider and wider, and this principle of Zion, which is peace, will stretch all over the earth: that is the millennium.

           The saints will increase, and continue to increase, and virtue, love, holiness and all good principles, will continue to spread and spread, and will rule the nations of the earth, and who is there that can stop its progress?  None, but it will roll until there is no room for the devil; then he will be bound and shut up.  The principles of the kingdom of God will prevail, from city to city, from nation to nation, until the devil shall be bound and there is no place for him.  They killed the prophet Joseph for fear he would spread this principle, but it will go and fill the whole earth; this is true and will come to pass as the Lord lives.  Amen.