DATE: 18 August 1844  
            Nauvoo, Illinois  
  
SOURCE:     Addresses/BY  
            HC 7:254-260  
  
  
  
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      I have many things to speak of.  It was my mind in the first place that we should have a suitable time to meditate upon all matters, and weigh them, even every subject wherein we felt interested.  When the question was asked me if the elders should continue to baptize for the dead, I replied that I had not counsel to give upon that subject at present, but thought it best to attend to other matters in the meantime.

      I have learned some things I did not know when I came home.  I discover a disposition in the sheep to scatter, now the shepherd is taken away. I do not say that it will never be right for this people to go from here or scatter abroad; but I do say wait until the time comes, or until you are counseled to do so.  The report has gone forth through the city that the Twelve have a secret understanding with those men who are going away and taking companies with them, that they shall take away all they can; and although the Twelve will blow it up in public, yet privately they wish it to go on, but if they were the last words I had to say before going into the eternal worlds I would swear by the Holy Trinity that such a report is utterly false, and there is not a word of truth in it.  There is no man who has any right to lead away one soul out of this city by the consent of the Twelve, except Lyman Wight and George Miller, they have had the privilege of taking the "Pine Company" where they pleased, but not another soul has the consent of the Twelve to go with them.  There is no man who has any liberty to lead away people into the wilderness from this church, or to lead them anywhere else, by the consent of the Twelve or the church, except in the case above named -- and I tell you in the name of Jesus Christ that if Lyman Wight and George Miller take a course contrary to our counsel and will not act in concert with us, they will be damned and go to destruction -- and if men will not stop striving to be great and exalted, and lead away parties from us, thereby weakening our hands, they will fall and not rise again---and I will destroy their influence in this church with the help of God and my brethren, I wish you to distinctly understand that the counsel of the Twelve is for every family that does not belong to the Pine Company to stay here in Nauvoo, and build up the Temple and get your endowments; do not scatter; "united we stand, divided we fall." It has been whispered about that all who go into the wilderness with Wight and Miller will get their endowments, but they cannot give an endowment in the wilderness. If we do not carry out the plan Joseph has laid down and the pattern he has given for us to work by, we cannot get any further endowment -- I want this to sink deep into your hearts that you may remember it. If you stir up the flame of dissension, will you get an endowment?  No!  You get a party to run here and another there, to divide our strength, and weaken our hands, and our enemies will flock around us and destroy us---in that case you will not get your endowments, but will sink and not rise;---go to hell and not to the bosom of Abraham. Do the people leave here because they are afraid?  Are you cowards?  Do you fear those who have power to kill the body only?  If you leave this place for fear of the mob, before God tells you to go, you will have no place of rest, but you will flee from place to place and go like the Jews, until God raises up some other people to redeem you, for if the devil scares you from this place he will scare you from all other places.  Let no man go from this place but the pine country brethren, but stay here and sow, plant, build, and put your plowshares into the prairies:  one plowshare will do more to drive off the mob than two guns.  Let us stay here where the bones of Joseph, Hyrum, Samuel, Don Carlos, and Father Smith are.  While Joseph was alive he said "If I am slain in battle or fall by the hands of my enemies I want my body brought to Nauvoo and laid in the tomb I have prepared." I would rather have the dead body of the Prophet than some men who are alive and I would rather have the clothes of the Prophet stuffed with straw for president of the United States than any man whose name is now before the nation as a candidate, for the straw would not do any harm.

      We want to build the Temple in this place, if we have to build it as the Jews built the walls of the Temple in Jerusalem, with a sword.in one hand and the trowel in the other.  How easily some men are scared! I have not been frightened yet, and I know of other men who have not.

      Do you suppose the mouth of God is closed, to be opened no more unto us?  If this were the case I would not give the ashes of a rye straw for the salvation of the church.  If God has ceased to speak by the Holy Ghost, or to give revelation, there is no salvation; but this is not the case.

      There seems to be a disposition by many to leave Nauvoo and go into the wilderness or somewhere else.  Suppose we should all go into the wilderness and then ask God to give us an endowment, and he should ask if we were driven from Nauvoo, and who drove us?  The devil drove us would be the answer; he might say, well, did you not know that I had power over the devil?  Yes, but one said I would not give a jackknife for all Nauvoo, and another said, I would not give a pair of mules for the best farm in Hancock county and I was afraid; would the Lord give an endowment to a people who would be frightened away from their duty?

      Concerning those who are wishing to lead away parties contrary to counsel, I would not wish them damned worse, than to have a company after their own liking to go with them, for they will soon quarrel among themselves; and if we should go to the wilderness and ask the Lord to give us an endowment, he might ask us, saying, Did I not give you rock in Nauvoo to build the Temple with?  Yes.  Did I not through my providence furnish men to quarry and cut the stone and prepare it for the building?  Yes. Did I not give you means to build the Temple there?  Yes.  Very well, had you died in Nauvoo, on the walls of the Temple, or in your fields, I would have taken you to myself and raised up men to officiate for you, and you would have enjoyed the highest glory.  Did you make a sacrifice by tithing? No. Well I do not wonder you did not believe I had power over the devil.

      Such may go away but I want to have the faithful stay here to build the Temple and settle the city.  We shall require the tenth of all your property as a tithing for the building of the Temple and for the poor and for the priesthood.  I want my support and living by the church hereafter, so that I can give my whole time to the business of the church. I have always supported myself heretofore in all my travels and labors, with the aid of my brethren.

      Joseph has always been preserved from his enemies, until now, but he has sealed his testimony with his blood, and his testament is now in force. While the testator lived it was all in his hands, but now he is dead. There is no remission of sins without the shedding of blood. [Heb. 9:22] You will soon wake up and know things as they are---there has been a great debt paid; there will be no need of more blood of the saints being shed at present, by and by you will understand and see that all is right.

Woe! woe!  woe!  unto all who have shed the blood of the saints and the Lord's anointed.  It must needs be that offenses come, but woe unto that man through whom they come.

      To those who want to go away from this place, I would say wait until the time comes.  I will give you the key.  North and South America is Zion and as soon as the Temple is done and you get your endowments you can go and build up stakes, but do not be in haste, wait until the Lord says go. If you have the Spirit of God you can discover right from wrong -- when all is right with the priesthood and a man rises up and speaks by the Spirit of God and just right, all will say, Amen, but when a man rises up and talks as smooth as oil, if he is not right, there will be many queries about it, it will not edify the body.  I give this as a key.  You may go all over North and South America and build up stakes when the time comes.  The whole continent of America must be organized into districts and presiding elders appointed over each district:  the time has come when all things must be set in order.

      I wish the saints to let their bickerings cease, and a strict order of things be introduced:  we shall not harbor blacklegs, counterfeiters and bogus-makers; we know all about them, they have been in our midst long enough. I advise all the saints to have no dealings with such men: let them alone. The time has come that they should be wiped out of our midst, let the ungodly dealers alone; and as to the doctors who are in our midst, who are our enemies, I say let them alone, for I have no doubt but that three to one who have died in this place had a doctor.  I say woe unto you lawyers for your whole study is to put down truth and put a lie in its stead. I want the lawyers to know that we have common sense.  They want to make you believe that when you spell "baker" it means cider or whiskey. Now let the lawyers and doctors alone and leave off bitterness and evil speaking, and you will build the Temple and get an endowment.  All ye lawyers go away and let us alone and when we get full of the devil and want you, we will send for you, we may then have a more convenient season.

      I want to say to all who profess to be saints, do not harbor blacklegs, counterfeiters and bogus-makers, wipe them away; it is time to carry out the design of our Prophet; do cease to employ doctors, lawyers, and merchants who will empty your purses and then mob you.  Store your grain in Nauvoo for you will want it here to eat while you are building the Temple. I say to the hands on the Temple, be united; and to the Temple Committee, do not turn away any person because he is an Englishman, Scotchman, Irishman or of any other nation; but employ every man you can and build the Temple and your homes.  I would rather pay out every cent I have to build up this place and get an endowment, if I were driven the next minute without anything to take with me.  As to the doctors, let them go. I can prove that a doctor in this place doctored a woman that was in the family way, and did not know it until she was delivered, and both woman and child died, and if you will employ them, you will all die.

      There is a distinction between the law of the land and the law of the church. You have the privilege of keeping all shops that do not come in contact with the law of the state, county, or city; so I will evade the law of the land, says the dealer, and give away whiskey and sell a little tobacco or something else and charge enough for both; but the law of the church will reach such men and if they are members they should be cut off. I dreamed that I saw a fruit tree in which I went in search of fruit. I soon discovered that some of the main branches on the top were dead. It seemed to me necessary to cut off the dead branches in order to save the tree so I told some person to help me cut them off.  The person stepped on to a large green limb and was afraid it would break so I put my shoulder under it and held it up till the dead branch was cut off, the green limb cracked but did not break.  After the dry limbs were cut off the wounds healed up and the tree grew finely.

      Let us cut off the dead branches of the church that good fruit may grow and a voice will soon be heard, go and build up Zion and the Temple of the Lord.

      The seventies will be organized and a presidency of seven men will be chosen out of the first quorum to preside over the first ten quorums.