

Enjoyment of Liberty Under the Kingdom of God

Remarks by President Daniel H. Wells, made in the Bowery, Great Salt Lake City, October 26, 1862.

The Gospel of salvation is interesting to me, to you, and should be to all the world, for by it we are to be judged. This test will be put to all. The principles of life and salvation the Gospel offers to us, which if we neglect will be brought up against us in a day to come. The light of truth has been revealed by the Savior, and through the mercy of the Lord he has sent forth his servants to proclaim this Gospel to all nations. What for? To injure them? No; but to bless them. The time has come in this age of the world when God has set himself to take the rule and the power of the earth into his own hands. He has sent forth Joseph, and Hyrum, and Brigham, and Heber, and Jedediah, and Willard, and Daniel, and the Twelve Apostles and the other authorities of the Holy Priesthood which is established upon the earth. The communication has been opened up between the heavens and the earth. He has sent forth a message to all nations, saying, "Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment has come." It has been proclaimed to the world by faithful men for many years—it has been sounded in the by-ways and highways, in city and hamlet, and in the nooks and corners of the earth; and, in a coming day the people will be judged by it, because it has been sent forth by the direct counsel of Heaven.

It is our duty to sustain the principles of truth, virtue, and integrity, and every principle that has been revealed from the Almighty to his children on the earth. If it is the duty of one man to do this, it is the duty of every man to do the same; and every man will be found wanting unless he obeys this Heavenly message. How shall we do it when we are compassed about by all the powers of earth and hell to overcome, overthrow and destroy us? By cleaving to the Lord of hosts, who is mighty to save, and by cleaving to those holy principles of life and power which he has revealed. The more the floods of iniquity surge up against us, the closer let us cling to those principles, for they will bear us off victoriously to exaltation and glory in this world and in the worlds to come. The same principles have exalted our Father and our God to his present state of glory and power, and they will exalt you and me and all who will abide them in the scale of human existence and eternal progression. They are the same principles which have been revealed in the latter days for the salvation of mankind, and for their exaltation to the presence of God the Father in heaven. They have always existed, and always will continue to exist. They will abide after the refuge of lies has been swept away. It is not now as it has been in days and years gone by. The kingdom is now established; it is upon the earth never again to be prevailed against or to be overcome by sin and iniquity.

All men have their volition, and are responsible to God alone for it. As the kingdom of God grows and becomes mighty upon the earth, laws will be given suited to the condition of the children of men, in their respective governments and nationalities, according to their views and principles. The supreme law of the world will be the law of God, and all people will choose to obey or disobey as they list. All will be governed according to their circumstances and the principles which will be revealed from time to time for their best good. This is not the work of a day, but of eternity—it is without beginning of days or end of years.

I feel gratified that I live in this day and age of the world; I am thankful for this privilege. "Would you not have preferred to live in the days of Jesus?" says one. No, nor in the days of Moses, nor in the days of Noah. Had I lived in Noah's days I might have been drowned in the great flood. I prefer to live now—today—in the days of Brigham and Heber, and in the days of the great Prophet Joseph and Hyrum, although they did not stay long with us. They are not far away from us, neither is the Lord. Brigham is here, Heber and Daniel are here, and the Twelve Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ are here, and the organization of the Church and kingdom of God is here, with the Holy Priesthood which is after the order of the Son of God; and this is the great chain which opens up a communication between the heavens and the earth, and in it there is safety; and through it truth will prevail over the face of the whole earth, and by its power the kingdom of God will be established upon the earth no more to be prevailed against. What matters it to us who speaks in anger against it? The truth is all the same, no matter who walks it under their feet. The eternal principles of salvation and exaltation are the same, no matter who does despite to them.

In trying to injure the truth, and impede it in its progress, they only injure themselves, and will bring upon

themselves swift destruction and a righteous judgment according as it shall be ordered by our Father in heaven. God is merciful and forbearing. Can we forbear as well as he can? We can, although we are far from being as good as he is. If he can forbear many years with a man who will not say grace over his meat, or bend his knee to his God in acknowledgment of his mercy, we surely can bear a little with the infirmities of our brethren, and the ignorance of the ungodly world.

As a people and community we have borne much; and all we have ever asked of any people or government has been our rights in common with the rest of mankind; but these they seek to withhold from us, which they have no right to do, hence they are under condemnation, and we shall go free. We believe and worship as we choose, and live under a Government that guarantees unto us that right. Inasmuch as they do not give us those rights, they violate one of the holiest and most sacred provisions of the Constitution of our country, and destruction will be the consequence. The fathers of the revolution fought and bled to secure this holy right to their children so long as the world should last or the Government continue. We are therefore bold in declaring our principles, and in defending our rights. There are countries in the world where imprisonment would be the penalty of the free expression of principles and rights; but they do not live under and enjoy the blessings of the Constitution which we live under. Yet even in this free country some have sought to deprive us of the free enjoyment of the privileges granted unto us in the Constitution of our country, and they will have to pay the penalty for so doing, for they trample under foot the Constitution that grants to them their own liberties, and thus subvert their own liberties, which it becomes them as well as us to preserve inviolate. It becomes us to cleave to God and our holy religion, trusting in him because in him there is power—in him there is strength; and if we remain faithful, we shall come off victorious, and walk under our feet every principle that is calculated to destroy, and rear the standard of truth and righteousness in the world in spite of hell and all the hosts thereof. Let us be encouraged, and go steadily on in the performance of our duties, cultivating the earth, and bringing from the elements all we need for our sustenance that we may be free and independent, so far as we can, by depending on our own resources with which the Lord has abundantly blessed us. We are greatly blessed in that the Lord has planted our feet in these quiet valleys from those who sought our destruction; while he has brought an overwhelming destruction on them, he has brought safety to us. We can see his wisdom, and his mighty hand manifested in this. Let us henceforth put our trust in that arm which has been so prominently made bare in saving the righteous. May God add his blessing. Amen.