

Inspiration—Importance of Heeding the Revelations of God, Etc.

A Discourse by President Heber C. Kimball, Delivered in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, Sunday, September 11, 1859.

Brethren and Sisters—I want to talk a little to you from actual duty. There are things upon my mind, not only now, but at many times, that trouble me. I am satisfied that I am pretty faithful in regard to warning this people to keep the commandments of God. All things that are good are for us to do according to the dictations of the Holy Ghost.

Brother Pratt was telling about the ten commandments, which are all very good. But I believe that there are at least as many commandments as there are words in the English language. Jesus and his disciples both said—“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

You believe in the living oracles of God that are appointed to communicate to us daily and hourly. These oracles are clothed upon with the holy Priesthood, which is given to enable us to receive revelations to guide and lead us aright every day.

We are instructed in the Scriptures to contend for that faith which was once delivered to the Saints, and which inspired them with dreams and visions, tongues and the interpretation thereof. Pray, tell me who is capable of interpreting an unknown tongue without inspiration? It cannot be done, except the person be dictated by the Holy Ghost. How can I discern that a man is wrong, or that he is corrupt, except I have the Spirit of revelation? I cannot do it. How can President Young discern that there is an evil designed against him, unless he has the Spirit of revelation? He cannot know it beforehand, except it is revealed to him.

Now, I assuredly know it to be true that angels are ministering spirits to minister to men who are heirs of salvation.

Now, God says, in another part of his word, that he will reason with us. But how will he do this, unless we are submissive like clay in the hands of the potter? He says he will do it before the world, the philosophers, the kings, and the nobles. He says he will do it before all these, if we will be subject to him. We have all been to see a theatrical performance; but you don't see it, except you look. Well, a prompter is there; for sometimes the performers forget their pieces: then the prompter is ready to help them out, as he stands behind the veil. Just so it is with angels. They are not in sight; we do not see them; but in the very hour that we need them they are here as the ministers of the covenant to inspire and guide us aright. I know this, gentlemen, just as well as I know that I am here today: I know it by the senses that God has given me.

I have been led to touch upon this thing by the dictation of the Holy Spirit; but there are other things essential to our salvation.

Yes, I feel many times to weep and am sorrowful, and I can hardly sleep at night; and if I had Gabriel's trump, I would speak to the Saints of all nations, and I would say, Gather! gather! and do not wait even for a handcart to be made. I feel this in my soul. Do the world believe it? Do the Latter-day Saints believe it? No. Many of them are lifeless, and have no energy at all.

Here is brother N. V. Jones: he expects to start on a foreign mission in a few days, and I believe he never felt so well in his life. He is going to wake up the people in Europe.

There are a great many of the Saints coming here this year—many of those men that have never gathered with us—men that have been wandering about in the States, and that have almost entirely lost the Spirit of the Lord; and there are some that have previously turned away—apostatized. They are coming back, and that one circumstance makes me think there is trouble near at hand. I never knew it to fail yet.

When I get up to speak here, I do not do it for the sake of hearing myself talk or to please myself, but to do my duty and please God, for I am his servant. I wish to exhort you to be faithful—to be diligent and watchful. There is nothing to prevent your living near to God and having the light of revelation constantly within you. If your eyes

were single to the glory of God, you would see things as they are—you would know and understand your duty.

When I look through this Territory and see what there is in existence, and when I consider that it was given through Joseph Smith, by revelation, that we should let our garments be the workmanship of our own hands, and that we should take care of our grain, I feel sorrowful. You may take the people north of this city, in Davis County, in Ogden and Box Elder, and they have not got wheat enough to last them till next harvest, if they do not sell another bushel. If you were keeping the commandments, you would not sell a particle.

When the pioneers came here, President Young counseled the brethren respecting laying up their grain against a time of famine and sorrow. They were very short of provisions in Ogden last season: some of them had not a particle of breadstuff, and I had to lend the people flour. Bishop West told me that if I did not, the people would suffer much; and it is just so in Box Elder and Davis counties; and that is what is bearing so heavily upon my mind; and you will see sorrow yet, if you neglect the counsel of God through his servants. I fear you will.

Here is an army—probably 6,000 or 7,000, with the employees and attachees; and they have got to be fed. I have no objection to their having wheat and flour; but they cannot have mine, while my brethren may be without bread. Do you hear it? Listen, all ye ends of the earth! I will give you enough to keep you alive, gentlemen, just as you do when men start on the Plains. The Scriptures say—“He that does not provide for his own household has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”

Who are my brethren and sisters? You that have obeyed the same Gospel, received the same Holy Spirit and the same Priesthood that I have. You are connected with me by that Priesthood; you are connected with God; I am connected with you; I am also connected with President Young, in holding the keys and the Priesthood of the Almighty. And, O ye Elders of Israel and Saints of latter days, why do you not wake to these things? What do you suppose you will do when you have sold all your bread? Will gold or silver keep you alive? Will whiskey keep you alive? Or will any other liquor? Bread is the staff of life which God has spoken of in his word. Then why do you expend it for those things that you can do without, or that your wives and daughters can make? Will you still do it? I know we do it, and I cannot help or avoid it in my family. I presume it costs me about as much to supply my family and those that labor for me with coffee, tea, and sugar as most men in this community.

I have got considerable stock also; and all you that want my stock, make it known. I have many mules, horses, and cattle; and you can have them all, if you will furnish me the wheat. But if you do this, you will see the day when you will be sorry. I say to the President of this Stake of Zion, brother Daniel Spencer, and also to the Apostles, and to all Saints, Wake up, and lay up your grain, and let your finery go where it belongs; for that is where it will go, and you cannot avoid it.

How many friends am I going to get for telling these things? The friendship of every good Saint, and of God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ; and the angels will sustain me when I speak in the name of the Father and the Son, and by their authority. There are more in heaven for us than there are anywhere else against us; and there are millions more of men and women in heaven saved than there are people on the earth.

I have now done my duty. I have told of these things for years. Some inquire, “Why don’t President Young say more about them?” Simply because he has spoken and reiterated these things in your ears till he is ashamed. Do you think our enemies will get his wheat? No, they will not. If they were to go to him tomorrow, and offer him ten dollars per bushel, they would not get it. Neither will they get mine. But I will tell you what I have done: I have stepped forward and handed men bread when they wanted to leave the Church. But I would not do that now.

This is an important day in which we are living.

You may make what you please of this kind of preaching: it is the Gospel of salvation, and it has brought us into the fold of Christ; and let us take care of the sheep that are in the fold. We are here in the tops of the mountains, and here is where we shall stay, and all hell cannot get us out until the Lord God says, “Come out!” Now you may set your hearts at rest.

I am astonished, when I look upon the people of the United States, that they are not more friendly to us. They stand ready to debauch and destroy this people. They want the money—the gold and the silver, that the people have, and which you know is the god of this world; but I am not going to employ them. If I cannot raise more than five hundred dollars, I will send one of my boys; and if he has not money enough to purchase a load of goods, my team can live upon the Plains and haul part of a load for somebody else; for I am determined to transport my own goods, unless I can buy them as cheap here. Uncle Sam's troops drove our men off the road from the stations they had located, when we calculated on running a daily express from here to the States and importing our own goods. Do you think I fear the world? Why should I? I have done nothing to be afraid of; and all the feelings that the wicked can have arise on account of our keeping their troops back at Bridger till they got cooled off; and we did that hand-somely. And then, when they came in, they were very tame; and they would not have been otherwise, if it had not been for some of our federal officials. The army has been so much more gentlemanly than some of those officials that have come to execute the law, that I am ashamed; and I give the army the credit for that much.

"Well, now," says one, "you had better hold your tongue, Mr. Kimball." I shall when I get ready. I have no feelings of hardness, nor disposition to hurt anyone. Some seem to have a spite against the gamblers; but, bless you, they are some of the best of the camp followers. I am ashamed of the acts of some of you Elders of the Church. You ought to be had in remembrance in the courts of heaven. Were they sent here to lead you into such practices? What were those judges sent here for? Not to teach this people, but to bring up those murderers and handle them, and to send all the thieves to prison, and punish them for their crimes. This is what you are sent for, you judges, and you marshals, and all the rest of you officials; and why don't you do your duty? Now I wish there was a lawyer here to tell me whether I have committed treason or not!

For instance, here is Dr. Bernhisel—just as good a man as ever lived upon the earth. We have sent him four times to Washington. Did he go as our master? No; but he went as our servant to importune the Government of the United States for our rights. Bless you, the rights we ask are ours: they are mine: our fathers fought for them! Well, he went as our servant, and not as our master; and these judges are sent here by James Buchanan; and if they had done their duty, they would have had scores of you transgressors of the law in prison, and some on the scaffold. They should make you amenable to the laws of this Territory as well as those of the United States.

Gentlemen officials, you came to execute our laws. This is the way, as Mr. Hord said to me yesterday—"I am of your opinion, Mr. Kimball, when a man is among the Romans, he should do as the Romans do. When we go to the polls, go with the voice of the people." "Yes," said I; "and when we go to your States and Territories, we should do the same, and be subject to your laws, just as you should be subject to our laws; and so should all ministers that are sent to preach and administer justice and righteousness."

Now, have I committed treason this afternoon? No, gentlemen, I have not. What do they want to kill us for? They are from the same father. Now, we want to obey the laws of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and get the Spirit of God; and because of this they are our enemies. It is the same as it was with the family of Jacob, and he was the friend of God; and because Joseph was in favor with God and with his father, his brethren hated him. It was particularly so with Joseph. His own brothers hated him; but the Lord honored him, and he lived to see his father and brethren bow down to him; and the king of Egypt honored him, and bowed to his wisdom. And so the nations will bow to this kingdom, sooner or later, and all hell cannot help it. Then, gentlemen, why don't you make peace? You will be glad to make peace, for the wicked will see earthquakes, pestilence, and famine; for they have caused thousands of men, women, and children to go to premature graves. And Thomas H. Benton said, "Give them hell, and sweep them off the earth." When we were in our wagons, Senator Benton advocated this.

I say to the Saints, Live your religion, stop your murmuring, take care of your crops, lay up your grain. I shall do it.

Now, you women, go to work, as far as it is in your power to do it, and do not be constantly teasing your husbands to dispose of their grain. What better are you than I? I came here with good homemade calfskin boots on, and why can't you be contented with homemade clothes as well as I? You are no better than I am, and I know you can do these things.

I try to carry out this counsel that I am giving to you; and not many years will pass away before you will see the result of these things, and you that are wise will go to work and act as though you believed what I say. My sorrow is that trouble will come upon you unawares, in consequence of your neglect of these counsels. I have no objections to your selling your grain, but I want you to sell it to your brethren, and not to those that will cut your throats. If you do not want to sustain me, sustain one another.

How do you look, you who hold the Priesthood, going through the streets drunk, and in company with those who are constantly planning for the destruction of this people? I mean you that are guilty of these offenses. Those that are not guilty know that my remarks are not for them.

God bless the righteous—the peacemaker! and God bless the honorable man that comes here and does unto us as he wishes us to do unto him. Come to me, ye men that do not profess to believe “Mormonism:” I am the lad to make you comfortable and happy. But let me live, do good, and work righteousness. I will do this, whether you are willing or not, God helping me.

I say, Peace be upon the righteous, and upon every man that is willing to do as he would like to be done by! But if you desire this blessing, don’t come here and interfere with our rights, when you are sent by the Government to see that murderers and robbers are brought to justice, and dealt with according to the laws. I want you to understand this now, for I am a lawyer, and I understand as much about it as any of you.

God bless you, in the name of Jesus Christ! Amen.

[After resuming his seat, President Kimball again arose and said]—I just want to say a few words to the Elders of Israel, and to the daughters of Zion. If you wish to manifest your faith, go and prove that you have faith by your works; for I would not give a dime for all the faith there is without works. Let each man go to with his might, and lay up his grain, and not preach about that which he is not doing himself. This is my religion. If you follow my counsel, God will bless you and increase you in the comforts of life; and let the world know it. This is all I have to say at present.