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RISE OF THE REORGANIZED CHURCH.

BY PRES. W. W. BLAIR.

I would have been pleased to have had the Inspired Translation of the Holy Scriptures, but it doesn't seem to be present. I suppose it will be no news to many of my hearers tonight when I say that we have an Inspired translation, in other words, a corrected and revised edition of the Bible; portions of it translated, but many portions of it simply revised and corrected; and while I mention this, I may go still farther and say from my own personal knowledge that this version is presented to the

church as it came from the manuscripts found in the hands of Emma, the widow of Joseph the Seer. I was one of those who made application to her in the Spring of '66, when we obtained the manuscript, and when it was carefully and religiously prepared. It so chanced in the providence of God, that I went with it to Philadelphia and supervised its publication, read the proof sheets, retaining a copy of the original always with me so there could be no possible corruption of the text, and in December, 1867 it was placed upon the market, distributed to the church, and it has been on sale ever since. Thousands of copies of it have been scattered abroad in various parts of the world, Europe as well as America. I mention this that you may know from one who has had immediate contact with it, just how it has happened that you have the Inspired Translation. And while upon that point I may mention that in section 42 of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, a revelation given to

the church February 9th, 1831, the Lord speaking by his servant, Joseph the Prophet, declared concerning this New Translation, that it should be preserved in safety, and that when the church received it in full it should be taught to all nations, kindreds, tongues and people. In the providence of God, it fell into the hands of the Reorganized Church, and I can assure my hearers tonight that the greatest fidelity was observed in preserving the text without change, precisely as we found it in the manuscript delivered to us from Emma, the widow of Joseph the Seer.

I read you now, as a specimen of that book, the 7th chapter of the book of Matthew, the gospel or the testimony according to St. Matthew:

“Now, these are the words which Jesus taught his disciples that they should say unto the people: Judge not unrighteously, that ye be not judged; but judge righteous judgment. For with what judgment ye

shall judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again. And again, ye shall say unto them, why is it that thou beholdest the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye, and canst not behold a beam in thine own eye? And Jesus said unto his disciples, Beholdest thou the Scribes and the Pharisees, and the Priests and the Levites? They teach in their synagogues but do not observe the law, nor the commandments; and all have gone out of the way and are under sin."

You discover these words are very different from King James' Version:

"Go thou and say unto them, why teach ye men the law and the commandments, when ye yourselves are the children of corruption? Say unto them, Ye hypocrites, first cast out the beam out of thine own eyes; and then shalt thou see clearly

to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. Go ye into the world, saying unto all, repent for the kingdom of heaven has come nigh unto you; and the mysteries of the kingdom ye shall keep within yourselves; for it is not meet to give that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls unto swine, lest they trample them under their feet. For the world cannot receive that which ye yourselves are not able to bear; wherefore ye shall not give your pearls unto them, lest they turn again and rend you. Say unto them, Ask of God. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth, and he that seeketh, findeth, and unto him that knocketh it shall be opened. And then said his disciples unto him, They will say unto us, We ourselves are righteous, and need not that any man should teach us. God, we know, heard Moses and some of the prophets, but us he will not hear. And they

will say, We have the law for our salvation and that is sufficient for us. Then Jesus answered and said unto his disciples, Then shall ye say unto them, What man among you having a son and he shall be standing out and shall say, Father open thy house that I may come in and sup with thee, will not say, Come in, my son, for mine is thine, and thine is mine? Or what man is there among you, who if his son ask bread, will give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him? Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets. Repent therefore, and enter ye in at the straight gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be who go in thereat. Because straight is the gate and narrow

is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. And again, beware of false prophets that come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits; for do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? Even so, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

I want to talk to you tonight something about prophets. The Bible assures us that God never had a people from the morning of time who were his especial and peculiar people but what they had inspired men and women among them, prophets, seers, revelators, translators and the like. All the Bible everywhere bears witness to this proposition; and the same Bible

likewise, both the Old Testament and the New, declare that in the latter days God will have an inspirational people; God will reveal himself from the heavens by angel messengers and by the direct office-work of the Holy Spirit, and as a consequence, there will be prophets and inspired people in the land, prior to the second advent of Jesus Christ our Lord, or the end of the world. I am not going to stop to prove this, but I assert it to be a fact, and you will, on examination of the subject, find the statement amply sustained by the facts of Scripture, the testimony of Holy Writ.

Now, we are admonished here by our Lord, and again the people of God are admonished, "Beware of false prophets." For my part I take that to myself, I want to be careful in regard to this matter, to take the admonition and the warning of Jesus Christ, put it into faithful practice and profit by it both for myself and likewise for the good of others, and we need to

examine the grounds upon which we are building, and to do it with candor; with thoroughness; and see whether or not we are building substantially; building in the light of God; building in that manner that shall stand and endure all the trials that shall be brought to bear upon us. We need to be honest with our neighbors and our fellowmen, and above all things to be honest with God. Stand for the right; stand for the truth; doing it in meekness and in gentleness, and be candid and honest as we expect to be judged in the day of the Almighty.

We believe in prophets. Indeed we believe that all God's people and his servants and his handmaidens, those that are worthy the name of being his sons and his daughters, will have measures of that Holy Spirit of promise, and that that will consequently make them to be prophets and prophetesses; but in a more direct sense we believe that God will have a ministry in these latter days, who will be richly en-

dowed with the office work of the Holy Spirit, each one in his place, and they will be prophets; and besides that, we believe and we so teach that God will place at the head of his church one like unto Moses, having the keys of authority and of power, and that that man upheld and sustained by the confidence and faith of God's people, will be enlightened by the power of the Holy Spirit, and will be a prophet of God in the most eminent sense of that term; made like unto Moses, like unto Alma of Book of Mormon times, and scores and scores of others that I might mention in this connection; and that that man who stands at the head of God's work occupies an important position in reference to the work of the Lord as an elder and as a teacher; as a counsellor and a director according to the divine purpose.

Now, I want to talk to you plainly, and bear my testimony in regard to some of these matters as we pass along; and I may remind you that God's work has always been filled up

by the testimonies that his servants have borne of the work from time to time; God's servants and God's handmaidens from the earliest period of time, right along down the centuries until now, whenever God separated a ministry, that ministry have been capable of faithfully bearing testimony; honest, truthful, essential testimony to the dealings of the infinite God. I was in Washington not long ago; I heard that celebrated minister, Mr. Talmage, a man of international fame, bear testimony in regard to what he knew about the dealings of God, there in the presence of assembled thousands in the First Presbyterian Church of Washington; and do you know, when he got through with his wonderful testimony, he absolutely did not bring one scintilla of truth that he knew anything about God any farther than a man might know that had experienced a gladness of heart, a joy of spirit, and was prospered in the ordinary affairs of life. He testified to these things, and I did not doubt it, but

that was the best and the most that the man could say. I thought right then, and I said to Bishop Kelley afterwards, as we were journeying down to our hotel, "Oh, I wish that there could have been upon that platform some one of our experienced men or women, some even of our youth that have received the baptism of God's Spirit that they could have testified, there, in the presence of that vast assembly, something that was tangible, sensible and reliable in regard to the workings of God." Joseph the Seer tells us in his writings that God had never conducted a work among the children of men, but he did it by testimony—the testimony of his faithful servants—and that no one can be a minister of Jesus Christ unless he has the testimony of Jesus Christ; unless he has had actual experience in regard to it. Now, I mention some of this in order that you may excuse me if you please if I bear some humble testimony with regard to this matter of prophets in the latter days.

I heard this gospel when I was an infidel, in the northern part of Illinois, near the city of Amboy, and I went to hear out of curiosity. A morbid curiosity led me to hear some Latter Day Saints scattered through that country, preach; I did not listen a great while until I saw a consistency in their teachings vastly superior to anything I had ever listened to before. In process of time I became convinced that they preached the truth and that the doctrine that they presented was indeed of God. I did not stop to confer with flesh and blood, even those that were nearest and dearest to me, but I immediately went to the minister when the supreme moment had arrived, when my heart was convicted that it was true, and I told the minister that I wanted to be baptized, and if there had been no one else under the starry canopy that would have been baptized, I certainly should have gone right along. And I embraced the gospel, was baptized by William Smith, a brother of the Prophet Joseph, the

Seer, and I bear you witness that within a few days after that, in answer to ardent, earnest prayer, I received the baptism of God's Holy Spirit after the order that you find recorded in the New Testament and in the Book of Mormon; and I knew in all my conscious nature that the doctrine I had embraced was divine, and I felt that I had become a new creature in Christ Jesus. All conditions had passed away that once had been familiar and of force to me, and life took on a meaning and a consistency and a significance that I never knew anything about before; I never dreamed of before. By and by trials came, darkness came, and I drifted out. I was then engaged in the affairs of the world to be sure, but I became more deeply immersed in the affairs at large and continued in that until 1855; then my heart was deeply stirred again in regard to the subject of religion. I could not go with our friends the Strangites, with the Baneemyites or Charles B. Thompson; I could not

go with the people of Utah, but still I knew that the gospel was true. I had received evidence from God that the Gospel was indeed divine; what it claimed to be—the power of God unto salvation, and I finally said to my companion who united with the church the day after I did, in 1855, I said to her, “We know this gospel is true, we will endeavor to serve God, let other people do what they will.” And it pleased her. By and by two men came to me just as we had opened up a business place out in Paw Paw, and immediately my attention was drawn to them, and the impression was clear that they were Mormon preachers, for in those days we did not see any Mormon preachers, unless it was occasionally Father John E. Page, Father Landers or some of those old members of the church; but these were striplings, comparatively, and I stepped down to where they were to learn who they were. I finally took them to my home. On journeying down I inquired what brought them into the country.

They told me they were out to see and visit the Latter Day Saints, (this was in November 1856) to tell them that God had revealed it to them in the little branches up north in the edge of Wisconsin and the northern part of Illinois, that the time was near at hand when God would call Joseph, the son of Joseph, to stand in the father's place at the head of the Church of Christ. It sounded to me like idle tales; I had got bewildered; I knew there was divinity in the Latter Day Work, I knew the gospel of Jesus Christ was true, but I became bewildered in regard to matters of church government and the like, and when I heard this, it had not the least particle of weight upon my mind further than to inspire me with the zeal to learn what they had to say; all they knew in regard to the matter. I took them home and prepared a room where we could be by ourselves away from the family; and do you know, we got to reading and talking, and we continued there until three o'clock

the next morning. I mention this to show you that we were in what the westerners call "dead earnest" about it; that we were in downright earnestness over the matter. The next day, being Sunday, after breakfast we repaired to the parlor; we had our usual season of prayer, and then we began reading and examining and arguing out of the books of the church, but all to no effect. It did not have a particle of weight in my mind. I was glad to see the zeal of the young men, but I believed them to be in error, and I knew I was not in the right; I was lost and I thought they were. But it was not long before one of those young men, and it was the youngest one, the one that had the least education; the least experience; the youngest in years likewise—that young man rose up, and taking the Book of Mormon off the stand, in an instant he began trembling like a leaf, his face was as white as a lily, the tears began coursing down his cheeks, and as though he read it out of the Book of Mormon, he

says: "I, the Lord, will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy, and I will forgive whom I will forgive." There is no such passage in the Book of Mormon, but immediately that he opened his mouth to speak these words, the Holy Spirit came with a rushing mighty power and seemed to fill the entire room where we were; and I bear witness to you tonight, before God, that my entire being was filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, the same Spirit of God that bore witness to me that the gospel of Jesus Christ was true. As a matter of course, my doubts began to be swept away; then I saw things in an entirely different light. I had now direct testimony from the Almighty in regard to this all-important matter, and while these young men were there they blessed my family. My wife had been an invalid for the past sixteen months, and in twenty-four hours from that, Mrs. Blair was as well a woman as she ever was, all her difficulties were removed. The little daughter that had been likewise a weakly,

puny child, so that we despaired of its life, began to mend and is now one of the most promising, vigorous women of Southern Iowa. I mention this to show you how the power of the living God attended the ministrations of these young men when they came to me the latter part of November, 1856.

Now I want to state still further in this connection; I was then living at Paw Paw, and had some business interests at Earlville, which I was going to see about, and intended to take these young men with me; but they had gone, to go out and visit my relatives, and I went alone to where we had formerly lived, and where I received the gospel in 1855. While there I learned that a brother, one of the old stock of Latter Day Saints, who united with the church down at Jamestown, in the State of New York, in the early day, a Bro. Barrett, who was given up to die with bronchial consumption; was so far gone that his limbs were swollen and the doctors told him that he might live a few

weeks, but might die at any time, and these young men on their journey to my house had stopped at this Bro. Barretts. They had been commanded by revelation to stop and visit at Binghamton, and call upon William Smith and then upon Daniel Razie, and then on Bro. Jonathan Barrett; and when they came to see poor Bro. Barrett stretched upon his bed of death, it shook their faith, for they thought to have found him a rugged old man, and they were greatly tried over it. They told the family what their mission work was, and finally as they started to go away, Bro. Barrett said, "Brethren, you call on me tomorrow morning as you pass, for it is probably the last time I shall see you in the flesh. They called in the morning, and he called his family together and said: "Now, I want you to pray that God may spare my family from being scattered, and that he will bless me in the hour of death, that I may be comforted from above, and that my faith may

triumph and that I may be received into everlasting life." They bowed with the family in prayer, and immediately after they had entered in prayer, the Holy Spirit fell upon them and shone upon this youngest one, as he raised on his feet and told that dying man that he should live and not die, and that God would raise him up and add many years to his life, and that he should rear his family. Well, God did raise him up. I saw him after this, and Bro. Joseph has seen him after he became a sound and well man, and he lived for some fourteen years afterwards. I mention these facts that you may know that the power of the Infinite God was with these young men; that they were led by the inspiration of the Almighty, and God confirmed their labors in the most extraordinary manner. I united with the church. This young man I spoke of, who read apparently from the Book of Mormon, proceeded to speak in prophecy, and told me what my feelings had been; what my condi-

tion had been. He was well nigh a total stranger to me, yet he told me that I would be released from my business, and that I would become associated with the work; pointed out my mission work, and I was commanded of God to bear witness to this wonderful manifestation. From that time on I have been what the world calls a Josephite, Latter Day Saint. We used to pray, and fast and pray, and the spirit of prophecy was in the midst of the people; and every now and again God would say to us by the Holy Spirit to fear not; that the time would come when Joseph would be called to the church. We had no association with him; no correspondence with him; nothing of the kind. He and his were strangers entirely to the people who lived up in our region of the country, and so we waited and waited on, anxiously, and yet we kept putting it off, thinking that perhaps it would be in three or four years or such a matter. Presently I received a letter—I have it

now in my possession at home—from Father Zenas H. Gurley, who resided in Blanchardsville, Wisconsin, and he wrote me: “Bro. Blair, lift up your heart and rejoice for God has revealed it to us that the year 1860 will not pass away until he shall have his servant Joseph to stand at the head of the church.”

That was almost too good news to believe. We had been so anxiously waiting for it. Now, by and by, not long after that, in our little branch, the Holy Spirit was manifest in power upon one occasion through the gifts, and we were told that Joseph would come to the next conference, the conference to be held at Amboy, on the 6th of April. Not long afterward I received a call by one of our brethren from down on Fox River; he said that father Marks, William Marks, a man who was the president of the high council of Nauvoo, and a bosom companion of Joseph, the Seer, and one of the most trusted men of the church at that time; that he had received a letter from

Joseph, and Joseph requested him to come to Nauvoo as he wished to counsel with him, and likewise he should bring with him such a minister as he saw fit. Of course I went and we had an interview at Nauvoo with Joseph and his mother, and the family; and it was in regard to doctrine; it was in regard to the spiritual concerns of the church; it was in reference to how we looked upon the work that had been done by his father; of how we received that work. We told him we had accepted the work just as his father left it, according to the teaching as found in the sacred books of the church; that was the ground that we occupied at that time and which had been publicly proclaimed by us time and again in the little conferences we had held.

When the 6th of April came, Joseph came with his mother, and the evening before the Conference held its session, we had a prayer meeting out at Bro. Stephen Stone's, a mile and a half from the city of

Amboy, and Sr. Emma Smith was there, and Joseph was there. There Emma stood in the midst of a large concourse of people and bore her testimony to the truth of the latter day work, and the prophetic mission of her husband. She said: "We have known that this time would come, when Joseph would be called to the church, for the last sixteen years and more, but we have never known how soon it would come until of late." And then she went on to bear her testimony in regard to the latter day work and the prophetic mission of her husband. Next day, the 6th of April, when the Conference was organized, Joseph came forward, made an address to the church, and of which a garbled report was written and published in the Amboy Times. We had no short hand reporter there, but a gentleman of the Times took it down in long hand as best he could, and published it; and we re-published it with no changes, although it is in some sense a very meagre report of

the discourse. He occupied perhaps more than an hour in the delivery of that discourse, and I can read it as reported in less than ten minutes. I went out in 1859 on my first mission in the church as an active missionary, and was led and prompted to it by the office work of God's Holy Spirit. I went all through the state of Wisconsin; visited various places; was made to pass by many of the Strangites; but we kept on the even tenor of our way, and God blessed our labors mightily; and we planted the seed all through that region where afterwards there were large flourishing branches and districts of the church. Then we had a conference at Amboy in the month of June, and there it was arranged for myself and E. C. Briggs to pass up around Omaha and Council Bluffs. We started out with our satchels in our hands. I left a fine horse and carriage at home, but I thought in those days if I could not go just as humbly as a minister ever went, I had better

stay at home; I needed to be humble, and I suppose that is one reason why God's Spirit led me into this condition. We came down through the state of Illinois, riding where we could get rides, going afoot where it was necessary, preaching all the way, distributing tracts, and all along that line we have churches and districts organized today. Then came on to Burlington, Fort Madison and Montrose and to Vincennes, Farmington and Keosauqua, and then started westward, led to do it by the inspiration of God's Spirit, and this right in the heat of summer and through an entirely new country. We planted the work all along wherever we could find settlements and people that would hear. We went among all classes. We hunted up a good many of the old struggling Latter Day Saints, and found, out about Garden Grove, a good many of them; and there we met some of the old mob element who threatened to lynch us if we didn't leave the country straightway. God man-

fested himself in that region of the country in extraordinary power. I remember Bro. Morey, who was the Temple Keeper at Kirtland, in the days of Joseph the Seer. His daughter had been lying for weeks and months an invalid. We preached in his house, a double house, she was lying in one part of the house while we occupied a middle place, and at the close of the exercises she desired of her father that we might administer to her. We of course said, "Yes, if they had faith to believe, all right." We administered to that girl that night, (a young lady about eighteen or nineteen years of age) expecting to start the next day; but in the morning when I was down at a neighbors, and we were just ready to start in to breakfast, in came Mrs. Cowan, a married lady, daughter of Father Morey, and immediately the question was propounded by a step-daughter staying where I had stopped, she saying in a sneering way, "How is Helen this morning?" The lady says,

“Why, she is well, she rose up this morning, walked up to David’s and back (about eighty rods) before breakfast.” The young woman, a school mistress, got her bonnet and away she flew into the cornfield, and when we were just through with breakfast, here returned the young lady who had been whipped; this woman came to say that that young lady, to whom we administered, desired to be baptized before we left. So we held a meeting there, and the result was that ten were baptized, and when we came to confirm one of them, that same young lady, a school teacher that had lately come on from the east in order that her life might be lengthened out, for it was supposed she had the consumption, when Elder Briggs confirmed her he told her in the name of the Lord that she should be healed every whit; and I bear you witness that when I returned in the following September she was as fresh and rosy and healthy looking a woman as I would wish to see. I mention this to

show how it was that when we were out bearing this testimony that God would personally endorse to the church,—for this was in 1859 mark you,—that Joseph the son of Joseph was to be the prophet and seer of the church. The Lord sustained us by the outpouring of his Spirit, and confirmed our work with signs following them that believe.

I have one more point and then I must close on this part. We found right in Iowa at a place called Farm Creek, that there were a few Latter Day Saints, and among them was Calvin Beebe, (one of the men that was here and assisted in the dedication of this temple property, in 1831; a man who afterwards gave me the history of the marvelous experiences that transpired when he was here with Joseph, and Sidney, and Oliver, and others at that time). And there was also a little band of what were called Cutlerites; they had accepted Mr. Cutler as their leader. They had made an examination in regard to leadership, and we told them what was our mission,

and so one subject brought on another. Early in the morning I said to the young man with me, "We will be called upon to preach," for the young man had been having a very bad time for some days before. When we went over to the meeting at a private dwelling, there gathered forty or fifty or sixty persons; Father Beebe says, "Joseph the Seer told us in his time that when there was any important matter presented that we of ourselves had no wisdom nor knowledge by which to determine the matter, that we were then to take it to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ, and humbly ask him for wisdom and knowledge in regard to it." He says, "These young men have come here and they have told us in regard to the testimonies received, that the Lord will presently call Joseph to stand at the head of the church, and I had no means to say whether it was true or false, and I took it to the Lord, and God has witnessed to me that they are his servants and that is enough for me; and I am

going to give this meeting into their charge." My brother, at that time did no preaching, and I spoke on the Latter Day Apostasy, and on the need of a reformation, and the need of a reorganized church, and then pointing to the law and testimony as contained in the sacred records to show where the Saints should look in order to see where the president of the church should come from, according to the design and purpose of God. When I concluded my remarks I said to the young man, "Brother, do you feel like speaking?" He said, "Yes;" and rose and began bearing testimony with regard to his experience in the church; and he then prophesied; and when he concluded his prophecy, a young man, a Cutlerite about eighteen years of age, son of one of the old Latter Day Saints, sprang to his feet and burst out in the gift of tongues, it was James R. Badham. As he sat down, a white haired old patriarch by the name of John Smith, one that had been waiting

for the consolation of Israel quite a long time, rose to his feet and gave the interpretation of that tongue; then he broke out in prophecy and said, "These be the servants of the Most High God, and they will lay a foundation for a great work in all this part of the country."

You go into that region of country now, and you will find districts and branches, and if you will attend some of our reunions there you will see, five, six, seven, eight, ten thousand people gathering there and waiting for days together. And also, over in Nebraska. That was the beginning of it; and see how truthfully the prophecy of that young man has come to pass. Wherever we went and wherever it has gone from that time onward, God has blessed it and that mightily. There are those under the sound of my voice with whom I have met in the years past, and I could call upon them and they could bear witness that they knew from the evidence that God had

given them that the Lord confirmed the work of the Reorganized church and the prophetic mission of Joseph, with signs following them that believe. Now, bear in mind, Jesus says, "Beware of false prophets; by their fruits ye shall know them." You take the lesson right home to yourselves, you Latter Day Saints that belong to the Reorganized church; criticise the positions of the church and of your faith; do it honestly and candidly, and thoroughly, and if you are builded upon the rock you need have no fears whatever, and if you are not builded there, you had better get away and regulate your goings; get where there is safety. Is that a consistent testimony? Is it not harmonious with what we might expect, judging from God's words?

I appeal now to the Book of Covenants that contains the revelations of Joseph the seer; and in this Book of Covenants, in the 43d section, we read some instructions given to the church for the very

purpose that the church should not be deceived by false revelators; for this was given about the time that false revelators began to appear and undertake to deceive the Saints of God. It was the 10th of February, 1831. Let us hear what God has said and what every Latter Day Saint should heed, that we point out directly the source through which the successor of Joseph the seer must come. "Oh, hearken ye elders of my church and give an ear to the words which I shall speak unto you, for behold, verily, verily I say unto you that ye have received a commandment for a law unto my church, through him [Joseph the seer] whom I have appointed unto you, to receive commandments and revelations [that is as a law for the church] from my hand. And this ye shall know assuredly, that there is none other appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations until he be taken, if he abide in me. But verily, verily I say unto you that none else shall be appointed unto

this gift [of what? Receiving commandments and revelations as a law to the church. None else shall be appointed unto this gift] except it be through him.” Now, the question comes, can we trust the appointment of our present President Joseph Smith, to Joseph the Seer? Can we point out how he has been marked and singled out, and assurance given to the Saints that he would be called of God to succeed his father in the presidency of the church? Now, there is the law, and notice—be very careful in reading—“None else shall be appointed unto this gift except it be through him, for if it be taken from him he shall not have power, except to appoint another in his stead.” In no event you discover, even though himself were to lose the gift, yet God would have it that the appointment of his successor should be made through him. “And this shall be a law unto you that ye receive not the teachings of any that shall come before you as revelations or commandments”—Ex-

cept, as a matter of course, they come through one appointed through the seer. That is a law to the church; there is the safe-guard thrown around the church, in order to shield them from the blandishments and machinations of false prophets that would abound in the latter days. "And this I give unto you that ye may not be deceived, that you may know they are not of me. For verily, I say unto you, that he that is ordained of me shall come in at the gate and be ordained as I have told you before, to teach those revelations which you have received, and shall receive through him whom I have appointed."

There is the specific law to every one that is called to be a Latter Day Saint that must govern in regard to the successor of Joseph the seer, for God had ordained that he would appoint no one only as he appointed him through Joseph the seer, to be the successor. I invite your attention now to section 107 of the revelation of January 17th, 1841, paragraph 18, of this edition.

This edition is the same as the Nauvoo edition of the Book of Covenants. "And now I say unto you as pertaining to my boarding house which I have commanded you to build for the boarding of strangers that it be built unto my name, and let my name be named upon it. Let my servant Joseph and his house have place therein from generation to generation." Why should Joseph Smith and his family have place therein from generation to generation more than anyone else? Well, you will get the explanation of it in the very next sentence. It was that he, as the president of the church, might be free from the cares and responsibilities and burdens of keeping an open house and entertaining strangers, both in the church and out of it; that he might be free from that burden so he could give his entire attention to the spiritual concerns of the church. That is the reason why he and his house were to have place therein. "For this anointing [here comes the reason] have I put

upon his head, that his blessing shall also be put upon the head of his posterity after him." There we get the explanation, plain as language can make it. That is the reason why his house after him was to have place there in that boarding house that was commanded to be builded. Joseph was to have place there because he was the president of the church, and called, in the very nature of the work, to give his entire attention to spiritual concerns; and how his house after him was to have place there likewise. And why? "For this anointing have I put upon his head that his blessing"—What was that blessing? To be a prophet and seer, a revelator and translator unto the church, to be great like unto Moses. No intervention once, between Joseph and his posterity. Now there is the Divine purpose; there is the Divine appointment so far as we find it in revelation; and I will give you something more presently upon this point. I read a little further from this same passage:

“And as I said unto Abraham, concerning the kindreds of the earth, even so I say unto my servant Joseph, in thee and in thy seed shall the kindred of the earth be blessed.” How was the kindred of the earth blessed through Joseph? By preaching, by his being the prophet, seer and revelator and translator appointed of God to the church. He occupied that position; God appointed him there and honored and sustained him there. Now, this revelation was as he said unto Abraham, and God confirmed that promise with an oath unto Abraham and showed by his words of promise that he could not lie. “As I said unto Abraham concerning the kindreds of the earth, even so I say unto my servant Joseph, in thee and in thy seed shall the kindred of the earth be blessed.” What, then, should Latter Day Saints do? They are bound in the light of God’s word, now that Joseph has passed within the veil, to look to his seed from whence should come blessings to bless the inhabitants of

the earth. God has spoken this; God has ordained it; and woe betide the set of men that perverteth the way of the Lord. I go to another passage and you will find it in the "Times and Seasons," in a letter that was written by Joseph the seer, the spring of 1844, to John C. Calhoun. Joseph was anxious for the church and knew there was to be a president elected in the November coming, and that there were a great many aspirants for the office, and so he wrote to Henry Clay, who was a prominent figure in politics, to know what his course of conduct would be toward the poor down-trodden, persecuted Latter Day Saints, should he be chosen president. Joseph's heart was throbbing with love for these Latter Day Saints; he had not forgotten those cruel persecutions that the Saints had gone through. He said to him, "Now what are you going to do for the Latter Day Saints in case you shall come into power, what will be your attitude toward them?" He also wrote to

John C. Calhoun, who was likewise a prospective candidate, and Mr. Calhoun gave him an evasive reply, and then Joseph replied to him in this characteristic letter dated January 2d, 1844, and published on pages 394, 95 and 96 of the 5th volume of "Times and Seasons." After Joseph had reasoned with him, he finally said to him: "Now verily know, while I have powers of body and mind, while water runs and grass grows; while virtue is lovely and vice hateful; and while a stone points out a sacred spot where a fragment of American liberty once was; I or my posterity will plead the cause of injured innocence, until Missouri makes atonement for her wrongs or sinks degraded." The same sentiment was found here. Joseph plead the cause of injured innocence by virtue of being God's servant standing at the head of the dispensation, and now he says, "I or my posterity." Do you believe that Joseph wrote that? Published here in this authentic work? Do you believe he understood what

he wrote? I do. Do you believe it was inspirational? I do. Do you believe he was exercising the power and authority that pertained to his high and holy calling? I do. And he says, "I or my posterity." Joseph has passed within the veil, his posterity is left now, and to whom must the Saints of God look to plead the cause of injured innocence; to whom does the word of the living God point? and our answer is as found in God's sacred word as well as in this prophetic letter, that we are bound to look to the posterity, or seed of Joseph the seer.

In the parable of the wheat and the tares, found here in the revelation of 1832, God speaking to Joseph the seer said to him, for he was there, and he was the revelator: "Therefore thus saith the Lord unto you, with whom the priesthood hath continued through the lineage of your fathers, for ye are lawful heirs, according to the flesh, and have been hid from the world with Christ in God, therefore your life

and the priesthood hath remained, and must needs remain, through you and your lineage, until the restoration of all things spoken by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began." That, then, points out the fact of Joseph's lineage after him, etc., that would hold the same priesthood that Joseph held. I look back over the history of the past and I go to the days of the Savior, and I find the gifts and the power passing from the Savior to James his brother, all the history proves that, my dear friends; the New Testament proves that; some people tell us that Peter held the keys, but he did not hold the keys from James; he did not hold authority from James. You go to the 15th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles and there you will find one important question is brought up from the churches down in Asia concerning circumcision, and the whole ministry were gathered together to consider this matter. Peter bore his testimony, and perhaps others, and who, then, ren-

dered the decision? Not Peter; not Paul; not Barnabas; but James the Lord's brother; he rendered the decision; and why? Because he held the keys of power, superior to any other kind of ministry that was then upon the face of the earth. We go down to later times, and you will find it in the 2d chapter of Galatians. Peter had fallen into dissembling; Paul knew that was wrong and he took Peter to task about it, and Paul says, in writing his letter to the Galatians, that before that certain came from James that Peter dissembled, but when they came with power, with the decision, that settled the matter.

Now, we come to the Book of Mormon, and let me tell you that the priesthood passes there from father to son; father to son, with but two or three breaks in all that thousand years from 600 B. C. to 400 A. D., a period of about a thousand years; and you find that presidency of the priesthood passing along from one prophet to another, the presiding officer and sacred

things of the church, and it went from father to son; and when there was no son then it went to a brother, where there was a faithful brother, and there was once or twice that it went to a person that was not of the lineage, but not when there was one of the lineage that was still in existence and a faithful man.

I want to say now, in conclusion, my brothers and sisters and friends, we know that where 'this gospel of Jesus Christ is going, it is just as it is taught in that Bible; just as it is taught in the Book of Mormon; in the Book of Covenants, and where we are building, just as Joseph the seer builded in his day, and with the same sacred books in our hands, wherever that is going, God is blessing the administration of the ministry, signs are following them that believe and you are finding a peaceful, loving, enlightened, self-sacrificing people; a people, thank God, that are filling up their whole lives by upright conduct, and are receiving the respect and honor of

those by whom they are surrounded. God said to the church here in 1834, section 102, in the Fishing River revelation, to settle in the regions round about. "But firstly, let my army become very great, and let it be sanctified before me, that it may become fair as the sun, and clear as the moon, and that her banner may be terrible unto all nations; that the kingdoms of this world may be constrained to acknowledge that the kingdom of Zion is in very deed the kingdom of our God and his Christ; therefore let us become subject unto her laws."

God is doing this, and the waste places are being redeemed under this administration; and let me say to the Saints—I wish Joseph wasn't here, I'd like to talk a little plainer than I do, on his account—under the administration of the Reorganized Church that there has been honor and fame brought to the work of God right in this place where it has been put to shame, until now throughout the United

States and territories, and elsewhere, we are getting an influence; winning it right against the tide of prejudice which has been beating against the church; we are winning it and gaining friend after friend, favor after favor, and the time never looked so auspicious for this work as it does in 1896. I have just been attending four different district conferences here in the west, and I bear you witness that God's Spirit is in the midst of his people; that there is unity; and that the gifts and blessings of the Holy Spirit are with the old and young, and my heart has been made glad in the testimonies that I have witnessed within the last month past. I find it the same wherever I have been visiting the churches. Again, "Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing;" if you have anything of that kind in the church get rid of it—that is my advice to you and everyone; and if you have anyone that fills that description of Jesus Christ; if their utterances are not in

harmony with God's word, get rid of them at once, for there is your safety both for time and eternity. Amen.

Remarks by President Joseph
Smith, Following Sermon
by President Blair.

There is a point to which I wish to call the attention of the people and in the form of bearing testimony likewise. In 1856 when these young men came through that country, they visited me, and in their zeal of presenting their cause, these same young men bore vehement testimony to me. At that time I had no testimony, with one single exception received in 1853; that is not essential to the point. I told these young men then, that if God had a work for me to do, he knew where I was; and that I had been baptized by my father, and confirmed a member of the church under his administration; that I was as willing to do whatever God might have in store for me, at his commandment, as I believed that my father was, and that I would not take a single step in the direction of anything that looked like

church-building until I knew that God demanded it at my hands; that, testimony to him, was not testimony to me; it might be corroborative, but was not to me, and that when God saw fit to tell me what he wanted me to do, I would do it. And in the winter of 1859 in answer to prayer, I asked this question of the Almighty, to tell me with which of those peoples called churches, representing the latter day work, I should unite my fortunes. If he had told me to go to Gladden Bishop, I should have gone. If he had told me to go to those people in the west, I should have gone. He told me to unite myself with the people called the Reorganized Church, as plainly as I speak to you tonight. That testimony I have borne; I bear it again, and again, that in answer to prayer with a willing heart to do what the Lord should demand of me, he told me to unite myself with the Reorganized Church. Not one single line had ever passed between me and these men. I never saw Bro. Blair

until he came to Nauvoo with President Marks and Bishop Rogers here; two brethren of the church away back yonder in New York, baptized in my father's day, and receiving the ministration of those Elders who preached under his presidency and ordained under his hand. I received no baptism but that which I received of my father. I was blessed by him—and let me tell you further than that, that this Reorganized Church never gave me one dollar for the use of my name in connection with its work. I have wrought with these hands of mine in labor to sustain myself as best I might, in doing absolute work that was necessary to be done, and I have taken pride in it, because the Book of Mormon says of the people of God, that their priests should labor with their hands.

I bear you testimony then, tonight, that which I have attempted to do in the way of uniting myself with the church, was done in trying to follow answer to prayer distinctly made to God, and in

doing that work the witness of his Spirit has been with me and been with those to whom I have ministered. I simply want to leave this matter with you as I think a fitting close to the effort made by the brother in my presence, pointing out that which is found in the law; and I say now, as I said then, that if God has anything for me to do, he knows where I am, and by the ministration that he may give he may visit me, and I will do what he tells me, so far as it is possible for me to do it; and I will do it without any special fear of men. I will do it without any special regard to any reward that may be offered to me by men; and not one single offer was ever made by these people called the Reorganized Church to me in any sense of the word, but President Marks distinctly affirmed in that interview which we had in the Mansion house in Nauvoo: "We want someone whom God has called. We don't care for those whom men may make prophets or leaders." I simply make

this statement that you may know, because there are persons present who have heard a great deal about me and about my connection with the Reorganized Church. Upon one occasion one, Chillian Daniels, visited me. At my supper table he said: "Well, I suppose the church pays you a pretty good price?" I asked him what he meant by that. He says, "I hear that you get thirty thousand dollars a year." I said, "Bro. Daniels, a man that gets thirty thousand dollars a year, does not dine on potatoes, corn bread and buttermilk." That is just what we were eating for supper, fortunately to the point. I make this statement openly and fairly in order that it may be clearly understood that I stand upon the integrity of the statement made to me by the Almighty in reference to my uniting with the Reorganized Church, and I have been led from that time to this by that which has been upon record as I comprehended it, and by the voice of the Spirit to me in this direction.

I feel grateful in saying that I have reason to believe that the places where I have taught among the people my presence is welcome among them, and their interests are mine; that I have the kindest feeling especially toward any that have known this work in the past. This I felt when I shook Mother Ireland by the hand on Sunday morning, who was at Nauvoo at the time those men were killed at Carthage, and who from that time to this has never been permitted to live where any of the church were, and who when she heard these testimonies on Sunday afternoon at St. Joseph, said, "Thank God, I feel that I have got back home, I hear that which I heard when I was a girl." Fifty years she had been away. For this and other things we have reason to believe that though we may be meeting difficulties of different kinds, and be facing positions that we never faced before, laboring under conditions that never existed before, some of them more or less

hard to endure, as we look at them from human standpoint, there is behind the dark cloud the ministering hand of God, and just as certainly as we keep our faces Zionward, he will never forsake us.