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"The Fifth Gospel"

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Abstract: Continues addressing the claims against 3 Nephi of “a sectarian minister of high standing” by noting distinctions between the Sermon on the Mount in the Old World and the Sermon at the Temple in the New World, specifically between the Savior’s remarks to the twelve and those to the multitude, and pointing out that 3 Nephi specifies the proper mode of baptism and the sacrament.

dent of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and John Smith, who occupies the same position as his honored father—Presiding Patriarch of the Church. These faithful brothers, like the faithful martyrs who have gone before, are honored and loved by the Saints of God throughout the world. In all generations which are to come, there will be found among the Apostles and Patriarchs and leading Elders of the Church of Christ, the descendants of the Patriarch Hyrum Smith.

Joseph and Hyrum Smith, the great Prophet and the Patriarch of the last dispensation were one in life, and in death they were not separated. Their names are properly linked together in the memory of the Saints, and will be throughout all future generations.

Let us therefore honor, and teach our children to love, honor, and respect the men whom God hath honored, whether living or dead. Especially let us never allow the 23rd of December to pass us by, without grateful memories, and a proper commemoration of the birth, the life and the labors of him whom God hath placed at the head of the greatest dispensation of the Gospel ever committed to man on the earth—the Prophet Joseph Smith.

“THE FIFTH GOSPEL.”

BY ELDER B. H. ROBERTS.

(Continued from page 46.)

I COME now to a greater point, where more light—and light that is very necessary—is added to this sermon on the mount. I commence reading from Matthew vi: 24.

“No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

“Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?”

“Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?”

“Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?”

“And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies in the field, how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin.

“And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

“Wherefore if God so clothed the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?”

“Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?”

“(For after these things do the Gentiles seek) for your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

“Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”

That is the passage of scripture against which infidels have leveled sarcasms ever since it was written; and have denounced it as utterly impracticable; as false in theory as it would be impossible in practise; and gives the evidence that Jesus was a mere idle, impractical dreamer, and not a practical reformer; for, say they, this doctrine of taking no thought of the morrow, and taking no thought respecting food and raiment, if applied to the world's affairs, would turn the wheels of progress backward and land us in a state of barbarism. There could be no civilization under such conditions. We would go back to the condition of the savage and the brute beast. And I have never yet heard a Christian argument against that assault that has been an answer to it. But I find the key to the situation in this III Nephi, or fifth gospel. There is a flood of light thrown upon this matter that makes the defense of the doctrines of Jesus easy against the infidel world. Mark what the Book of Mormon says. Proceeding along the lines of His teaching as He does in Matthew, up to the point when He tells the people that they could not serve God and mammon, this follows:

“And now it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words, He looked upon the twelve, whom He had chosen and said unto them, Remember the words which I have spoken. For behold, ye are they whom I have chosen to minister unto this people. Therefore, I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?”

He then proceeded to declare this doctrine of taking no thought for the morrow, but let the morrow take thought of the things of itself. But the Book of Mormon tells me that those words were not addressed to the multitude, nor are they to be followed by all the members of the Church, or by the people of the world. Jesus confined it in America to twelve men whom He chose from among His disciples, and especially commissioned to go and preach the Gospel; and to so completely dedicate themselves unto the Lord that they would give no thought to temporal things, but put heart and soul into the work of their ministry, and their Father in heaven, who knew they had need of food and raiment, would open up the way for them, even as He clothed the lilies or cared for the birds in the air. Thus limited, that doctrine is all right, is it not? And as Jesus turned from the multitude to deliver this doctrine especially adapted to the Twelve here in America, so if we had the fulness of the truth as delivered in Judea, I believe he would be represented as confining those remarks unto the men whom He had especially called unto the ministry.

So I say the fifth gospel places in our hands the means of meeting the scoffs of the unbeliever, and vindicates the doctrines of Jesus Christ, as reasonable now that we have the word of the Lord rightly divided and applied to those to whom it is suitable to apply that portion of it.

I cannot leave this passage without calling your attention to the closing sentence of the sixth chapter of Matthew: “Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” In III Nephi it stands: “Sufficient is the day unto the evil

thereof." In the first instance you note that the evil is made sufficient for the day. The fifth gospel has it that the day is made sufficient for the evil. Don't you think that is better? Three learned commentators say of that sentence: "An admirable practical maxim, better rendered in our version (King James' translation) than in any other, not excepting the preceding English ones. Every day brings its own cares, and to anticipate is only to doubt them." If they can thus speak in high praise of the saying of the Savior as it stands in Matthew, how much more reason they would have for praising it as it is found in III Nephi.

I will now read to you a passage which Elder Lyman read during our recent general conference, and which first suggested to me the thought of taking up this reverend gentleman's discourse and show, at least to our young people, that there is something in the fifth gospel worth while considering; that it adds something to our Christian knowledge. Jesus, giving instruction to the Nephite disciples, says:

"Verily I say unto you, that whoso repenteth of his sins through your words, and desireth to be baptized in my name, on this wise shall ye baptize them: behold, ye shall go down and stand in the water, and in my name shall ye baptize them,

"And now behold, these are the words which ye shall say, calling them by name:

"Having authority given me of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

"And then shall ye immerse them in the water, and come forth again out of the water."

If we had only been so fortunate as to have had such an explicit statement as this in our four gospels, or in one of them, what a world of contention would have been avoided, what a world of Christian persecution would have been avoided, and what unity and harmony there would have been upon a great Christian ordinance upon which Christians are now unhappily divided. Aside from this statement and the revelations that God has given in these days, there is nothing that definitely instructs the world on the subject of how baptism shall be administered. Jesus came to the disciples after His resurrection and said to them, "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Of course, for some two or three hundred years we have the custom of the Saints as an interpretation of the manner of baptism which was that they were immersed; but since Jesus had not specified the manner in which the ordinance was to be performed in some other way than immersion, some adopted the method of sprinkling, or of pouring the water on the person. And from that departure from the true Gospel grew up the varied methods of baptism as we have them to-day. The Greeks still immerse, and they immerse three times—once in the name of the Father, once in the name of the Son, and once in the name of the Holy Spirit. We have an American sect who hit upon what I suppose they consider a happy thought, and that is, that baptism must not only be thrice performed, but that the candidate must be pushed face forward into the water; for, say they, would you have people going into the kingdom backwards? Of the Protestant sects, some sprinkle and some pour water on

the candidate; and one prominent minister, the late Henry Ward Beecher, reduced the ordinance to the mere act of moistening the hand and placing it on the brow of the candidate, and called that baptism! The great Catholic church, backed by its scholarship, insists that its method of sprinkling is a proper method of baptism. And so the world is divided on this great ordinance, which all confess is the visible sign of entrance into the fold of Christ—part of our birth into the kingdom of God.

What parable, what dozen parables, could be so precious in their importance to the Christian world as this explicit statement of how the ordinance of baptism shall be administered, if they would but accept it!

In addition to this doctrine of baptism you will find (though I shall not take time to point it out at length on this occasion) in the fifth gospel instructions given by the Savior on the subject of the Sacrament and the purposes for which it was given, which afterwards were crystallized in the prayer of consecration of the emblems, and because they were crystallized, and therefore briefer, I shall read that instruction to you as it is found in the prayer. The prophet is explaining how the Sacrament was administered after the people received this instruction from Jesus:

“And they did kneel down with the church, and pray to the Father in the name of Christ, saying:

“O God, the Eternal Father, we ask Thee in the name of Thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it, that they may eat in remembrance of the body of Thy Son, and witness unto Thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of Thy Son, and always remember Him, and keep His commandments which He hath given them, that they may always have His Spirit to be with them. Amen.”

If the four gospels had contained the instructions of Jesus Christ on this subject as found in the fifth gospel, and finally crystallized into this beautiful, fitting prayer of consecration, the Christian world would have escaped one of its bitterest religious controversies, and the Roman Catholic church to-day would not ask men to be so untrue to their intellectual consciousness as to believe that the water which they place upon the tongue of the communicant is the actual body and the actual blood of Jesus Christ. On the other hand, the Protestant world would not be divided and sub-divided upon this question, but they would have instruction which would enable them to properly hold the great atonement of Jesus Christ in true and objective remembrance in the Sacrament.

I undertake to say now that there cannot be produced from the literature of the world, sacred or profane, a prayer that is the equal of this prayer of consecration, excepting only the Lord's prayer. With that exception, this prayer, for completeness, for a succession of solemn thoughts, fitly spoken, and crystallized into a form from which you can take nothing and to which you can add nothing without marring it, stands alone; and it adds something to our Christian knowledge. It is an important item of Christian instruction and doctrine, and one that the world much needs; you will find its scattered rays in the fifth gospel. In the form I have quoted it, it is given by Moroni.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]