

LEGITIMACY AND ILLEGITIMACY.

A SERMON BY ELDER JOHN TAYLOR, DELIVERED AT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE, IN THE TABERNACLE, GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, APRIL 8, 1853.

REPORTED BY G. D. WATT.

It rejoices my heart to hear the principles that have been advanced this day by our President, because they have their foundation in truth, are based upon the principles of equity, and are calculated to promote the happiness, well-being, exaltation, and glory of man, in time, and throughout all eternity. They lead us back into eternity; they existed with us there, and in all the various stages of man's existence they are calculated to elevate and ennoble him, and place him in a proper position before God, angels, and men. They will put him in possession of his legitimate right, save him from the grasp of the adversary, from every subtle stratagem of the powers of darkness, and place him in his proper station in time and in eternity.

I have been much pleased with and edified by the remarks that have been made upon this stand during the Conference. Wisdom has been displayed in them; from them the intelligence of heaven has beamed forth, the mysteries of eternity have been spread before our minds, and we have had a view of heavenly things, that has filled our hearts with joy and our mouths with praise. It has made us feel as though we were upon the threshold of eternity; as though we were eternal beings, and had to do with eternal things; as though the things of this world were short, fleeting, and evanescent, not worthy of a thought when compared with those things that are calculated to exalt and ennoble us in time and in eternity.

The principles of justice, righteousness, and truth, which have an endless duration, can alone satisfy the capacious desires of the immortal soul. We may amuse ourselves like children do at play, or engage in the frivolities of the dance. We may take our little enjoyments in our social assemblies, but when the *man* comes to reflect, when the *Saint of God* considers, and the visions of eternity are open to his view, and the unalterable purposes of God are developed to his mind—when he contemplates his true position before God, angels, and men, then he soars above the things of time and sense, and bursts the cords that bind him to earthly objects; he contemplates God and his own destiny in the economy of heaven, and rejoices in a blooming hope of an immortal glory.

Such have been some of our feelings, while our minds have been carried away from the things of earth to contemplate the things with which eternal beings are associated, and the glories that await us in the everlasting mansions of the Gods.

The principles that we have to do with, then, are eternal, and not simply to play a game upon the checker of mortality, on which people can win and lose for the time being. We have to do with that which shall continue, "While life, and thought, and being last, Or immortality endures."

We seek not to build our hopes upon things that are evanescent, fleeting, and transitory.