

ORDAINING YOUNG MEN TO OFFICE—THE WORD OF WISDOM—UNION

A DISCOURSE BY ELDER GEORGE A. SMITH, DELIVERED IN THE BOWERY,
GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, APRIL 8, 1855

Reported by G. D. Watt

As I arise I am cautioned by President Kimball to be careful that my hair does not blow off; I shall exercise as much care and caution as possible on the subject; but if it should actually come off, I have very few friends here today in this numerous audience but what know very well how my head looks perfectly bare, and consequently I should not feel as though I was subject to any particular disgrace, while I can enjoy the comfort of sitting in the congregation without having my head tied up in a handkerchief, or suffering with a cold.

I feel a little sorry this morning that our meetinghouse is so small; really it seems too bad that we have not a little more room, but it fulfills very clearly the early predictions of the first President of the Church (Joseph Smith), that we may build as many houses as we would, and we should never get one big enough to hold the Saints; and I presume, before this immense Bowery is absolutely enclosed, and comfortably seated, that we shall find it too small to accommodate those who wish to attend here on the Sabbath day, or on any important occasion.

In rising to speak to so vast an assembly, I am reminded of the old rupture of my lungs, which was made while preaching in the streets of London to scattered assemblies, to persons in the courts, in the squares, in the windows of buildings four and five stories high, and on different sides of the streets, in the midst of a foggy,

smoky, damp atmosphere. It is a rupture which caused my lungs to bleed, and which has been a constant caution and effectual check to my course in life, requiring me to keep within a certain limit, with, however, this condition, that, live or die, or whatsoever might be in the road, the Gospel of Jesus Christ *I would preach*, and the testimony of the fulness of the Gospel of the Lord to the Saints in the last days I would bear, wherever and whenever I had the opportunity, backed with a faith in me that I would have power and health to do this; at the same time any kind of exercise, that would heat my blood for one half hour, would produce considerable bleeding from the lungs, and yet by the aid of your faith I undertake to address this immense audience, with full confidence that I shall succeed so that a great portion will hear me, and by the stillness of the balance I may be enabled to make them all hear me, though it requires a great effort for even a man with sound lungs to make ten thousand persons hear him speak distinctly.

I have been a member of this Church from my childhood: I commenced to advocate the Book of Mormon when only thirteen years of age. The second day after I got hold of it I read it nearly through. News flew round the neighborhood that the “golden bible” had come, and a large company of neighbors came in to see the book; they commenced to examine and find fault with it, and I to ans-