

THE NECESSITY OF A LIVING PRIESTHOOD—THE UTAH LEGISLATURE

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT HEBER C. KIMBALL, DELIVERED IN THE TABERNACLE,
GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, JANUARY 27, 1856

Recorded by G. D. Watt

I do not feel as though I desired to take up much time, I merely wish to say a few words in regard to what we have heard today. I am aware that a great many in the world are pleased with fancies, they are gratified and edified with that which is artificial, but if people would be pleased and instructed with such remarks as we have heard today, it would be well, for they are the principles that will save you, that will lead you into the celestial world. Listen to that which you have heard today from brother Brigham; he is our leader, our Prophet, our Priest, and our Governor—the Governor of the Territory of Utah. In him is every power and key of celestial life and salvation, pertaining to every person there is on this earth, and that is a principle which but few persons realize. You take away the keys that are with him, and with those who sustain him, and I would not give a dime for you. Sin to such a degree that brother Brigham and his counselors, and those who are associated with him—the Apostles of Jesus Christ—withdraw from your midst, and I would not give a dime for all the salvation you have got; that is my faith. He holds the keys of the kingdom of heaven, just as much as Peter, James, and John did after Jesus committed the keys to them on the mount, and said, “I give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whomsoever you bless I will bless, and whomsoever you curse I will curse.”

Take away that power, take away those keys, and you cannot find your way into the celestial kingdom. The keys in his possession will unlock the door and let you through into another existence more excellent than this. He holds the keys. Can anybody pass without them? No, only as they get authority through him. Are they appreciated as they should be? Do this people listen to the counsel that proceeds from his mouth, as the words of the living oracles of God?

I would not care if there was not a Bible within ten thousand miles of this place, or any other book or script; here are the oracles living right in our midst, and we receive them from day to day, by word of mouth from a living man, an Apostle who is alive, and through a Priesthood which is living in our midst.

At the same time, a great many persons think more of the testimony of a dead Apostle than they do of a living one, and think more of dead Prophets than they do of living ones who are here in their midst. It is generally the case that men do not fully appreciate their blessings in life; often when their wives are dead they think more of them than they did when they were living, and it is just so with some wives in regard to their former husbands. We do not always appreciate the blessings we have in our possession until they are taken from us; then we begin to appreciate them; so when good men have left us we cease thinking of their faults, but begin to