

God of Israel to bless you forever and ever, for you are the best people on earth. I can say that I am happy that you are doing so well as you are. Continue to increase in all the graces

of God's Spirit until the day of His coming, which I desire with all my heart, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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**THE AX THAT IS LAID AT THE ROOT OF THE  
TREE—REGENERATION—PRODUCTS OF POLYGAMY, A  
NUMEROUS OFFSPRING, ETC.**

A DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT HEBER C. KIMBALL, DELIVERED IN THE TABERNACLE,  
GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, FEB. 8, 1857.

REPORTED BY G. D. WATT.

I know not what I shall say or how I shall be led to address you, but I have no doubt many are thinking that perhaps I shall be led to speak as plainly as I did two or three weeks ago. With regard to that I wish to tell you, brethren and sisters, that I never could have led myself in such a train of ideas; the Holy Ghost led me to speak upon those items that you consider small items, for if you did not consider them of little moment you would reform in your practices touching those points, and take a different course from what you do. I do know, and that most positively, that if this people would put into practice those things that I recommend, they would be blessed, for they are fundamental principles of our holy religion.

These things are the ax that is laid at the root of your trees; and what is it? It is rottenness. Where is that rottenness? It is at the root of the tree; and if the roots have become rotten—have become defiled—then of course the tree will also be rotten, with every branch pertaining to it, and the whole tree will perish. You

are every one of you compared to a tree, or to a body; and there is no body, neither will there be, but what has a root to it; if it were not so you could not produce a posterity. It is for you to take that evil—that corruption—away from the root. It is a corruption that the world is dabbling in, and this people are dabbling in it more or less. Such a thing as adultery never would be known in the house of Israel, if some were not dabbling in that evil, and if rottenness was not at the roots of some of the trees. It is this which leads to the principle of adultery, and the body has become tinctured with corruption.

It is like this: take a good sweet barrel and fill it with good sweet pork, and then deposit in the center of it a tainted piece as big as my fist, and how long will it be before it will ruin the whole barrel of good meat, in case the tainted meat is not removed? Upon the same principle let wickedness be in our midst undisturbed—pay no attention to it at all—and it will ruin this whole people. It will canker the roots of the trees and spread, until all the branches per-