

and whose course had taught him to respect his judgment, his honesty, his truthfulness, and the integrity and justice of his character, and that in the most trying circumstances he had never failed to honor himself, God, his family, and to honor his father. Now, as he is going away to a far distant land, he takes this son aside and says to him, "I will place you in charge of my family, and leave you to watch over their interests in my absence, that while I am gone they may have someone to look up to who can act the part of a father to them." And then turning to the family he says, "My sons and daughters, I have chosen this son, your elder brother, to act in my place while I am absent. I wish you to obey him and respect and honor him as you would your father, and to submit yourselves to his dictation in all things." The family consent. They say, "We will do as you desire, father. We will honor your judgment and choice by honoring and obeying our brother whom you have chosen to watch over us during your absence."

It might be argued that those children, by complying with the wish of their father in this matter, would sacrifice their agency. Do they not exercise that volition just as much by obeying that son as they would by each one taking his or her own course, and saying, "I will judge for myself, as to the correctness of what you say and will differ from you whenever I please." Let me ask you as parents and as children, brethren and sisters, do you not think you could exercise your agency just as much by obeying the son as by disobeying him? I cannot conceive how it can be otherwise. I cannot see why I, for instance, should not exercise my agency just as much by obeying him as by disobeying him. This is precisely my position today.

Brigham Young, our President, has

been chosen by God as His representative here on the earth, among His sons and daughters. He has been selected for this special calling. The Father is not present in person; Jesus is not present in person; but God is here through the Holy Ghost and the holy Priesthood, through the power which He has bestowed, and in the same position precisely as the son in the figure which I have used does the President of the Church act for us, his brethren and sisters. We are all alike before God; He loves us all alike; we are all the creatures of His care; but there must be rule, there must be government; there must be order, or this would not be the kingdom of God. The Lord chose President Young to rule and dictate in the affairs of His Church when His servant Joseph was taken from the earth.

Look at the singular combination of circumstances which caused Brigham Young to be President of the Twelve. Reflect on the remarkable combination of events which made him the leader of Israel, showing plainly, in my mind, that long before he was born, yes, probably before the earth was organized, Joseph Smith and Brigham Young were chosen, the same as Jeremiah was. The Lord said to Jeremiah: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." This is my opinion about the leaders of Israel in the latter days. I believe they were chosen to act in this capacity; and God, knowing their integrity, and afterwards proving them to the uttermost in the flesh, has greatly blessed them. See the blessings that have followed the administrations of these men in our midst. Who would exchange the peace, the joy, and the knowledge we have concerning the Gospel of the