
THE PRIESTHOOD, ITS ORGANIZATION, ETC.

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR, DELIVERED IN THE TABERNACLE,
OGDEN CITY, SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 18, 1880

Reported by James Taylor

I am pleased this morning to have the opportunity of meeting with the Saints in this place. If you will try to be still, I will endeavor to lay before you a few principles on the subject, concerning which your President enquired of me a few days ago. It seems that there have been, somewhere in this Stake, difficulties existing between the Bishop of a Ward and certain members of his Ward. Failing to arrive at an amicable settlement, the parties appealed, against the Bishop, to the High Council. President Peery sent a telegram desiring my answer to the question—"Whether a High Council had authority to try a Bishop." I could have answered yes, and I could have answered no, to that question; but it was a matter that would require some explanation, and on which the brethren, in many instances, are not very well informed. I knew it would be almost useless to give an answer of that kind, without making some little explanation thereto, because there are some things with which more than one truth is connected.

If you were to ask me whether I am dressed in woolen clothes or cotton, I could not give you an answer, in the simple words yes or no, because part of them are woolen, part of them cotton, and part of them

linen; and I should need time to explain.

There are many questions pertaining to the Priesthood, which cannot be answered categorically without further explanation, and as this is a conference, I wish to make a few remarks concerning some of them; but I do not propose to enter into all the details of these matters; there would not be time, nor half time, nor a quarter time. I simply propose to make a few remarks in regard to the question which was asked me by your President.

I will here read on this subject a passage which people take up sometimes, without understanding it, and, consequently, when they do so, they are apt to make quite a number of mistakes. The passage to which I will refer you, is the 22nd verse of the 68th section, in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. After reading it, you would think you had got the whole answer, but then you might not have it, although you might think you had.

"And again, no bishop or high priest who shall be set apart for this ministry shall be tried or condemned for any crime, save it be before the First Presidency of the church."

Now, does not that look very plain? It does, when apart from the context, and if we do not exam-