The Ideology of Equality


My brethren: We seem to be living in an age of ideologies of various kinds. The things that used to influence men and nations and lead them into conflict—ordinary ambition, thirst for territory, thirst for power, still remain, but there have come to supersede them certain ideologies which move nations, sometimes in rebellion against the past, sometimes to build up new concepts and new rules.

One of these ideologies which is perhaps politically not so important but which socially is most important, has been talked about tonight by Brother Mark E. Petersen,—the ideology which lowers moral standards that we have been taught in the past to regard as sacred. I endorse all that Brother Mark has said tonight and urge you bishops, presidents of stakes, and heads of households, to follow his advice.

I am going to talk tonight, or plan to, about another ideology, and I should like, in all humility on my part, to have the assistance of your faith and prayers. I shall try not to be too long; it may be I shall be a bit dull. I am going to read in part, perhaps a good part, what I say.

The ideology I have in mind is what I might call the ideology of equality. We have a sort of feeling about our own people in our nation and the nations of the world, that everybody is equal to everybody else. You remember that the Declaration of Independence said, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.”

Those phrases seem to have caught the imagination of people of various kinds. I am not going to talk about them; somebody would accuse me of talking politics, but I have this kind of a feeling about them,—that they are not intended to suggest that force shall be brought to bear upon me, if I be a law-abiding man, tending to my own business, to take away a part of my life to give to somebody else who thinks he would like some of it. I feel the same way about liberty. I feel the same way about pursuit of happiness. That is my right as a member of the body politic, and just because somebody else thinks he would like some of my happiness, I am not imposing upon him or taking anything away from him, that I should be compelled to bestow upon him some of my happiness, is just beyond me.

Now, I want to talk tonight about what I will call spiritual relativity. I do not know anything about what scientific relativity means, but I can get some idea about what I am going to talk about. I am going to speak from the Book of Abraham, primarily, and my speaking will consist principally in reading, in the first part of what I say, with perhaps an interpolation of a remark here and there.

If you will read the third chapter of the Book of Abraham, you will find that the Lord is giving instructions to Abraham about various matters, including matters of astronomy, and then the Lord begins to apply those matters of astronomy of which he has been talking, where he has one planet and then another greater than that, and then that there shall be one greater than that, and he begins to apply that to individuals:

“19. And the Lord said unto me: These two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they; I am the Lord thy God, I am more intelligent than they all.”

Now, I am not going to try to tell you what that principle means, or where it leads; all I want to get out of that is that here are three intelligences, spirits, and that they are not equal, even the two are unequal. There is the one, there is the second more intelligent than the first, and there is the third more intelligent than the other two.

I like to think of that, as I have said, as spiritual relativity.

I am going on, now, and reading from the third chapter of Abraham. The Lord has been talking about the intelligences, and he says:

“21. I dwell in the midst of them all; I now, therefore, have come down unto thee to deliver unto thee the works which my hands have made, wherein my wisdom excelleth them all, for I rule in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, in all wisdom and prudence, over all the intelligences thine eyes have seen from the beginning; I came down in the beginning in the midst of all the intelligences thou hast seen.

“22. Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones:...”

In that great body of intelligences there were those whom the Lord has described as “noble and great ones”; obviously others were not noble and great. Then going on, apparently in the same...