

Revelation — Science — Technology

Discourses of Brigham Young (SLC: David O. McKay, Trustee in Trust for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Deseret Book, 1954).

Page 246: Every art and science known and studied by the children of men is comprised within the Gospel. Where did the knowledge come from which has enabled man to accomplish such great achievements in science and mechanism [technology] within the last few years? We know that knowledge is from God, but why do they not acknowledge him? Because they are blind to their own interests, they do not see and understand things as they are. Who taught men to chain the lightning? Did man unaided of himself discover that? No, he received the knowledge from the Supreme Being. From him, too, has every art and science proceeded, although the credit is given to this individual, and that individual. But where did they get the knowledge from, have they it in and of themselves? No, they must acknowledge that, if they cannot make one spear of grass grow, nor one hair white or black without artificial aid, they are dependent upon the Supreme Being just the same as the poor and the ignorant. Where have we received the knowledge to construct the labor-saving machinery for which the present age is remarkable? From Heaven. Where have we received our knowledge of astronomy, or the power to make glasses to penetrate the immensity of space? We received it from the same Being that Moses, and those who were before him, received their knowledge from; the same Being who told Noah that the world should be drowned and its people destroyed. From him has every astronomer, artist and mechanic that ever lived on the earth obtained his knowledge. By him, too, has the power to receive from one another been bestowed, and to search into the deep things pertaining to this earth and every principle connected with it. (*Journal of Discourses*, 12:257; hereafter *JD*.)

Pages 259–260: There is no ingenious mind that has ever invented anything beneficial to the human family but what he obtained it from the one Source, whether he knows or believes it or not. There is only one Source whence man obtain wisdom, and that is God, the Fountain of all wisdom; and though men may claim to make their discoveries by their own wisdom, by mediation and reflection, they are indebted to our Father in Heaven for all. (*JD* 13:148.)

Page 247: Not only does the religion of Jesus Christ make the people acquainted with the things of God, and develop within them moral excellence and purity, but it holds out every encouragement and inducement possible, for them to increase in knowledge and intelligence, in every branch of mechanism [technology], or in the arts and sciences, for all wisdom, and all the arts and sciences in the world are from God, and are designed for the good of his people. (*JD 13:147.*)

Page 247: The religion embraced by the Latter-day Saints, if only slightly understood, prompts them to search diligently after knowledge. There is no other people in existence more eager to see, hear, learn, and understand truth. (*JD 8:6.*)

Page 247: Let us train our minds until we delight in that which is good, lovely and holy, seeking continually after that intelligence which will enable us effectually to build up Zion, which consists in building houses, tabernacles, temples, streets, and every convenience and necessity to embellish and beautify, seeking to do the will of the Lord all the days of our lives, improving our minds in all scientific and mechanical knowledge, seeking diligently to understand the great design and plan of all created things, that we may know what to do with our lives and how to improve upon the facilities placed within our reach. (*JD 10:177.*)

Page 248: If we wish to be taught, to receive, and understand, we must train ourselves. (*JD 6:99.*)

Page 248: We are in a great school [mortality], and we should be diligent to learn, and continue to store up the knowledge of heaven and of earth, and read good books, although I cannot say that I would recommend the reading of all books, for it is not all books which are good. Read good books, and extract from them wisdom and understanding as much as you possibly can, aided by the Spirit of God. (*JD 12:124.*)

Page 248: It is our duty and calling, as ministers of the same salvation and Gospel, to gather every item of truth and reject every error. Whether a truth be found with professed infidels, or with the Universalists, or the Church of Rome, or the Methodists, the Church of England, the Presbyterians, the Baptists, the Quakers, the Shakers, or any other of the various and numerous different sects and parties, all of whom have more or less truth, it is the business of the Elders of this Church ... to gather up all the truths in the world pertaining to life and salvation, to the Gospel we preach, to mechanism [technology] of every kind, to the sciences, and

to philosophy, wherever it may be found in every nation, kindred, tongue, and people and bring it to Zion. (*JD* 7:283.)

Pages 248–249: Will education feed and clothe you, keep you warm on a cold day, or enable you to build a house? Not at all. Should we cry down education on this account? No. What is it for? The improvement of the mind; to instruct us in all arts and sciences, in the history of the world, in the laws of nations; to enable us to understand the laws and principles of life, and how to be useful while we live. (*JD* 14:83.)

Page 255: Let the boys from ten to twenty years of age get up schools to learn sword exercise, musket and rifle exercise, and, in short, every act of war. Shall we need this knowledge? No matter; it is good to be acquainted with this kind of exercise. (*JD* 9:173.)

Page 257: I long for the time that a point of the finger, or motion of the hand, will express every idea without utterance. When a man is full of the light of eternity, then the eye is not the only medium through which he sees, his ear is not the only medium by which he hears, nor the brain the only means by which he understands. When the whole body is full of the Holy Ghost, he can see behind him with as much ease, without turning his head, as he can see before him. If you have not that experience, you ought to have. It is not the optic nerve alone that gives the knowledge of surrounding objects to the mind, but it is that which God has placed in man — a system of intelligence that attracts knowledge, as light cleaves to light, intelligence to intelligence, and truth to truth. It is this which lays in man a proper foundation for all education. I shall yet see the time that I can converse with this people, and not speak to them, but the expression of my countenance will tell the congregation what I wish to convey, without opening my mouth. (*JD* 12:159?)

Pages 258–259: I am not astonished that infidelity prevails to a great extent among the inhabitants of the earth, for the religious teachers of the people advance many ideas and notions for truth which are in opposition to and contradict facts demonstrated by science, and which are generally understood. You take, for instance, our geologists, and they tell us that this earth has been in existence for thousands and millions of years. They think, and they have good reasons for their faith, that their researches and investigations enable them to demonstrate that this earth has been in existence as long as they assert it has; and they say, “If the Lord, as religionists declare, made the earth out of nothing in six days, six thousand years ago, our studies are all vain; but by what we can learn from nature and the

immutable laws of the Creator as revealed therein, we know that your theories are incorrect and consequently we must reject your religions as false and vain; we must be what you call infidels, with the demonstrated truths of science in our possession; or, rejecting those truths, become enthusiasts in, what you call, Christianity.”

In these respects we differ from the Christian world, for our religion will not clash with or contradict the facts of science in any particular. You may take geology, for instance, and it is true science; **not that I would say for a moment that all the conclusions and deductions of its profession are true**, but its leading principles are; they are facts — they are eternal; and to assert that the Lord made this earth out of nothing is preposterous and impossible. God never made something out of nothing; it is not in the economy or law by which the worlds were, are, or will exist. There is an eternity before us, and it is full of matter; and if we but understand enough of the Lord and his ways we would say that he took of this matter and organized this earth from it. How long it has been organized it is not for me to say, and I do not care anything about it. As for the Bible account of the creation we may say that the Lord gave it to Moses. If we understood the process of creation there would be no mystery except to the ignorant. This we know by what we have learned naturally since we have had a being on the earth. We can now take a hymn book and read its contents; but if we had never learned letters and knew nothing about type or paper or their uses, and should take up a book and look at it, it would be a great mystery; and still more so would it be to see a person read line after line, and give expression therefrom to the sentiments of himself or others. But this is no mystery to us now, because we have learned our letters, and then learned to place those letters into syllables, the syllables into words, and the words into sentences. (*JD* 14:115–117.)