

## Chapter 2

### Discourse of the Prophet Joseph Smith

Given on February 12th, 1834

At a council of High priests and Elders at the home of Joseph Smith in Kirtland

*The following discourse comes from minutes taken by Orson Hyde and shortly thereafter copied into "Minute Book 1". In 1843 they were edited and copied into the Manuscript History of the Church. This speech contains Joseph Smith's general counsel about how church councils should operate, and both that and his personal testimony introduce the rest of the meeting. (not included here)*

Brother Joseph then rose and said: I shall now endeavour to set forth before this council, the dignity of the office which has been conferred upon me by the ministering of the angel of God, by his own voice and by the voice of this church. I have never set before any council in all the order in which a council ought to be conducted, which, perhaps, has deprived the councils of some, or many blessings.

He said that no man [is] capable of judging a matter in council [unless] his own heart [is] pure; and that we frequently are so filled with prejudice, or have a beam in our own eye, that we are not capable of passing right decisions, etc.

But to return to the subject of the order: In ancient days, councils were conducted with such strict propriety, that no one was allowed to whisper, be weary, leave the room, or get uneasy in the least, until the voice of the Lord, by revelation, or by the voice of the Council by the spirit was obtained; which has not been observed in this church to the present.

It was understood in ancient days that if one man could stay in council another could, and if the president could spend his time, the

members could also. But in our councils, generally, one would be uneasy, another asleep; one praying, another not; one's mind on the business of the council, and another thinking on something else, etc.

Our acts are recorded, and at a future day they will be laid before us, and if we should fail to judge right, and injure our fellow beings, they may there perhaps condemn us; then, they are of great consequence; and to me the consequence appears to be of force, beyond anything which I am able to express.

Ask yourselves, brethren, how much you have exercised yourselves in prayer since you heard of this council; and if you are now prepared to sit in judgment upon the soul of your brother.

Brother Joseph then went on to give us a relation of his situation at the time he obtained the record, the persecution he met with, etc. He also told us of his transgressing at the time he was translating the Book of Mormon.

He also prophesied that he should stand and shine like the sun in the firmament when his enemies and the gainsayers of his testimony should be put down and cut off and their names blotted out from among men.