

J22 [JONES, Dan.] "*Peidiwch a'u gwrando*," ("Do not listen to them,") *Swansea: Published and printed by D. Jones, [1854].*  
8 pp. 17.3 cm. *Welsh Mormon Writings* 82.

The title of this pamphlet is put in quotes, because it serves as the subject of the first sentence of the text: "'Do not listen to them,' is the most popular theme of the preachers of our country now, I suppose," Dan Jones states, "which compels us to review their sermons concerning it as follows: I. Who is ordering; II. Who is being ordered; III. What is being ordered; IV. Why such an order is being given; V. The results of this order and of obeying it."

After exploring each of the five major areas in some detail, the author concludes that it was a form of slavery for ministers to instruct their congregations as to what they could and could not hear. His final sentence is: "Why talk about the black slaves of America while there are so many slaves in our midst, as much more wretched as their skins are whiter!"

The 21 October 1854 *Zion's Trumpet* (p. 547) carries an announcement for "*Do not listen to them*," with an appeal for Welsh members of the Church to present copies of the pamphlet as gifts to members of the clergy.



## “DO NOT LISTEN TO THEM,”

Is the most popular subject of our country's preachers now, I should think, which induces us to review their sermons on it, as follows:—

I. *Who is giving the order.* II. *Who is being ordered.* III. *What is being ordered.* IV. *Why such an order is given.* V. *The consequences of ordering this, and of obeying.*

I. Who orders not to listen? We answer that, from what we understand, this teaching is preached from the pulpits of every sect in Wales that professes religion; no exception is known among the Catholics, the established Church, or among their various progeny. It is published by their authors and their Editors, their deacons and their Sunday school teachers, their members and visitors to the houses of women of their acquaintance. Especially in their church meetings one often hears the command “DO NOT LISTEN TO THEM.” With them agree the irreligious world, drunkards, blasphemers, atheists, and the common herd of our fellow-countrymen; with some notable exceptions of individuals who are too sensible for that, they all join together in a great shout about certain people, “Do not listen to them!” All of this proves that those to whom it is forbidden to listen are of a different origin, opinion, taste, and spirit from all the *united* parties that oppose them! Meanwhile the accord of all those in the *Chorus* of “Do not listen to them” proves them all to be of the same taste and unity of heart, despite the fact that this is almost the only *chorus* they sing together. So we see that “Do not listen to them” is a popular song.

II. Who is being ordered?—we answer that it is those who profess to be men, possessing senses, and men who had received the highest honor from their Creator of *judging for themselves!* yes, men who possess immortal souls, men who have to die for themselves, and stand before a court to be judged for their own thoughts, and not for the thoughts of another; people who are each of them worth more than the world and all its treasures, are being ordered by their fellowman to “not *listen*” to another! What worse slavery than this? Is it possible to insult common sense more than this? What is this but taking their free agency from them? The laws of countries forbid *doing* such things; Louis Napoleon and the Catholic

Inquisition forbid men to proclaim their thoughts; the slave-traders of the West Indies forbid the Negroes to express their feelings, but we have to come to “enlightened Wales,” and to “the country of the Bibles” to be deprived of the use of our ears! Only in the “garden of Christianity,” and the “nursery of freedom” of all the violent places in the world are men forbidden to think! For what is the purpose of listening except to think, since the ear is for introducing sound to influence the mind? It is appropriate to say that the “free Britons,” yes, even closer to home, that the “independent *Welsh*,” as they boast, are slaves more pitiful still, or that their preachers by preaching “Do not listen to them” are aiming to degrade them into more captive slaves than the Negroes of Cuba or Sierra Leon! *Power* to punish with the tortures of the Inquisition is all that is lacking to those who excommunicate their parishioners for listening to others; but they did the best they could by expelling them!

Gentle Welshman, allow no longer such oppressors to degrade you to such extremes and deprive you of the precious free agency which your Creator gave you as a birthright, at least until they can die and answer for you in the judgment, or prove that they are infallible themselves.

III. What is being ordered? “Do not listen to anything said by the Mormons, namely the Latter-day Saints,” is the popular anthem; not do not listen to blasphemers, balladists, ribalds, sorcerers, players of tricks, or the opposing partisans of the impudent opposing factions of the country. Oh no, you can listen to everyone and everything except the ‘Saints,’ they say. What do the ‘Saints’ say that is so bad then? Do they not urge their listeners to believe in Jesus Christ? Certainly, and they do their best to obey all His commandments themselves, and they teach others to do so. This is undeniable. This is good in them if it is good in their oppressors, so they *should* be listened to. They urge all to repent of their sins, forsake them, and live righteously, honestly, in a neighborly and godly fashion. Why is it forbidden to listen to them, then, by those who profess that there is great need to teach these things to the world? They teach also that the way to obtain forgiveness of sins is by being baptized “FOR THE REMISSION of sins,” as Peter and all his brothers taught, and their Lord before them. If it is good to listen to the latter, it is also good to listen to the Saints, for they teach the same thing; and so, it is *bad*

to forbid them to listen to that, whoever forbade it. The Saints also teach that the gifts of the Holy Ghost are to be had now, and on the same conditions as in the days of Christ and the apostles; they teach that the Spirit of God is available to bear witness to their spirits that they are children of God; and it is because they are happily *enjoying* the various gifts of the gospel themselves that they testify to their listeners, out of love for them, and a desire for them to enjoy the same. What sort of men must they be who forbid listening to a religion such as this? Let the reader judge! Would they not have prohibited listening to Peter, Paul, yes, and Christ himself preaching the same things had they been their contemporaries? Incontestably they would have.

The Saints testify that they have in fact received a divine message through angelic ministry, which contains the restoration of the eternal gospel in the fulness of its blessings; yes, there are thousands of them who testify that they know this is *true*; and despite all this there are men who profess to 'preach the gospel' and forbid those under their spell to come to listen to the message of God from heaven to them! Yes, there is a class of people numbing the ears of the age with fables under the guise of a claim of being religious, who will not come into the kingdom of God themselves, and will not allow others who wish to come; rather they imitate the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees who were so severely threatened by Jesus. To the surprise of the world, those who profess most zeal in teaching the thoughts and word of God to the people are found to be the ones most ready and with the loudest voices to shout, "Do not listen" to the important message God has sent to them!! They are quite the opposite of the Prophet who said, "When the Lord speaks from heaven, let all those that dwell on the earth hearken." These people would have shouted in his face, Oh no, he is a deceiver, "Do not listen to him," I suppose. The scriptures show that God never sent a message to the world that he did not ask the world to listen to, and all God's servants through the ages complained about nothing as much as the contempt of the preachers of the harmful doctrine of "*Do not listen to them.*" There is no account of any servant of God from Adam to the last he sent who preached this teaching, but quite the opposite,—"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." Seek, listen, and use your ears and your senses, was God's commandment

to every age to whom he sent word. Thus to recognize as servants of God these who shout, "Do not listen," which they claim to be God's voice to them, is to admit a miracle, if a miracle is an incomparable thing, according to the popular interpretation of the word.

The Saints believe the scriptures to be correct and thorough as they are, consequently, saying "*Do not listen to them*" is saying "*Do not listen to the scriptures, but listen to the explanations of those who deny the scriptures.*" It is completely ungodly to shout, "Do not listen," to something that claims to come from God; their belief that it is deception does not excuse them, even were they as conscientious as Paul in persecuting the same sort of message, for they should "listen" honestly themselves, and test it, and insist on *knowing*, not supposing whether it is true or false. Neither will they be excused just because innumerable tales falsely accuse the Saints, any more than Christ excused his persecutors because they believed those false teachers who claimed that He was an evil man, they having had the opportunity to know better.

In a word, the Saints teach their listeners to believe every doctrine, to obey every commandment, sacrament and duty which Christ and the apostles taught, and they set their adherents on the path to enjoying a fulfilment of all the promises for themselves, and urge them to become sanctified in every good deed; this cannot be denied; consequently, by their endeavors to the contrary, those who say, "*Do not listen to them*" must be trying to prevent all this from being done; and this proves them to be enemies of God and men and every goodness taught by the Saints, and it is as his enemies that the Great Author of the divine message they disregarded will pay them on the day of reckoning, unless they repent.

IV. Why do they order, "Do not listen to them?" If their own answer were permitted, it is immediate, namely, "Because they are the most dangerous deceivers in the country," they say. We admit that we are the most dangerous of all in revealing the deceit of the crafts and sorcery of these frightful howlers; most dangerous of all to scandalous storytellers who gain their good life at the cost of charming eternal souls into the darkness of hell, and keeping them there so that they can feast on their luxuries and delicacies! They tell the truth about one thing at least; they are dangerous to them as every truth is dangerous to deception and hypocrisy.

Oh, yes, surely, they are the shepherds of the flock, and it is on their shoulders that rests the responsibility for saving souls, one would suppose from their long faces pretending grief at the sin of the age! Indeed! who gave them a pastorate? Not the divine Shepherd who they confess never uttered a word to them, and whose message they order others “not to listen to,” you can be sure!! Who asked this from their hand? Reader, be not tricked by such a pretence; look into the roots of the hair, or the teeth, and if you recognize a “wolf” you will no longer be deceived!

But why do these people order others “not to listen” to the Saints? One reason is, let them deny it if they can, that the Saints’ truths are far superior to the tales of these people—that the Saints freely promise the blessings these people deny; and they fear the people will discover the improvements they could make if they changed places with them; and thus they would lose their livelihood and their respect, and would not be able to feed their pride; they cannot work, and begging is shameful to them; consequently, they tell all sorts of untruthful tales about the Saints and their religion, in order to demean them, make them unpopular, say they are too disgraceful to listen to; and they also fear that if they went to listen they would hear almost everything contrary to their false accusations, so that they would be caught immediately in their places of refuge and lies, and that they would be overtaken by the shame they fear by so doing; and since they began to accuse falsely, they must continue and shout, “DO NOT LISTEN TO THEM, otherwise I shall excommunicate you,” &c.

Another reason why some forbid listening is because they are so weak-headed and inclined to believe slander, or give credence to the stories they have heard, and they believe the Saints are deceivers; but those poor storytellers, if they are not convinced of the evil of that by now, we fear that it is useless to bother with them. Another reason with many is, whether they themselves know it or not, it is obvious to someone with his eyes open, that they yield to the influence of false spirits and of destructive religious illusions that are opposed to the truth; our country is nearly full of every kind of trickery and cunning to get the world to listen to everyone except those whom God commands us to listen to. Let them be angry or not, and let their master be angry; he and I, and heaven too, know that this is



a truth too difficult to disprove. The heart's enmity toward divine truths causes it despite that.

V. The consequences of ordering and of obeying their counsel. The fact of the divinity of the Saints' message proves its importance; the fact that everyone's eternal life depends on listening to and obeying every previous message God has sent to the world is similar reasoning to prove that the lives of the age depend on listening to and obeying this message; and the historical fact that God destroyed every previous age that disregarded his message to them is strong reasoning to prove that the same will be the fate of those who scorn this message. But we have clearer proofs of it than that; yes, we have the definite word of its truthful Author, that harsh punishment and destruction will come upon those who refuse it. The Son of God said, "He that heareth you [those I have sent] heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me." So it is now precisely. He has said that "whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven;" and he said also, "It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the depth of the sea than that he should offend one of these little ones." So let the consequence of shouting "*Do not listen*," be dreaded then.

Paul's advice was quite the opposite of this, namely, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," yes, good, even in Mormonism. It is obvious that Paul did not belong to these persecuting churches. "Do not listen to them," is it, Sirs? i.e., in case they see your trick to keep them in darkness. You know that if they came to hear the two sides, your false accusations would be made obvious, and you would come to the disgrace deserved by such attackers who have no cause. Their crafts are based on "NOT LISTENING" to the other side; and as soon as some of those under their spell come to search impartially, they will be convinced of their deception. Every reasonable person considers it an *insult* to his senses for anyone to give him such advice. Are they the choosers of religion for their fellowmen? Is it by their *ipse dixit* that reasonable men are to be judged? If not, why are these not as equipped to judge for themselves as are the former? It is a clear sign of an intentional deceiver to shout, "Do not listen to them." That popular doctrine has been preached in every age, and above every message that God has sent to the world. These must



have had brothers in the old world, those who taught all but eight "not to listen" to Noah. This doctrine of "not listening to them" was very popular after the flood too, with hosts of proselytes for it, such as the numerous churches in Admah, Zeboim, Sodom, Gomorrah, &c. When they were warned to leave their harmful traditions and return to the truth, a pack was sent from the colleges to shout at the tops of their voices, "do not listen to them." Not to mention those large churches that were in Babylon, in Tyre, Sidon, Jerusalem, &c., which were based on the doctrine of "NOT LISTENING" to anything the servants of God said, remembering that popular one in Athens that had taught the doctrine of "not listening" to Paul. It is true that there were there the occasional few as there are in Wales, not quite steadfast in the faith of "not listening," but who came to listen for themselves, and they heard from the Saints everything so contrary to the false accusations of the Saints' persecutors, that their eyes were opened and they embraced the truth. But the majority went by shaking their heads, and some gnashing their teeth under the influence of the warning from the pulpit to "*not listen*." The leaders of this sect are more faithful in their disciplinary rules than were their forefathers; for these make the crime of "listening to them" a sin of excommunication, so that having once gone to the unpopular faction which says "prove all things," their sins are unpardonable! They can never come back to them. This makes me think of the jailer who threatened to turn the prisoners out into the world as a punishment for chatting to each other. "Not to listen" to them was his motto, as it is theirs, while the greatest blessing to the poor prisoners would be to be excommunicated from such prisons to freedom, so that they may prove all things they choose, especially to test a plan that professes to be a divine message to them. So it will be seen that the doctrine of "not listening" is old and very popular; and the prophecies demonstrate that they will be as successful in the latter days in getting the people "not to listen" as in any previous age. As it was in the days of Noah and the days of Lot, namely, "*do not listen to them*," so will it be in the days before the coming of the Son of Man. And it is obvious that a very large church is to be on the earth in the latter days preaching the doctrine of "do not listen to them," to whom it is said, "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man *regarded* ;" i.e., "they did not listen." "But

ye have set at nought all my counsel by 'not listening,' and would none of my reproof;" and the reason was that their preachers were shouting "do not listen to them." "I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh."

Moses complained bitterly because of the preachers who told the people, "Do not listen to them;" and it was because of "not listening" to the servants of God that Israel's heaviest punishments came. God lamented through David because of the success of the craft of "not listening," "Oh, would that my people had hearkened unto me," said He. So it was with Isaiah in his day, however important the message God sent; "they will not listen," he said. The Lord complained through Jeremiah that their ears had become so heavy that "*they cannot listen.*" When He set watchmen over them to lead them in his paths, saying, "Hearken to the sound of the trumpet," they said, "*we will not hearken;*" the reason was because the false teachers had always taught them to "not listen." "Hear, O earth; behold, I will bring evil upon this people," he said, because they did "not listen." The servants of God in every age were unable to get the ear of their fellowmen, because of the multitude of preachers of the doctrine of "*not listening.*" Such was the complaint of Christ and his followers, and this is the source of their followers' grief, because people "do not listen." But it will not continue so forever! Oh no, "in their month will they be found," and this age will not pass before the shouts of thousands will be heard echoing in the rocks of Wales, "Oh, if only we had listened to our teachers instead of numbing our ears by listening to those who said, 'Do not listen to them;'" "but the summer is ended, the harvest of our souls is past, and we are not saved" will be their sigh, when God has gathered up into shelter those who *did listen* to him, and those who did not will suffer together the destructive drops of the winepress of His wrath, for "*Not listening.*"

How long, responsible Welshmen, will you let men like these pull the wool over your eyes, so that they can unbutton your pockets and flog you afterwards if you dare put your thoughts into action! Why speak of the black slaves of America, while there are so many slaves around us, as much more pitiful as their skins are whiter!