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Journal of Discourses,
Volume 23

DISCOURSE BY ELDER H. W. NAISBITT.

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, May 15th, 1881.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

THE PREACHING AND PRACTICE OF THE GOSPEL – VISITATIONS OF ANGELS, ETC.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 376, JD XXII.)

[JD 23:1 – p.2, Henry W. Naisbitt, May 15th, 1881](#)

there have been larger opportunities for the acquisition of the knowledge which pertains to the designs of the Creator. I think that all thoughtful men and thoughtful women have felt within themselves that there were a great many problems in regard to human existence upon which they would like to have light and intelligence, they would like to understand and to have a surety as to whether a man was anything more than a mere animal in creation, whether it was his destiny only "to eat and to drink, for to-morrow we die," or whether his existence was of a continuous character; whether after having laid down this tabernacle of flesh he would be privileged to enjoy again the associations which have been agreeable to him on earth, whether the family circle would be burst asunder, or whether continuing to exist he would be divested in a great measure of the temptations which seem to influence him on the right hand and on the left, and which appear to lead so many thousands of the human family down to degradation and death. It appears to me that there are questions in connection with all these things that thousands would like to solve, and questions which really never can be solved by the ordinary wisdom and knowledge which pertain to the educational facilities of mankind. Now, in reading these prophecies concerning the future angelic visitations that are to take place in the history of mankind, I have no doubt that those who have pondered over these prophecies have thought that in these visitations they would find the key which should unlock the past, the present and the future, and be of great value in the salvation of the human family – salvation from ignorance, from sin, and from death. These are the things which men everywhere need. They need to be saved from themselves; they need to be saved from each other; they need to be saved in regard to the future, according to the Scriptures, and the generally received notions of the Christian world.

[JD 23:2 – p.3, Henry W. Naisbitt, May 15th, 1881](#)

Now, this angel that was to come in the latter times was declared to be one who was to bring the everlasting Gospel in order that it might be preached among all nations. Now, the everlasting Gospel, whatever that may mean, is something that is divine in its character. It is not conjured up by cunning and designing men. God was its author; in fact the Scriptures say that His Son Jesus was the "author and finisher" of the Christian faith on earth. Whenever, therefore, the revelation of that Gospel comes it must give man an account of his origin, of the necessity of the circumstances of the present, and something of his future. There is one thing that strikes the reader as being very peculiar in regard to this angel coming to the human family. It is implied upon the surface, and in its depths also, that there would be no necessity of sending the Gospel if the children of man had the Gospel already, this would be superfluous. Then when this angel comes is he to come to Christendom, or is he to come to heathendom? Is he to come to men that have not heard of Jesus, know nothing of God, know nothing of the way of salvation, or is he to come to the Christian world. If he is to come to heathendom it of course would be to bring salvation, the redemption of the soul and body of man; but if he is to come to Christendom it would almost seem to imply that amid them even the Gospel of redemption was unpreached or misunderstood, for in all the creations of our God there does not appear to be anything of an unnecessary character, there are no steps taken in His government that are inapplicable to the existing condition of things; but the fact that an angel was to come in "the dispensation of the fulness of times" naturally implies that the Gospel would not be at that time preached on the face of the earth. Now this is rather an awkward conclusion

to arrive at when all Christendom is said to be doing so much in regard to the building of churches, the teaching of religion, the payment of ministers, the sending of the so-called Gospel to the heathen, and the furnishing of Bibles to all the nations of the earth. And on reflecting upon the visits of this angel a man would naturally enquire, if this angel is going to bring the Gospel, in what does the Gospel consist, and as a necessary consequence he would also begin to enquire as to what the records say which have come down to us from ancient times. He would look into the New Testament; he would read the sayings of those whose names have become historic; he would read the sayings of the Great Teacher, who was sent from heaven, even Jesus Christ the righteous; and he would read the acts and doings in that book of His successors the Apostles, and of the primitive church, and from this record he would endeavor to find out what the Gospel was as preached in ancient times, and after he had done this he would begin to contrast the Christian organizations with which he was surrounded, the theories which Christians hold, the doctrines which they teach and put them side by side in parallel columns with the teachings of the ancient Church. He would institute comparisons and so would show a desire to understand the necessity for this angel coming expressly from heaven to "preach" the everlasting Gospel unto them that dwell upon the earth, and to every nation and kindred and tongue and people." And in taking the New Testament for his guide, in pondering the acts and teachings of Jesus and his Apostles, he would begin to understand that there was method and order in connection with that Gospel; that it consisted of a series of principles, of ideas, and thoughts and practices, which were intended to work out some desired end. Hence it was said that the Gospel in ancient times "was the power of God unto salvation." It was an important thing, it was something of value; it was something calculated to affect a man's interests in time and in eternity, it was "the power of God unto salvation;" and I do not think that in any other recognized record are we so likely to find a portrayal of that Gospel in its purity and original simplicity as in the record called the New Testament. When we come to search that, we realize that Jesus professed to be the Son of God. He encouraged his followers to exercise faith in his Father, and in regard to his works he told them that he "did nothing of himself, but that which he had seen the Father do that did he," and that which he did before his Apostles, and which he commanded them to do, was according to the commandments which he had received of the Father. I think the Christian world will be willing to acknowledge that this faith in God was a principle which was calculated to enhance the welfare of the human family. It was calculated to infuse high and lofty thoughts into the man or woman who accepted it; faith in the existence of God, faith that they were his children; faith that he was alive to their interests; faith that he was able to teach them the purpose of their existence, and the design that he had in their creation, faith that he was able to hear and answer their prayers. And the man who enjoyed this faith in God after he had been taught it was a man who was likely not only to feel higher conceptions in regard to humanity, so far as he himself was concerned, but there would be bound to spring up in his heart feelings, growing out of this, in regard to his brother-man, and to his sister, woman; he would be bound to look upon them with more regard for their interests, well-being and salvation upon the earth, than he would have done without this conception. He would be interested in the moral, mental and spiritual condition of his neighbor; he would be interested in imparting to his neighbor the truth, and thus the spirit of faith in God would begin to spread and exercise a salutary influence wherever it was felt among those who received it.

[JD 23:3 – p.4 – p.5 – p.6, Henry W. Naisbitt, May 15th, 1881](#)

And Jesus was not satisfied only with teaching this faith in God, but he realized that there would grow out of it these or similarly certain principles of action with regard to the conduct of those who received it. A man would begin to realize that inasmuch as he was a child of God, that he had in many respects been unworthy of that position, that he had been guilty of many acts both of commission and omission that were derogatory to such origin, and he would naturally begin to repent, to be sorry for having committed himself in this way and not to be sorry only, but to lay everything of this character aside in order that he might stand approved of God His Heavenly Father. Hence there would grow out of faith the spirit of repentance for past sins, and then it was found that there was an ordinance in the Gospel by which through divine appointment, a man was enabled to receive the "remission of his sins," consequent on the sacrifice that was to be offered on Calvary. That ordinance of the Church, as established by Jesus, was the ordinance of water baptism for the remission of sins. This was one of the principles of the Gospel, one of the principles of salvation, one of the steps in the educational process of those who submitted themselves to the authority of the Great Teacher, Jesus Christ.

Now there is a vast diversity of opinion in the Christian world in regard to baptism, but this diversity we need not stop to consider. We can take the New Testament, and see what is laid down there upon the subject. Some think baptism unimportant. Christ, however, evidently thought it important. In speaking to Nicodemus, he said, "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." And when he commissioned his Apostles to preach the Gospel, they went forth among the people, "baptizing them in water, confessing their sins." Indeed, there are illustrations in abundance of this fact, that will be familiar to all the students of the New Testament. The great Apostle Peter, who appeared to have been the master spirit of the Church on the day of Pentecost, when men began to inquire what they should do to be saved, answered the inquirers in this way, "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." This was the ancient order; this was the order established by Jesus, and the presumption is beyond dispute that if it was necessary for any one single member of that primitive church, or for any of the Apostles, or for Jesus himself to be baptized in water, it was necessary for the whole. Hence the irresistible conclusion is, that every member of the primitive church was baptized, "buried with him by baptism unto death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." This was one of the doctrines of the ancient church, and the next doctrine that followed it in the programme and system of the Gospel was the giving of the Holy Ghost. Now the scriptures tell us that "the manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal." In every land and clime, in all conditions of the human family, of every color, among the most highly civilized as among the most degraded, there is given to every man this measure of the spirit of God to profit withal, and it is in accordance with his obedience to the measure received of that spirit that he will be rewarded in the future. But in the Christian church there appears to have been an order that went in advance of this universal gift of the spirit. It was called "the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands." Hence those who are familiar with the New Testament will realize that when men were baptized they were afterwards confirmed by "the laying on of hands," and upon that confirmation they received the Holy Ghost. This Holy Ghost in them was the power of God. It opened up their minds, it informed their reason, enlarged their capacity, and enabled them to comprehend, as the scriptures say, the past, present and future. It was a grand gift, and one essential to salvation. To one man it gave the spirit of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge; to another faith; to another the gift of healing; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues, etc. It was to them the fountain of divine intelligence and power. And these manifestations followed the believer everywhere. It harmonized all the conflicting thoughts and ideas that they might have had in regard to God, in regard to the institutions with which they were surrounded, in regard to the duties devolving upon them, in regard to their destiny in the future. It made them one in Christ Jesus. They were baptized by one baptism, and they enjoyed one spirit. They were rich in the unity of the faith. And when men were thus baptized and received this spirit it was not expected that they should stand strictly upon their own individuality. They were not left to wander abroad to the right and to the left, but there appeared to have been in the primitive times a good deal of what we see in our own day. An organization grew up. They formed what was called a church. It is called in the New Testament, in some places "the Church of God," in other places it is called "the Church of Christ." It was a church composed of those who had thus been baptized, and thus received of the Holy Ghost. They were united together for self-defense. They were united in order that they might be taught by the authorities of that church. They were not taught by strangers or by men who had never passed through the same gateway and received the same spirit as themselves, but according to the New Testament they were taught by Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers and Evangelists, men who were engaged in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. These officers were "set in the church," according to the New Testament, for the edifying of the body, for the training of the members, until they all came to the unity of the faith and to the full stature of men and women in Christ. Now, that was a glorious age. I have heard good men and women, ever since I heard anything, wish that they had lived in those primitive times. They have said how glad they would have been to have the privilege of even touching the hem of the Savior's garment, witnessing his miracles, hearing his teachings, and to have been obedient to the principles which he taught. Men and women have said that they would have been glad to have lived in the Apostolic age; that they would have belonged to the primitive church; that they would have been in their glory to share in its trials and persecutions, to have enjoyed its spirit, to have received of its blessings, and to have acquired the knowledge and intelligence which accompanied the

Priesthood that had control of that special church. I believe there are thousands everywhere to-day – men who are Elders, Deacons, Superintendents of Sunday Schools, teachers in Sunday Schools – who, on reading the history of the past feel that they would have been glad to have lived in the primitive times and seen the leaders and apostles of that church. Well, now, these feelings are natural. We realize the glory and blessing which belong to that ancient order. But it appears that this order in a great measure has become obsolete; it has passed away, it is not to be found anywhere in the form in which it existed anciently. There may be a church that has faith in God; there may be many churches that include repentance, that practice baptism; some may have faith in baptism for the remission of sins; there may be here and there men who believe in the reception of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands; but in its beautiful primitive order it is nowhere to be found among the children of men.

JD 23:6, Henry W. Naisbitt, May 15th, 1881

Now, in regard to the angel that should "fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth," it is only reasonable to suppose that when the Gospel is restored, it will be restored with all its ancient power, blessings, ordinances, Priesthood, and everything that gave it grandeur and glory in the primitive times. But now the query is, Has this angel come? If he has not, are the children of men looking for him? Is there any anticipation in the midst of the Christian world of his appearance? I think not. But here among a small section of men and women in the Rocky Mountains, gathered from all the nations of the earth, there is an understanding that this angel has come, and should not the world be pleased at the assumption; for if they are delighted in reading the account of this angel's probable visitation, why not take comfort and delight in the thought that angelic visitation may again become general or partial, as the case of necessity may require. Here, then, we have a little nucleus of men and women who say this angel has come in the 19th century, in the "dispensation of the fulness of times;" that he has brought with him and given to those who are preaching it, the "everlasting Gospel" as it existed in the ancient times; that in their practice they are in the habit of exercising faith in God; that they have repented of their sins; that they have been baptized in water for the promised remission; that they have laid aside their follies; that they want to free themselves from error and from all unrighteousness; that they have again identified themselves, as did the ancient Christians, with the Church, possessing within itself the ancient organization, the ancient Priesthood, the ancient authority to teach, to lead, and to govern and control, until all the obedient come again to the unity of the faith. Now if the Christian world take joy and satisfaction in reading ancient history or prospective history; if there are thousands of longing hearts in every denomination who say they would have rejoiced to have lived in the ancient times, to have listened to the teachings of the authorities of the primitive church, and to have shared in its blessings, etc.; what should be the thought when they hear again from men passing to and fro in the nations of the earth declaring that the ancient order has been restored; what should be the thought of men of intelligence, men of reflecting minds, men that know the merits and demerits of the Christian world should not these hearts leap for joy when they hear that the Gospel has been thus restored in all its ancient glory?

JD 23:6 – p.7, Henry W. Naisbitt, May 15th, 1881

The Latter-day Saints testify – it is a standing testimony to the nations – that this angel spoken of by John, the Revelator, has come to the human family, that he has brought with him the ancient Gospel, and that all those who are willing to accept their testimony, to exercise faith in God, to lay aside their dead works, their foolish notions and their false traditions, to divest themselves of the errors of the ages, and to be baptized and receive the power of the Holy Ghost, that they shall be as full of assurance as were the Saints in ancient times. For this, the Gospel of the kingdom neither was nor is a cunningly devised fable, nor was it something got up by the craftiness of men, but the obedient realized and know that it is "the power of God unto salvation;" it has come to them not in word only but in power and in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance; and there are thousands throughout the length and breadth of the Territory, thousands throughout the United States, the islands of the sea, and throughout the nations of the earth, that rejoice in this Gospel. They are ready to testify that they know that God lives, that Jesus was the Savior of mankind, that the Gospel in all its pristine purity and beauty has been restored, and that in our own day all the blessings and privileges necessary for a complete salvation are offered to mankind. This may seem a reflection upon the intelligence of ages that are past and

gone. But it is not so. I presume that there are thousands and millions who have passed away, that did the best they could, they lived up to the light they had, they sought to please God in their daily walk and conversation; but the Elders of Israel take the liberty of pointing out "a more acceptable way," and they are free to testify and speak of their own knowledge that God has restored the Gospel and prepared the way for the salvation of all who are willing to give obedience to that which has been revealed.

JD 23:7, Henry W. Naisbitt, May 15th, 1881

May God enable us to appreciate the day of our salvation and live according to his design, that we may be saved in his kingdom, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Erastus Snow, February 5th, 1882

REMARKS BY ELDER ERASTUS SNOW,

Delivered at Logan, Sunday Afternoon, February 5th, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE INDIANS – THE INFLUENCE OF THE ELDERS AMONG THEM IN THE INTEREST OF
PEACE, ETC.

JD 23:7 – p.8, Erastus Snow, February 5th, 1882

I am asked to occupy the few minutes yet remaining: If the Spirit gives me liberty I will pursue the train of thought that has passed through my mind while Brother Richards has been speaking upon the spirit that has gone abroad upon the remnants of the house of Israel who occupy this land, the American Indians whom we understand to be the descendants of the Nephites, the Lamanites, the Lemuelites and the Ishmaelites who formerly possessed this land, whose fathers we have an account of in the Book of Mormon. Those who are most familiar with their history, and with the history of our settlements in these mountains for the last thirty years – the manner in which we have sent out our colonies to locate upon the land of the Lamanites: the manner in which we have treated with them to obtain their consent and approval to occupy and improve the land which they claim; the manner in which we have moved among them to maintain ourselves and to build the towns and cities which are now inhabited by our people throughout this mountain region: the manner in which we have sent out missionaries in advance of our colonies to open up the way, carrying with them the spirit of the holy Gospel, the spirit of peace, the spirit of love and brotherhood, to endeavor to impress them with the belief that we were not men of blood, but that we were a people who cherished and cultivated the spirit of peace; the course we have taken when difficulties would arise between them and our settlements, which occasionally would occur through the indiscretion of thoughtless and selfish men, to settle the same in a friendly, peaceful way, thereby avoiding bloodshed and war; and the spirit in which we have chastised them when it became necessary to do so, not in malice nor revenge, but as a father would chastise his wayward child, and then as soon as possible pour into their wounds the oil and the wine to heal them up again – those, I say, who are best acquainted with our labors in this direction will best appreciate the results.

JD 23:8, Erastus Snow, February 5th, 1882

I have had much experience during the last twenty years in this direction; and have, by means of the spirit of the Gospel, averted much war and bloodshed.

[JD 23:8, Erastus Snow, February 5th, 1882](#)

Wherever our colonies have been sent in advance, their influence has been felt for good – not alone to them, not only has it tended to establish confidence and a bond of friendship between the natives and our colonies, but it has also tended to restrain the uprising in their hearts to war against the white race, and has thus promoted peace to our General Government, the misrepresentations and the lying of our enemies to the contrary notwithstanding.

[JD 23:8, Erastus Snow, February 5th, 1882](#)

We know there are to-day, as there always have been, men who are suspicious and full of green-eyed jealousy, ever ready to misrepresent the purest motives of the best people on the earth; and acts of loyalty and honesty and commendation are construed to be those of conspiracy and wickedness. And we know too that among this class of vilifiers and defamers are many of the clergy, some of whom have come among us as followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, to bring to us glad tidings: but being wolves in sheep's clothing they do the work of their master, and, therefore, they scatter broadcast lies and defamation. And many newspaper scribblers, who are ever ready to pander to popular sentiment, whether it be right or wrong, who know not the facts in the case, take up and republish to the world the untruths and misrepresentations of the wicked men who are seeking notoriety at the expense of truth and justice.

[JD 23:8 – p.9, Erastus Snow, February 5th, 1882](#)

The history of Utah Territory gives the lie to all these misrepresentations. There is no part of the American continent that has been peopled and redeemed from its desolated condition with so little bloodshed as Utah. There is no other State or Territory where the general government has expended so little money or so little force, or where so few lives have been lost in settling a country and maintaining peace with the Indians as Utah. To-day the American nation is indebted for the spirit of "Mormonism" that has been diffused through this mountainous country in the maintenance of peace, and the saving to the nation of millions of treasure as well as thousands of lives.

[JD 23:9, Erastus Snow, February 5th, 1882](#)

And the wisdom of the Lord, through His servant Brigham Young, in sending colonies into Arizona, and on the several branches of the Colorado, also into the San Juan country, as well as on our eastward borders, may be witnessed to-day in the influence that is exerted by our people to check the spirit of war and bloodshed among the Navajoes and the Utes and the Apaches. The wars that have troubled the country during the last four or five years in Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona, have been, to my certain knowledge, greatly mitigated by the presence of our colonies on their borders, and by the labors of our missionaries among the Indians. During those years I have spent considerable time in visiting those colonies, and have, therefore, been brought in contact with many of the nations of the different tribes when they have been visiting colonies and missionary stations. And so has Elder Woodruff and some others of the Quorum of the Twelve. And I am a witness to this fact, that in every instance where the influence of our missionaries and our colonies has been exerted upon these fallen people, their chiefs have been imbued with the spirit of peace, and they in turn have exerted their influence on the side of peace to allay the uprising of their more bloodthirsty brothers. And when they have been almost on the point of joining distant warlike bands engaged in hostilities against the Government, and have come to us to know our views and to seek our counsel, our advice has always been in the interest of peace, in the spirit of kindness; we have always taught them to restrain their hostile feelings, and have portrayed to them the benefits of peace, forbearance and longsuffering, and advised them to endure what they considered wrong rather than to attempt to redress their wrongs in their feeble, helpless condition, by taking up arms against the strong and powerful government of the United States; and besides, that it was

displeasing to God our heavenly Father, that they should shed the blood of man. Such is the character of the teachings and counsels of our leading men of the various settlements to the Indians, and of our missionaries who are sent among them.

JD 23:9, Erastus Snow, February 5th, 1882

And I have had the testimony, during the last two years, of many of our presiding Elders and Indian missionaries – and they are men, I know, whose word may be relied upon, and who are themselves, I know, the true friends of the Indians, and are laboring for their welfare – they assured me that had it not been for this influence, the young men of the Navajoes would have been fighting with the Utes in Colorado during the last war, and that many more of the Apaches would have been on the war–path with the late Victorio in New Mexico.

JD 23:9 – p.10, Erastus Snow, February 5th, 1882

And here let me say, the last outbreak of the Apaches last fall, was forced upon them by the foolish and ruthless procedure of some of the officers at Camp Apache, greatly to the disgust of every thinking man acquainted with the affairs of that country. It was no more nor less than an attempt to make a great national affair out of a little, harmless, religious enthusiasm that sprang up among that tribe. Once in a while the Indians become very much excited over some local prophet; and it was merely an event of this nature that led to the late Apache war; the interference of the troops to quell their religious enthusiasm. And I want to say that a general war all through these eastern mountains and Arizona was imminent last September and October, and have no doubt would have broken out, had it not been for the presence and influence of our colonies extended along their immediate borders, which are presided over by careful, wise men, and their intercourse and labors among the Indians; and for the conservative influence of those chiefs and leading Apaches that Brother Woodruff visited and preached the Gospel to two years ago, and whom I and some half dozen of our brethren visited and labored with three years ago last summer, which had the tendency to restrain the uprising of their more hot–headed brethren and of quelling it. They did more than all the troops from California, New Mexico and Eastern Arizona in bringing about peace.

JD 23:10, Erastus Snow, February 5th, 1882

The influence of those friendly Indians, who had listened to the counsels of our missionaries and our leading men in that country, and to Brother Woodruff, who went through the mountains to hunt up the bands that had hidden, and who were procuring ammunition and otherwise preparing for war – I say, their influence was felt for good, as was fully attested by their success in bringing the hostiles in by hundreds in the vicinity of Cooley's ranch and elsewhere, and in allaying the warlike spirit among the Indians generally around Camp Apache; and thus in a quiet way bringing about peace and preventing a general war.

JD 23:10, Erastus Snow, February 5th, 1882

I know these things are true. I was posted every day, being at the time on the Little Colorado, and in company with President Jesse N. Smith, who was in communication with our brethren on the borders of those hostile Indians, who had messengers going and coming every day to and from them bearing counsels of peace; and I know that the prayers of our people ascended to the Father in the interest of peace, that the counsels of peace might prevail among them; and I know too that our prayers, together with the good influences that had been exerted, did prevail on behalf of the Saints of that region of country. And I know and can testify that the influence of our interpreters and discreet Indian men and missionaries, whom we have located on the San Juan River, between the Navajoes and the Ute reservations, who have been there during the last three years, as also those on the south of the Navajoe reservation, and between the Navajoes, and the Apaches on the various branches of the Little Colorado, I know that their influence and the effect of their teachings and counsels upon the Lamanites is in the interest of peace between the white race and the Indians of that country.

I feel it a pleasure to be able to speak knowingly of these things, and hope that this spirit of peace may extend throughout the land. Amen.

John Taylor, November 9th, 1881

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered in the St. George Tabernacle,

Wednesday Evening, November 9th, 1881.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE SETTLING OF SOUTHERN UTAH – BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE, ETC.

[JD 23:11, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881](#)

I feel pleased to have the opportunity of again meeting with you. There are many things that if I had time, I should like to talk about. However, there were one or two statements, that I made yesterday, which I will further explain. In speaking of the position of the people and of their settlements in this southern country, I then stated that President Young did not make any mistake in laying out a city here, nor in building a Temple here; that it was quite as important a move as any that could have been made in the interests of the Church and kingdom of God upon the earth. If I were to enter into the details of that move I should speak of it perhaps in a two-fold capacity; but I will speak for a short time, at least, upon some of the leading features associated with the position that we occupy here in these valleys of the mountains.

[JD 23:11, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881](#)

We are quite a long distance from the outside world. It is true there are railroads and more are being made; and it is right there should be. That is their part of the business. In this way, and in many instances, they are assisting us to build up the kingdom of God, but they don't know it. If they did they would not like to do it.

[JD 23:11 – p.12 – p.13 – p.14, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881](#)

The position that we occupy in these valleys of the mountains, is a very peculiar one. When we came up here the first place that was designated was Salt Lake City. President Young said that he had a manifestation that that was the place. There was a valley, a very good valley, a comparatively rich valley, a valley that was well watered, a valley that could be irrigated without much labor, where the streams were quite easy of access and where a small community could easily raise their sustenance; and this we did. Now, had we landed in a place like this at first, it would have been more difficult, people would have become more discouraged, and some of them felt very much discouraged as it was – some going to California because everything looked so forbidding. Yet others thought it would be a pleasant place to reside in, a place where a living could be as easily obtained as in most other places, except we go to some of the rich lands of Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, etc. But there were other circumstances associated with these things that would have made it difficult for us to sustain ourselves even in those places. For instance we lived in a rich land back in Missouri. Everything there

seemed to grow at a very rapid rate, everything increased very fast. I have heard some people tell such big stories about the productiveness of that country that I have sometimes been afraid to tell what I myself knew of it, for fear that people would not believe me. For instance, I have seen fields of corn that a regiment of soldiers could ride into and they would be out of sight; and I have seen beans grow where corn has been planted where the corn stalks have served as bean poles; and I have seen pumpkins and squash grow among them, three crops growing the same year and at the same time. That country, nevertheless, has many drawbacks. In that country we were very unhealthy. We were subject to what is called fever and ague every year; in fact, in the spring we used to think we did well if we didn't happen to die off in the fall. Why could we not stop there? Because the land was too good, and we were easy of access to men desirous to possess our property, and they told us to move on, and we had to go. We had to leave Missouri, and I suppose God intended to try the Saints, to let them pass through certain kinds of experience and place them in a position that they would have to lean on Him. Some of the people rebelled against these things in their feelings. Among the rest, I remember being much shocked at the remarks of Sidney Rigdon after he had been imprisoned with the Prophet Joseph in Richmond jail, as well as many others. I visited them in jail, and Sidney Rigdon made a remark soon after he got out, to the effect that if God did not care anything more about us than He seemed to do, that if He allowed us to be hauled around as we had been, he did not care about serving such a God. That is, he found the trials were heavier for him than he was capable of bearing, notwithstanding that he had seen the Lord and had had visions pertaining to the celestial, terrestrial and telestial kingdoms, in which he had seen the position of men in the future, and the purposes of God regarding the nations of the earth, and had borne testimony of it in connection with Joseph Smith, as we find recorded in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. Yet when trials came his knees faltered, and the knees of many others have faltered in the same way. Now, we talk about lands, good rich land. Why did we not stay in Missouri? Because people would not let us. It was just so in Illinois. Why did we leave there? Because, as I have heard Brother George A. Smith say, we left because we could not help ourselves; at least, that was the purport of his saying. I think the Lord was very merciful to us in Salt Lake Valley. I believe we landed just in the right place. The people commenced to establish themselves; they began to find that they could raise crops there, and that the land was very productive. We stayed there for a while and began to make little settlements and little excursions out into the surrounding country. The people had all kinds of difficulties. I remember once, in Bountiful, there were three or four families went up to settle there, and they felt that there was not enough water, and that they could hardly get along. They got to quarreling about water rights, as we do sometimes. I do not know of much quarreling down here; I do not think you have as much water to quarrel over as they had. Afterwards President Young was moved upon to begin to make settlements in other places. We had now obtained a foothold. We had a place where we could raise all the grain necessary for our sustenance, where we could raise sheep, cattle, etc. We pushed out to Ogden on the one hand and to Provo on the other, and then occupied some of the best places in Salt Lake Valley, in Utah Valley, and on the Weber. We began to increase; more immigrants came in, and others began to come from above. Things went on. A Temple was started there, but it seemed to progress very slowly; as well it might when we consider the substantial nature of the building. When we started, we had nothing but wagons to haul the rock on, and they were very big rock, if you remember. Those rocks had to be hauled about 17 miles in those wagons, and owing to the liability of the wagons to break down, this work gave us a great deal of trouble. To-day, and right along for a number of years past, since the railroad has been built, it is not uncommon to bring in some three or four car loads at a time, delivering the rock in the Temple yard. Then it was thought best to commence down here. Why? Let me tell you some other things and show you about the settlements north and south, and especially south. If you remember, Brother Geo. A. Smith, as much as 25 years ago – I don't remember exactly how long – came down and made a settlement at Parowan, and another at Cedar – and here is Brother Henry Lunt present, who was one of that number. He came to Cedar at that time, and they tried to start iron works at that place. And then Brother Joseph Horne and some others were sent down to see if cotton could not be raised in this district of country in the hope that something could be done whereby we might produce the raw material for the manufacture of our clothes, and they stayed a little while somewhere not far from here, some five miles south on the Santa Clara, I am told. There was a rich little settlement up there. Some time after, a great deal of it was washed away. I remember the struggles Brother George A. used to have. He labored under difficulties, being so very heavy, and not as active as most men; but he was a man of great energy. He would

come down here and bring a few men, and would settle them down and go back again. By and by he would bring some more down, all that he could pick up that would volunteer. By the time he came down again, he would find half of the others had gone. They did not want to stop. They thought the land was set up on edge and had never been finished, and they had all kinds of notions. Then he would return to the city, and drum up a few more recruits, and take them down; and by the time he got here he would find that a good many of those he left had also gone. Finally, they became weeded out and left, until he got a lot of folks who, if they had considered it a duty to go on to a barren rock and stay there until they should be instructed to leave, would have done it. It needed just such an element to come to this country. What Brother Snow said here, referring to the sad fact of there being such a number of widows in this place whose husbands had gone to their graves through having worked themselves to death, was perfectly true; but, then, we don't want to cry about it. We may as well laugh as cry about the past. You have done a great deal of hard work. In coming down from Pine Valley we found immense dugways in the most forbidding places, and it has required all the perseverance, energy, intelligence and faith of even those men who were capable of living on a dry rock – it required the combined energy of the whole to accomplish these things, and a good deal of faith too.

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Still President Young urged forward the people; Brother Geo. A. Smith and Brother Erastus Snow urged them forward, and others urged them forward, and there was a general feeling to build up this southern country. Finally it was found that our Temple in Salt Lake City would take such a long time to build, it was thought best to erect one down here. Why? Because there was a people living here who were more worthy than any others. Who were more worthy of the blessings of a Temple than those who had displayed the self-abnegation exhibited by the pioneers of the south? God inspired President Young to build a Temple here because of the fidelity and self-abnegation of the people; and, furthermore that there might be an asylum here for those living further south to be administered to in the holy ordinances of God. I speak this for your credit – not that all of you are of that class, but let those that are worthy take the credit, and those that are not, need not take it. This Temple was built and we went into it, and a great many thousands of people have been administered to, and for, within its walls. People have administered for themselves and for their progenitors. Over 150,000 people, Brother McAllister says, have been administered for in this Temple. Don't you think it is worth while building a Temple where such a work can be done? If life is worth anything, if salvation is worth anything, if the life of our friends and brethren with whom we shall be associated in the kingdom of God, is worth anything, then I think a good work was done in the building of this Temple. In other words, it was a wise move. Why? Because it helped to sustain this part of the country. Means were brought from other places down here to supply the people with means and labor, thus it has been a blessing both to the living and the dead. You men who comprehend things aright, you would not take in exchange anything that could be conferred upon you for the blessings you have received in that Temple.

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There were then blessings of a temporal nature, as well as of a spiritual nature, connected with the labor performed in the building of that house. There was another thing. In establishing the kingdom of God it was necessary that there should be a strong place somewhere here between the land south and the land north. It was necessary that there should be a foothold here all through these valleys of the mountains between Salt Lake City and north of Salt Lake City clear away, as you have heard President Young say, on the backbone of the American continent. And why? We make remarks sometimes, but I always like to get at the bottom of them. Why is it better for us to be here than to be somewhere else? If we had been in Missouri we should have been mobbed and robbed long ago. If we had been anywhere in Central America or South America where we could have been reached, our Christian friends would have come there and stolen what we had from us. But, furthermore, President Young, who was governed by the inspiration of the Spirit of God in leading the people forth in the way he did, expected that these railroads that are now coming would come along. Years ago I expected the same thing, because I saw them at work here, and clear away into Mexico. I had it manifested to me, and Brother George Q. Cannon here has heard me speak about the matter. Didn't you Brother Cannon? (Brother Cannon: Yes, sir.) At that time I was very sick. I told President Young of some things that I then

believed would take place, among the rest was this railroad building. And if there had not been some pretty strong places, such as a settlement on Salt Creek, a settlement at Beaver, a settlement at Parowan, a settlement down here, etc., we never would have been able to carry out the will of God, and we should have been in a different position with regard to other settlements further south than we are to-day. Now your young men are beginning to say, they want room. There is plenty of room south. Here is Brother Snow, who has been working like a beaver, and there are others, who are doing the same, establishing settlements in the various valleys south, in Arizona, in Colorado, and all through this southern country, until we now occupy, as I have stated in other places, some 800 miles of country in a direct line, running north and south.

[JD 23:15, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881](#)

What did we have when we left Nauvoo? Not much. Any property to spare? I think not. I think many of us would have gone without shoes, without clothing, unless God had interposed in a miraculous manner in sending down – I was going to say, a shower of clothing. You remember that Brother Kimball prophesied at a certain time that clothing would be as cheap here as in the East. Regarding this some people felt a good deal like the man did when Elijah prophesied about a measure of meal being sold for so much. Says one man; if the heavens were to open this could not happen; but it did happen; and the other happened that Brother Kimball talked about. When the gold fever burst out, people brought clothing by the wholesale and sold it for a mere song, and let you sing the song; until the wants of the people were all supplied. Who supplied them? These men. Did they want to do it? No, it was the Lord who controlled these matters. He started up this feeling which brought the people here, and they acted more like crazy men than any I ever saw. They were ready to give us their goods almost for nothing. The Saints at that time in Salt Lake City were supplied with all the necessaries of life brought by traders whom they knew nothing about, and they traded off their cattle and their horses and anything these people could pack away. Here was a manifestation of the work of the Lord, of the will of God, and the protecting care of our heavenly Father over His Saints.

[JD 23:15, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881](#)

As I told you yesterday we have traveled among the Saints and found thousands of happy homes, good farms, good gardens and orchards, cattle, sheep, horses, etc., and that the people generally are now in a very prosperous condition. What has it originated from? We certainly did not bring it about. God has blessed our labors on the land and increased the water for our sake.

[JD 23:15 – p.16, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881](#)

Now, having said so much upon this subject I will turn to our political position. We have already made in Salt Lake City numbers of very nice places. You have also got some very beautiful buildings here. I am sorry to see so much saleratus yet in the land; I wish you had a little easier times; but while I am inclined to sympathize with you, yet I do not want my sympathy to overcome my judgment about matters of this kind.

[JD 23:16, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881](#)

Now, we have really the foundation for a prosperous State. We started with nothing a little while ago. I think we have made pretty well at it. You have had hard times; still you are living and thriving; there are none of you naked or without shoes, hats or bonnets. You seem to be provided with a great many of the good things of this life. You seem to be doing tolerably well. I know very well that you have a hard struggle to make two ends meet; I understand it. But there is one advantage you have – no one will want to steal away your place from you; will they? (Laughter.) I do not think they would want to carry it off. I do not think they would want to drive you away because of your extraneous wealth; consequently, you are free from this trouble. That is not the fix of the nations of the earth. Go to some of the nations to-day and look at their condition. Take England for instance; they are prospering very well, but look at the trouble they have had in Ireland. They have tried to benefit that people in one way or another, but they seem to spurn those benefits, and are inclined to stir up commotion which is not unlikely to end in bloodshed. We are not troubled in that way. In Russia, look at the

horrible condition they are in. They have secret societies, as spoken of in the Book of Mormon. They are engaged in all kinds of plots, plans and calculations. They have tried to kill their present Czar, after having assassinated his father. There seems to be a feeling of uneasiness and trouble among the nations. Then again, in Turkey, they have had a great deal of trouble there. It has leaked out lately that the Sultan, who was said to have died a natural death, was strangled, and they have lately been prosecuting his assassins. There are terrible forebodings among the nations of the earth because of troubles that seem to be threatening them. Here we have had our own President killed, and a little while ago President Lincoln was assassinated, and there seems to be a spirit of that kind rampant, and it will grow worse and worse. Not long ago in Pittsburgh there was a shocking state of things, where they burnt up and destroyed property to the amount of three millions of dollars or more. We have apparently prosperous times. There is now a lull in the storm, but it is only a lull to burst out more violently by and by. You will see it. There are elements at work to uproot the government and destroy the foundation of society, and to take away the rights of men and pull down the bulwarks of this government, and scatter to the four winds the principles by which it has been governed, and to let loose the wildest passions of men. These are some of the things that are taking place. These are the elements that are at work to-day. They are running around, and through, and among the people almost everywhere. And it will not be long before there is trouble again in the United States. These inflated times will by and by bring about a great reaction, and then there will be trouble and difficulty; and so these things will continue to increase.

[JD 23:16 – p.17, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881](#)

Now, we are here in the tops of the mountains, far away from these things. We are here learning the laws of life and the principles of truth, and we are here as saviors upon Mount Zion, operating in the interests of humanity, sending forth missionaries to the nations of the earth, gathering people together; and when they are gathered together, we build temples and administer in them. We are here, forming closer connections with the heavens, with God our Heavenly Father, with Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and with the ancient Apostles, Prophets and men of God. We are here participating in some of the greatest blessings that ever were conferred upon mankind since the world was formed. We are here as those that God has selected from the nations of the earth, that He may plant among us the principles of eternal truth, and that we may operate with Him and with the Priesthood behind the veil in the interests of all humanity that have ever lived upon the face of the earth. We are a blessed people if we could only comprehend our position. And we need not be too anxious about the affairs of the world. Men of wealth, men of standing, men of position, men who stand in high places, are beginning to tremble and quake everywhere. They are looking forward with terrible forebodings to something that they fear is coming upon the earth. They do not know what it is, but it will burst upon them and their forebodings will be realized.

[JD 23:17, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881](#)

But we will look at this matter again. Could we be in a better place? I think not. Let me show you the reason for that. We are a very small people, and we are in the midst of a very large people. We occupy these valleys among these rugged mountains, and we dwell in deserts, and in many of the most forbidding places. We see people living in little places, on little streams of water trickling along, and perhaps all of it would go through an inch pipe without much pressure, and they are professing to farm and raise fruits, vegetables and vines in such places, wrenching their living from the barren desert soil. And they do live, but it is hard sledding, and there is a great deal of it here. Now then, go over the ground we have traveled to get here, say starting from Utah County to Juab, from Juab to Fillmore, from Fillmore to Beaver, from Beaver to Parowan, and so on down through here, and among these rocks where little settlements are placed, and up and down your rivers, how very, very few comparatively they are. Yet what an extent of land, is there not? We occupy the country it is true; but I tell the people sometimes that our mountains have very large feet, and that our deserts occupy very large tracks of land. But wherever there is a habitable place, Latter-day Saints are living on it, and consequently living in these little places they control the mountains and the country. Is not that a fact? And suppose we did not have these little forbidding, barren places, the little springs and little rivulets that come along reminding one of oases in the deserts – if we did not have them we could not have the country, but we have them and God has given us possession of them. If we had not possessed these narrow valleys and defiles

they would have been in the possession of bands of Gadianton robbers, who would have preyed upon the people and their property, as "cowboys" and guerillas are now doing in Arizona. But our possessing them gave strength and protection to our more important settlements.

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We have paid for what we have got. I expect your land is all entered here?

[JD 23:17, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881](#)

Answer – Yes, sir.

[JD 23:17 – p.18, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881](#)

You have paid for the land then, and you have paid for it up here in Pine Valley. There is a big mountain between, and you own that in the bargain, and all those sand ridges and rough places, including Jacob's Twist are thrown in for nothing. You own the country here and there and all the way through. How far is it from these mountains to Kanab?

[JD 23:18, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881](#)

Answer. – About 80 miles, sir.

[JD 23:18, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881](#)

The most of it is mountainous. But there are little places here and there which enable you to control all of it; the mountains are thrown in as chips and whetstones. It is the same all the way from here to Nephi; there are little places here and there; we own them and have got our titles for them, and we are the owners of the soil and the mountains are thrown in. So that owing to the small quantity of land we have been compelled by circumstances to go into Idaho, Arizona and Colorado. We cannot hide from ourselves that these things give us some political rights in these places; but who are we injuring, whose political or religious liberties are infringed upon by us? Nobody's! If we live on and conquer those forbidden districts we ought not to be begrudged the limited influence that those positions naturally award us; and while we do not interfere with others and their political arrangements, we think we ought to possess that meagre share that these forbidding circumstances place in our possession.

[JD 23:18, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881](#)

There is another remarkable thing. Who is it that we are to thank for this? The Lord. Did he inspire Brigham Young in these things – to occupy these places! Yes. Is it right for us to occupy them? Yes. Is it right for us to build temples? Yes. Is it right for us to administer in them? Yes. Is it right for us to seek to establish the kingdom of God on the earth? Yes. Is it right for us to seek wisdom from God to do it? Yes. That is what we have been doing for a great many years and we are doing it to-day. Here is Brother Cannon. He is going to Washington as our representative in the general government. Only think about it. Here is a Territory several hundred miles long and I do not know how wide. Let me see (the speaker turning and addressing himself to President Cannon) George, how many representatives have they in Congress?

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Answer: 293 representatives and 9 delegates.

[JD 23:18, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881](#)

And then there is the Senate?

Answer: 76 members.

JD 23:18 – p.19, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881

And we, a little people in the valleys of these mountains, right in the tops of these mountains, in the midst of 50 millions of people, all the representation we have is just one delegate, and he has not a right to vote! And yet what have they done to us? Not much. Have they been plotting against us? Yes, they have. Are they seeking to injure us to-day? Yes. Who? All classes of men, and especially the religious kind. Our feeling is to save people, not to curse them. It must be a miserable feeling for men to have when they are seeking to destroy their fellow-men, yet they are doing it. It is because they have not the intelligence to cope with the principles that God has revealed to us, that they want to drag the strength of the government to put down by arms that which they have not the power to do by argument or on any just or regular principle. I would be ashamed if I were one of them; I would be ashamed if I could not do something else besides praying to destroy a few, weak people in the tops of the mountains of Utah, far away from everybody, and pretending that we are so awfully corrupt that they are afraid we shall demoralize them. God save the mark! They themselves are killing off their own children by tens of thousands and by hundreds of thousands before they are born. That is the feeling that is growing up among them. It is adultery, fornication, lasciviousness that is undermining the constitutions of the people. They are rotting by thousands and tens of thousands, and they will come here and preach morality to us. We do not want them. We tell them to go among their own lepers and cleanse their own social evils, sweep out their own Augean stables, and purify themselves from their own corruptions, and then come and talk purity to us. That is what I would say to those people. We understand them as well as they understand themselves, and for that reason we do not want any of that kind of hypocrisy here.

JD 23:19 – p.20, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881

Now, then, we come to ourselves. We are here. Could we have been placed in any better position than we are to day? No. What has been the object of God for sometime? In the first place He operated upon Columbus to come and find this land. He then operated upon the Puritans and other men in England and other places to come to this land, and many of them were good, honorable, high-minded, virtuous people. The grandfathers and grandmothers of this nation were not murderers; they did not murder infants; they were honorable people who cherished human life, and considered it a blessing to have a large posterity and to take care of them. The spirit of the early fathers was, if their land was poor they could raise men. What are they doing now? Raising murderers and murderesses. From among those people and from Europe and other parts the Saints have been gathered. The Lord is gathering them together, and His kingdom is spreading and growing, and it is our privilege to grow and expand with it, and we should be true to ourselves, be true to our religion, be true to God, and operate in the interests of humanity. We could not find a better place for Latter-day Saints than in these valleys of the mountains, nor in those rugged parts further south. We expect to go on and to increase and seek to the Lord for his guidance, protection and sustenance, while we must learn to do right and observe his laws and keep his commandments. The kingdom of God is onward. It is accelerating in its speed. God has called the First Presidency, the Twelve, High Priests, Seventies, Elders, Bishops, High Councilors, Priests, Teachers and Deacons – he has called upon them to devote themselves to him. He expects us to be willing in the day of his power. He expects us to be true to our integrity, and having taught us eternal principles, he expects that we shall have the law of God written in our hearts and be valiant for the truth and for God. God and all the intelligences that he is surrounded with are on our side and are enlisted in our protection and for the sustenance of this people; and for the rolling forth of his work, and the accomplishment of the objects that he designed in the introduction of the Gospel in the last days, even in the dispensation of the fulness of times, when he would gather all things into one. Being called to live in a land like this, in the midst of rugged mountains and barren deserts we will sing, "For the strength of the hills we bless thee, our God, our fathers' God;" for the wisdom Thou hast displayed we praise Thee, O God, our fathers' God. And we will be true to God, to our religion and will keep our covenants; we will maintain strict integrity to our vows which we have

vowed in sacred places; we will follow the guidance of the Holy Priesthood, and God will lead us from strength to strength, from victory to victory, from power to power, until the kingdom of God shall be established, and no man can stay its progress to-day, God being our helper. Let us go to him and put our trust in him, and all will be well with us in time and through all eternity.

[JD 23:20, John Taylor, November 9th, 1881](#)

Brethren: God bless you, and prosper you in all your journeyings, and enable you to accomplish your object, and frustrate all the designs of your enemies, and let all the congregation say, Amen [the congregation responded, Amen.] May God bless this people. Hold on a little longer, for this motto which I see in your house will be fulfilled, "After the cloud there will be sunshine." Amen.

John Taylor, December 11, 1881

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered in the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, December 11, 1881.

Reported by John Irvine.

TRAVELS OF THE FIRST PRESIDENCY AND THE TWELVE – TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL
CONDITION OF THE SAINTS – THEIR EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS – TEMPLE BUILDING, ITS
OBJECT – ORGANIZATION OF THE PRIESTHOOD, ITS DUTIES – THE GATHERING AND
GENERAL DUTIES OF THE SAINTS OF GOD, THEIR ULTIMATE DESTINY.

[JD 23:20 – p.21, John Taylor, December 11, 1881](#)

I am pleased to have the opportunity of meeting with and addressing the Saints in this place. Since our last Conference I have traveled a great deal among the Saints in different parts of the Territory, in part accompanied by some of my counsel and the Twelve. Personally within a short time I have visited all the leading settlements of the Saints both north and south, east and west, and it may not be uninteresting to you to hear a brief statement of the position which the Saints occupy in their various locations and settlements; because we all of us feel more or less interested in the welfare of all. It was in view of this that I felt a desire to visit the Saints at their own homes, to associate with them at their own firesides, or at least to meet them in their public assemblies. It has been very interesting to myself and accompanying brethren to find out the true position which the Saints occupy, to know what their standing is in relation to their religious views and sentiments, and also to ascertain their moral status and how they conduct themselves not only religiously but socially. And then another thing that we felt desirous to understand was the true educational condition of the Saints; and what they were doing to enlighten the minds of the youth and to train them in the right paths, and how far literature, science and those principles of intelligence which are calculated to exalt and ennoble men when under proper influences, prevailed among our people, and in what manner they deported themselves in

regard to all these things. We have felt the more desirous to do this because many of the Saints live far from the seat of the Presidency of the Church. I suppose so far as we have been in this Territory, in the adjoining Territory of Idaho, in some portions of Wyoming, and in other portions south, that we have not traveled less than from 500 to 600 miles in a direct course north and south, besides visiting nearly all the prominent settlements east and west, and our feeling and impressions after visiting the whole of the Saints in all of their locations are to us very interesting and encouraging. So far as the temporal position of the people is concerned, they seem to be in possession of a reasonable share of the good things of life; their habits of industry and perseverance, their self-abnegation, the desire to comprehend and sustain correct principles, together with the blessing of the Almighty, have tended to promote their welfare in a temporal point of view.

JD 23:21 – p.22, John Taylor, December 11, 1881

We do not find so many very wealthy people as there are in some communities, but our people, so far as our observation goes (and we have had a pretty fair opportunity of investigating all these matters), are second to none in regard to the comforts, conveniences and necessaries of life; and perhaps there is no place nor people (at least, none that I have any knowledge of, and I have traveled quite extensively myself in the world), that are better situated as a whole than are the Latter-day Saints in this and the adjoining territories, nor where more of the people dwell in their own homes. We find thousands upon thousands of happy homes, and the people that inhabit them are sober, industrious, frugal and God-fearing, feeling a strong desire to observe the laws and keep the commandments of the Lord; and notwithstanding the many aspersions cast upon them by wicked and designing men, they nevertheless evince a strong desire to observe the laws and institutions of the land. We find them in possession generally of good houses, farms, orchards, gardens, and in many instances, of cattle, sheep, horses, and all the appliances of life which tend to promote comfort in a social and family capacity. We find, too, that this season has been a very prosperous one, with very few exceptions, throughout the length and breadth of the Territory. The Lord has blessed our labors, exceedingly, and I presume that the crops, as a general thing, have been increased at least 20 to 25 per cent, I think we should be quite safe in saying 20 per cent; and this, of course, tends to make existence more pleasant and agreeable, and to enable the people to more easily struggle in the battle of life in its various forms and phases. In addition to this we find that they are generally seeking to live their religion and to keep the commandments of God. And the various organizations which you have among you here, in this city, prevail throughout all the settlements of the Saints with very few exceptions, very few indeed. We find that the Relief Societies which are so active and energetic among you here and which are operating so creditably in looking after the interest and welfare of the female portion of our society, also exist all over the Territory, and that there is a creditable zeal and intelligence without that obtrusiveness which we see among many – a desire to promote the well-being of those with whom they are associated, and to make themselves useful in all the affairs of life; and we feel whenever we find a disposition of this kind, to appreciate it. We find, also, that our Young Men's and Young Women's Mutual Improvement Associations prevail almost everywhere, and that there is a desire to elevate the youth and lift them up from the sloughs of ignorance and darkness, and to implant within their minds true and correct principles, putting them in possession of a knowledge of science, literature, and the arts, and cultivating those principles that are calculated to elevate and ennoble mankind, as well as to correct their morals and govern them in their religious pursuits. We find, also, that their Primary Associations are attended to with the same vigilance that they are around us here, and that the most wise, prudent and intelligent ladies are selected for the purpose of supervising their movements and in "teaching the young idea how to shoot." We find, also, that throughout the Territory our Sunday Schools receive that attention which we consider all such institutions ought to merit and do merit, and that the best of men and women are selected for their teachers, who, as we see, take an interest in the welfare of our rising posterity.

JD 23:22, John Taylor, December 11, 1881

It is not for me to enter into all particulars; I merely wish to give a brief outline of these matters. All of these institutions that I have referred to are in a very creditable position; are managed with great care, and many of your old neighbors who used to live here in the city, both men and women, and who were known as high-minded, honorable persons – we find mixed in the various societies throughout the settlements and

organizations, exerting an influence which is truly interesting to all who feel desirous to promote the welfare of Zion and the building of the kingdom of God upon the earth. Then, again, in regard to our scholastic affairs, we find that there is very great progress being made in our common schools, or rather what are termed our district schools. We find that a more intelligent class of teachers is being employed, and that with the operations of the normal department of the University, with the Brigham Young Academy in Provo, and other institutions of learning, they are telling very favorably upon our youth, and as better teachers are obtained, there seems to be a greater desire manifested among the people to acquire intelligence of every kind. From the best information that I am able to obtain, I suppose there are at least thirty normal students turned out every year. They are prepared in our University and in the other scholastic institutions referred to, and as these teachers, coming from their own counties and peoples, return to their several homes, properly qualified as instructors, they do a great deal of good among the community.

JD 23:23, John Taylor, December 11, 1881

In relation to other matters, such as the building of Temples, they are also progressing very favorably. I need not say anything about the one we are building here; you are all acquainted with that. The one which is being built in Logan is now covered in. A large force of carpenters are engaged in finishing the interior department thereof, and another year will count very favorably in the work on that structure. It is a beautiful building, and stands in a very imposing position on an elevated plateau in Cache County, near Logan. About 200 miles from that, in the south, in Sanpete County, there is another Temple being built. That also occupies a very eligible position. A very large amount of labor has been performed in preparing the site. The point of a mountain has been removed, and a great amount of labor has been expended on the walls which surround the Temple, forming nearly a semi-circle. There are three terraces elevated one above another, the same as the gallery may be elevated above the lower part of this house; they surround the Temple, being wider, of course, at the lower part and narrower as they approach towards the Temple. A very large amount of means and labor have been expended in preparing these terraces and also in preparing the Temple. The Temple itself is a beautiful structure. They expect to have the walls up to the square in another season. I think they have built up the wall this year some 28 feet. It is built of beautiful white rock – or at least very light, clear rock – and is hewn on the outside where the joints come together, and presents a very beautiful and creditable appearance. It is interesting, too, to find how strongly the feelings of the people are drawn out in relation to these edifices. They seem to think that no sacrifice is too great to accomplish the object which they have in view; indeed in both of these Temple districts they seem to take very great pride in prosecuting this labor. I was informed that the superintendent was a little short of means a short time ago at the Manti Temple, and he asked if he must slacken the labor. They told him no, he was to proceed with it, and I think in a very short time a number of people from different parts subscribed 7,000 bushels of wheat to assist in the construction of the Temple, and there seems to be, generally, a strong desire for the accomplishment of this work.

JD 23:23 – p.24 – p.25 – p.26, John Taylor, December 11, 1881

The religion that we have espoused, connects time with eternity, heaven with earth, this world with the next, and while the Lord has revealed unto us what is termed a new Gospel, and hence it is called the new and everlasting Gospel – new indeed to the people of the world, but everlasting so far as God is concerned and the interests of mankind both living and dead; for God is interested in the welfare of all humanity that has ever lived, that now lives, or that ever will live. He is, we are told, the God of the spirits of all flesh, and he has introduced principles which have been made known to us for the benefit of all. The principles that we are associated with reach back into eternity and forward into eternity. They are not the ideas, the theories or notions of men, they emanate from the Almighty. And in regard to the ideas which have been developed pertaining to the past, the present and the future, none of us can claim ourselves to be the founders or the originators of any one idea associated with the Church and kingdom of God, neither was Joseph Smith, neither was Brigham Young, neither are any of the Twelve, nor is anybody that now exists or has existed; all of these things come from the Lord. And having proceeded from him he has dictated the whole matter from first to last. We did not receive our ideas from any theologian, from any scientist, from any man of renown, or of position in the world, or from any body or conclave of religionists, but from the Almighty, and to him we

are indebted for all life, all truth, and all intelligence pertaining to the past, pertaining to the present, or pertaining to the future. Therefore we feel our dependence upon him. Neither are we indebted to any man for any doctrine that we have received, nor for the organization of our Church, nor for the Holy Priesthood, whether it be the Melchizedek or the Aaronic; all of these proceed from the Almighty, and if he had not given them we should have been as ignorant of them as others are, for they do not generally comprehend the law, the word, the will, or the design of the Almighty; for no man knows the things of God but by the Spirit of God; and if the Father did not reveal them we should be very ignorant indeed, as are the rest of mankind pertaining to these matters. But the time having come to introduce what is termed, the "dispensation of the fulness of times," when God would gather together all things in one, whether they be things in heaven or things on the earth, it became necessary, because of the ignorance of men, because they did not comprehend God, nor his laws, nor the principles of eternal truth, that men should be taught of the Almighty, that God should be their instructor, and hence he introduced through the medium of the Holy Priesthood that had existed heretofore upon the earth, those principles which are calculated to bless and exalt the human family, prepare them to carry out the word and will of God, and to accomplish those purposes which he had designed from before the foundation of the world. Hence he organized the First Presidency and the Twelve, he organized the Seventies, he organized Elders, Priests, Teachers, and Deacons, he organized Bishops and High Councils and all the various adjuncts associated with the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. And why, it may be asked, should these institutions be introduced in our midst? For certain obvious reasons when we reflect upon this all-important matter. Having revealed his will to man, to Joseph Smith, as he had done to other men in former ages, it was necessary that that will should be made known to all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, that men might be informed of the things that he revealed for the salvation and exaltation of humanity. Hence the Twelve were set apart. For what purpose? That they might introduce the Gospel to the nations of the earth, and preach the principles of life as they emanate from God. Then the Seventies also were ordained until we now have upwards of seventy times seventy. What is their business? Under the direction of the Twelve, to preach the Gospel to the nations of the earth. Are they doing it? Yes. Have they been doing it? Yes. And the Twelve? Yes, for these many, very many years, and are still doing it. We still feel the same responsibility devolving upon us to spread forth that light, that truth, and that intelligence which has emanated from God our heavenly Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ. And these men are going forth bearing precious seeds, even the seeds of eternal life, and when the people believe the Gospel what do they do? Their testimony to the people is that God has spoken, that the Gospel has been restored; they explain what the Gospel is; they call upon the people to repent and to be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins, promising that the obedient shall receive the Holy Ghost. Do they baptise them? Yes. Do they lay on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost? Yes. Do the people receive the Holy Ghost? Yes, and you here to day are my witnesses in relation to these things, and you know what I say is true. And what will the Holy Ghost do? It takes of the things of God, and shows them unto us; it brings things past to our remembrance; it leads us into all truth and shows us things to come. Does it do that? Yes, and it is because of this principle that the Latter-day Saints feel as they do; having partaken of the Holy Ghost and tasted the powers of the world to come, and having received a hope that enters within the veil, whither Christ the forerunner is gone, and knowing to-day that they are the sons of God, and that they have rights and privileges pertaining not only to time but to eternity, they feel to act and operate under the directions of that spirit. And being partakers of that spirit, there is a communication opened between them and their heavenly Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, and being inspired by that spirit, their prayers ascend unto the God of the whole earth; they learn to place their confidence in him and to obey his laws; and then having been baptized into one baptism, they all partake of the same spirit – that is, those who are living their religion, observing the laws of God and keeping his commandments, and who have not grieved the Spirit of God, whereby they are sealed to the day of redemption. Then, that same spirit that brought them into the Church and led them to obey the laws of God, led them to gather together as we are here to-day. It is a false idea entertained by many very ignorant men that we gather men together on some kind of emigration principle. The people get the principle of gathering in their own hearts by the Spirit of God, and that draws them here. There needs no argument, no influence, no power of suasion, or anything of the kind to bring them here. Their desire, when they receive the Gospel, is to come to Zion. And why? That they may learn more fully of the laws of life. As the scriptures say – "I will take you one of a city and two of a family, and I will bring you to

Zion. And what will you do with them when you get them to Zion?" "I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." Hence we have come together as we are here in this city and in this Territory. Our object is to fear God, to observe his laws, to magnify our calling, to fulfil our destiny upon the earth, and to operate with those who are behind the veil in the interests of humanity, to lay aside our selfishness, our covetousness, our evils of ever kind whatever they may be, and to purge ourselves from unrighteousness, that we may be fit receptacles for the Holy Ghost and be prepared to do the will of God on earth as it is done in heaven. I know a great many men object to us doing this. No matter; with God's help we will try to do it; no matter what the opinions and ideas, the feelings and theories of men are. God has laid on us a mission, and in the name of Israel's God we will fulfil it, and let all Israel say Amen. [The congregation responded aloud, Amen]. We will try and carry out what God has given us to do, no matter what men's theories, opinions or ideas may be. We are here, then, for that purpose. And we feel that God is our heavenly Father; we feel that we are his children; we feel that we are doing his work by his assistance, we feel, too, that he is engaged just as much as we are, and a thousand times more, in carrying on this work, and therefore we feel easy and satisfied in our minds and know that all is well. God our heavenly Father, Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, the ancient patriarchs and prophets and men of God who have lived upon the earth years and years ago, Adam the Father of mankind, and Noah, another great father, and Abraham the father of the faithful, and all the Prophets, Apostles and men of God who have lived upon the earth are interested as we are in the welfare of humanity and in seeking to introduce and carry out the word and will of God which he designed before the world rolled into existence or the morning stars sang together for joy. God will accomplish his work and we will try and help him do it. It needs the co-operation of all these men who have held this Priesthood, who administer in time and in eternity – it needs the co-operation of all those and of the Gods in the eternal worlds to assist us in the labors in which we are engaged. Therefore, God has introduced the system of things that we have been speaking of for the purpose of gathering together a people who would listen to his voice, and they are the only people on the earth to-day who will listen thereto, and then it is as much as the bargain for many of us to do it. God expects to have a people who will be men of clean hands and pure hearts, who withhold their hands from the receiving of bribes, who will swear to their own hurt and change not, who will be men of truth and integrity, of honor and virtue, and who will pursue a course that will be approved by the Gods in the eternal worlds, and by all honorable and upright men that ever did live or that now live, and having taken upon us the profession of sainthood, he expects us to be Saints, not in name, not in theory, but in reality. And then he expects us to do just what we are doing, that is, to build Temples, and to preach the Gospel to an unthankful world. Have we done it? Yes, we have. I have done it. I have traveled thousands of miles to preach this Gospel without purse or scrip, trusting in God. Did I ever lack anything? No. Here is Brother Woodruff, and many other men who have done just the same thing. High Priests, Seventies, Elders, and others have gone forth to the world, bearing the precious principles of eternal life, and have returned again, as the Scriptures say, bringing their sheaves with them. What are we doing besides? Building our Temples. What for? That we may have places to enter into that are dedicated to the God of the whole earth.

[JD 23:26 – p.27, John Taylor, December 11, 1881](#)

The world have forgotten that God is the fountain of all truth, the source of all intelligence, of everything that is calculated to elevate and exalt mankind; but we will give to God all the glory. We are seeking to build up the Zion of our God. And shall we accomplish it? With the help of the Lord we will. Will we all do right? No, many will fall by the wayside as they have done; but the work of God will go on and prosper and increase, and the Lord will be with Israel if they will only cleave to the truth, obey his laws and keep his commandments. Are all good? No, you know that many of us do many things that are far from right. Let me say unto you that our only safety is in obedience to the laws of God. You need not fear the clamor that is now being raised against us, nor any of this nonsense, this spite of the world; you need not fear the illiberality of religionists who are clamoring to deprive you of your liberties, you need care nothing about that.

[JD 23:27, John Taylor, December 11, 1881](#)

You all know that they are proclaiming falsehoods against us, and that we are misrepresented by them. No matter, they are in the hands of God, and we are in the hands of God; and while we seek to maintain righteous principles, virtue, purity, and the laws of the land, we can afford to leave them in the hands of God, and let him be their judge. Let us be for God, for righteousness, for virtue, for purity, for truth and integrity, and if our enemies prefer to wallow in their iniquities, and lend themselves to vice and falsehood, we can stand these things if they can, it is better to suffer than do wrong. The Lord will judge both them and us, and all will be well with those who cleave to the truth. We need not be troubled about their intrigues and mendacity. God will protect the right and will save and bless and deliver us despite their mendacious assertions, if we fear him, observe his laws, and keep his commandments. They, nor any other men, nor any power, can go further than God permits them, and when he says stop, they must stop. He will control all things according to the counsels of his own will. It is for us to be willing to obey his laws, to preserve our bodies and spirits pure, to cleave to righteousness, to honor the Lord our God, that we may always have his spirit to be with us. And if we are faithful by and by, it will be said of us, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things and I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

[JD 23:27, John Taylor, December 11, 1881](#)

May God bless you and lead you in the paths of life, in the name of Jesus, Amen.

John Taylor, March 5th, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered at the Assembly Hall,

on Sunday Afternoon, March 5th, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE DISPENSATION OF THE FULNESS OF TIMES – RESTORATION OF THE GOSPEL – DUTIES
OF THE PRIESTHOOD – THE FUTURE OF ZION – INCONSISTENCY OF THE SAINTS'
PERSECUTORS – INCIDENTS OF CHURCH HISTORY, ETC.

[JD 23:28, John Taylor, March 5th, 1882](#)

We are living in peculiar times; we are operating in an eventful era; we are associated with a peculiar dispensation, and we have a labor to perform which in many respects differs from that of all other ages or times. The dispensation that we are connected with is called in Scripture the dispensation of the fulness of times in which, it is recorded, God will gather together all things in one, whether they be things on the earth or things in the heavens. There are ideas associated with this dispensation that are in many respects distinct, and dissimilar from those that have been enunciated and proclaimed in former ages and dispensations; and inasmuch as the present dispensation is to embrace everything that has been connected with all past dispensations – all the prominent features as well as the minor ones that characterized the Church and kingdom of God in former days, that were essentially necessary to its growth and development – must

re-appear in connection with the work of God in this our day. If the manifestations and developments of other dispensations have been made known to us, we have had revealed to us doctrines, theories, organizations and systems that have existed among the whole of them; because it is emphatically the dispensation of the fulness of times. If they had anything that was peculiarly characteristic in the days of the ancient Patriarchs, we have the same revealed to us. If they had anything prominent and important in the dispensation of Noah, we have it, and if Noah was called upon to preach the Gospel to the world in his day, before its destruction, so are we.

JD 23:28 – p.29, John Taylor, March 5th, 1882

If in the Abrahamic or Mosaic dispensations God revealed important principles, we have a clear knowledge of those things made known to us, and the reasons, the whys and wherefores, pertaining to them. If they had anything among the ancient Prophets and men of God, we have the same principles developed. If in the days of Jesus they had manifestations, revelations, doctrines or organizations, those things are made known to us. Or if the people upon this continent, to whom God revealed his will – either the people that came from the Tower of Babel, or those who came from Jerusalem during the reign of Zedekiah – if anything was revealed to them, we have had it revealed unto us. And this is why certain things exist pertaining to organizations, etc., referred to by Brother Hatch.

JD 23:29, John Taylor, March 5th, 1882

We have here on the ceiling of this building pictured to us, Moroni making known to Joseph Smith the plates, from which the Book of Mormon was translated, which plates had been hidden up in the earth; and in connection with them was the Urim and Thummim, by which sacred instrument Joseph was enabled to translate the ancient characters, now given unto us in the form of the Book of Mormon; in which is set forth the theories, doctrines, principles, organizations, etc., of these peoples who lived upon this continent. People talk about their disbelief regarding these things. That is a matter of no moment to us. I do not intend to bring any argument upon this question, caring nothing about what people believe. We know certain things, and knowing them we regard them as matters of fact. If we were to take the world and its ideas and theories, we should find that there is hardly one person in every thousand who believes the Bible. The Christian world professes belief in the Bible; that is, they believe it when shut, but not when open. Consequently, I do not propose this afternoon, at least, to address myself to infidels, whether they go under the name of Christian or any other name. I am speaking of certain principles to a people who believe them to be true; and I wish to refer more particularly to some events associated with the dealings of God with his earthly children.

JD 23:29 – p.30, John Taylor, March 5th, 1882

When John was on the isle of Patmos, certain things were revealed to him that were to transpire in the last days, and he prophesied of them. While wrapped in prophetic vision, gazing on the purposes of God as they were to be unfolded in later times, among other things he saw an angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, to every nation, kindred, tongue and people; saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come. This was a declaration made by this ancient Apostle and Prophet of God while banished for his religion, as certain men to-day would, if they could, banish us. We now declare to the world that this part of the visions of John has been fulfilled; that the angel has come and appeared to man upon the earth, conferring upon him this heavenly charge, namely, the responsibility of opening up a new Gospel dispensation; and we declare that God himself took part in it, and that Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, accompanied him, both of whom appeared to Joseph Smith, upon which occasion the Father, pointing to the Son said, "This is my beloved Son, hear him." Following this the Gospel was to be preached to every nation. What Gospel? The same Gospel that was preached to Adam, and to the Patriarchs and men of God of every age; the Gospel of salvation and deliverance from sin through the atonement of Jesus Christ, the resurrection from the dead, life immortal and all the blessings associated therewith. And when this Gospel was first proclaimed in this age, who knew anything about it? Nobody; it was not and had not been among men for centuries. The world of mankind had been left without direct communication from the heavens, and as a natural consequence while

grovelling in the dark, they followed the devices and desires of their own hearts; they were governed by man-made systems, and bowed to the dictum, to the notions, the theories and follies of men. There was no Apostle, no Prophet, no inspired men of God, holding His Holy Priesthood to say, Thus saith the Lord, this is the way, walk ye in it.

JD 23:30 – p.31, John Taylor, March 5th, 1882

In connection with this I may allude to an incident in my personal experience, to show the state of the world religiously some forty or fifty years ago. Not being then acquainted with this Church, a number of us met together for the purpose of searching the Scriptures; and we found that certain doctrines were taught by Jesus and the Apostles, which neither the Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, nor any of the religious sects taught; and we concluded that if the Bible was true, the doctrines of modern Christendom were not true; or if they were true, the Bible was false. Our investigations were impartially made, and our search for truth was extended. We examined every religious principle that came under our notice, and probed the various systems as taught by the sects, to ascertain if there were any that were in accordance with the word of God. But we failed to find any. In addition to our researches and investigations, we prayed and fasted before God; and the substance of our prayers was, that if he had a people upon the earth anywhere, and ministers who were authorized to preach the Gospel, that he would send us one. This was the condition we were in. We knew all that the Methodists knew then, and all that they know now. We knew all that the Presbyterians knew then, and all that they know now. We knew all that the Episcopalians knew then, and all that they know now. We knew all that the Roman Catholics knew then, and all that they know to-day; for we made ourselves conversant with the doctrines and examined them thoroughly, as well as the theories of all men who pretended to have knowledge of Gospel light. We prayed earnestly; and in answer to our prayers, the Lord sent us Elder Parley P. Pratt, who gives an account of this in his auto-biography which has been published since his death. Brother Pratt, in relating the circumstances, says that Brother Heber C. Kimball came to his house one night after he had retired; that Brother Kimball requested him to get up, which he did, and then began to prophecy to him. He told him there was a people in Canada who were seeking for a knowledge of the Gospel, and they were praying to God to send them a minister who should reveal to them the truth. Brother Kimball then commissioned him to repair to Canada, telling him that the Lord would bless him and open up his way. Just previous to that time the Saints had been engaged in building the Temple in Kirtland, Ohio, and were all very much embarrassed as to means, Brother Pratt with the balance having devoted everything he had to spare for that purpose. Among other things that Brother Kimball told him was, that where he was going he would find means to relieve himself, and that many of the people would embrace the Gospel, and that it would be the means of introducing the Gospel to England. And furthermore, said he, your wife who is now childless shall have a son. In the course of time she did have a son, and they named him Parley. I do not know but that he may be present; but I was going to say, I knew him before he was born. [Laughter.]

JD 23:31, John Taylor, March 5th, 1882

I speak of this to show that there was at that time nobody, of whom we had any knowledge, from whom we could obtain any information with regard to the Gospel of the Son of God, or that could teach us the doctrines Jesus and His Apostles taught, as contained in the Scriptures. Brother Pratt came and found us, and he came in answer to our prayer; at least, that is my faith in regard to the matter. And were all these things accomplished? Yes: I was baptized myself and others, and I baptized many others in that country; and it was the means also of sending the Gospel to England. John Goodson, who apostatized long ago, John Snyder, a good, faithful man who was one of the committee of the Nauvoo House, and who died in the 17th Ward of this City, Isaac Russell, and Joseph Fielding, uncle to Brother Joseph F. Smith, were of our number, embraced the Gospel, and were afterwards called to accompany Brother Heber C. Kimball and Orson Hyde to England for the purpose of opening up the work in that land; and I was the first person that wrote a letter to England on the subject of the Gospel; I did it at the request of Brother Fielding, who got me to write for him to a brother and brother-in-law of his who were ministers in England. These were the men that helped to introduce the Gospel into England in that early day. I speak of this for the information of many of you.

When Brother Pratt came to me I was, perhaps, as well read in the letter of the Bible as I am to-day, and as soon as he commenced to talk about Prophets, I said, Yes, we believe in them. And he talked about Apostles and I remarked, Yes, we have been looking for such men, but we cannot find them. He talked about the organization of the Church as it was anciently; and about the gift of tongues and the gift of healing, etc., and we were delighted with his message, it was something we were seeking for, and it was all new to us. We had heard rumors about the Mormons, just as people hear rumors now-adays of us; and the rumors we heard were not of the most complimentary character, any more than are those that are circulated about us to-day, or those that were circulated about Jesus and the former-day Saints. You know, the pious, hypocritical clergy of that day put the Savior down as the vilest creature that ever lived, and influenced the populace against him; for said they, if he heals the sick, give God the glory, for we know that this man is a sinner; and when he cast out devils, this same class attributed it to the power of Beelzebub, the prince of devils; and they spoke of him as being a bastard, and cast all manner of reflections upon him. The Savior in speaking to his disciples gave them to understand that inasmuch as they had persecuted him, they would also persecute them; and said he, further, when they persecute you in one city, flee to another; and he also told them to be exceeding glad when they were persecuted for righteousness' sake. What, to be lied about by adventurers and political demagogues who seek to rob and plunder you? Yes; that is a good and favorable sign. If we were guilty of the infamies that they seek to lay at our door, that would be another matter. But whilst we are not as good as we might be, we do know that what they say and publish to the world about us, which has had a tendency to arouse the feelings of the general public against us, are infernal falsehoods. "Blessed are you when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad," etc. In this we but share the lot of the honorable of other ages, the men of God who stood the abuse of their fellow-man, and who, in many instances, were persecuted much worse than we are. Our present assailants have not learned how yet; but they are trying upon a small scale to introduce the inquisition, and may, by and by, in some degree, succeed in carrying out their nefarious objects. This is their work, if they can stand it we think we can. There are thousands of honorable men who will look down with contempt upon all such unprincipled and mendacious efforts.

After the Lord had spoken to Joseph Smith, and Jesus had manifested himself to him, and after Moroni had revealed to him the hidden plates containing the history of the ancient inhabitants of this continent, which, in the wisdom of God, have been translated into our own language in the form of the Book of Mormon, and which, in connection with the Bible, is to be the means of confounding false doctrines, the one being corroborative of the other in principle and doctrine and in relation to the designs and purposes of God – after this it was necessary that the Priesthood held by men in former days should be restored in these latter days, that people now, as men in those days, might be authorized to act in the name of the Lord. Hence John the Baptist, who held the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood, came and laid his hands upon the heads of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, using these words: "Upon you, my fellow-servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; and this shall never be taken again from the earth until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness." After having been ordained to this Priesthood which is after the order of Aaron, it was necessary that they should have another Priesthood which is after the order of Melchizedek, and after the order of the Son of God. And consequently Peter, James and John came and conferred that Priesthood. Why did they come? Because they were the last who held the keys of that Priesthood. After this order of Priesthood was introduced, the organization which we possess to-day was gradually effected, which is as full and complete, perhaps, as ever existed upon the earth. How perfect it was in the days of Enoch we are not told, but everything that they had revealed to them pertaining to the organization of the Church of God, also pertaining to doctrine and ordinances, we have had revealed to us, excepting one thing, and that is the principle and power of translation; that, however, will in due time be restored also. And if they in their day built a Zion, we have one to build in our day, and when this shall be done and everything is in readiness, the Zion which the people of Enoch built and which was translated, will

descend from above, and the Zion of the latter days which this people will build, will ascend by virtue of this principle and power, and the former and the latter-day Zion will meet each other, and the dwellers in both will embrace and kiss each other, so we are told in the revelations of God.

[JD 23:33, John Taylor, March 5th, 1882](#)

We are indebted to no one excepting God, our heavenly Father, for the organization which we possess; and as a little circumstance with regard to its practical working occurs to me, I will mention it. Among other places, we sent to Bear Lake a copy of the form of petition which we are now presenting to Congress. I think it was on Wednesday that it was sent out from here, and on Saturday night it was returned with thousands of signatures. That is the way we do things here. In a few days we had some fifty thousand signatures, and I presume before this there are some ten or twenty thousand more from the more distant settlements. What does it manifest? Union and sympathy one with another, all testifying to one thing, which I was very glad to see. People have said that we know that polygamy is not a principle of our religion; but here are petitions signed by some seventy or eighty thousand, all of whom testify to their faith in regard to this principle. I think the testimony of seventy or eighty thousand persons living right among it, and most of whom are born in it, ought to be as strong as that of a few quidnuncs who know little or nothing about it.

[JD 23:33, John Taylor, March 5th, 1882](#)

The Gospel was then revealed, what for – for you and me, or for this man and that man? No; it was for the benefit of the world; it was in the interests of humanity; and it was to be proclaimed to every nation, kindred, people and tongue, by men commissioned of God to do so. That duty belongs to the Twelve especially, to either do so in person or see that it is done. I have traveled myself tens of thousands of miles, and so have my brethren, visiting the nations of the earth in their most prominent cities declaring to them the principles of the Gospel as God has revealed them. And could we find men upon the earth that could successfully oppose us? I declare before God I never found one, taking the Bible as a standard; neither can any one be found to day that can do it, and that is the trouble.

[JD 23:33 – p.34 – p.35 – p.36, John Taylor, March 5th, 1882](#)

In that day, we are told, the meek shall rejoice in the Lord; and the poor among men shall rejoice in the holy one of Israel. God has had his people scattered among the nations, and his testimony was to go forth to all lands; and it becomes the duty of the Twelve, the Seventies, the High Priests and Elders to carry this message and present it to them in the spirit of the Gospel, not to cram the truth down the throats of men, as certain individuals would cram their peculiar views down our throats. But when we were sent forth we were sent to teach, and not to be taught. We could not learn anything from them about the Gospel, for they did not know it. They could not teach us, hence the Lord in sending out the first Elders, told them they were sent to teach and not to be taught. We went in the midst of opposition and persecution, mobbings and drivings, and were subjected to every insult, indignity and infamy that wicked and corrupt men could invent, and we have put up with such things all the time, and many have had to lay down their lives in the conflict, and they will, as others formerly did, when the time comes, gain a better resurrection. And we are still struggling on, in the face of a general opposition, trusting in our God to sustain us, while we shall continue to sow the precious seed of the everlasting Gospel, and maintain in our own midst the principles of life eternal, and freedom, liberty and equality to the human race. And our sons who have grown up are now doing what we have done; and they too are full of the Spirit, full of life, light and intelligence, having, as we had and still have, the interests of humanity at heart, as they move among the people as messengers of life and salvation. Our course is onward; and are we going to stop? No. Zion must be built up, God has decreed it and no power can stay its progress. Do you hear that? I prophecy that in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. For Zion must and will be built up despite all opposition, the kingdom of God established upon the earth in accordance with the designs and purposes of God. That is true, and you will find it to be true if you live long enough, and if you die you will find it to be true; it will make no difference. "But shall we not be persecuted?" Yes, and does not Jesus say, Blessed are ye when men revile you and persecute you, etc., – would you be deprived of that blessing. "But

we have had enough of it." O, have you? no matter, you will have to put up with it. "But," say you, "have we not certain constitutional rights?" Yes, on paper, but when you get through with them, the paper does not amount to much; it is like pie-crust, easily broken. We do not pay much attention to these things. Honorable men will be governed by constitutions, and laws, and principles, but dishonorable persons will not. Therefore, we have to do the best we can, taking a righteous course that we may be entitled to the blessings of God. "What will be the result of this?" I care nothing about what the result may be, it is a matter of very little importance to me. "Do you expect such things?" Yes, and have done for years; I have never expected anything else associated with the Gospel. When I first embraced it I considered it a life-long affair; and when I came to look at it squarely in the face, if I could have satisfied my conscience by getting along without it, I would have done so; but I could not, and I apprehend that many of you have been in the same situation. I believed it was true, and so did you; and after I was baptized and had hands laid upon my head for the reception of the Holy Ghost, I knew it was true by the operations of the Holy Spirit upon my heart. And this is the common experience of all Saints. Some people seem to think that we are going to throw away our religion at the "drop of the hat." I do not know of any such feeling among this people. There have been men who learned to endure things quite as bad as those which afflict us. My mind runs back to Daniel who was a man that feared God. There was a set of political plotters in his day – and probably a fair share of religious ones associated with them – who conspired against him, for Daniel was a man of God in great favor with the king; and the only way they could accomplish their plans was by laying a trap to catch him through an edict of the king. They did it by getting the king to issue a proclamation that no man should ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of the king, that if he did he should be cast into the den of lions. This was done expressly to catch Daniel, but the king was not made acquainted with the secret. Their request was granted and the decree established by the king's signature, which then could not be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altered not. When Daniel heard of this, we are told that he went into his house, and the windows of his chamber being open towards Jerusalem, he bowed down before his God, and prayed and gave thanks to him, as aforetime, three times a day. He did not falter, although he knew the nature of the decree and the laws which governed it; but he knew too that the God whom he served was able to deliver him. They watched him, of course, and finally complained against him; and he was adjudged guilty of violating the law. The law had to take its course, although the king, when the thing was made known to him felt very sorrowful, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him. He did not feel like some feel towards us; although there have been praiseworthy efforts made by a few to maintain constitutional principles, and we recognize them as the sentiments and feelings of honorable men, who wish to see correct principles maintained in our land. There was no appeal in Daniel's case; or as a certain class of Christians to-day would say, "Daniel had to go." They cast him into the den of lions. The king went to the den early the following morning, feeling much concerned about him, and he cried out, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" Daniel spoke up and said, "O King, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me." Now, he dared to do that which showed there was some manhood in him. We have another example in the three Hebrew children, who refused to bow down to a golden image that had been set up. Shall we call it monogamy? [Laughter.] The conditions were that if they did not bow down to this golden image, they should be cast into a burning fiery furnace. They did refuse to obey this royal decree, saying, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King. But if not (said they), be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship thy golden image which thou hast set up." This, of course, was considered a great indignity on their part to refuse to bow down to this God. These three men were cast into the furnace and their persecutors in their animus and religious zeal, heated it to such a degree – evincing in this respect the same feeling we see manifested toward us in a different form – that the men who cast Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego into the furnace were themselves destroyed by the flames. And it seems the King himself was curious to look into the furnace to know of their fate, and in doing so, to his astonishment, he beheld four persons in the midst of the flames, one of whom appeared to be like unto the Son of God. Nebuchadnezzar then called to these three men to come out, which they did; and even the smell of fire was not found upon their clothing, nor was a hair of their heads singed. Such was the faith of those young men, and such their conduct that all honorable men could approve and appreciate the nobility of their course, and even the Gods could admire them; and their integrity to God was the means of their being promoted to the

favor of the King, and to distinction in the land. Let us hope that the descendants of those people in these days, in the trials that they have to pass through, which are now being enacted in Russia, in Europe, and in other places, and apparently commencing in this land, may be found as true to their integrity as were these noble examples of manhood and faith in God.

[JD 23:36, John Taylor, March 5th, 1882](#)

But to return to the Christians' idol. The pious, zealous, religious and hypocritical in our day, uniting with political demagogues, have set up a God for us to worship, which they boastfully represent as the embodiment of everything that is pure and virtuous, embodying the enlightenment and civilization of the nineteenth century. Their god is overlaid with gilt and tinsel, but inside it is pregnant with the social evil with its twin adjuncts feticide and infanticide. Like a great Moloch it is crushing out female virtue, trampling upon innocence, and prostituting and destroying millions of the fair daughters of Eve. Yet this loathsome, filthy, debauched, degraded monster is held up for our veneration and worship by its corrupt Christian devotees as the essence of everything that is great and grand, noble and praiseworthy; and we are called upon to fall down and worship this loathsome monster under the threat of unconstitutional pains and penalties, and the violation of every principle of liberty and protection guaranteed under the Constitution.

[JD 23:36, John Taylor, March 5th, 1882](#)

Shall we worship this unnatural, lascivious Moloch? Shall we bow down before the shrine of this fetid, corrupt and debauched monster? No! We will worship the Lord our God, yield obedience to his behests, and, if we are faithful, live our religion and keep his commandments, the God whom we worship will deliver us out of the hands of our enemies, and we shall triumph over all our foes.

[JD 23:36, John Taylor, March 5th, 1882](#)

There have been men living nearer our own times who could meet the inquisition with its fagot, rack and thumbscrew, and in the midst of their sufferings could commit themselves in all serenity and calmness into the hands of God; and we can surely do the same. If the rulers of this nation can afford to tamper with the sacred rights of the people guaranteed by the Constitution of this great nation, and ruthlessly tear down the temple of freedom erected at the cost of so much blood and treasure, instead of anticipated glory, they will bring destruction upon the nation and ruin and infamy upon themselves. The sacred bulwarks of freedom once tampered with, the floodgates of anarchy and confusion will be thrown open and dissolution and ruin will follow in their train in rapid succession. It is for us to sustain and maintain the principles guaranteed in that sacred palladium of human rights – the Constitution of the United States, and to contend inch by inch in every legal and constitutional manner for our own rights and human freedom, leaving misrule, anarchy, violations of law and the trampling under foot of the rights of man and constitutional guarantees to religious fanatics and clamoring demagogues; and if they can afford to tamper with those sacred guarantees, we certainly can afford to have them do it. It is for us to seek more exalted ideas, to abide by constitutional law, to maintain inviolate the principles of human freedom, and to contend with unwavering firmness for those inalienable rights of all men – life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; and to seek continually to our God for wisdom to accomplish so great, noble and patriotic a purpose.

[JD 23:36 – p.37, John Taylor, March 5th, 1882](#)

One of the first things I ever heard preached by the Elders of this Church was that the world would grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. Should we be surprised at its coming to pass? Another thing that I have heard from the beginning is, that people would persecute us, commencing with neighborhoods and villages, and then it would extend to cities and counties, and then to States, and then to the United States, and afterwards to the world. We have got about fifty millions of people on our backs now – and it is a pretty heavy load to carry, too; but the Lord will see us through. We are acting in the interests of humanity: we are proclaiming salvation to a fallen world, and in this we are carrying out the word and will of God made known

and manifested directly to us. We are warning the people of their position, and we will continue to send forth our missionaries for this purpose until God says, it is enough. And if they persecute us in one city, we will do as Jesus told his disciples, we will flee to another, searching out the honest in heart. Persecution has been our lot from the beginning, and it has followed us to this day. I am reminded of a circumstance that occurred in Missouri, which I will mention to show the kind of feeling that Joseph Smith was possessed of. Some 25 years ago, in Far West, a mob – one of those semi-occasional occurrences – had come against us with evil intent, placing themselves in position to give us battle; and there were not more than about 200 of us in the place. We had one fellow who was taken with a fit of trembling in the knees, and he ordered our people to retreat. As soon as Joseph heard this sound, he exclaimed, "Retreat! where in the name of God shall we retreat to?" He then led us out to the prairie facing the mob and placed us in position; and the first thing we knew a flag of truce was seen coming towards us. The person bearing it said that some of their friends were among our people for whose safety they felt anxious. I rather think it was a case in which the wife was in the Church but not the husband, and the mob wished these parties to come out as they, he said, were going to destroy every man, woman and child in the place. But these folks had a little "sand" in them, as the boys say; they sent word back, that if that was the case they would die with their friends. Joseph Smith, our leader, then sent word back by this messenger, said he, "Tell your General to withdraw his troops or I will send them to hell." I thought that was a pretty bold stand to take, as we only numbered about 200 to their 3,500; but they thought we were more numerous than we really were, it may be that our numbers were magnified in their eyes; but they took the hint and left; and we were not sorry. (Laughter.) The Lord, through simple means, is able to take care of and deliver His people, but they must put implicit faith and confidence in Him; and when they are crowded into a tight place they must not be afraid to make sacrifice for the sake of maintaining the truth, and all will be well with us whether living or dying, in time or in eternity.

[JD 23:37 – p.38, John Taylor, March 5th, 1882](#)

Well, what shall we do? We will serve the Lord; we will live our religion; we will be true to our covenants, keep his commandments and be one, and we will sustain one another, and not sustain men among us who have it in their hearts to cut our throats; let them alone to pursue their own course, and let them draw their sustenance from their own kith and kin; and let us pursue the even tenor of our way, operating together as a band of brethren; and if any have sinned, let them sin no more; and inasmuch as this people are found faithful to God and true to themselves and their fellow-men, I will risk the results of what our enemies may do to injure us. We are in the hands of God, and this nation is in His hands, and he will do with us and them according to the pleasure of His will.

[JD 23:38, John Taylor, March 5th, 1882](#)

Brethren and sisters, God bless you, and God bless the honorable of the earth, and may the wrath of the wicked be made to praise Him, and the remainder may He restrain. Amen.

John Morgan, December 18, 1881

DISCOURSE BY ELDER JOHN MORGAN,

Delivered in the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, December 18, 1881.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE SOUTHERN STATES MISSION – FAITHFULNESS OF YOUNG ELDERS – OPPOSITION TO
THE TRUTH – GRADUAL SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL – CHANGES IN RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL
SENTIMENT – HARD TIMES IN THE SOUTH – VICE AND DEGRADATION – THE COLORADO
SETTLEMENTS.

[JD 23:38, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

It is a very pleasant thought that we, as Elders, have when traveling abroad preaching the Gospel, to look forward to the time when we shall have the privilege of again meeting with our friends and loved ones in the valleys of the mountains, to again share their love and to partake of the spirit of those who compose the body of this Church.

[JD 23:38 – p.39, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

During the past summer and until a few days I have been engaged in missionary labor, chiefly in the Southern States. Our labors there have been, as have been the labors of the Elders in other missions, crowned with a certain degree of success. We have realized the blessings of God upon us in all our labors in the midst of the people, for which we feel to rejoice and give thanks and praise to him. The brethren who have gone from the different parts of the Territory to labor in the mission have as a general thing, enjoyed good health; and they are felling well, as a rule, temporally and spiritually; and especially the younger brethren who have gone forth bearing the glad tidings of salvation. There has been evinced a feeling that certainly is most praiseworthy, a desire to emulate the example set by their fathers in preaching the principles of eternal truth, often under unpleasant circumstances. Because, however much the work of God may progress and be received abroad there is, as there has been, and doubtless will be, a spirit of opposition which has to be met by every Elder in the performance of his duty. It is true our young brethren have the benefit of the experience of their fathers and of men prominent in the Church, to encourage them, and which is highly appreciated by them, but after all they have to get the experience for themselves, in order that they may know what their fathers know, and that they may be able to stand shoulder to shoulder with them. I have scarcely found an exception among the scores of young men who have been called from the different avocations of life to go forth and proclaim the Gospel, but what they were worthy bearers of glad tidings.

[JD 23:39, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

There is an idea entertained by the pious world, whose sympathy for fallen humanity is so great as to be exercised towards us, that the old and gray-headed of the "Mormon" people, "you can do nothing with, they having becoming fossilized in their religious ideas and petrified in their faith; but the young may be induced to depart from the faith of their fathers." This, however, has not been the experience we have had in the Southern States mission with our young Elders. On the contrary, we have found their faces set like flint toward the building up of the kingdom of God, and the proclaiming of the principles of truth. It often occurs in our missionary labors that Elders are called upon to pass through trying circumstances, but I do not remember of a single instance in which a young Elder flinched from the performance of his duty. They have always been ready and willing to add to the extent of their ability and strength in carrying out any measures thought necessary for the good of the cause, even to the risking of their lives. And I am led to believe from what I have witnessed in the young men who have come under my observation, that the great majority of our young people, growing up in these mountains have planted in their hearts the principles of truth, by which they will be governed in their lives. And in this connection there is this peculiarity. In our travels in the South we often meet with families who were once members of the Church, who during the trying times of Missouri and Illinois, or at some other time in the history of the Church, had stopped by the way-side – and where they

stopped temporally they stopped spiritually; the cessation of their temporal work was the milestone that marked their spiritual resting place – but notwithstanding this falling away on the part of the parents, we found, as a general thing, that in the hearts of their children there was a love for the principles of eternal truth; and that if an elder was known to be in their vicinity they would send for him and make themselves known to him, and open their doors to him, and ninety–nine times out of a hundred they would ask to be baptized. This being true of the children of such families, who are isolated from the body of the Church, we might reasonably expect that the youth of Zion will be found true and faithful to the precepts of truth taught to them, through the force and benefit of example they receive from their parents who are members of the Church.

[JD 23:39 – p.40, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

In our labors we at times meet with considerable opposition, but we notice that it, in the long run, instead of working to our injury, results in good. And what is true in the South in this respect is doubtless the case elsewhere. That which our enemies inflict upon us in the hope of breaking us up or weakening our position is, through an overruling providence, turned to result in good by bringing the honest in heart, the Israel of God, to a knowledge of the truth. The widespread feeling of opposition that exists toward us throughout the United States, arguing from past experiences, may be set down as a good omen for the future. But notwithstanding this general hubbub which the people seemingly have to indulge in semi–occasionally, we find in traveling and moving among the people very many upright noble men and women, and we find them belonging to various churches and religious bodies; and then we meet with others who are not connected with any sect or denomination, and who are seeking for truth let it come from where it may. And this class, in my opinion, is not small throughout the United States; in fact, I might with safety say, that there are thousands of such people who have not heard the sound of the everlasting Gospel, there being vast districts of country occupied by hundreds of thousands of peoples who do not know whether the Latter–day Saints believe in God or not, whether they accept the Bible or reject it, people who are totally ignorant in regard to our views; and among these there are many thousands of the honest in heart. We find that the spirit of opposition that we have to meet, as a rule, culminates in violence; and that the more success we have in baptizing people, the more bitter the feeling manifested toward us by our opponents.

[JD 23:40, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

We are, doubtless, traveling in the Southern States Mission, by way of making converts as fast as it would be prudent. If our labors should be crowned with any greater success, that is, to any considerable extent, the opposition would be correspondingly more ripe, and the consequence would be, we would have a bigger row on our hands than we would care to face.

[JD 23:40 – p.41, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

We find a great many prominent, leading men in our travels who are willing to act fairly and honorably by us; men who use their influence with their friends in our behalf by endeavoring to place in their minds correct ideas in relation to us and our situation. To illustrate this idea, I will relate an incident that occurred during the summer. The Legislative Assembly of one of the States, Missouri – whose members had been urged on by sectarian bigotry, had a bill introduced that it was supposed would act against the "Mormons" in that State. Some of the distinguished citizens, honorable, fair–minded people, said to certain of the legislators: "You pass that bill and one–half of the State will become Mormons; that will evidently be the result. Why? Because the moment you adopt such measures you are in the wrong, let them be what they may." There are many men of that way of thinking who have moral courage sufficient to speak their minds; and the influence of such men is felt for good. And here let me say to the credit of the press that, bitter as the opposition is, we scarcely ever find a daily newspaper of any prominence but what will open its columns for us to vindicate our course. And in addition to what I have said in alluding to the class of people who are liberal and cosmopolitan in their views, we find such people ever ready and even anxious to learn in regard to our religious belief. And notwithstanding the fact that among this class are found men of learning and deep research, men who are looked up to by their fellow–men, strange as it may seem to a people who keep pace with the age, we find the

great majority of them much astonished when they learn that we believe in the Bible, and that we take the teachings of that Book to substantiate our doctrines. Among this class who are so uninformed as to our theological status are Congressmen, governors, legislators and others of distinction and character.

[JD 23:41, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

We find also in the ordinary walks of life honest-hearted people. We find them in the churches and out of the pale of the church. We meet with men belonging to the sects of the day who say, "If we have not got the truth, we wish to obtain it." And we meet with others who do not belong to any religious denomination who say, We have examined the doctrines taught by the different churches; they will not do. Now we are willing to investigate what you teach. But, then, we cannot help but notice this kind of expression in their faces: "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Can any good come out of Utah? This, of course, is owing to the widespread misunderstanding in regard to our religious views.

[JD 23:41, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

The newspapers to-day are teeming with articles in regard to the Latter-day Saints. We are written about by editors and special correspondents; local editors gather up items respecting us and our labors among the people of their vicinity; reporters appear to be greedy for an interview with a "Mormon;" ministers preach about us from their stands, and lawyers have to allude to us from the forum; and to such an extent is this spirit and feeling indulged by the people of all grades and classes, that to-day "Mormonism" is a living question in the United States. Recently some politicians endeavored to work up an issue, and make a live question out of the tariff, and it was rather amusing to witness after their exertions how slow the public were to take the bait. And especially amusing did such efforts appear to those who watch with a lively interest the progress of this latter-day work called "Mormonism," in view of the fact that if a couple of "Mormon" Elders go into a town, almost without any effort on their part to make themselves known, the whole town is stirred up. In my opinion the "Mormon" iron is red-hot, and it is a proper time for the Elders to beat it into shape.

[JD 23:41 – p.42, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

We observe changes taking place in the minds of the people continually. Indeed, I can notice marked changes in the people of the United States during the past six years. For instance, quite recently I listened to a sermon preached by one of the distinguished ministers of the United States, the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, and was very much surprised to hear him enunciate an idea like this: "What shall be done with all the thousands and millions of the human family who knew not, even of the existence of the Bible. Shall they perish?" "No," said he, "not if my God reigns in the next world." But, continued he, "what shall be done? They will have the Gospel preached to them in the spirit world." Another minister, the Rev. Dr. Thomas, of Chicago, of the Methodist Church, made similar assertions; but he was not as strong as Mr. Beecher, and they therefore excommunicated him from the church. But Beecher could make it, and no one dare say nay. So we find religious ideas undergoing a change, until there is scarcely a religious denomination to-day but what has done what the Pharisees of old did – put new wine into their old sectarian bottles, and the probable result will be, as Jesus said, their bottles will burst. They are endeavoring to patch their old sectarian clothes with pieces of new cloth, and the result will be that they will be obliged to keep patching in order to keep the garment together. And thus their religious ideas are drifting to and fro.

[JD 23:42, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

And what is true with regard to their religious views is also true with regard to their political ideas. I had an excellent opportunity recently to witness a remarkable change in public sentiment. Public sentiment, you know, is a very strong argument in the minds of some people. "Why, public sentiment is against you," they say. I remember listening to Gov. Bross, of Illinois, who spoke in front of the Townsend House, one night, some years ago. The foundation of his argument was that thirty-five millions of people in the United States were opposed to us; that in short, public sentiment was opposed to us. I had my mind directed to the fickle

nature of public sentiment quite recently in Nashville, Tennessee. Some 25 years ago a certain race of people were held in slavery there. Slavery was an adjudicated question at that time. But it was claimed by the opponents of slavery that if a negro and his wife could be taken out of Missouri through Illinois, that they were entitled to their freedom because they were then upon free soil. It was, however, decided in the Supreme Court of the United States, by Chief Justice, Roger B. Tanney, that black men had no rights that a white man was bound to respect, that, in fact, they were chattel property. And the people of the United States almost en masse applauded the decision, a few only dissenting, they being what were called abolitionists. Wendell Phillips, a distinguished orator, undertook to lecture in Boston against slavery, and learned as Boston was, educated as Boston was, the noted lecturer was egged off the platform, having to make his escape from the mob.

[JD 23:42 – p.43, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

Twenty–five years have gone by since Phillips was mobbed, and now for the contrast. Some four or five weeks ago I boarded a through passenger car at Nashville, Tenn., to Cincinnati, there were seated in the car some 25 ladies and gentlemen. After I got comfortably seated alongside a person who proved to be a Christian minister of the Campbellite persuasion, and an editor, we perceived a little difficulty at the car–door. On investigation we learned that a negro woman held a first–class ticket, and demanded admittance to a seat in this, a first–class car. She was entitled to a seat there, having procured a ticket, according to the provisions of the civil rights bill; but the rules of the railroad company would not permit it. The manager was sent for, and after some conversation with the colored woman, addressing himself to the passengers already seated in the car, he said: Ladies and gentlemen, will you please take seats in the car to the rear. We did so. It proved to be a smoking second–class car. He then admitted the old negro woman, who occupied our car. After we had taken in the situation and were re–seated, addressing myself to the gentleman whose acquaintance I formed on entering the car, I said, "Mr. Editor, twenty–five years ago, had a man dared to do what this negro woman has done, you would have hung him to a lamp–post. Now, I will dare say, there is not a paper in the city of Nashville that will venture to write one line, in condemnation of this piece of impudence." He acknowledged there was not. And why this change? Public sentiment had revolutionized in a quarter of a century. The negro slave of Phillip's day is the sovereign citizen of to–day.

[JD 23:43, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

These are revolutions that are occurring among the children of men that are of a serious nature. And what is true in a political sense, is true in a religious sense. It is a very common observation among the people everywhere that we are not taught religiously what we were twenty–five years ago, or ten years ago. They are drifting to and fro religiously as well as politically.

[JD 23:43, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

Another feature associated with this: About forty years ago a number of our Elders traveled through the Southern States – it may have been in 1844. And as they journeyed along, they scattered all over the country tracts and books, setting forth our faith and doctrines. And to–day it is not unfrequent, on our going into a neighborhood and talking to the people, that they will say, "Our minister has been preaching that." Ah, indeed. Well, can we see him? O, yes; we will ask him to come and see you." On our conversing with him, we have found that he has a Voice of Warning hidden away in his saddle pockets, which he had been reading, and believing some of its pages, he had been preaching some of the principles of the Gospel to his own congregation, which they would believe, and receive without even "a grain of salt." This willingness on the part of the people to receive principle, good or bad, from the lips of their own minister, reminds one of the same state of things that existed in the days of the Savior, as indicated by these words: "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in."

[JD 23:43, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

It is a self-evident fact; it is a truth patent to the most casual observer that the teachings of Joseph Smith have revolutionized the religious world. And the spirit that is working this change is growing and extending, until to day there is inquiry upon the right hand and the left.

[JD 23:43, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

As a general thing those who receive the Gospel in the Southern States are to be from what are termed the middle classes, people who are the owners of small possessions which, when sold, realize them sufficient to provide themselves a suitable outfit and take them to their emigrating point. There have been some instances, however, when their possessions have been sold, even where they possessed good homes, that the proceeds of the sale have been insufficient to emigrate them. This has been due, in part, to the peculiar circumstances by which they have been surrounded. In the first place a terrible war devastated their country; and since that time they have been under carpet-bag rule. And the consequence is, in many places property has depreciated, life has been insecure, laws have been trampled under foot, and little progress has been made.

[JD 23:43 – p.44, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

The people living in Utah can scarcely sense the true situation of the Southern States people. There has been a dreadful drouth this summer. I suppose the majority – I may say the entire South has not raised sufficient grain to bread themselves to the first of April. The corn yield will not, it is said, exceed four bushels to the acre, and the cotton crop may be a little rising of one-third the usual harvest. The result will be more or less suffering among the poorer people this winter. Wages are very low. A man can be employed, a strong, able-bodied man, either white or colored, for from \$6 to \$8 per month including board; and from \$10 to \$12 when they board themselves. Flour is 5 dollars per 100 pounds, and other provisions in proportion. I noticed that dry goods were as high in Nashville as they were in our settlements in Colorado. Wages are at such a low figure that it seems almost impossible for the people to live, when they depend upon day's wages for a living. In addition to this there seems to be a wasting away of the earth, a weakening in its strength, affecting its ability to produce abundantly. Fields that a few years ago yielded good crops, are bordering on sterility to-day. There are hundreds and thousands of acres of land that formerly were very prolific have to-day become "commons," covered with edge grass and sassafras bushes. And it is talked about by the landowners, and commented upon by the people generally; and they believe that something is wrong, but what it is or where it is, they do not know.

[JD 23:44, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

Monopolies and corporations have also a tight grip upon the people. Where there are iron works, where there are railroads, where there are factories, they are owned by a few men, and these few men hold such power, that the people cannot make any move and succeed in it, that would be opposed to the interest of the monopolists. And to-day, it is one of the strongest points of opposition that we have to meet in that mission in preaching the Gospel. Laboring men say, If I take you to my house and receive you as my guest, these men who own this property will turn me out; these men who employ me in their factory will drive me away, my family will suffer, as I have nothing laid up. Under the circumstances, they have not the faith sufficient to meet the issue, and consequently our labors are not crowned with that success, as they evidently would be if the people enjoyed their liberty. But even under these circumstances, many do receive us and proclaim openly their faith.

[JD 23:44, John Morgan, December 18, 1881](#)

In addition to this, all experience that opposition which is as old, doubtless, as the preaching of the truth; and this comes from the clergy. And here let me say, that the opposition we meet with from that quarter, to a great extent, has its foundation in Salt Lake City. There walk the streets of our city men who produce and feed the flame of prejudice that exists to-day in the United States; men who profess to be the friends of their fellow-men; men who come here with a smile on their faces pretending to do us good, pretended followers of

the meek and lowly Savior. These are the characters that send these infamous lies abroad in regard to the Latter-day Saints. They are prejudicing the mind of the people of the United States against our missionaries and against the truth. When I have visited the cities where these men came from who have come to Utah as reformers, I have been deeply impressed, and deeply moved at the condition of their society contrasted with that of this people.

JD 23:45, John Morgan, December 18, 1881

Some time last summer I had business in Louisville, Kentucky, connected with our emigration, and was detained there two or three days, having nothing particular to do but to walk around the city and see what was to be seen of interest. And in walking the streets of that city I thought that in all my travels I had never before seen such evidences of wickedness, corruption and degradation. There are portions of that city that seem to have become corrupted to such an extent, that Sodom and Gomorrah would have blushed at the mention thereof. Men and women could be seen in the most beastly state of drunkenness, and little children, bearing the marks of the lowest degradation – waifs of society, growing up as hoodlums, with no sense of the difference between right and wrong excepting that which nature itself has planted there, to furnish future material for the gallows. I thought in contemplating the scene that presented itself in the streets of the city of Louisville, ay, even at noon-day, to say nothing of that which the recording angels are obliged to look upon in the darkness of the night – I thought of the reformers who come to Utah fresh from such haunts of vice and corruption, and then I thought of you, my brethren and sisters; and you can better imagine my feelings than I can describe them.

JD 23:45 – p.46, John Morgan, December 18, 1881

I went to one of their hospitals and sought an introduction to one of the physicians; on learning who I was he expressed himself pleased to meet me, and proffered his own services to accompany me over the building, which I gladly accepted. On passing through the different wards I saw sights that I trust my eyes shall never be called to look upon again. He opened his book in which was recorded the names of the patients who had been admitted during the past twelve months, and I had the curiosity to ask him to tell me the nature and character of the disease of these people. He informed me that three-fourths of all cases were, what is termed venereal disease. This is not hearsay; these are facts that exist of which the records testify. And from the windows of this hospital, this living monument of the morals of Louisville, Kentucky, was pointed out to me the residence of one of these "reformers" of the Latter-day Saints. And in conversation with one of these "reformers" who had been here, whose acquaintance I had formed when he was here – he recognizing me while traveling in a railway car, and came and shook hands with me, and sat down alongside of me – he asked me "how our friends were getting along in Utah." "Whom do you mean," said I, "by our friends?" I mean the ministers who have gone there," he replied. They are, I think, getting along in their way pretty well. What have they done? They have established whiskey shops! they have imported houses of prostitution, and they have brought hoodlums into our midst, and they thrive under their spiritual care. They have caused sorrow on the hearts of fathers and mothers, by ruining the prospects of sons and daughters whom they have led astray from the paths of honor and credit. Now is not that glorious work to be engaged in! Do you not congratulate yourselves in having been connected with men whose object and labor has been to turn men and women from the truth, from bearing the fruits of morality and righteousness, and failing in that to join hand in hand, heart and soul, with those whose mission is to introduce into our midst the seeds of ruin and decay, to deprive and demoralize your fellow-men. Certainly it is a noble calling to be engaged in. Think of it! Latter-day Saints. Here are men engaged in the work of trying to lead our sons and daughters astray, and they are bold enough to publish boastfully to the world that they would rather see our young people frequent dens of iniquity, saloons, gambling houses and houses of prostitution, than that they should adhere to the "Mormon" faith. Strange as it may seem, with all the enlightenment of this the Nineteenth Century, with our glorious constitution, and our declaration of the rights of man, and the boasted civilization of to-day, officials of the government of the United States will back men up in this damnable work. It may be that an Elder abroad devoting his time and ability to the conversion of souls would feel this more keenly than those who are in the midst of it every day.

These are some of my meditations as an Elder in the missionary field.

Our brethren and sisters who have emigrated to the State of Colorado, are succeeding fairly well; they have their fields fenced in, and they harvested a pretty fair crop this year. The Railroad Companies have been kindly disposed to them, offering them assistance in various ways, by way chiefly of affording them employment at remunerative wages, and seeking after them, in fact to do their work in preference to others. They have their organizations – the Seventies, Elders, Priests, Teachers and Deacons' Quorums; they have their young people's Mutual Improvement Societies organized; and I had the pleasure of attending one of their meetings in the meetinghouse which the people built two and a half years ago. I remember attending one of the first meetings that was held in that house, and there were present not more than 27 all told, and said to them that in the course of four or five years this same house will not hold the people; and to-day it is entirely too small, in fact it would not comfortably seat the young people of Manassa. The first location was made there in the spring of 1878. Since then some two or three settlements have been organized besides; our brethren in that quarter are spreading out and wresting from the barren wastes comparatively comfortable homes. Their associations with the Mexicans are cordial. While they have been kindly disposed towards our people, our brethren have acted honorably towards them, and hence mutual good feelings exist between them. I also spent a few days with our brethren who are locating Sunset, Brigham City and St. Joseph. They have had rather a bad year, as to crops, on account of high waters, the Little Colorado flooding the valleys, and destroying to a great extent their crops. But the building of the railroad in their borders has, through Brother John W. Young, the contractor, furnished them with labor, and it will continue, I understand, for some 12 or 18 months yet, so they will not suffer so much as they otherwise would, in consequence of the loss of their crops.

As Elders traveling without purse or scrip, proclaiming the principles of eternal truth, we need the faith and prayers of the Saints in our behalf, for the devil, it would seem is even more determined now than ever to put it into the hearts of wicked and bigoted men to oppose and, if possible, hinder us in the performance of our duty. And one item that comes to my mind I will mention. I have noticed when abroad that if anything in the world would cheer and encourage an Elder when far from home, it is to receive word from his family that they were cared for, and did not want for the necessaries of life. And there is nothing that will weaken an Elder so effectually and so discourage him in his labor as to receive word from those whom he holds near and dear, to the effect that they are in need of the necessaries of life, that they are unpleasantly situated, that the house they live in does not afford them sufficient protection from the inclemencies of the weather. In one or two instances Elders have come to me to relieve their minds of such a burden, and, as I say, there is nothing that I have witnessed that so effectually unfits a man for missionary labor as the receipt of such intelligence. Therefore, in behalf of those who have left their all to proclaim to their fellow-men the principles of eternal truth, let me solicit the good offices of their friends at home, in behalf of such families who may not be so well prepared to live during the absence of husband and father. Any little attention shown them under such circumstances not only does good to the family, but is appreciated by him whom duty has called elsewhere; and often, under trying circumstances, the knowledge of such kindnesses, cheers and encourages him, and makes comparatively easy labors that would otherwise be hard to bear. Amen.

John Taylor, April 9th, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered at the General Conference,

on Sunday Afternoon, April 9th, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE GOSPEL'S RESTORATION – ITS PRIESTHOOD AND PRINCIPLES – THE SAINTS
MISREPRESENTED – THE "MORMON" WAR – COMPARATIVE STATISTICS – THE IMPENDING
JUDGMENTS OF GOD – DUTIES OF THE SAINTS – A WARNING TO THEIR OPPRESSORS – THE
WICKEDNESS OF THE WORLD – EXHORTATION TO RIGHTEOUSNESS.

[JD 23:47 – p.48, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

In attempting to address the congregation this afternoon, I trust that all will be as quiet as possible. It is extremely difficult to make the congregation hear in this place, especially in so large an assembly, when there is the least confusion. While I address you, I wish to speak such words as shall be interesting, edifying and instructive, and I desire an interest in the prayers of the faithful, that I may be able to do so intelligently, that we may be the better for our coming together.

[JD 23:48, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

I am aware of the position that we occupy to-day. I feel that I am surrounded by a large number of intelligent men and women, and while I am addressing you, I am also addressing the world, for the remarks I make will be reported and published to the world. Therefore, I am desirous to advance such sentiments as will be in accord with the enlightenment of the Latter-day Saints, with the intelligence of the 19th century, and with the principles that have emanated from God.

[JD 23:48, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Any intelligence which we may possess and which we may be able to impart, is not of ourselves, but of God. It did not originate with us; it did not originate with Joseph Smith, with Brigham Young, with the Twelve Apostles, nor was it received from any institution of learning, nor of science, either religious, political, or social. Our philosophy is not the philosophy of the world; but of the earth and the heavens, of time and eternity, and proceeds from God.

[JD 23:48, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

A message was announced to us by Joseph Smith the Prophet, as a revelation from God, wherein he stated that holy angels had appeared to him and revealed the everlasting Gospel as it existed in former ages; and that God the Father and God the Son had also appeared to him: the Father pointing to the Son, said, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him." Moroni, a prophet that had lived on this continent, revealed unto Joseph the plates containing the Book of Mormon, and by the gift and power of God he was enabled to translate them into what is known as the Book of Mormon. That book contains a record of the ancient inhabitants who dwelt upon this continent, a part of whom came from the tower of Babel at the time of the confounding of tongues, and another part came from Jerusalem in the time of Zedekiah, king of Judah, 600 years before the advent of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This book contains a record of the dealings of God with those people; it

contains a record of their worship, of their wars and commotions, of their righteousness and iniquity, and of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ unto them, and of His preaching unto them the same Gospel that was taught on the continent of Asia, attended by the same ordinances, the same organization and the same principles.

[JD 23:48 – p.49, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

I shall not attempt to bring any proof with regard to these matters to-day; I am simply making statements, the truth of which you Latter-day Saints know, as it would be impossible to enter into all the details in a short discourse. Suffice it to say, that the Father having presented His Son to Joseph Smith, and commanded him to hear Him, Joseph was obedient to the heavenly call, and listened to the various communications made by men holding the Holy Priesthood in the various ages under the direction of the Only Begotten. He and Oliver Cowdery were commanded to baptize each other, which they did. John the Baptist came and conferred upon them the Aaronic Priesthood. Then Peter, James and John, upon whom was conferred, in the Savior's day, the keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood came, and conferred that Priesthood upon them. Then Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Elias, and many other leading characters mentioned in the Scriptures, who had operated in the various dispensations, came and conferred upon Joseph the various keys, powers, rights, privileges and immunities which they enjoyed in their times.

[JD 23:49, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Again, Joseph was commanded to preach this Gospel and to bear this testimony to the world. He was taught the same principles that were taught to Adam, the same principles that were taught to Noah, to Enoch, to Abraham, to Moses, to Elijah and other Prophets, the same principles that were taught by Jesus Christ and the Apostles in former times on the continent of Asia, accompanied with the same Priesthood and the same organization, only more fully, because the present dispensation is a combination of the various dispensations that have existed in the different ages of the world, and which is designated in the Scriptures as the dispensation of the fulness of times, in which God would gather together all things in one, whether they be things in heaven or things on earth. Therefore, whatever of knowledge, of intelligence, of priesthood, of powers, of revelations was conferred upon those men in the different ages, was again restored to the earth by the ministration and through the medium of those who held the holy Priesthood of God in the different dispensations in which they lived.

[JD 23:49, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Under the direction of the Almighty, Joseph organized a church; and when people were called upon to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, to repent of their sins, to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and to have hands laid upon them for the reception of the Holy Ghost, those who did believe and obey received the attendant blessings. Then the various offices of the Priesthood began to be conferred upon men who believed, and in due time the quorum of the Twelve was organized, whose commission was to proclaim this Gospel to every people, to every nation, to every kindred, to every tongue. Then a quorum of seventy Elders was selected, known by the name of Seventies; and we now have some 76 times 70 of those Elders.

[JD 23:49 – p.50, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

A First Presidency was also organized to preside over the whole Church in all the world. Then there were High Priests ordained whose office was principally to preside as well as to preach the Gospel. Then there were Elders, Priests, Teachers and Deacons; and this organization was given by direct revelation, by which the Church has been governed from that time until the present. Bishops were also appointed whose position in the Church was clearly defined by the word of the Lord. Then High Councils were organized for the adjustment of all matters of difficulty, for the correction of incorrect doctrine, for the maintenance of purity and correct principles among the Saints, and for the adjudication of all general matters pertaining to Israel. This was the testimony and this is our testimony to-day to the nations of the earth. The Lord stood at the head as instructor,

guide and director; and the Elders were told to go forth and to preach the Gospel to every creature, because confusion, disorder, sectarianism and the theories of men had been substituted for the word and will, and the revelation, law and power of God. These Elders were told that we approached the latter times, when God would have a controversy with the nations, and the message which they had to proclaim was that which was described by John when wrapped in prophetic vision upon the Isle of Patmos. Among other great and important events he said, "I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come." This was the commission given by the Lord to the Latter-day Saints. This is the mission we have been trying to carry out from that time to the present; and I myself have traveled tens of thousands of miles without purse or scrip, trusting in God, to teach these holy principles, and so have many of my brethren by whom I am surrounded.

[JD 23:50, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

When we started we were told that we were not sent to be taught, but to teach. Why? Because the world was not in possession of the principles of life, and therefore could not teach them. We went in obedience to the direct command of God to us through his servant Joseph, and we have spread forth the Gospel among the nations. And is there anything unreasonable about it? No. Is it true? Yes. Is it scriptural? Yes. Is it philosophical? Yes. And I say to-day, not by way of boasting, because we have nothing to boast of (I have no intelligence but what I am indebted to God, my heavenly Father and my brethren for,) that while I have traveled through various parts of the United States and the Canadas, also in England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, France, Germany, and different parts of the earth, among the wise and intelligent as well as the poor and ignorant, among all classes of men – I have stood in their halls and talked with their professors, ministers, legislators, rulers, divines, judges and wise men of every class, grade and position in life – but I have never met with a man who could gainsay one principle of the Gospel of the Son of God, and I never expect to; because truth, eternal truth, as it emanates from God, cannot be controverted.

[JD 23:50 – p.51, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

And what is the nature of the Gospel? It is the same as that taught on the day of Pentecost by the Apostles, when they cried out to the multitude, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." That was the testimony which they bore to the people. That is the testimony which the Elders of this Church bear. There is something about this that is reasonable, that is intelligent, and that is susceptible of proof. It was a very fair proposition for the Apostle to make, promising the people who would obey the requirements which the Gospel imposes upon its adherents, that they should receive the Holy Ghost. And what should this do for them? It was to cause their old men to dream dreams and their young men to see visions, it was to make their sons and daughters prophecy, it was to bring things past to their remembrance, to lead them into all truth, and to show them things to come. This proposition was not alone of a religious nature, but it was also strictly philosophical. The farmer sows oats or wheat, or plants corn, and what does he expect? He expects oats, wheat or corn, as the case may be, and nothing else. There are laws and principles in nature, in the vegetable, the animal and the mineral kingdoms, as well as in all the works of God, that are true in themselves and they are eternal. There are such metals as gold, silver, copper or iron, each possessing certain distinctive elements which they always did possess; and the different bodies in their chemical relations possess principles that are always true to unchangeable laws. It is so also in regard to all the elements by which we are surrounded, and also in regard to the heavenly bodies. Because of these unchanging laws, we know precisely when the sun will rise and when it will set. We know when certain planets or comets will appear and disappear. All their movements are undeviating, exact and true according to the laws of nature.

[JD 23:51, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Now here is a principle of the Gospel that will admit of as strong evidence as anything in nature. What is it? "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall

receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Or in other words, sow wheat and you reap wheat; plant corn and you gather corn. It was a bold position to take. I remember that on these points I questioned the Elder who brought the Gospel to me. I asked, What do you mean by this Holy Ghost? Will it cause your old men to dream dreams and your young men to see visions; will it bring to pass the scripture which saith: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they shall prophecy? Yes. Will it give you the permeating influence of the Spirit of the living God, and give you a certain knowledge of the principles that you believe in?

JD 23:51, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882

"Yes," he answered, "and if it will not, then I am an impostor." Said I, That is a very fair proposition. Finding the doctrine to be correct, I obeyed, and I received that Spirit through obedience to the Gospel which gave me a knowledge of those principles which I simply believed before, because they were scriptural, reasonable and intelligent, according to that scripture which saith, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

JD 23:51 – p.52, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882

I was ordained an Elder by the proper authorities, and I went forth to preach this Gospel. Other Elders went forth as I did to the civilized nations, preaching the same doctrine and holding out the same promises. Some of them were not very learned; some were not very profoundly educated. We send a singular class of people in our Elders. Sometimes a missionary is a merchant, sometimes a legislator, a blacksmith, an adobe maker, a plasterer, a farmer, or common laborer, as the case may be. But all under the same influence and spirit, all going forth as missionaries to preach the Gospel of light, of life and of salvation. They have received the treasures of eternal life, and they are enabled to communicate them to others; and they hold out the same promises. You who hear me this afternoon, as well as thousands upon thousands of others, have listened to those principles, you have had held out unto you those promises; and when you obeyed the Gospel, you received this same spirit; and you are my witnesses of the truth of the things that I now proclaim in your hearing, and of the Spirit and power of God attending the obedience to the Gospel, and you will not deny it. This congregation will not deny it. When you yielded obedience to the laws of God, obeyed His commandments, were baptized for the remission of your sins and had hands laid upon you for the reception of the Holy Ghost, you did receive it; and you are living witnesses before God. This is a secret that the world does not comprehend. Its people have not obeyed it and they do not know it; and the things of God, say the scriptures, no man knoweth but by the Spirit of God; and this Spirit has imparted to us that intelligence and that knowledge. This people have in their possession a hope that enters within the vail, whither Christ, our forerunner, has gone. They are living and acting and operating for eternity. God is their Father, and they know it. Some people think we are a set of ignorant boobies, who do not know what we are talking about, and they try to overrun the faith of the Latter-day Saints by sophistry, falsehood and folly. Whilst the fact is, we are in possession of the principles of eternal life, and are operating for eternity; and then we are operating to build up the Zion of God, where righteousness can be taught, and where men can be protected, and where liberty can be proclaimed to all men of every color, of every creed and of every nation.

JD 23:52, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882

Being placed in communication with God, the sophistry, nonsense and dogmas of men have no influence upon us. We are built upon the rock of revelation, as Peter was, and on the same principle. Said Jesus to him, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" The answer was: "Some say thou art one of the Prophets; some say thou art the Elias who was to come," etc. "But whom say you that I am?" Peter answered and said: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven; and I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." What rock? The rock of revelation – upon the intelligence communicated by the Holy Ghost to those who obey the Gospel of the Son of God; by this, men shall know for themselves, and stand as the rock of ages, invulnerable,

immovable and unchangeable. That is the position which we the Latter-day Saints occupy.

[JD 23:52, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

This, then, is the religious part of the question. What do we believe in? We believe in purity, in virtue, in honesty, in integrity, in truthfulness and in not giving way to falsehood; we believe in treating all men justly, uprightly and honorably; we believe in fearing God, observing His laws and keeping His commandments. Do we all do it? No, not quite. I wish we did. But a great majority of the Latter-day Saints are doing this; and if there are those that are not, let them look well to their path, for God will be after them, and their brethren will be after them, for God cannot look upon sin with any degree of allowance. And as we are here for the purpose of building up Zion, He expects that we will be upright and honorable in all our dealings with one another and with all men.

[JD 23:52 – p.53, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

One part of the Gospel is that we should be gathered together to a land that should be called Zion. Have we been doing this? Yes. Some people are very much opposed to it. Have we injured anybody by gathering in this way? Is this indeed the land of the free, the home of the brave, and the asylum for the oppressed? Cannot the people of this nation afford to listen to the principles of truth, and allow men who are fearing God to assemble together to worship Him according to the dictates of their own consciences? Have we violated any law of the United States in thus gathering together and in thus worshipping our God? Not that I know of. Have we been opposed to the United States? No! no! no! we never have, and we are at the defiance of all men to prove anything of the kind. There are falsehoods set afoot by low, degraded, unprincipled men. We believe that the Constitution of the United States was given by inspiration of God. And why? Because it is one of those instruments which proclaims liberty throughout the land, and to all the inhabitants thereof. And it was because of those noble sentiments, and the promulgation of those principles which were given by God to man, we believe that it was given by the inspiration of the Almighty. We have always esteemed it in this light, and it was so declared by Joseph Smith. Did we do any wrong in coming here in the way we did? I think not. Did we transgress any of the laws of the United States? I think not. Did we transgress any of the laws of the nations we left? I think not. We gathered together simply because we were told there was a Zion to be built up. And what was that Zion? The term means the pure in heart. In connection with our gathering, I would remark, that a short time ago, at one of our public celebrations, there were twenty-seven nationalities represented. This is in accordance with the scripture which says: I will take them one of a city and two of a family, and bring them to Zion. And I will give them pastors after mine own heart, that shall feed them with knowledge and understanding. This is what we find in the Christian Bible, and there is certainly no harm in believing the Bible. The Christians send their Bible missionaries among us to circulate it, and we are always glad to receive the Bible and be governed by it.

[JD 23:53 – p.54, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Now, then, being gathered together, we necessarily required some kind of social relations with each other, for when we came here we brought our bodies with us as well as our religion, and we brought our wives and families with us as well as our religion; and we needed to cultivate the earth and build houses, and plant orchards, and vineyards, and gardens, and attend to the common affairs of life. And then as we began to increase we began to open and build farms, hamlets, villages and cities. Is there anything wrong in this? No. Finally, when we came here we petitioned for a State government, the people held a convention and a constitution was framed, and forwarded to Washington. Congress refused our application for a State, but they gave us a Territorial form of government and named the Territory Utah; and strange to say, how men and nations change, they are trying to interfere with us because of our polygamy, and at that time the government appointed a polygamous governor, Brigham Young. People change in their sentiments and views; I suppose they call it progress. Apostle Orson Pratt, whom you all knew, as soon as that revelation was made public, went down to the city of Washington, and there published the doctrine of plural marriage and also lectured upon it. The paper he published was called *The Seer*, which many of you brethren remember very well. They

were not in ignorance in relation to these matters. It was then well understood by the nation that these were our sentiments, and that President Young was a polygamist.

[JD 23:54, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

But passing on. Sometime after that, we had some United States officials sent out here, who were not polygamists, but one of them went so far as to show us what beautiful civilization they had where he came from, and he left his wife at home and brought with him a strumpet and took her on to the bench with him, to let the people see how intelligent and enlightened the people were in the United States. However, fortunately for him, there was no Edmunds bill then. Still, we were not much edified. It might be according to some people's system of ethics; it may be considered beautiful or aesthetic by the admirers of this fast and progressive civilization; but we could not appreciate it, and the consequence was, that the people felt indignant, they looked upon him as a profligate, and that he had defiled and disgraced the ermine. These were the sentiments of the people then, and they are yours to-day, for you have never been taught anything else. He and some others went back to Washington, and reported that the "Mormons" were in a state of rebellion; that they were a very wicked people, very corrupt and very depraved, almost as bad as some of our truth-telling ministers make us out to be, for some of them are not very notorious for telling the truth, nobody believes them here; but then they have reverend put before their names and that, of course, covers – what is it? a multitude of sins. And therefore, the mendacious stories that they tell and circulate are received as actual truth by thousands of blind, ignorant, bigoted people, who, doubtless, are far more sincere and far more honest and pure in their lives than these specimens of fallen humanity who, in the garb of sanctity, manufacture falsehoods and prepare them specially for the vitiated taste of the age.

[JD 23:54, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

But to return; judges and other officials were sent here, and suffice it to say, we did not like their civilization; and, then, they were not much enamored with ours, because whatever we may be in the estimation of the world generally, we are utterly averse to anything like licentiousness and debauchery; and, if there is any among us, we are indebted to our Christian friends for it, and to our Christian judges for maintaining and protecting it in our midst. We have no affiliation with such things; they cannot exist among us as a people, only by the force, the power and influence of this federal Christianity that has been introduced among us. Until these people came into our midst we had no house of ill-fame; and a lady could travel as safely in our streets at any time of night as in the day; we had no occasion to lock our doors to prevent thieves from preying upon us; we had no drunkenness, ribaldry or blasphemy in our streets; all these things have been introduced among us by our good, kind, pure, pious Christian friends, and in scores of our remote settlements where this civilization has not penetrated, they are free from these vices to-day.

[JD 23:54 – p.55, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Now we will go back to the statement of these men. They were believed in Washington. What did they state? Among other things they said that we had burned the United States library, and the court records, and that a dreadful state of anarchy was in existence; and instead of the United States sending out a commission to enquire into these matters they took the statement of a Lothario and his associates, and sent out an army to destroy us. And these troops were reduced to gnawing mules' legs about the vicinity of Bridger, refusing salt when we sent it to them – for we would have done them good, notwithstanding they came as our enemies. I remember writing a letter to one of the officers who had a letter of introduction to me, and forwarded it by a messenger; I told him that I was very sorry, that as a United States' officer, as an honorable man, he should be placed in the situation he was then in; because he could not help it, as an officer, any more than we could, as he was operating as a servant of the government under military rule and had, therefore, to obey orders. And that while we esteemed him and other officers as patriots and highminded, honorable men, who had exhibited their patriotism and bravery in Mexico and other places, and while we heard of their excellent military equipments, we did not like the idea of their trying the temper of their steel upon us. I told him that republics which reflected the voice of the people were in many instances excitable and erratic, and that I looked for a

reaction in public opinion, and that when that change came I expected the difficulties that the government had placed us in would be done away, and that then I would be glad to extend to him that courtesy in our city that one gentleman should extend to another, and would then be happy to see him. But we could not meet then of course; they could not come to us, and we could not very well go out to them.

[JD 23:55, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

So that the Latter-day Saints may know the truth or falsity of the allegations made by Judge Drummond, I will have the official statement of Governor Cumming, who came out with the army, read to this congregation.

[JD 23:55, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

It would be unfair and disingenuous to blame one administration for the acts of another, yet when we see a disposition to listen to the same kind of popular clamor that then existed, we cannot but notice a great similarity of circumstances.

[JD 23:55, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

[Elder L. John Nuttall then read the following extracts from the official statement of Governor Cumming, which was dated Great Salt Lake City, April 15th, 1858:]

[JD 23:55, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

"Since my arrival I have been employed in examining the records of the Supreme and District Courts, which I am now prepared to report as being perfect and unimpaired. This will, doubtless, be acceptable information to those who have entertained an impression to the contrary.

[JD 23:55, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

I have also examined the Legislative Records and other books belonging to the office of Secretary of State, which are in perfect preservation.

[JD 23:55, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

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[JD 23:55, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

The condition of the large and valuable Territorial Library has also commanded my attention: and I am pleased in being able to report that Mr. W. C. Staines, the librarian, has kept the books and records in most excellent condition. I will, at an early day, transmit a catalogue of this library, and schedules of the other public property, with certified copies of the records of the Supreme and District Courts, exhibiting the character and amount of the public business last transacted in them."

[JD 23:55 – p.56, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Thus it appears that the allegations made by our enemies were false, and the army was sent out under false representations, and their own Governor furnishes the evidence for their own refutation. Yet we were subjected to the indignity and outrage of having an army sent among us, predicated upon these false statements.

[JD 23:56, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

From the above and other similar actions manifested towards us as a people we have learned in the sad school of experience, and by the things that we have suffered, the excitability of the populace, and the unreasonable, savage and relentless feelings that frequently possess the people in their antagonism towards us, to be very careful, in all our acts among men, not to excite that feeling of hate which seems to be implanted in the human bosom against the principles taught by the servants of the Lord in all ages of the world.

[JD 23:56 – p.57, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Our mission is and always has been peace on earth and goodwill to man, to all men. We have in our midst Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics and all kinds of "ites." Does anybody interfere with them? Not that I know of. Yet there was a man, a professed minister in Sanpete County – [addressing President Canute Peterson of Sanpete Stake] Brother Peterson, did you not have a man in your Stake who got up a sensation by publishing far and wide that he had to preach the Gospel in Sanpete with a revolver on his desk, to prevent the "Mormons" from interfering with him – was not that the purport of his statement? [President Peterson: Yes, sir.] Do you know the man? [Ans.: Yes, sir.] Is he there yet? [Ans.: No, sir.] [Laughter.] Others have stated lately that we were in a state of sedition, and that in our different counties there were armed bodies of men prepared to fight the United States. The person that made and published this last statement was, as I understand, also a minister, one of these reverend gentlemen. Do any of you know his name? [A voice: Sheldon Jackson.] I am told it was one Sheldon Jackson; a reverend gentleman with a big R, a pious man, of course, and therefore what he says must be true. [Laughter.] We have a set of people that seem to be prowling about; I suppose, however, they are as necessary as anything else; I do not know but what they are. We have a species of birds called buzzards, whose natural tastes are for any kind of nauseous food; nothing suits them better than to gorge on carrion. Like them, these defamers are fond of trying to root up something against our people here. They themselves fabricate all kinds of notions and opinions, similar to the above that I have mentioned, that everybody here knows to be false, and they circulate them, and they have fanned the United States almost into a furore. People generally are ignorant of what these men and women are engaged in. They think these persons are honorable men and women; and they get up a lot of stories about some poor woman or some poor girl who has been crowded upon by her husband, and that in this state of polygamy there is the most abject misery, and the greatest distress that can be found anywhere. Are they true? Some individual cases may be true. Some of our men do not treat their wives right, and then some wives do not treat their husbands right. We do not all do right by a great deal. I wish we all did right. But supposing we were to go down to the places where these people hail from, to the slums of Chicago, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, New York, and other cities, beginning, say, in New York, with the gilded palaces of 4th and 5th Avenues, and trace the thing down to Five Points, and then go through other cities in the same way, and what would we find there? Do you not think one could get up something as dirty and filthy as the most foul-minded person can get up about us? A thousand times more so.

[JD 23:57, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

They say we are an ignorant people. We admit that we are not so very intelligent, and we never boast of our learning or intelligence; but then, they should not boast of theirs either. However, we can compare favorably with them any day; and while they have had millions of the public funds to sustain their educational establishments, we have been despoiled, plundered and robbed over and over again, yet we are prepared to compare notes with them on education, and also on virtue, honesty and morals, any way they can fix it. And I would be ready to say, as one said of old, Thou fool, first take the beam out of thine own eye, that thou mayest see the more clearly to take the mote out of thy brother's eye.

[JD 23:57, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

We will have read some figures for the information of the brethren who come from a distance, who may not be acquainted with these matters.

[JD 23:57, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

[President Taylor then called upon his secretary, Elder L. John Nuttall, to read some extracts from a work published by an ex-United States official in New York City, which were as follows:]

[JD 23:57, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Before citing from the still incomplete census reports of 1880, let us take that of 1870 and compare Utah and Massachusetts, the new theocracy with the descendants of an old theocracy – priest-ridden Utah with "cultured" Massachusetts, also adding the District of Columbia, which has the enlightening presence of the American Congress to add to its advantages, and is under its direct government.

Comparative Statistics from Census of United States 1870.
School Illiteracy. Paupers. Insane Convicts. Printing Church
Attendance. (can't read and and Edifices.
or write, Idiotic. Publishing
10 years establish-
and upwards.) ments.

Utah 35 11 6 5 3 14 19

Mass. 25 12 55 23 11 11 12

District of
Columbia 27 40 23 35 9 11 8

[JD 23:57, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

"From statistics contained in the Report of the Commissioners of Education for 1877, it is shown that in the percentage of enrolment of her School population, Utah is in advance of the general average of the United States, while in the percentage in actual daily attendance at school, she still further exceeds the average of the whole Union.

[JD 23:57, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

In 1877, when the school population of Utah numbered 30,792, there was invested in the Territory in school property the creditable sum of \$568,984, being about eighteen and one-half dollars per capita of the school population.

[JD 23:57, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

In contrast with this, take the amount per capita of their school population, which some of the States have invested in school property: North Carolina, less than \$0 60; Louisiana, \$3 00; Virginia, about \$2 00; Oregon, less than \$9 00; Wisconsin, less than \$11 00; Tennessee, less than \$2 50; Delaware, less than \$13 00.

[JD 23:57, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

In respect to the amount, per capita, of her school population, which Utah has invested in school property, she exceeds several other Southern and Western States, is in advance of the great States of Indiana and Illinois, and I believe in advance of the general average of the entire Union.

[JD 23:57 – p.58, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Thus, in the matter of education, Utah stands ahead of many old and wealthy States, and of the general average of the United States in three very important respects, namely, the enrolment of her school population, the percentage of their daily attendance at school, and the amount per capita invested in school property.

[JD 23:58, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

From the census of 1880 I have compiled the following:

[JD 23:58, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

COMPARISON OF ILLITERACY. – The United States & Utah Territory:

[JD 23:58, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Total population United States. Utah.
50,155,783 143,963

Total over 10 years of age who cannot read 4,923,451 4,851

Percentage who cannot read, 10 years & over 9.82 3.37

Total over 10 years of age who cannot write 6,239,958 8,826

Percentage who cannot write, 10 yrs. & over 12.14 6.13

Total white population 43,402,970 142,423

Total white population over 10 years of age who
cannot write 3,019,080 8,137

Percentage of white population who cannot write,
10 years & over 6.96 5.71

[JD 23:58, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Of all the States and Territories in the Union there are but thirteen showing a lower percentage of total population who cannot read, Connecticut having the same 3.37. The rest range all the way up 32.32. per centage of total population in South Carolina.

[JD 23:58, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

We will now produce some evidence with regard to crime, etc., drawn from official sources:

[JD 23:58, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

The population of Utah by the census of 1880 is about 144,000, divided as follows:

Mormons 120,283

Gentiles 14,155

Apostate Mormons 6,988

Josephites 820

Doubtful 1,717

23,680

Total 143,963

[JD 23:58, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

"It will be seen that the "Gentiles" constitute only ten percent of the population, yet from this small minority are taken the incumbents of nearly every position of influence and emolument. They have the Governor, with absolute veto power, Secretary, Judges, Marshals, Prosecuting Attorneys, Land Register, Recorder, Surveyor-General, Clerks of the Courts, Commissioners, principal Post-office Mail Contractors, Postal Agents, Revenue Assessors and Collectors, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Indian Agencies, Indian Supplies, Army Contractors, express, railroad and telegraph lines, the associated press agency, half the jurors in law, but at least three-fourths and always the foreman in practice, in fact, every position not elective.

[JD 23:58, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Last winter there was a census taken of the Utah penitentiary and the Salt Lake City and County prisons, with the following result: In Salt Lake City there are about seventy-five Mormons to twenty-five non-Mormons. In Salt Lake County there are about eighty Mormons to twenty non-Mormons. In the city prison there were twenty-nine convicts, all non-Mormons; in the county prison there were six convicts, all non-Mormons. The jailor stated that the county convicts for the five years past were all anti-Mormons except three.

[JD 23:58 – p.59, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

In Utah we have seen that by the United States Census the proportion of orthodox Mormons to all others is as eighty-three to seventeen. In the Utah penitentiary there were fifty-one prisoners, only five of whom were Mormons, and two of the five were in prison for imitating Father Abraham in their domestic menage, so that the seventeen per cent "outsiders" had forty-six convicts in the penitentiary, while the eighty-three per cent Mormons had but five! The total number of Utah lockups, including the penitentiary, is fourteen; these aggregated one hundred and twenty-five inmates. Of these one hundred and twenty-five, not over eleven were Mormons, several of whom were incarcerated for minor offences and polygamy; while if all the anti-Mormon thieves, adulterers, blacklegs, perjurers, murderers and other criminals who are at large, were sent to prison, the Mormons claim that their prisons could not hold them.

[JD 23:59, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

In 1878 a Mormon publication made the following boastful statement:

[JD 23:59, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Out of the twenty counties of the Territory, most of which are populous, thirteen are, to-day, without a dram-shop, brewery, gambling or brothel-house, bowling or billiard-saloon, lawyer, doctor, parson, beggar, politician or place-hunter, and almost entirely free from social troubles of every kind; yet these counties are

exclusively 'Mormon;' and with the exception of a now and then domestic doctor or lawyer, the entire Territory was free from these adjuncts of civilization (?) till after the advent of the professing Christian element, boastingly here to 'regenerate the Mormons,' and to-day every single disreputable concern in Utah is run and fostered by the very same Christian (?) element. Oaths, imprecations, blasphemies, invectives, expletives, blackguardism, the ordinary dialect of the "anti-Mormon," were not heard in Utah till after his advent, nor till then, did we have litigation, drunkenness, harlotry, political and judicial deviltries, gambling and kindred enormities.

[JD 23:59, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

This is what the Mormons assert. Let us see how the case stands to-day, and what the facts attest.

[JD 23:59, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Out of the two hundred saloon, billiard, bowling alley and pool table keepers, not over a dozen even profess to be Mormons. All of the bagnios and other disreputable concerns in the Territory are run and sustained by anti-Mormons. Ninety-eight per cent of the gamblers of Utah are of the same element. Ninety-five per cent of the Utah lawyers are Gentiles, and eighty per cent of all the litigation there is of outside growth and promotion.

[JD 23:59, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Of the two hundred and fifty towns and villages in Utah, over two hundred have no "gaudy sepulchre of departed virtue," and these two hundred and odd towns are almost exclusively Mormon in population. Of the suicides committed in Utah, ninety odd per cent are non-Mormon; and of the Utah homicides and infanticides, over eighty per cent are perpetrated by the seventeen per cent "outsiders."

[JD 23:59, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

The arrests made in Salt Lake City from January 1, 1881, to December 8, 1881, are classified, as follows:

Men	782
Women	200
Boys	38

Total	1,020
Mormons, Men & Boys	16
" Women	6 169
Anti-Mormon-Men & Boys ..	65
" Women	194 851

Total1,020

JD 23:59, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882

A number of the Mormon arrests were for chicken, cow and water trespass, petty larceny, etc. The arrests of anti-Mormons were in most cases for prostitution, gambling, exposing of person, drunkenness, unlawful dram selling, assault and battery, attempt to kill, etc.

JD 23:59 – p.60, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882

If the seventy-five per cent Mormon population of Salt Lake City were as lawless and corrupt as the record shows the twenty-five per cent anti-Mormons to be, there would have been 2,443 arrests made from their ranks during the year 1881 instead of the comparatively trifling number of 169 shown on the record; while if the twenty-five per cent anti-Mormon population had as law-abiding and upright a record as the seventy-five per cent Mormons, instead of the startling number of 851 anti-Mormon arrests during the year, there would have been but 56 made."

JD 23:60 – p.61, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882

I give these statements of facts for the information of the brethren who are here from a distance; but, then, they know them as facts; that is, they know how these soi disant regenerators act, but many of them do not know what their civilization is here, and what is sought to be introduced among us, and the infamous statements circulated concerning us. We are ready, as I said before, to compare notes with them or the people of this or any nation at any time. And then again, we ought to be more pure and virtuous than they, for we do profess to be the Saints of the Most High God. With this view, when this Edmunds bill was being canvassed, and there was a prospect of its passing – although we thought at first it was impossible that such a concern could pass through Congress; but when we saw the falsehoods that were being circulated, the furore that was being raised and fanned by religious fanatics and political demagogues, petitions were gotten up by the people here, one of them representing the male class, another our Relief Societies, another our young men, and another our young ladies' Improvement Societies. All of them represented that we were a virtuous people – that polygamy was a religious institution; and the young people asserted that it had been taught to them by their parents from their youth up, and that the principles of purity, virtue, integrity and loyalty to the government of the United States had been instilled into their minds and hearts since their earliest childhood; and further, that they had been taught and understood that chastity was their greatest boon, far above jewels or wealth, and more precious than life itself. In a few days we had 165,000 signatures, and they were forwarded to Washington. The request was that Congress would not act as the government had before – first send out an army and then send commissioners to inquire, but that they would send commissioners first to inquire into the facts of the case. But they did not choose to listen. In fact, there has been a great furore in the United States in relation to these matters, and that has originated to an extent through our Governor. Now I am very much averse to talking about official men; I do not like to do such things. They ought to be honorable men; the most charitable construction I could put upon his acts would be to say that his education had been sadly neglected, and that he was not acquainted with figures. He might have learned to read and write perhaps, but I would question his having gone so far as arithmetic; because he did not apparently know the difference between 1,300 votes and 18,500 votes. It does denote a lamentable absence of a knowledge of the rudiments of a common education; but then, a man should not, perhaps, be blamed for that which he does not know. And, indeed, it would seem that some of our lawmakers in Washington are not educated. With all due respect to them, with these facts before them and condemned throughout the United States, they did not think it was any crime for a man to be thus ignorant, or they would not have sent him back again. We hope the Commissioners will be better educated, that they will be men who can tell the difference between 1,300 and 18,500. Now we may be very ignorant – and we do not boast much of our intelligence, but when such people perpetrate such palpable, flagrant outrages, we have to resort to a political phrase in order to express our disgust towards them by saying, "There is something rotten in Denmark." I have to be a politician as well as everything else.

Still, in the midst of these things, what are you going to do? Do the very best we can. Are you going to rebel? That would please our enemies, but we do not have much of that spirit in us. We feel to sympathize with people who have not better judgment than to adopt so suicidal and dishonorable a course as that which has been pursued towards us. Yet notwithstanding this, we are unshaken towards the principles of our government and believe that we have got the best on the earth, these evils arising from the corruptions of men and maladministration. It is said that error and falsehood will run a thousand miles while truth is putting on its boots, but truth ultimately will triumph, as according to the old adage, "Truth, crushed to earth, will rise again." And what will you do? Contend for constitutional principles, or lie down and let the vicious, the mendacious and unprincipled run over and overslaugh you?

JD 23:61 – p.62 – p.63, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882

We have peacefully, legally and honorably possessed our lands in these valleys of the mountains, and we have purchased and paid for them; we do not revel in any ill-gotten gain. They are ours. We have complied with all the requisitions of law pertaining thereto, and we expect to possess and inhabit them. We covet no man's silver or gold, or apparel, or wife, or servants, or flocks, or herds, or horses, or carriages, or lands, or possessions. But we expect to maintain our own rights. If we are crowded upon by unprincipled men or inimical legislation, we shall not take the course pursued by the lawless, the dissolute and the unprincipled; we shall not have recourse to the dynamite of the Russian Nihilists, the secret plans and machinations of the communists, the boycotting and threats of the Fenians, the force and disorder of the Jayhawkers, the regulators or the Molly Maguires, nor any other secret or illegal combination; but we still expect to possess and maintain our rights; but to obtain them in a legal, peaceful and constitutional manner. As American citizens, we shall contend for all our liberties, rights and immunities, guaranteed to us by the Constitution; and no matter what action may be taken by mobocratic influence, by excited and unreasonable men, or by inimical legislation, we shall contend inch by inch for our freedom and rights, as well as the freedom and rights of all American citizens and of all mankind. As a people or community, we can abide our time, but I will say to you Latter-day Saints, that there is nothing of which you have been despoiled by oppressive acts or mobocratic rule, but that you will again possess, or your children after you. Your rights in Ohio, your rights in Jackson, Clay, Caldwell and Davis counties in Missouri, will yet be restored to you. Your possessions, of which you have been fraudulently despoiled in Missouri and Illinois, you will again possess, and that without force, or fraud or violence. The Lord has a way of His own in regulating such matters. We are told the wicked shall slay the wicked. He has a way of His own of "emptying the earth of the inhabitants thereof." A terrible day of reckoning is approaching the nations of the earth; the Lord is coming out of His hiding place to vex the inhabitants thereof; and the destroyer of the Gentiles, as prophesied of, is already on his way. Already the monarchs of the earth are trembling from conspiracies among their own people; already has one Czar of Russia been destroyed and another holds his life by a very uncertain tenure through the perpetual threats and machinations of an infuriated populace; already have the Emperor of Germany, the King of Italy, the Queen of England, the King of Spain, the Sultan of Turkey, and many others of the honorable and noble rulers of the earth had their lives jeopardized by the attacks of regicides; already have two of the Presidents of this Republic been laid low by the hands of the assassin; and the spirit of insubordination, misrule, lynching, and mobocracy of every kind is beginning to ride rampant through the land; already combinations are being entered into which are very ominous for the future prosperity, welfare and happiness of this great Republic. The volcanic fires of disordered and anarchical elements are beginning to manifest themselves and exhibit the internal forces that are at work among the turbulent and unthinking masses of the people. Congress will soon have something else to do than to proscribe and persecute an innocent, law-abiding and patriotic people. Of all bodies in the world, they can least afford to remove the bulwarks that bind society together in this nation, to recklessly trample upon human freedom and rights, and to rend and destroy that great Palladium of human rights – the Constitution of the United States. Ere long they will need all its protecting influence to save this nation from misrule, anarchy and mobocratic influence. They can ill afford to be the foremost in tampering with human rights and human freedom, or in tearing down the bulwarks of safety and protection which that sacred instrument has guaranteed. It is lamentable to see the various disordered and disorganized elements

seeking to overthrow the greatest and best government in existence on the earth. Congress can ill afford to set a pattern of violation of that Constitution which it has sworn to support. The internal fires of revolution are already smouldering in this nation, and they need but a spark to set them in a flame. Already are agencies at work in the land calculated to subvert and overthrow every principle of rule and government; already is corruption of every kind prevailing in high places and permeating all society; already are we, as a nation, departing from our God, and corrupting ourselves with malfeasance, dishonor, and a lack of public integrity and good faith; already are licentiousness and debauchery corrupting, undermining and destroying society; already are we interfering with the laws of nature and stopping the functions of life, and have become the slayers of our own offspring, and employ human butchers in the shape of physicians to assist in this diabolical and murderous work. The sins of this nation, the licentiousness, the debauchery, the murders are entering into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and I tell you now, from the tops of these mountains, as a humble servant of the living God, that unless these crimes and infamies are stopped, this nation will be overthrown, and its glory, power, dominion and wealth will fade away like the dews of a summer morning. I also say to other nations of the earth, that unless they repent of their crimes, their iniquities and abominations, their thrones will be overturned, their kingdoms and governments overthrown, and their lands made desolate. This is not only my saying, but it is the saying of those ancient prophets which they themselves profess to believe; for God will speedily have a controversy with the nations of the earth, and, as I stated before, the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way to overthrow governments, to destroy dynasties, to lay waste thrones, kingdoms and empires, to spread abroad anarchy and desolation, and to cause war, famine and bloodshed to overspread the earth.

[JD 23:63 – p.64, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Besides the preaching of the Gospel, we have another mission, namely, the perpetuation of the free agency of man and the maintenance of liberty, freedom, and the rights of man. There are certain principles that belong to humanity outside of the Constitution, outside of the laws, outside of all the enactments and plans of man, among which is the right to live; God gave us the right and not man; no government gave it to us, and no government has a right to take it away from us. We have a right to liberty – that was a right that God gave to all men; and if there has been oppression, fraud or tyranny in the earth, it has been the result of the wickedness and corruptions of men and has always been opposed to God and the principles of truth, righteousness, virtue, and all principles that are calculated to elevate mankind. The Declaration of Independence states that men are in possession of certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. This belongs to us; it belongs to all humanity. I wish, and the worst wish I have for the United States, is, that they could have liberality enough to give to all men equal rights, and, while they profess to have delivered the black slaves, that they strike off the fetters of the white men of the South, who have been ground under the heel of sectional injustice, and let them feel that we are all brothers in one great nation, and deliver all people from tyranny and oppression of every kind, and proclaim, as they did at the first, liberty throughout the land and to all people. That is the worst wish I have for them. And when I see them take another course I feel sorry for it. I would like if I had time to talk a little upon constitutional rights; I would like a little to discuss the unconstitutionality of that Edmunds bill; but it was ably done by many senators of the United States, and by others in the House of Representatives. Very able done; and I honor the men who maintain such sentiments. It is true that most of them apologized and said that they were as much opposed to polygamy as anybody. Well, that is a matter of their own; they have a right to their opinions as much as I have a right to my opinion. Would I deprive them of that right? No, I would not. I preach the Gospel to the world. What is it? Force, tyranny and oppression? No: it is all free grace and it is all free will. Is anybody coerced? Did anybody coerce you, Latter-day Saints? Are any of you forced to continue Latter-day Saints if you do not want to? If you think you are, you are all absolved to-day. We know of no such principle as coercion; it is a matter of choice. The principle that I spoke of before – that is, men receive the Holy Ghost within themselves, is the cementing, binding, uniting power that exists among the Latter-day Saints. What right have I to expect that members of the House of Representatives or the people of the United States should advocate polygamy? They would not understand it. Nor would it be reasonable for us to expect it at their hands; but what I admired in those Senators and Members was their fealty to the government, to the Constitution and the maintenance of the freedom and the inalienable rights of man, of every color, creed and profession.

I will relate a little conversation that I had with President Hayes, when he was here, on the subject of polygamy. I said to him, we are not generally understood by the people of the world, by the outsiders; and I can look with very great leniency upon the action of members of the House of Representatives and the Senate, the governors, and others who have expressed strong indignation against this principle. From your standpoint, you think we are a corrupt people; you think it is a part or portion of the thing you call the social evil, that permeates all classes of society, and is sapping the foundation of the life of so many throughout the land. You think that we are trying to introduce something that is encouraging licentiousness and other kindred evils among the people, and to legalize these things by legislative enactment and otherwise, and trying to popularize and make legal those infamies. I continued, that is a false view to take of the subject. Mr. President, I have always abhorred such practices from the time I was quite young; when I have seen men act the part of Lotharios, deceiving the fair sex and despoiling them of their virtue, and then seeing those men received into society and their victims disgraced, ostracised and esteemed as pariahs and outcasts, I could not help sympathising with a woman that was seduced. I looked upon the man who seduced her as a villain; I do so to-day. Said I, when Joseph Smith first made known the revelation concerning plural marriage and of having more wives than one, it made my flesh crawl; but, Mr. President, I received such evidence and testimony pertaining to this matter, scriptural and otherwise, which it was impossible for me as an honest man to resist, and believing it to be right I obeyed it and practised it. I have not time now to enter into all the details; but in regard to those honorable gentlemen in the Senate who maintained the principle of constitutional rights and who declare, as I declare to-day, that that instrument which was then gotten up was unconstitutional in several particulars, I could not expect them to advocate my religion; it is not their business, but is mine and yours. They can take what religion they please; we do not wish to force our religion nor our marital relations upon them, nor have we ever done it, nor could we do it if we wished, for this principle is connected with the Saints alone, and pertains to eternity as well as time, and is known to us by the appellation of "celestial marriage." It does not belong to them, nor does it pertain to all of our own people. None but the more pure, virtuous, honorable and upright are permitted to enter into these associations. Now I speak to the Latter-day Saints, who are acquainted with what I say. If I state untruths, tell me, and I will consider you my friends, and the friends of this community. Should we preach the doctrine of plurality of wives to the people of the United States? No; you know very well that it is only for honorable men and women, virtuous men and women, honest men and women who can be vouched for by those who preside over them, and whom they recognize as their Presidents; it is only such people as these that can be admitted to participate in this ordinance. You know it. I know it, you Presidents of Stakes know it and the people know it. There are any number of people in this Territory who are good people in many respects, but who cannot come up to that standard. That is the position we occupy in relation to this principle.

JD 23:65, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882

If the United States were to ask us if we could give to them the same ordinance, we would say, No; no, we cannot. Why can you not? Because it is a religious ordinance, as I have stated; because it connects men and women together for time and for eternity; because it associates people of this world in the next; because it makes provision for our marital associations in the other world, and that while we have our wives here we expect to have them in eternity; and we believe in that doctrine that reaches beyond time into eternity. Others make their marital relations to end in death; their covenants last only till death does them part. Ours take hold of eternity, they enter into the eternal state of existence, and contemplate an eternal union of the sexes worlds without end.

JD 23:65, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882

We believe in the resurrection of the dead and the life in the world to come; and not only in the resurrection of the male, but also of the female. We believe also in eternal unions, union on earth and in heaven. And as the heavens declare the glory of God, and the stellar universes roll on according to eternal laws implanted in them by the Deity, and perform their revolutions through successive ages, so will man progress and increase –

himself, his wives, his children – through the eternities to come. Who is injured by this faith? Cannot a great and magnanimous nation afford the privilege to enjoy these principles without passing bills of pains and penalties for the belief and enunciation of such divine, ennobling and Godlike principles?

[JD 23:65, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Man is a dual being, possessed of body and spirit, made in the image of God, and connected with Him and with eternity. He is a God in embryo and will live and progress throughout the eternal ages, if obedient to the laws of the Godhead, as the Gods progress throughout the eternal ages. Is it a thing incredible in this generation that God shall raise the dead? Is it a thing incredible that the finest and most exalted ties and sympathies of humanity, sanctified by family relations – pure undefiled love, should continue in the resurrection?

[JD 23:65 – p.66, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

We have no fault to find with our government. We deem it the best in the world. But we have reason to deplore its maladministration, and I call upon our legislators, our governors and president to pause in their career and not to tamper with the rights and liberties of American citizens, nor wantonly tear down the bulwarks of American and human liberty. God has given to us glorious institutions; let us preserve them intact and not pander to the vices, passions and fanaticism of a depraved public opinion.

[JD 23:66, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Cannot the enlightenment, civilization and statesmanship of the nineteenth century in this great American nation find a more worthy object than to fetter human thought, to enslave its own citizens, to forge chains for the suppression of human progress, to bind in Cimmerian darkness the noblest aspirations of the human soul, to tear down the pillars of the temple of liberty, to inaugurate a system of serfdom and oppression, and to copy after Egypt, Russia, and the late practices of this nation in enslaving and brutalizing humanity, tearing to pieces that great palladium of human rights, the Constitution of the United States? Can they afford to do this? If there are supposed wrongs, can they not find a legal and constitutional way of correcting these wrongs? Surely the tearing down of the bulwarks, the very temple of freedom, will not aid them in the solution of this, to them, vexed question, for if they tear away the strongholds of society, they themselves will perish in the ruins.

[JD 23:66 – p.67, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

But with regard to those not of us, I will tell you what I believe about the matter. I believe it would be much better for them to have even polygamy in their state of existence than this corroding, corrupting, demoralizing and damning evil that prevails in their midst. We look upon it that polygamy is the normal condition of man; but that has nothing to do with Mormon plurality of wives, or what is termed "celestial marriage." I would state also, that when we speak of its being the normal condition, it has so existed throughout all ages. And when we talk about polygamy, I have read the speeches of men in Congress when speaking about the Mormon position, telling us that the British in India put down suttee, which is the burning of widows on the funeral pile of their husbands; casting children into the Ganges, etc. – that the British put that down by force of law. But the British, if my memory serves me right, have about two hundred millions of polygamists under their jurisdiction, and they can afford to treat them right and to give them the protection of law; but our free government cannot. And when we talk about the suttee, that is the destruction of life, while polygamy means the propagation of human life. One tends to destruction and death, the other to the propagation of life. I will guarantee to–day, without fear of contradiction, that there is more of the suttee in the United States to–day pertaining to infants than there ever was in India among the same number of population. It has become unfashionable in the east for women to have large families. I have heard remarks like this: one lady was asked, How many children have you? One or two. Is that all? What do you take me for, do you think I am a cow? Why no, you are not a cow, for cows do not murder their offspring. What a terrible tale is here told!

What a horrible state of affairs is here exhibited. And I am told that some of these iniquities are being introduced here. I tell you, in the name of God, if you do we will be after you. I am told of physicians who are acting as they do in the east – as the butchers of infants. Let us look after these things, you Bishops, and if you do find it out, bring them up. As God lives we will not permit such infamies in our midst; you will not commence your fashionable murders here. And I will say now, Wo to this nation and to the nations of Europe, or any people among any nation, that sanctions these things. Have you not read that no "murderer hath eternal life abiding in him?" What shall be thought of those unnatural monsters, the slayers of their own offspring? This revolting, unnatural, damnable vice may be fashionable, but God will require this crime at their hands. Wo to men and to women that are licentious and corrupt, depraved and debauched, and especially wo, tenfold wo, to the murderers of helpless innocence. I tell you this in the name of the Lord. If these things are not stopped, God will arise and shake the nations of the earth and root out their infamies.

[JD 23:67, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Now then what shall we do?

[JD 23:67, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

We do not wish to place ourselves in a state of antagonism, nor to act defiantly, towards this government. We will fulfil the letter, so far as practicable, of that unjust, inhuman, oppressive and unconstitutional law, so far as we can without violating principle; but we cannot sacrifice every principle of human right at the behest of corrupt, unreasoning and unprincipled men; we cannot violate the highest and noblest principles of human nature and make pariahs and outcasts of highminded, virtuous and honorable women, nor sacrifice at the shrine of popular clamor the highest and noblest principles of humanity!

[JD 23:67, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

We shall abide all constitutional law, as we always have done; but while we are Godfearing and law-abiding, and respect all honorable men and officers, we are no craven serfs, and have not learned to lick the feet of oppressors, nor to bow in base submission to unreasoning clamor. We will contend, inch by inch, legally and constitutionally, for our rights as American citizens, and for the universal rights of universal man. We stand proudly erect in the consciousness of our rights as American citizens, and plant ourselves firmly on the sacred guarantees of the Constitution; and that instrument, while it defines the powers and privileges of the President, Congress and the judiciary, also directly provides that "the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively or to the people."

[JD 23:67 – p.68, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

I have heard it boasted by British statesmen, that as soon as a slave planted his foot on British soil, his fetters were broken and he was a free man. It is the proud boast of Americans that her flag floats for all; and while Congress claims the right of dominion and legislation over territories, with that same right is associated the right of manhood, freedom and American citizenship. We need have no fears, no trembling in our knees, about these attempts to deprive us of our God given and constitutional liberties. God will take care of His people, if we will only do right. I am thankful to say that you are doing pretty nearly as well as you know how. There are many things among us that are wrong, many things that are foolish, but generally you are seeking to fear God and keep His commandments. Now, treat your wives right, but do not subject yourselves to the infamous provisions of the Edmunds' act more than you can help, avoid all harsh expressions and improper actions, act carefully and prudently in all your social relations. Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. A gentleman in Washington told another, who related it to me, in answer to the question, What will the "Mormons" do with their wives and children when this bill passes? he was told: Turn them out in the streets as we do our harlots. I say in the name of God we will not do any such thing, and let all Israel say Amen. [The vast congregation, amounting to from 12,000 to 14,000 persons, responded Amen.] We will stand by our covenants, and the Constitution will bear us out in it. Among other things, that instrument says that Congress

shall make no law impairing the validity of contracts. You have contracted to be united with your wives in time and in eternity, and it would not do for us to break a constitutional law, would it? [Laughter.] Others may do it, but we cannot. We cannot lay aside our honor, we cannot lay aside our principles; and if people cannot allow us freedom, we can allow freedom to them and to all men. We will be true to our wives and cherish them and maintain them, and stand by them in time, and we will reign with them in eternity, when thousands of others are weltering under the wrath of God. Any man that abuses his wife, or takes advantage of this law to oppress her, is not worthy of a standing in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and let the congregation say Amen. [The immense congregation responded by a loud Amen.]

[JD 23:68, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Now, what will we do in our relations with the United States? We will observe the law as we have done, and be as faithful as we have been. We will maintain our principles and live our religion and keep the commandments of God, and obey every constitutional law, pursuing that course that shall direct us in all things.

[JD 23:68, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

Brethren and sisters, God bless you and lead you in the paths of life, and give you wisdom; be calm and quiet; all is well in Zion. You need not be under any fears about anything that may transpire, as though some strange thing had happened. We have met such things before; we can meet them again. God has delivered us before. He will deliver us again, if we put our trust in Him and remain true to the covenants we have made with Him. Our trust is in God. You have heard me say before, Hosanna, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth; and if this congregation feels as I do we will join together in the same acclaim. Follow me.

[JD 23:68, John Taylor, April 9th, 1882](#)

[The speaker then repeated and was followed by the congregation: Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna! to God and the Lamb, for ever and ever worlds without end, Amen, Amen and Amen.]

Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH,

Delivered at the General Conference,

on Sunday, April 9th, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE LAWS OF GOD AND THE LAWS OF THE LAND – THE SAINTS AN OBEDIENT AND
LAW-ABIDING PEOPLE – THEIR PERSECUTIONS PRODUCTIVE OF PROSPERITY – THEIR PAST
AND PROSPECTIVE EXPERIENCE AND EVENTUAL TRIUMPH.

[JD 23:69, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

Nearly all the brethren who have spoken at this Conference have referred to the circumstances in which we, as a people, are now placed; and it would seem unnecessary for me to make any further reference to this all-prevailing subject with which the people generally are more or less familiar, and in which we necessarily are considerably interested. But while the brethren who have spoken have merely referred to some of the sayings of the Prophet Joseph, and to items in the revelations through him, to the Church, I feel impressed to read in the hearing of the congregation one or two passages from the revelations previously referred to. I will, therefore, call the attention of the congregation to a verse or two in the revelation given in 1831, which will be found on page 219 of the Doctrine and Covenants:

[JD 23:69, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

"Let no man break the laws of the land, for he that keepeth the laws of God hath no need to break the laws of the land.

[JD 23:69, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

Wherefore, be subject to the powers that be, until He reigns whose right it is to reign, and subdues all enemies under His feet.

[JD 23:69, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

Behold, the laws which ye have received from my hand are the laws of the Church, and in this light ye shall hold them forth. Behold here is wisdom."

[JD 23:69, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

The following I quote from a revelation given December, 1833, page 357:

[JD 23:69, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

"According to the laws and the Constitution of the people which I have suffered to be established and should be maintained for the rights and protection of all flesh, according to just and holy principles.

[JD 23:69, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

That every man may act in doctrine and principle pertaining to futurity, according to the moral agency which I have given unto them, that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment.

[JD 23:69, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

Therefore it is not right that any man should be in bondage one to another.

[JD 23:69, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

And for this purpose have I established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose, and redeemed the land by the shedding of blood."

[JD 23:69, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

Again, in a revelation on page 342:

[JD 23:70, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

"And now, verily I say unto you concerning the laws of the land, it is my will that my people shall observe to do all things whatsoever I command them.

[JD 23:70, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

And that law of the land which is constitutional, supporting that principle of freedom in maintaining rights and privileges, belongs to all mankind, and is justifiable before me.

[JD 23:70, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

Therefore I, the Lord, justify you and your brethren of my Church, in befriending that law which is the constitutional law of the land;

[JD 23:70, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

And as pertaining to law of man, whatsoever is more or less than these cometh of evil.

[JD 23:70, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

I, the Lord God, make you free, therefore ye are free indeed; and the law also maketh you free;

[JD 23:70, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

Nevertheless, when the wicked rule, the people mourn;

[JD 23:70, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

Wherefore, honest men and wise men should be sought for diligently, and good men and wise men ye should observe to uphold; otherwise, whatsoever is less than these cometh of evil.

[JD 23:70, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

And I give unto you a commandment, that ye shall forsake all evil and cleave unto all good, that ye shall live by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God;

[JD 23:70, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

For He will give unto the faithful, line upon line, precept upon precept; and I will try you and prove you herewith;

[JD 23:70, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

And whoso layeth down his life in my cause, or my name's sake, shall find it again, even life eternal;

[JD 23:70, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

Therefore, be not afraid of your enemies, for I have decreed in my heart, saith the Lord, that I will prove you in all things, whether you will abide in my covenant, even unto death, that you may be found worthy;

[JD 23:70, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

For if ye will not abide in my covenant, ye are not worthy of me."

[JD 23:70, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

This, as I understand it, is the law of God to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in all the world. And the requirements here made of us must be obeyed, and practically carried out in our lives, in order that we may secure the fulfilment of the promises which God has made to the people of Zion. And it is further written, that inasmuch as ye will do the things which I command you, thus saith the Lord then am I bound; otherwise there is no promise. We can therefore only expect that the promises are made and will apply to us when we do the things which we are commanded.

JD 23:70 – p.71, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882

We are told here that no man need break the laws of the land who will keep the laws of God. But this is further defined by the passage which I read afterwards – the law of the land, which all have no need to break, is that law which is the Constitutional law of the land, and that is as God himself has defined it. And whatsoever is more or less than this cometh of evil. Now it seems to me that this makes this matter so clear that it is not possible for any man who professes to be a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to make any mistake, or to be in doubt as to the course he should pursue under the command of God in relation to the observance of the laws of the land. I maintain that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has ever been faithful to the constitutional laws of our country. I maintain also, that I have a right to this opinion, as an American citizen, as one who was not only born on American soil, but who descended from parents who for generations were born in America. I have a right to interpret the law in this manner, and to form my own conclusions and express my opinions thereon, regardless of the opinions of other men.

JD 23:71, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882

I ask myself, What law have you broken? What constitutional law have you not observed? I am bound not only by allegiance to the government of the United States, but by the actual command of God Almighty, to observe and obey every constitutional law of the land, and without hesitancy I declare to this congregation that I have never violated, nor transgressed any law, I am not amenable to any penalties of the law, because I have endeavored from my youth up to be a law-abiding citizen, and not only so, but to be a peacemaker, a preacher of righteousness, and not only to preach righteousness by word, but by example. What therefore have I to fear? The Lord Almighty requires this people to observe the laws of the land, to be subject to "the powers that be," so far as they abide by the fundamental principles of good government, but He will hold them responsible if they will pass unconstitutional measures and frame unjust and proscriptive laws, as did Nebuchadnezzar and Darius, in relation to the three Hebrew children and Daniel. If lawmakers have a mind to violate their oath, break their covenants and their faith with the people, and depart from the provisions of the Constitution where is the law human or divine, which binds me, as an individual, to outwardly and openly proclaim my acceptance of their acts?

JD 23:71, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882

I firmly believe that the only way in which we can be sustained in regard to this matter by God our Heavenly Father is by following the illustrious examples we find in holy writ. And while we regret, and look with sorrow upon the acts of men who seek to bring us into bondage and to oppress us, we must obey God, for He has commanded us to do so; and at the same time He has declared that in obeying the laws which He has given us we will not necessarily break the constitutional laws of the land.

JD 23:71, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882

I wish to enter here my avowal that the people called Latter-day Saints, as has been often repeated from this stand, are the most law-abiding, the most peaceable, long-suffering and patient people that can to-day be found within the confines of this republic, and perhaps anywhere else upon the face of the earth; and we intend to continue to be law-abiding so far as the constitutional law of the land is concerned; and we expect to meet the consequences of our obedience to the laws and commandments of Godlike men. These are my sentiments briefly expressed, upon this subject.

[JD 23:71, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

Now I desire to read another passage in a revelation given in 1834, which will be found on page 364 of the Doctrine and Covenants, commencing at the first verse:

[JD 23:71, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

"Verily I say unto you, my friends, behold I will give unto you a revelation and commandment, that you may know how to act in the discharge of your duties concerning the salvation and redemption of your brethren, who have been scattered on the land of Zion.

[JD 23:71, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

Being driven and smitten by the hands of mine enemies, on whom I will pour out my wrath without measure in mine own time;

[JD 23:71, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

For I have suffered them thus far, that they might fill up the measure of their iniquities, that their cup might be full.

[JD 23:71 – p.72, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

And that those who call themselves after my name might be chastened for a little season with a sore and grievous chastisement, because they did not hearken altogether unto the precepts and commandments which I gave unto them.

[JD 23:72, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

But verily I say unto you, that I have decreed a decree which my people shall realize inasmuch as they hearken from this very hour, unto the counsel which I, the Lord their God, shall give unto them.

[JD 23:72, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

Behold they shall, for I have decreed it, begin to prevail against mine enemies from this very hour.

[JD 23:72, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

And by hearkening to observe all the words which I, the Lord their God, shall speak unto them, they shall never cease to prevail until the kingdoms of the world are subdued under my feet, and the earth is given unto the Saints, to possess it for ever and ever.

[JD 23:72, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

But inasmuch as they keep not my commandments, and hearken not to observe all my words, the kingdoms of the world shall prevail against them.

[JD 23:72, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

For they were set to be a light unto the world, and to be the saviors of men.

[JD 23:72, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

And inasmuch as they are not the saviors of men, they are as salt that has lost its savor and is thenceforth good

for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.

[JD 23:72, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

But verily I say unto you, I have decreed that your brethren which have been scattered shall return to the land of their inheritances, and build up the waste places of Zion."

[JD 23:72, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

It is somewhere written as the word of God, that the enemies of the people of God can do nothing against but for Zion. Now let us review for a few moments the history of the Church, and see how far the acts of the enemies of this people have gone towards nullifying those words.

[JD 23:72, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

When Joseph first looked upon the face of the Father and the Son in 1820, until the Book of Mormon was translated and published to the world in 1829, his enemies did not cease their efforts to destroy him; they sought his life continually; they blackened his character; they maligned and proscribed him, and his name was cast out as evil among all men. But mark you, at the beginning of this period Joseph was a lad of a little over fourteen years of age; and during the nine years of persecution he was but a boy; he had no vast congregation as we see before us this morning to sustain, encourage, or cheer him in his ministry and labors. He stood alone in the world, friendless and despised, cast out, maligned and persecuted on every hand. But did the work cease? Did his enemies prevent him from performing the mission which he had been sent to accomplish? They tried and they did their utmost. They not only made frequent attempts to imprison him under the law, but they made several attempts to take his life, and thus stop the progress of the work in which he was engaged. They spared neither pains nor means, nor did they shrink from hypocrisy, falsehood and misrepresentation to accomplish their purposes; but they signally failed, and he continued to steadily pursue his course, and performed his work, translated the plates, published the Book of Mormon, and in 1830 organized the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, according to the law of the land.

[JD 23:72 – p.73, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

When the Book of Mormon was published and the Church organized, did they cease their endeavors? did the hatred of the world diminish? did the wicked stop their persecutions? did they refrain from slandering, misrepresenting, and otherwise attempting to obstruct the progress of this work? No, they did not, but on the contrary, as the work developed, as the Church increased in numbers and began to spread on the right and on the left, the feeling of hatred, animosity, bitterness and persecution increased proportionately, and as the Church became stronger, her enemies became more numerous and gained strength. But notwithstanding, we moved on; built a Temple in Kirtland, Ohio, from whence we colonized Jackson County, Missouri. We were afterwards driven into Clay, Caldwell and Davies's Counties, Missouri, where we founded new colonies. Like the snowball starting from the summit of the mountain which gathers not only in bulk but in velocity, so did the work of God increase in the midst of the opposition, persecution and hatred of the world. In the midst of all the powers that were exerted to stop it, it moved right on. But did they succeed in expelling our people from Jackson County, and finally from the State of Missouri? Yes, they drove the Saints from their homes, deprived them of their rights as citizens and freemen, murdered many of them in cold blood, while others they confined in dungeons feeding them on the flesh, (as those heartless wretches themselves boasted) of their own brethren; and they dispersed the people, as they supposed, to the four winds of heaven, rejoicing in the belief that they had finally consummated the destruction of the "Mormons." But like the phoenix rising from the ashes of its supposed destruction, they gathered like swarms of bees in Illinois, founded a city, and built another Temple, which cost a million dollars – the most beautiful structure in the Western States at that time; and they continued to thrive. Here they gained something which they never possessed before, a city charter granted to them by the State government of Illinois. They soon became notable for their union and their tenacity to the principles which they had espoused, for their faith in God and in His servant the Prophet, for

their unconquerable, irrevocable will to prosecute what they knew to be the work of God, and to accomplish, so far as in their power lay, His purposes and designs, concerning this great latter-day work.

[JD 23:73, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

In all these vicissitudes and during all the persecutions of fourteen years which were as ceaseless against the Prophet Joseph as the forces of nature are endless, did they diminish the numbers of Saints? Did they break the Saints to pieces? Did they destroy them? No; you know they did not, and it seems that our enemies themselves are fully aware of this fact. But when they thought they had torn up "Mormonism" by the roots and cast it out to dry up and wither under the parching, blighting influence of hostile public sentiment, behold, they had only transplanted the tree into new and better watered soil. Instead of destroying our confidence in the promises of God to us, it had the tendency to strengthen our faith, to increase our knowledge and experience, thus fitting and preparing us for the future that lay before us.

[JD 23:73, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

Finally they succeeded in taking the life of the Prophet and that of his brother; and they shed the blood of our honored President who sits here to-day upon this stand. They thought then they had accomplished their hellish work, they thought then the head and front, or root and branch of "Mormonism" was destroyed. But was it? No; it only made us stronger in faith and more united in purpose. "The blood of the martyrs became the seed of the Church."

[JD 23:74, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

They next drove us from our homes in Nauvoo. I remember the circumstances, although at the time I was but a lad. I also remember my thoughts on the day the mob besieged the City of Nauvoo. My widowed mother had been compelled a day or two previously to take her children and ferry them, in an open flat boat across the Mississippi river into Iowa, where we camped under the trees and listened to the bombardment of the city. We had left our comfortable home with all the furniture remaining in the house, together with all our earthly possessions, with no hope or thought of ever seeing them again; and I well remember the feelings I had when we made our camp on the Iowa side of the river. They were not feelings of regret, sorrow or disappointment, but of gratitude to God, that we had the shelter of even the trees and the broad bosom of the "father of waters" to protect us from those who sought our lives; I felt to thank God that we still possessed our lives and freedom, and that there was at least some prospect of the homeless widow and her family of little ones, helpless as they were, to hide themselves somewhere in the wilderness from those who sought their destruction, even though it should be among the wild, so-called savage, native tribes of the desert, but who have proved themselves more humane and Christlike than the so-called Christian and more civilized persecutors of the Saints.

[JD 23:74, Joseph F. Smith, April 9th, 1882](#)

After the expulsion of the Saints from Nauvoo, and from the State of Illinois, our enemies thought surely the "Mormons" are now broken up, and that this would be the last of "Mormonism." But it is strange how hard we are to kill; it would seem that we object to being killed: there is something dreadful in the thought of being destroyed – annihilated. We naturally recoil from such a doom and seek to preserve and perpetuate our existence. The fact is, we think we have a right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," so long as we do not interfere with the rights of others; we therefore most decidedly object to being demolished; we do not like nor do we intend to be destroyed. Not that we presume to be able to defend ourselves unaided by divine power, against our numerous and unrelenting foes; but knowing in whom we trust, and the nature of the work in which we are engaged, we are not slow to believe, neither are we afraid to openly maintain that we were born to live and to uphold truth, to defend virtue, to establish righteousness, and to stand by the right, and by the help of God we intend to fill the measure of our creation.

Let us follow the wanderings of the Latter-day Saints across the plains to these mountain valleys, and look at our condition to-day compared with our condition in Illinois, Missouri, Ohio, or New York, or compared with our condition at any period of our existence as a church. What do we see to-day? We see the promises of God made on certain conditions fulfilled; and that is an evidence to me that the majority of the people have complied with the conditions, although many may not have done as they should have done. We have prevailed thus far, in accordance with the word of God. And what of the future? So far as the ultimatum of this work is concerned, there is no man in Israel who has a spark of the inspiration of the Almighty in his heart who does not know just as well as he knows that God lives or that he himself lives, that it will be triumphant. But I do not suppose it would be wisdom in God to show us all the vicissitudes and changes, the trials and persecutions through which we may have to pass in order to reach this consummation, because if He did we might get fainthearted before we were prepared to enter into that trial. We may have to be driven again. I do not say we shall be driven; I do not believe we shall – but what has been done may be done again. And supposing we were driven again, what would be the result? Is it not fair to presume – have we not good grounds to believe from the experience of the past, that if we should be again driven and despoiled of our homes, we should rise up somewhere else, many fold greater and more numerous than we are now? The enemies of God can do nothing against, but much for, the work of God. Is it not written that the God of heaven has set His hand for the last time to establish His kingdom upon the earth, never more to be thrown down, and no more to be left to another people? Are we not assured by the word of God, ancient and modern, that its destiny is onward and upward, until the purposes of God concerning this great latter-day work are consummated? This seems to be a point difficult for many to comprehend; but when comprehended it is a key to the whole matter. What God has decreed cannot be annulled by the learning, wisdom, wealth, power, numbers or cunning of man! There is no power beneath the celestial kingdom that can stop or impede its progress one iota. Its destiny is onward and upward – man may fail, but the purposes of God will not. All His enemies, combined with the cunning and perfidy of the infernal spirits by which they are moved to hate, hound, and pursue him unto death, failed, signally failed, even in the crime of murdering him, to prevent Joseph Smith from accomplishing his mission; he filled his destiny and sealed his testimony with his blood. And his blood is upon this nation and upon all the nations that have consented to that terrible deed inasmuch as they do not repent of their sins and obey the Gospel of salvation which is being preached unto them.

My childhood and youth were spent in wandering with the people of God, in suffering with them and in rejoicing with them. My whole life has been identified with this people, and in the name and by the help of God it will be to the end. I have no other associations or place of abode. I am in this respect like Peter when the Savior, on seeing the people turn away from Him, asked him, Will ye go also? Said Peter, Lord, if I leave Thee whither can I go, Thou hast the words of eternal life. We have nothing else to do save to keep in the narrow path that leads back to God our Father. That is the channel He has marked out for us to pursue, and it is our duty to press on; we cannot turn aside, we cannot switch off; there is no side track, it is a "through train" and its destiny is already fixed and mapped out. We have got to meet opposition as it presents itself, battling against it with the weapons of truth which God has placed in our hands. And we must make up our minds that this world with all its pleasures is as dross compared with the excellency of the knowledge of God. He intends to try us and prove us, and He has a right to do it, even to the death if need be, and only those who endure to the end, who will not flinch, but will maintain their integrity at the risk and sacrifice of their all, if need be, will gain eternal life, or be worthy of the reward of the faithful.

I am thankful to God that circumstances are as well with us as they are. He has delivered His people thus far and blessed them from the beginning. His word has been fulfilled concerning them, and will be fulfilled from this time henceforth until His purposes shall be accomplished with regard to them, providing they keep his commandments, which, that they may do, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE WILFORD WOODRUFF,

Delivered in the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, March 26, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

MAN'S FREE AGENCY – THE GOSPEL RESTORED – OPPOSITION TO GOD'S WORK – INCREASE
OF WICKEDNESS – THE WORLD WARNED OF RETRIBUTION – THE SAINTS EXHORTED TO
RIGHTEOUSNESS.

[JD 23:76, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882](#)

I feel disposed to read a few verses from section 43 of the Doctrine and Covenants, a book containing the revelations of God to the Latter-day Saints, communicated through the prophet Joseph Smith.

[JD 23:76, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882](#)

(The speaker then read the whole of the section, commencing at the 17th verse.)

[JD 23:76 – p.77, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882](#)

There is one thing I wish to say to the congregation, and I would say the same to the whole world if I had the power – it is this: I have heard the Prophet Joseph Smith say on several occasions when speaking on the agency of man, and the liberty and rights of men, that if he were emperor of the earth, having control of the whole human family, he would give every man, woman and child the right to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience, leaving them to be responsible alone to their Creator for their individual acts. These are my sentiments, and they are the sentiments of this people to-day, and have been from the beginning of the organization of this Church, and I trust will be to the end of time. And this we believe to be a principle emanating from heaven; and while we accord this right to our fellow-men, and while we declare it to be a heaven-born right guaranteed unto all American citizens through the Constitution of our country, we claim the exercise of the same right ourselves; and we claim this right and privilege under the Constitution under which we live, and we claim it by the laws of God to man. And whenever any people rise up and attempt to make war upon the rights of men because of their religion, they go beyond their right, they transcend their own powers, whether their power be derived either from God or man.

[JD 23:77, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882](#)

You may wish to know why I make these remarks. I will tell you. Because God himself grants this right to every human being upon the earth irrespective of race or color; it is part of the divine economy not to force any man to heaven, not to coerce the mind but to leave it free to act for itself. He lays before His creature man the everlasting Gospel, the principles of life and salvation, and then leaves him to choose for himself or to

reject for himself, with the definite understanding that he becomes responsible to Him for the results of his acts.

[JD 23:77, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882](#)

It is upon this principle that we as Latter-day Saints assert our rights and endeavor to enjoy our privileges. And we are accorded this right in accepting the Gospel dispensation in which we live, and in believing in the Old and New Testaments, the records of God's people who lived in what is called the old world, as well as in the Book of Mormon, the history of the ancient inhabitants of our land, which records are in harmony with each other, bearing witness of the one great Head and of the Gospel which He taught in Jerusalem and Judea, and which His Apostles preached after He left them. It is, in fact, the same Gospel that has been taught to man in every age and dispensation, as there is but the one Gospel, and that Gospel is adapted to the wants and conditions of all men. It is the Gospel of Truth, and truth alone can make us free, free from sin and from the power of the adversary. And this is the Gospel which we have received, and which we take the liberty of preaching to our fellow-men.

[JD 23:77 – p.78, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882](#)

I do not suppose that there has been any dispensation upon the earth in which a greater variety of evidence, or important evidence of the divinity of the latter-day work has been given than that which is occurring, and that will continue to occur until the second coming of the Son of Man. There is no man upon the earth who believes in the literal fulfillment of prophecy as contained in the Old and New Testament, but who must in his heart believe that the God of heaven will in the latter days set His hand to perform a great work and a wonder in the earth; that He will call forth His Church out of the wilderness of darkness and establish it upon the foundation of Apostles and Prophets with Christ Jesus as the chief corner stone. There is no man who believes in the Revelations of St. John who does not believe in his heart that in the last dispensation the angel as seen and described by John in his vision, will fly through the midst of heaven having the everlasting Gospel to commit to man again upon the earth, and that this Gospel is to be preached in plainness and power to every nation, kindred, tongue and people upon the whole earth. There is no man that believes in the literal fulfillment of the revelations of God through the Prophets who does not believe that the Lord will in the latter days gather a people together out of every nation under heaven; and that He will also gather the dispersed of Judah – the Jews – that have been trodden under the feet of the Gentiles for the last 1,800 years for shedding the blood of the Messiah.

[JD 23:78, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882](#)

I wish to bear my testimony to all men within the sound of my voice and those to whom my words shall come, that we are living in that dispensation of God to man that every Prophet and Apostle that has ever breathed the breath of life has pointed to. I bear my testimony that God, in fulfillment of the Revelations of St. John, has sent the heavenly messenger to communicate to man the everlasting Gospel. And why did the Lord reveal to John that this would be done? Because the "falling away" spoken of by Paul had already commenced; because John in his exiled condition sensed keenly that the Church would be overcome and driven from the earth, and by way of encouragement to him and information to all who would believe his word, the Lord showed him what should take place in the future. The Jews had rejected the Messiah, they had crucified the Lord of life and glory and they had also persecuted and taken the life of the Apostles and others who were left to represent his cause; and John only was left, and they tried to take his life; but, in consequence of the promise he had received from the Savior prior to his death, they could not do it: and hence they exiled him on this island – called Patmos. When they rejected the Gospel, they rejected it in all its power and glory, its blessings, its gifts and graces, and also the ordinances of the Holy Priesthood – Aaronic and Melchizedek. With regard to Priesthood we differ from the Christian world. We believe there is no man in heaven or upon earth that administers in the ordinances of the Gospel without the Priesthood, and we defy the whole world to point to a single passage of scripture from the time of father Adam down to Jesus Christ, showing that any man had power to administer in any of the ordinances of the Gospel without the Priesthood. And we say as Paul said,

in referring to this delegated power of heaven, that "no man taketh this honor to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron:" and he was called of God through Moses with whom he communicated. Therefore men cannot legally and authoritatively go forth to preach the Gospel until they are sent; and men cannot hear the word and be converted by the same unless they hear it through the mouth of a preacher who is sent, and who has power to administer in the ordinances of the Gospel.

JD 23:78 – p.79, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882

The Lord has established his Church and his kingdom; and we have been laboring now fifty years and upwards in carrying out the instructions which he has revealed unto us in connection with this work. And as men were formerly, so we have been commanded to go forth and call upon men to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and to repent and be baptised for the remission of their sins; and as they were authorized, so have we been authorized to say to all men who comply with these requirements, that they shall receive the Holy Ghost. But say the Christian sects, these things are no longer necessary, these outward ordinances are not now essential to salvation. We believe they are. In this, of course, we differ from them, and we have a perfect right to. Jesus himself went to John when he was baptizing in Jordan, and requested baptism of him. John demurred, thinking himself unworthy, but Jesus satisfied him by saying, "Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him."

JD 23:79, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882

Baptism by immersion is one of the ordinances of the Gospel, and the law had to be complied with, and hence Jesus set the example. But the Jews, as a nation, rejected him and his teachings; and the Apostles were commanded to turn to the Gentiles. I say Gentiles – we are all Gentiles in a national capacity; and the same Gospel that was taught to the Jews was preached to the Gentiles. It never varied one iota; it was sent to them with all its gifts and graces, its priesthoods, powers and ordinances without any change whatever. And Paul in warning the Gentiles, told them to take heed and fear lest they fall, through the same example of unbelief; for if God spared not the natural branches, which were the Jews, why should he spare them who were the wild branches grafted into the olive tree. We all understand that the blindness in part which happened to Israel and which, Paul said, should continue until the fulness of the Gentiles come in, did befall the churches which had been built up by the Apostles, and that the Gospel, with its gifts and graces, its Prophets and Apostles, has long since ceased to exist among men. The Gentiles fell through the same example of unbelief, until to day a man is looked upon as a deceiver who will rise up and declare himself a believer in the same Gospel that Jesus and his Apostles preached. Paul told the people in his day that God hath set in the Church first, Apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly, teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues; and they were for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, for the perfecting of the Saints, until all come to a perfect man in the stature of Christ. But the Christian world do not believe in these things; they say they are done away, as not being needed. We believe differently, and we have a right to; we say the Lord has restored the Gospel as it was preached to the Jews and the Gentiles by Jesus and the Apostles, and we know whereof we speak. Joseph Smith received the ministration of angels, in fulfilment of the revelations of St. John, and we know it. He received the keys of the Holy Priesthood under the hands of John the Baptist, and under the hands of Peter, James and John, and from that day, through the preaching and administrations of the Elders of this Church, God has given a testimony to hundreds of thousands, of the truth of this work. We believe this, and we have received the testimony for ourselves of its divinity.

JD 23:79 – p.80, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882

In looking upon this congregation assembled in this beautiful building, I am reminded of the mercy and goodness of God to us as a people. On the 24th of July, 1847, I came here in company with the pioneers. At that time Utah was a barren desert, there was no mark of the white man, everything was wild and barren. To-day you may travel thousands of miles through this country, and you find towns and cities, farms, gardens and orchards, temples, and tabernacles, and schoolhouses, and large congregations of the people, and hosts of

children. And where did all these people come from, and what prompted them to come here? You came from your native lands, from the different civilized nations, impelled by the spirit of the gathering which God has restored in connection with the Gospel; and you came in fulfilment of the prophecies of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah and David, and others of the Prophets who have spoken of you. The question that arises in the minds of persons who pass through our country and see the labors of this people is, are we the dupes of impostors? Was Joseph Smith a deceiver? There is a way to test this, and we have tested it to our satisfaction. The great promise made to us when we first heard the preaching of the Elders of this Church was, that if we obeyed certain requirements of the Gospel, we should receive the Holy Ghost; and this same promise is extended to the world of mankind by our Elders who are still proclaiming these glad tidings of great joy. If that promise had fallen we, my brethren and sisters, would not have been here to-day; and Utah would doubtless be as barren as it was when we found it in '47. There is no question in our mind, as to the divinity of the work in which we are engaged. The Christian world questions it. This, of course, we cannot help.

JD 23:80, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882

I want to say to the Latter-day Saints, you are living in an important and interesting time in your history, a time when the principles of the everlasting Gospel are being brought prominently before the world, and it is but natural that they should find their opposite in misrepresentation and persecution. Jesus himself, together with every servant of God of every age, while endeavoring to bless and save mankind through teaching correct principles, made themselves unpopular and became the subjects of hatred and persecution. And there is no doctrine so unpopular to-day as the principles of life and salvation as God has revealed them; and there are none so unpopular as those who believe in and practice the same. Truth revealed from heaven for the salvation of mankind always was unpopular, and always will be so long as the world exists in its present state. Men do not want truth, and therefore they reject it, and they reject it to-day for the same reason that men rejected it formerly, because they love darkness rather than light. If the Latter-day Saints expect to become popular in this day and generation, they will find themselves greatly mistaken. There is a warfare going on between truth and error, and this warfare will continue until He shall reign whose right it is to reign.

JD 23:80, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882

I also want to say to the Latter-day Saints, you should exercise faith in God; you should make yourselves acquainted with the revelations of God, and with the promises He has made to His people, fully believing that all will come to pass as He has spoken it. And each man claiming a standing among this people should do his duty to the trust committed to our charge. Our responsibility is great before God and man. Any people into whose hands is committed a dispensation of the Gospel has a great responsibility. And Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and the Twelve Apostles, would have been under condemnation and would have rendered themselves liable to the curse of God if they had not gone forth into the world and borne record of this work. Paul was placed in the same position and he sensed it, as is inferred from these words: "Woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel." And this is our position to-day in relation to the world.

JD 23:80 – p.81, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882

I have been with this Church almost from its organization, and have passed through the various scenes of its early history. I have seen its rise and progress, and have witnessed the power of God manifested in behalf of this people; and I want to bear my testimony that the God of heaven has, in fulfilment of the prophecies, set His hand to establish His Church and kingdom in the earth, which means no more and no less than His rule and His government, and that He will accomplish it, and there is no power upon the earth or under the earth that can stay the progress of Almighty God. But notwithstanding this, we expect to meet with opposition, with the hatred of the world; this, in fact, is the legacy of the Latter-day Saints. Said the Savior to his Apostles, I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you; if you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. It hated me before it hated you. And what are we going to do? We are going to trust in God. I have no fears myself; I have never had since I heard the first Gospel sermon by the Elders of this Church; for I know that God lives, and that he has set his hand to establish his kingdom, and it will continue

to grow and increase until it shall fill the whole earth. He has called upon us to proclaim to the whole world the Gospel of Christ, and we are doing it as fast as circumstances and wisdom permits; and we promise all men what the first Elders promised us, that is, if they yield to the requirements they shall know for themselves whether this work is of God or man. Is there, I ask, any man or set of men dare make such promises to their fellow-men? I answer, nay; neither could we do it, did we not know that God would back up the word by imparting the Holy Ghost. He has done so from the beginning, and these people can bear me witness.

[JD 23:81 – p.82, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882](#)

The question may be asked, What about the course our government is taking with us? Whatever our nation does or may do, it will be held responsible before God; and every emperor, king and ruler will be held responsible for the use they make of the power committed into their hands. The Lord inspired the men that framed the Constitution of our country, and has guarded the nation from its foundation, in order to prepare free people in which to establish his kingdom. Columbus was inspired of God to persevere as he did to discover this continent, and thus prepare the way for a class of people upon whom the Spirit of the Lord moved to follow; and when they were oppressed hard enough they declared themselves independent, and by the help of God they established and have maintained the government which God gave our forefathers, which is one of the best constitutional governments ever known among men. One of its chief and prominent characteristics is its guaranty of religious liberty, permitting every man to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. This is a sacred right granted by God himself to all men; and when the rulers or legislators of any land undertake by enactments of law to step between man and his God, they by that act become responsible, and must sooner or later be made to answer for interfering with a divine law. This is the light in which we regard the position of our own nation in the steps they have recently taken against us, as a people. However, if I were to express my feelings to Congress and the leading men of our nation, and to our enemies and the whole Christian world, I would say, do not weep for us – and we are sensible of the fact that they will not – but rather weep for yourselves and your children, for as sure as the Lord lives the evils that men seek to bring upon us, will return in due time upon their own heads, heaped up, pressed down and running over. For it is an eternal law, and a law by which we are governed, that what measure we mete, shall be measured back to us again. Our nation knows not what awaits it; the Christian world knows not what awaits it, and the blind guides that lead the people cannot tell them, and the result will be that both the people and their guides will fall into the ditch together.

[JD 23:82, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882](#)

I will say another thing. The Lord never did bring judgment upon any people of any generation until he raised up prophets to warn them of the impending danger. You may read the history of the great and ancient cities of Tyre and Sidon, Nineveh and Babylon and other cities that were built to defy all time and every power but that of God; but when they were ripened in iniquity they were cut off, the Lord raised up men to warn them and to call upon them to repent; but when they rejected them the Lord brought judgment upon them and they were cut off in their sins. And so it will be with our nation and all others, when they shall be fully warned and they reject the message that is sent to them. The heavens are full of judgment, and as the prophets have said, they will commence at the House of the Lord and then go to the nations of the earth. These things are beginning to make themselves manifest and the righteous and pure in heart can see it.

[JD 23:82 – p.83, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882](#)

I want to see the Latter-day Saints live their religion, keep their faith and do their duty, and trust in God. And if men persecute you for the sake of your religion, what can you do? You can go to God, and make your wants known to him; and that is our duty as Latter-day Saints. And as to our nation, they, as well as we, are in the hands of God; and I have nothing to say about them. God will deal with them; and what they sow they will reap, and he will deal with us upon the same principle. The history of the ancient inhabitants of this land, as it has come down to us through the mercy and goodness of God, fully testifies to this principle; as long as they did what was right the blessings of God followed them, but after they became disobedient and wicked the

hand of God rested upon them. At times when I reflect upon the great change that has taken place in our own land in the morals of the people during my time, I feel in my spirit to mourn and to fear as to the consequences. I was between 20 and 21 years of age before I heard of a murder having been committed in the whole of the New England States. The first murder that was committed in our land from the time I could remember until I gained my majority, was committed in New Haven; and I well remember how the news of it shocked all New England. What effect has such news upon the people of the same region to-day? Throughout the whole of Christendom to-day, murder, whoredom, blasphemy, and their kindred evils and vices are indulged in, and unbelief reigns in the hearts of men. Men profess to believe in the Bible; but confront them with the doctrines and prophecies it contains, and they will at once either raise a doubt as to their real meaning or they will openly deny them; and the few that accept the literal meaning of God's word, and confess him and acknowledge him in all things, do it at the risk of their reputation, and some of them, even of their rights as American citizens. What the result of all this will be is already written; and it will come to pass as sure as the Lord hath spoken it.

[JD 23:83, Wilford Woodruff, March 26, 1882](#)

I rejoice in the Gospel of the Son of God as he has revealed it in this our day; I rejoice in the organization of the church and kingdom of God, and in the revelations of heaven. I read them with a great deal of interest, for I know they are true; and, therefore, I look forward with assurance to their fulfilment in the earth. We have but a little time to spend on earth even though we live to be a hundred years of age, and we have no time to waste. We should live in such a manner that the Spirit and blessing of God may attend us; and then when we cease our labors here we shall pass hence to continue them in the same cause of salvation and redemption, and all will be well with us. Amen.

Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE ERASTUS SNOW,

Delivered at the General Conference, Salt Lake City,

Friday Afternoon, April 7, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE LAST DISPENSATION – THE SAINTS' RELIGION PRACTICAL – HOSTILITY TO GOD'S
WORK – DIVISIONS IN SECTARIAN CHURCHES – UNITY OF THE SAINTS – EARLY HISTORY
OF UTAH – "MORMON" THRIFT AND ENTERPRISE – THE ONE-MAN POWER – GOD'S PEOPLE A
FREE PEOPLE – INCREASE OF CORRUPTION – THE SAINTS HOPEFUL.

[JD 23:83 – p.84, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882](#)

I regard the mission of the Latter-day Saints as the most important that has fallen to the lot of man because we, as the people of God, live in the most important period of the world's age – the dispensation of the fulness

of times, in which the God of heaven has set his hand a second time to recover his people, the house of Israel; to lay the foundation of the fulfilment of the promises made to the fathers through Moses and the Prophets, and to bring to pass the covenants made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and those made with Joseph the son of Jacob, concerning his seed. The Book of Mormon gives a brief history of a portion of the house of Joseph who came to this land from Palestine, their native land; and it not only gives an account of this people but it foretells their future. A great future lies before this people in connection with the Latter-day work.

JD 23:84, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

Our mission is not a mission of blood; it is not a mission of war, of strife or contention, but a mission of peace on earth and good will to men; a mission to bring life and salvation unto the children of men who will receive it; a mission to make known the things that God has revealed for the happiness, glory and exaltation of his children, both in this world and the world to come. And what God has revealed to us, which we call our religion, is not only theoretical but eminently practical. It could not be otherwise and be the Gospel of life and salvation. A religion that is exclusively theoretical, that is merely a matter of faith producing no legitimate works or fruits of that faith is dead. There are many dead forms of religion in the world; and as a matter of course they are without force and effect. But the Gospel of the Son of God revealed anew from heaven in our age and time, and which his people have espoused, is a living faith, producing in its votaries its legitimate fruits – love, joy, peace and good works. I am sorry to say, however, that we are not all examples of that living faith to the extent that God requires at our hands. In this respect it is with us as it was with others who preceded us; some of the seed has fallen by the way side, producing little effect in them that received it; some has fallen in stony places, and as anciently, such rejoice for the time being, but alas! when tribulation or persecution arises, they having not much depth of soil, are easily uprooted. Some again has fallen among thorns, and the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. But blessed are those who break up the fallow ground of their hearts, thereby preparing themselves by suitable reflection, meditation, humility and prayer, overcoming the evil that is in them by the good, that the seed when sown, may take deep root and spring forth and bear precious fruit, some thirty, some sixty, and some one hundred fold, according to the depth of the soil and the strength and cultivation of the mind.

JD 23:84, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

I said our religion was eminently practical, as true religion cannot be separated from true practice. It teaches us to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world; it teaches charity and love one toward another, and to assist to bear each other's burdens, and be one in Christ Jesus. Just before the Savior was offered up upon the cross he prayed to his Father in behalf of his disciples and those who should believe on him through their ministrations, that they might be one with him as he was one with the Father.

JD 23:84 – p.85, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

Now it is quite a fine thing in the estimation of the Christian world to preach about Jesus and his doctrines; but when it comes to practice it is quite another thing. One of the main objects of the Latter-day Saints is to become united, both spiritually and temporally. The clergymen of America who have been foremost in working up the late furore against the "Mormon" people, who have met in solemn conclave and dictated resolutions and gotten up memorials to Congress, and who have traveled and visited the noted cities as lecturers, among whom may be mentioned the celebrated Parson Newman and the celebrated – what shall I say? – well, Mr. Schuyler Colfax, and others, have aroused the nation and moved the members of Congress to hostile legislation against the Latter-day Saints. Their general declaration has been that polygamy – though polygamy was the war-cry – was not to be dreaded like "Mormon" unity. They term it priestly influence, or the influence of the "Mormon" hierarchy. In reflecting upon this declaration which was freely expressed on numerous occasions during last winter and spring, in the tirades made against the Latter-day Saints, it has caused some curious reflections. What would have been the result if the Methodists, the Presbyterians, the Baptists and all the prominent denominations of America, had been true disciples of Christ, and had come

under that rule laid down in the Savior's prayer – if they had all become one in Christ as he was one with the Father? What would have been the result? Methinks things would be very different in the history of American government from what we now see. We will refer, for example, to the condition of things prior to the late civil war, and about the time the republican party incorporated in their platform at the Philadelphia convention in 1856, the celebrated plank known as the twin relics – in which they pledged themselves to exterminate the twin relics, slavery and polygamy. What was the condition of the religious sects of America at that time? Those who are familiar with the history of those times will remember that preparatory to that great struggle which resulted in the great civil war, there had been a complete separation and two distinct organizations of all the prominent sects of America. The Methodist church was divided into the Methodist church north and the Methodist church south; the Presbyterians were divided into the Presbyterian church north and the Presbyterian church south; the Baptists, the Campbellites and the other various sects were divided in like manner, the Mason and Dickson line, as it was called, was the line of division between the churches north and the churches south; and substantially the same line marked the boundary between the southern confederacy and northern States during the war, for the division commenced in the churches, and it was the various religious sects of America that worked up the war. They divided one against another, and brought on the war. And when the Northern and Southern armies were marching against and slaying each other by hundreds of thousands, every regiment and division of the army on both sides were encouraged by the prayers and preaching of their respective chaplains of the various sects on both sides, each praying for the success of their arms, that each side might succeed in using up the opposite side.

JD 23:85 – p.86, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

Now imagine them, for a moment, to be the true disciples of Christ, Ministers of the true and everlasting Gospel holding power and authority from him. What would have been the result if the Lord had heard the prayers of the religious elements of these two contending parties? The only thing we can think of as expressing the idea, is the old fable of the Kilkenny cats, which, it is said, fought each other and devoured each other all but the tails, and they began to jump at each other. From the results one would suppose that the Lord heard the prayers on both sides to a considerable extent. But it is too serious a matter to be treated in a jocose style. And, yet, one can hardly resist the temptation, it is so ludicrous to see people professing the same holy religion, to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus and his righteousness, and preachers of his Gospel arrayed on each side, stirring up the people to war, urging them on, and praying to the same God for the success of each others' arms. Now, I ask, is this an ensample of Christian unity such as the Savior prayed for, when he asked the Father that all that should believe on him through the words of his disciples might become one even as he and the Father were one?

JD 23:86, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

The Latter-day Saints, as I have before remarked, are far from being as yet what the Lord requires them to be. But that spirit which accompanies the fulness of the Gospel, and which the Latter-day Saints have received through the preaching of the Gospel and through obedience to its requirements, has so far made their hearts as one, causing them to see eye to eye, and to gather together upon this land of Joseph, that they might learn more fully the ways of the Lord and walk in his paths, and cultivate the Christian unity which the Savior prayed for. And this appears to be the head and front of our offending. Polygamy is ostensibly the cry; but what reflecting man that is posted in the history of the times, believes that this has a particle of influence upon our statesmen? They admit, according to their own showing, that there is more immorality, depravity, whoredom, and the terrible consequences of the social evil in one of the great cities of the Union in a single year than has been in Utah ever since it has been founded. They know this full well. They know that we are a people of energy, of industry and honest labor, a people who do not labor with a view and desire to build ourselves up at the expense and ruin of our neighbors; but a people who labor to gather from the elements around us, producing the comforts of life for ourselves and families. They recognize in us a people who have planted a flourishing commonwealth in the heart of the great American desert, and made it possible to populate the surrounding Territories.

In 1847 the standard of the American nation was planted on this Temple block. I assisted in planting it; and many around me to-day participated in those early scenes. At the same time the country lying west of the Sierra Nevada and between it and the Pacific Coast, was held under the American flag by the Mormon Battalion, who under General Kearney captured the State of California from the Mexican government and held it for the United States government until this country was ceded to the United States by treaty on the 22nd of February, 1848. The stars and stripes were planted between the Rocky Mountains on the east and the Sierra Nevadas west by "Mormon" colonies, and west to the Pacific coast by the "Mormon Battalion," and the country held for the American government. We proceeded to the establishment and organization of civil government. This great basin country between the mountains was incorporated into the State of Deseret, a provisional government was organized for the State of Deseret, a republican constitution was framed and adopted by the people; the country was divided into counties and precincts, local government was organized, laws adopted and delegates sent to Congress to ask for admission into the Union. At the same time the gold hunters were flocking to California after the "Mormon Battalion" revealed the first gold which they brought to light while dragging Captain Sutter's mill race. Some of the men are still in our midst who brought about these results, who first revealed to the astonished world the gold of California, and who raised the first furore, which resulted in thousands flocking to the Pacific coast. And, mark you, the first colony of settlers upon that Pacific coast after the capture of that country through the valor of the "Mormon" Battalion, was a "Mormon" colony shipped from the New England States, who took with them a printing press, and planted their feet upon the shores of San Francisco, and there issued the California Star, in 1847, which was the first publication in the English language west of the Rocky Mountains – the first free press hailing the American flag and proclaiming American liberty, the principles of free government; and at the same time we planted a free press in this city, whence was issued the DESERET NEWS, proclaiming those principles to all the world.

JD 23:87, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

Both California and Deseret presented themselves at the same time, through their delegates, knocking at the door of Congress, praying for admission into the Union. The prayer of California was accepted; that of Deseret was rejected.

JD 23:87, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

Jesus had occasion to ask this question of the Jews: If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will ye give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? It might ill become me perhaps, to apply these words to our national government; but the facts are that when we presented ourselves as the State of Deseret, precisely on equal footing with that of California, with equally a democratic government and republican constitution, both of which States had been organized out of the old Mexican States of Upper California, and which had been recently captured from the Mexican government, and presented themselves to Congress on equal footing; one was accepted, the other rejected. Instead of granting to Deseret a State government, Congress gave us a territorial form of government under the Organic act of 1850. It is true it extended to us certain rights of self-government, but to a limited extent. We had the right of representation in the Legislative Assembly, but those rights were clipped by the absolute veto of a Federal Governor; nor, indeed, is the absolute veto of a Federal Governor the only veto held over the Territorial Legislature, Congress itself reserving to itself a right to annul the acts of the Legislative Assembly, though receiving the signature of the Governor. But if the Governor chooses to withhold his signature no matter how wholesome or necessary the measure, it cannot become law, nor would he be, under the Organic Act, required to assign any reason for it. The mere whim of a man, a stranger to our country who has but little, if any, practical knowledge of our needs, and who himself is not a tax-payer, probably may deprive a whole community of people of their legal rights. Such is the territorial form of government, not of all Territories, for with the exception of Utah and New Mexico, this absolute veto power does not exist on American soil. Other Territories as well as the States, and the United States, may, through a two-thirds vote of their legislature, pass any measure over the veto of its executive.

But what does this signify? It says to us, "we are not willing to trust you with the rights and privileges of self-government in common with other American citizens; and it is deemed advisable that we should hold this check upon your legislature." But notwithstanding we have been shut out from Statehood, we have prospered and grown into a flourishing community of people.

JD 23:88, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

On several occasions we have renewed our efforts by appealing to Congress for the rights of self-government; but on every occasion we have been put off. But we have continued to prosper, and yet we have received no aid from the general government in establishing and maintaining schools, as other portions of the country have. We have built our school-houses and maintained our schools, and educated our children as best we could. And here let me say that Utah will compare favorably in educational matters with any portion of the United States, even the older and richer States; and while the number of children is three times that of other populations, yet, they are all enjoying the benefits of a common school education at least; and as the higher schools are being established the facilities for more extensive education are accessible.

JD 23:88, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

We have opened up farms and established towns and cities over this vast country, of 500 miles in extent. We have established mills and have produced the various cereals and vegetables and fruits, and raised the beef and mutton, and the wool to supply our factories, and cotton, to manufacture to a considerable extent, the clothing that we wear; and we have manufactured to a considerable extent our farming implements, and yet we are under the necessity of largely importing manufactured goods. And, to-day, Utah enjoys prosperity equal, if not superior to any other Territory, and, indeed, some of the Western States.

JD 23:88, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

Now these are facts patent to the world. And with such facts can they in their inmost souls look upon this people as a vicious people, or as a wicked, licentious people, as a people who are influenced by worldly considerations and fleshly lusts? Are these the works of the licentious and dissolute? We invite the people of the United States to attend our Sabbath School Unions and attend the public gatherings of the people where they congregate; we invite their statesmen and honorable men and women of all classes to come and visit us and learn facts as they exist, instead of swallowing greedily the malicious calumnies and misrepresentations set afoot concerning us by those who know little or nothing about us; or if they have known anything about us, they have sold themselves to the Devil long since, and they are of their father the Devil, who was a liar from the beginning, and his works they will do; and when honest people come among us we ask them not to sit themselves down and allow themselves to be corralled by the lying hypocrites that are fanning the flame of persecution, and never come in contact with the people they desire to know and understand. Why is it that honorable men should act as though they were ashamed to learn the truth? Why is it they do not come and hear and see for themselves both sides?

JD 23:88 – p.89, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

We are accused of disloyalty. We are accused of being governed by priestcraft, and that we are subjects of the one-man power. Here we would pause and respectfully say, in the language of Scripture, "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." Where, I would ask, could we look for a more decidedly marked expression of the one-man power than in the case we have recently had in Utah, in which the Governor gave the certificate of election to the man for whom the insignificant number of 1,300 votes was cast, withholding it from the rightful representative of the people for whom 18,000 votes were recorded? The persistency with which he and his friends, the enemies of this people, have sought to fasten this fraud upon the people in this Territory, not to

say anything about the one–man power provided for in the organic act! A federal governor, a stranger sent among us with an absolute veto, possessing the power to wipe out the doings of a whole session of the people's representatives!

JD 23:89, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

I will further direct attention to all reflecting men to the scenes in the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States when the Edmunds' bill was put through under what is called the gag law of the previous question, cutting off amendments and limiting debate. I will appeal to every honest man – if there be an honest politician in the land – by asking, Who among them possesses the freedom of speaking and acting only in obedience to the party lash, and what Senator or Representative dare try to air his sentiments or vote contrary to the dictum of his party leaders? Shame upon them when they talk about the exercise of one–man power in Utah! If there is a people upon the earth that exercise greater freedom of speech or action than the Latter–day Saints, I hope and pray that we may grow until we become their equals at least.

JD 23:89, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

Every principle in our holy religion tends to freedom, or in the language of the New Testament, the Gospel is the perfect law of liberty. The reason that it is so is, because it lifts the spirits of man above the law, or, in other words, it teaches him to work righteousness and thereby escape the penalties of the law, and enables him to enjoy that perfect freedom which God has ordained for all flesh – the freedom to do right, but there is no liberty to do wrong without incurring the penalty of that wrong–doing, therefore, every one who does wrong must accept of the consequences of that wrong, and may expect to suffer the penalty either in time or in eternity. The Gospel then extends to us the freedom to do right, and the laws of our common country used to extend this right and privilege to its citizens. This was declared by the fathers in the famous Declaration of Independence, and which was consolidated by the fathers of the Constitution of our country, which was one of the fruits of their great struggle.

JD 23:89 – p.90, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

This famous declaration enunciated the doctrine that "all just powers of government are derived from the consent of the governed;" and upon this principle are the institutions of our country founded; and it is only through the guarantees of this fundamental doctrine underlying our institutions that there can be any freedom. This declaration of the fathers embodied in that celebrated instrument, signed on the 4th of July, 1876, is the embodiment of the principles of civil and religious liberty, such freedom as God has ever taught and sought to establish among his children from the beginning of the world. And whenever there has been a people who have listened to the voice of God, they have been made free, and oppression has been a stranger to them. The careful student of the Bible will at once perceive that everything which God sought to establish among his people, tended to freedom and the enjoyment of the common rights of humanity. Never did ancient Israel enjoy as free and happy a government as under the reign of the judges, from the time Moses led them out of Egyptian bondage until they clamored for a king. For 430 years they triumphed over their foes, and they dwelt in peace and unity, and love and freedom existed, and every tribe was a commonwealth managing its own local affairs, while they all sustained a central power which counseled and directed them; and their rulers were judges inspired of God, were prophets, seers and revelators, who judged in righteousness, and exercised no control over the liberties and consciences of men. The same principle is observed in reading the history of the American continent. The Book of Mormon is replete with testimony in this direction. And during the palmy days of the Nephites there was no king among them; and that long and happy period that preceded the coming of the Savior, and for hundreds of years that followed during the reign of the judges among the Nephites, liberty and freedom and happiness prevailed. And although they had at one time in accordance with their pronounced and persistent desire, a king – King Benjamin and King Mosiah – yet, these were kings more in name than in fact; they were only patriarchs or fathers among their people, and the term they apply to them might quietly have a tendency to cause them to augment power to themselves and to exercise oppressive jurisdiction over the people, and foreseeing this King Mosiah beseeched the people to abolish the office, and

establish and maintain free government, and elect their chief judge or governor by the voice of the people. He reasoned and explained to them the dangers which would result to them by having a ruler who was not elected by the people. When Israel began to fall into darkness and transgression, in the days of Samuel, and they clamored for a king to lead them to war and thus be like the Gentile nations around them, it grieved Samuel the Seer to his heart; and he besought the people to desist from their determination, and he warned them of the dangers that would follow, telling them that it would lead to oppression and tyranny, and that taxes would be levied and heavy burdens would be laid upon the people grievous to be borne, and that it would finally lead to war, bloodshed and bondage. But they would not listen. And when the prophet inquired of the Lord what he should do, he answered and said to Samuel: "Hearken unto the voice of the people in all they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them."

JD 23:90 – p.91, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

Furthermore, the Book of Mormon tells that God will cause a free government to be established upon this land in the latter-days, and inasmuch as the people will serve the Lord they shall forever be a free people. And in the Doctrine and Covenants is contained a revelation which was given to the Latter-day Saints in the early history of the Church, commanding us to uphold and maintain the principles of freedom and liberty, as claimed by our fathers and consolidated in the Constitution of the United States, and in which is written this remarkable declaration: "Let no man break the laws of the land, for he that keepeth the laws of God has no need to break the laws of the land;" and we are further told that we should uphold and maintain that law which is the Constitutional law of the land; for, the Lord said, the Constitution was established by wise men whom he raised up for that purpose, after the land had been redeemed by bloodshed. This doctrine was taught by the Prophet Joseph Smith, in the early days of this people, and cannot be separated from the religion we have embraced; and by the help of the Lord we mean to maintain those principles to the end, notwithstanding that some of our American statesmen wax wanton in their feelings and tyrannical in their acts and expressions, while religious bigots and political demagogues are undermining the foundations of our American institutions. They commence to-day upon Utah; but it is not the first time. From the time the declaration was made in Philadelphia by the republican party there have been divers departures from those principles embraced in our American Constitution. Had the people of America listened to the voice of the Lord through the Prophet Joseph Smith, they would have long since freed their slaves in an amicable, an honorable and economical manner without the shedding of blood. But they disdained the counsels of the Lord. The Prophet Joseph published his views in pamphlet form on the powers and duties of the national government on the then much-mooted question of slavery, in which he treated upon the compact of the United States as between the North and South on this question of slavery; and proposed an easy and honorable plan of settling the question without violating that compact or encroaching upon the rights of each other; and that was, to negotiate with the Southern States for the gradual emancipation of their slaves, the consideration to be met by the national treasury, and fixing a time after which all children should be born free, thus providing for a gradual emancipation, and that they might not feel that they were robbed, and by their being gradually emancipated they would have been prepared gradually for free government and free labor, and thus the ill and unpleasant consequences would have been measurably averted, at least, of turning loose a horde of uncultivated people, who were totally unprepared for American citizenship. Had they listened to this proposition, less than a tenth part of the cost of the war would have freed all the slaves, and that too without bloodshed, and the utter devastation of the Southern States would have been spared.

JD 23:91 – p.92, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

But we have seen it. And following the war has been inaugurated an era of degeneracy in public morals, degeneracy in politics and religion, a degeneracy in the minds of our statesmen which has shown itself in a desire on their part to tamper with the sacred rights of man, to tamper with every part of the government, not even excepting the Supreme Court, which, up to the time of the civil war, was looked upon by the American people as almost beyond temptation, and beyond the probability of being corrupted or bribed. But alas! the Supreme Court itself has been tampered with. And for many years, almost from the commencement of that effort to break down the barriers of the Constitution and to settle this vexed question of slavery by violence –

from that time politicians have sought to sustain themselves in violent, revolutionary and unconstitutional measures by foisting into the Supreme Court partisans who are already imbued with extreme political notions and ideas, whose carrying them with them on the bench has resulted in many decisions which after ages will greatly deplore and point out as the stepping stones to the destruction of our free institutions. But it remains for the Congress of the United States in 1882 to strike the blow at human freedom which places a vast people who have enjoyed their freedom in part only for 35 years in these mountains, at the disposal of a returning board to be sent here by the President. This is the object of the Edmunds' bill. Its framers, its advocates and supporters scarcely expect anything from it toward the extinguishing of polygamy; but they do expect from it the transfer of our flourishing Territory into the hands of the enemies of the "Mormon" people. And they expect to disfranchise whom they will, and decide who may vote and who may hold office, who may become members of the Legislature, etc., and vice versa; and then dictate what laws they shall make, and then dictate how the people shall be taxed to pay their salaries and expenses, unless forsooth, Congress shall, according to the recommendation of President Arthur, reconsider that part of the law and make provision for their salaries.

JD 23:92, Erastus Snow, April 7, 1882

It is not my purpose to attempt to foretell the consequences of this class of legislation. We shall all see for ourselves; but if our neighbors, our Gentile friends can stand it we can; and if our nation can stand it we can; and if our statesmen and the people who elect them and countenance their acts can stand it, we can; and if merchants, miners, bankers, agents, speculators, etc., among us can stand it, we can. If the taxes should be doubled up, and burdens put upon the people, and they can stand their share of it, we can stand ours, because we are used to it, and they are not. If they can confine themselves to one woman I know we can. (Laughter.) The proof of the pudding you know, is in the eating. We do not intend to be worried; we have already passed through many very trying places, and we still expect to find an outlet. I am reminded often of our experience when traveling through some of the narrow gorges in our mountains; it often appears that our road has come to an end against a mountain, but when we get close up to it, we find a turn, and we keep traveling; and this is sometimes often repeated in a day's travel, until, at last, our road opens out and a broad, beautiful valley is in sight, which never fails to bring feelings of relief to the weary traveler, especially if he is not familiar with the road. Such has been our experience in the pilgrimage of life up to the present time, and we confidently expect that He who has led us, through His Holy Priesthood, will continue to open up our way, and He will do so if we keep our covenants with Him. Amen.

George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON,

Delivered in the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, November 20th, 1881.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

PEACE AND PROSPERITY OF THE SAINTS – GROWING IMPORTANCE OF THE CHURCH FROM
ITS ORGANIZATION – THE WORK OF GOD AND NOT OF MAN – GOD'S BLESSING UPON THE

RIGHTEOUS; HIS CURSE UPON THE UNRIGHTEOUS – THE LIBERTY OF THE GOSPEL – THE
SAINTS PRESERVED FROM WAR AND BLOODSHED – THEIR UNION AND UNIVERSAL
GOODWILL.

[JD 23:93, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

There is a passage in the Book of Mormon which has suggested itself to my mind, which I will read. It contains the words of Alma unto his son Helaman, and were among the last words which he spoke unto him. They will be found recorded on page 368 of the new edition, namely:

[JD 23:93, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

"And it came to pass that after Alma had said these things to Helaman, he blessed him, and also his other sons; and he also blessed the earth for the righteous' sake;

[JD 23:93, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

And he said, Thus saith the Lord God: cursed shall be the land, yea, this land, unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, unto destruction, which do wickedly, when they are fully ripe; and as I have said so shall it be; for this is the cursing and the blessing of God upon the land, for the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance.

[JD 23:93, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

And now when Alma had said these words he blessed the Church, yea, all those who should stand fast in the faith from that time henceforth."

[JD 23:93, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

President Cannon then continued: In rising to speak unto you this afternoon, my brethren and sisters, I do so with a desire in my heart that that which I may say may be prompted by the Spirit of God, and may be for your edification and comfort as well as my own. I am glad to have this opportunity of meeting with you – not so much for the privilege of speaking as of being here.

[JD 23:93 – p.94, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

Some of us, as you know, have been traveling considerably of late, visiting the various settlements, and I believe President Taylor and party, when they return to this city, will have completed the entire round of the Territory and of all the Stakes outside of Arizona – that is so far as Utah and Idaho are concerned. We have found the people in a very prosperous condition and feeling exceedingly well. In almost every settlement the crops have been larger than they have been known to be before. And the people are prospering in their temporal circumstances and of course are feeling well, and I believe I do not overstate the matter when I say that they are as attentive to their duties generally as I have ever seen them. Good health has generally prevailed. I think probably we have had more sickness in this city and neighborhood than in any other part of the Territory. The people are increasing and spreading abroad, taking root in the land. In the southern part of the Territory they are not prospering to so great an extent as they are in the middle and northern part, owing to various causes. Still there is an excellent feeling throughout all these settlements, and they are looking hopefully to the future.

[JD 23:94, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

I have often thought in looking at the calmness and serenity of the people, and the peace which prevails in their hearts, and in their habitations and settlements, that it is not among the least wonderful features of this organization that a people, who are so much maligned, attacked and threatened as are the Latter-day Saints, should be found living so undisturbed by these things and apparently enjoying themselves as they do. There is scarcely a week passes, or has passed for years in which there have not been some threats uttered and circulated against us. "Terrible things going to be done with the Mormons; we are going to have them all disposed of now; we shall have this Mormon question all settled, and the problem so thoroughly solved that it will never require to be meddled with again."

[JD 23:94 – p.95, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

Threats of this character have been in circulation now for years, and every time they have been alluded to it seemed to those who made them as though their plans would be likely to be successful. In the case of any other people it would repress all energy and development, it would frighten everybody, and, in fact, no one would want to live in a community that was in such constant jeopardy. But so far as my observation has extended the people, as I have remarked, are full of peace and quiet, undisturbed by the prospects for the future. In fact they feel quite happy and rejoice that they are counted worthy to have their names cast out as evil. It is one of the most remarkable features connected with this work that a people so few in number, naturally so quiet and inoffensive, molesting no one, interfering with no one's peace or enjoyment, threatening no one, minding their own business, peacefully pursuing their varied pursuits, should create such a stir in the world as we are doing. It might be thought that the 150,000 people who live in the Territory of Utah, would be such an insignificant people and so utterly beneath the notice – so far as numerical strength is concerned – of the world at large, that they might be permitted to pursue the course which is marked out for them without interference and without so much agitation respecting them. But I was told yesterday by a federal official who had just returned from the east – and I suppose it is true – that there was no subject to-day that seemed to have the importance in men's minds that Utah had, and that wherever he went, when it was known that he was from Utah, everybody wanted to talk with him about its affairs and its people. Newspaper reporters were after him to find out what he could tell them about us, and I am informed that members of Congress and other leading men are making the "Mormon question" a special study. I hope they will thoroughly investigate it while they are at it; I think the investigation will prove profitable to them, if it is only done in the right spirit; but the object, I suppose, in making it a special study is to do something, to deal with its imaginary evils, to devise some plan that will reach this system that appears to be so hateful. Well, now, I call this a remarkable feature of this work. I think it is exceedingly wonderful that so small a people – a people whom every one must admit who visits this country, are peaceful – should create such a disturbance in the earth and be the cause of so much thought, so much writing and speech making. And it has not been the case in Utah alone, that is, since the Latter-day Saints came to Utah, but it has been a peculiarity of this work – the work of God – from the day of its inception in these last days until the present. And what is still more remarkable, it was predicted that this would be the case about it when it first started and before it, in fact, had an organization.

[JD 23:95, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

Doubtless the most of you remember that when Joseph Smith was visited by an angel of God when he was quite a youth, it was said to him by the angel that his name should be known for good and evil throughout the earth, and most wonderfully has that statement been fulfilled in his case and in the case of all those who have embraced the everlasting Gospel. This was said before the Church was organized; it was published directly after the organization.

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Doubtless you are all familiar – or most of you are – with the letters of Oliver Cowdery to W. W. Phelps, in which this was published among the earliest writings that were sent forth by this Church, and when to all human appearances there was not the least probability of it being fulfilled, except a man should have the spirit of revelation to discern the future. But when the Church was organized it created a sensation in the

neighborhood – it attracted attention – men's minds were drawn towards it. As it increased the excitement spread, and among the earliest predictions that I remember hearing, connected with this work, was, that it had called forth the attention of townships and of counties and of States, and it was said of it, that it should spread until it would attract the attention of the United States and of the world. This was one of the earliest predictions that was uttered connected with the work, and it was also predicted concerning it, that its missionaries should go to every land and to every people, and carry the glad tidings of salvation, and should be the means of gathering out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people, the honest in heart, who should gather together in one place, and should be known by the name of Zion. I often think of this. The wonderful manner in which this people called Latter-day Saints dwelling in Utah have been gathered together is a subject of never-ceasing interest to me.

[JD 23:95 – p.96, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

Before the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Joseph Smith received revelations which he said were revelations from God. They are now embodied in this book, which we call the Book of Doctrine and Covenants and among the earliest of these revelations is found a statement given by the Lord Jesus Christ, through Joseph Smith, to the effect that he intended to bring forth and establish Zion, and that He would gather together the people who would obey His Gospel. This prediction is particularly note worthy, because at the time when the first of these revelations was given, there was no such organization as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints upon the earth; it did not have an existence; and in the September following its organization – that is five months afterwards – another revelation was given, in which it was stated still more plainly who were to be gathered, and the purposes for which they were to be gathered, and this, too, before there was a place designated as a place of gathering. I have often said that if the Prophet Joseph Smith had no other evidence to show to the world of the divinity of his mission, and of his prophetic office, than that revelation alone, it was sufficient in and of itself to establish it; for this reason; that at the time it was uttered, as I have said, there was no organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; there was no gathering place; no person had ever witnessed such a proceeding as a people belonging to one church gathering together and dwelling together in one organization. There was nothing of the kind known; there was no organization among the children of men that could have given a hint of the possibility or probability of such a great event taking place. If other churches had done the same, then it might have been thought that the Prophet Joseph Smith could easily have predicted that the people that he would be the means of gathering together, might do so also. But there was no accessible record extant of the gathering together of any people in this manner at the time that Joseph proclaimed this principle. Yet he, inspired of God, dared to make this statement to the world, and to publish it, and to-day, we who are here are living witnesses of its fulfilment – not of its complete fulfilment, but sufficiently to make it one of the strangest events that has ever been witnessed among men. There have been many circumstances surrounding the people which have been of such a character as to operate against their gathering. It is not long since a Secretary of State issued a circular to the nations of Europe to check this very business of gathering. I do not suppose that he knew that Joseph Smith had made such a prediction, or that God had inspired him to give such a revelation, or that he ever imagined for a moment that the word of God was recorded upon this subject; but he thought it would be a good thing to stop the immigration of "Mormons." Mobs have also done their part to accomplish the same end, by endeavoring to break up the community and scatter its members and frighten those who had not gathered, so that they might be deterred from coming. But notwithstanding all these influences which have been operating from the beginning – commencing as I said in a township, then spreading to a county, afterwards to a State, and to States, and then the Secretary of State of our nation taking the matter in hand – notwithstanding all these influences which have been operating to check the gathering of the people together, they have gathered as we see them to-day, and are still gathering, because God has said they should, and there is no earthly power that can prevent their gathering together, though it need not surprise you if more thorough measures than ever have been should be taken to prevent the Saints from obeying this command.

[JD 23:96 – p.97, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

When the Elders of this Church first went out, they went out without the ordinary advantages that men who call themselves ministers possess. They were men selected from the various avocations of life. Joseph Smith himself was a farmer. He was not a man that was schooled for the ministry. He had had no education to fit and qualify him as men are ordinarily supposed to be qualified in these days who teach their fellow men what is called the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He did not go to a theological seminary. But inspired of God, having been ordained of God to the everlasting Priesthood (that authority that had been withdrawn from the earth in consequence of the wickedness of men; and been restored to the earth and bestowed upon him by angelic agency) he stood up in the midst of his fellow-men and proclaimed the truth, and by the power of God he was the means of bringing many to its knowledge; and, as I have said, inspired of God, he selected others and laid his hands upon them, that being the ordination necessary to qualify them to preach the word of God. They were taken from the plow, they were taken from the blacksmith's shop, from the mechanic's bench, from the counting room, and from all the vocations of life in which they were found; they were taken and were thus ordained and sent out to preach the Gospel, without purse and scrip, without salary, without that which the world had considered necessary – an education, an education suited to the calling. In this way they went forth and preached the Gospel – not in men's wisdom, not in their own strength, but calling upon God in the name of Jesus to bestow His Holy Spirit upon the people and to carry their words by that spirit to their hearts, and to help them find the honest, the meek, and the humble. This is the way in which they went. They could not glory in man. They could not take glory to themselves, for there was nothing about them in which they could glory. And the result was that wherever they went they met honest-hearted people – people who were waiting to receive their message; and these people as soon as they were baptized were seized with a desire to gather together with the people of God, without knowing what God had said upon the subject.

JD 23:97 – p.98 – p.99, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881

Now, when God does a work he does it in his own way, and he is determined – he always was apparently from all we read – to have the glory of that work. If a man were to go forth qualified by education and preached by the power of education and of learning, who is it that gets the glory? Why, you will find it everywhere that man is glorified. If there is a fluent preacher, if there is a successful orator in what is called the Christian Church, he gets the glory of it, and he gets a salary in proportion to it. Commencing, as some of them have done, to preach in humble places, the fame of their oratory has spread, and they have had calls to the ministry from other places, such calls being accompanied by an increase of salary, and a man goes from one place to another according to the addition he receives in his salary until he becomes noted as many are to day. The fame of their oratory goes throughout the United States. Who is it that gets the glory for this? Why, it is the men themselves, and they get the salary, too. They not only get the glory of men, but they get their pay. Man's education is praised, the college where he received it receives credit for it according to the ability that he may display, and God is very little thought about in the matter, and certainly the Holy Ghost gets no credit, for it is supposed that the Holy Ghost has nothing to do with it. Well, now, God has taken a different method in our day, and he is showing forth his power. He is taking the meek and the lowly and the humble men who are desirous to keep his commandments, and he is making them mighty through his power. But they cannot give any glory to any one but the Almighty for this. Let a man attempt to travel without purse and scrip, as the Elders of this Church have done, and as the ancient Apostles did, and if he is successful he is successful through faith, through his reliance upon God through keeping his commandments, through being humble, meek and lowly of heart, and if he reaches the hearts of the honest, the only way he can hope to do it is by having the Spirit of God, and having that power accompanying his words. He cannot do it in any other way. And who is there in this Church that gives Joseph Smith the glory of this work? Yet it is the most wonderful organization ever beheld among men. There is nothing like it. There is no limit to the power connected with it; there is no limit to the union connected with it; there is no limit to the capacity for expansion connected with it. You may expand it and make it as wide and broad as you please, and the organization is equal to it. If it only consisted of six members it answered the purpose; if it consisted of six thousand it answered the purpose. If it were to consist of six millions it would answer the purpose; if it should embrace the whole world it would be found equal to the necessity. No man can look upon the organization of this Church and examine it in its details without being wonderfully impressed – if he be a man who does not give glory to God – with the ability of the man who framed it; but if he be disposed to give glory to God, he

cannot examine it without praising God in his heart for giving so wonderful and so simple an organization on the earth for a church. But though this is the case, who is there that gives any glory to Joseph Smith? Who is there that gives any glory to Brigham Young? I have been told repeatedly that we do not honor our men enough, we do not give them praise enough; but it is a fact, the people look behind the instrument. Joseph Smith was a man; yet we have been falsely accused of worshiping Joseph Smith in the place of the Savior, and the same has also been said of Brigham Young. But the true feeling is to look behind Joseph Smith and Brigham Young to the Power who raised them up, to that Being who gave them all their gifts and endowments, who inspired them and who made them perform the work that they did. And when Elders in this Church are successful there is very little disposition to give them the glory or the praise therefore. The praise is given to God, who is the author of these blessings and of the gathering of this people together. The world say it was the shrewdness of Joseph Smith that first suggested this, and that it was the executive ability that Brigham Young had that carried it out. They do not recognize God in it; it was Brigham Young. But, my brethren and sisters, you know who it was. You know that it was no power of man that could have touched your hearts and made you desire to leave your homes and come to Zion. This makes every man and woman in this Church, who comes from the nations of the earth, a living witness for himself and for herself, not depending upon the Elders, for the Elders could not do this, they could not offer the inducements, but every man and every woman becomes an interested person, a witness himself and herself to the truth of these things, and especially to the doctrine of gathering. Why the desire is so strong and has been in the hearts of the people that if it were necessary they would walk on foot any distance to join the gathered Saints. If they could walk on the water they would do it. They would push hand-carts across the plains if they could not come across in any other way, carrying their packs on their backs. Why? Because the Spirit of God was poured out upon them, and it filled their hearts with this desire that I said is irrepressible. They could not be content to stay away.

[JD 23:99 – p.100, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

In this way God has built up this Church. It did not, as we have often heard, depend upon one man. Men thought if they killed Joseph Smith they would destroy the keystone; that his existence was the means of upholding the work and giving it solidity. But he was killed, and still the work prospered, and it will prosper if every man that is now in position in the Church should be killed or should die. The testimony of Jesus is in the hearts of the people. You travel throughout the Territory, and call the people together and ask them: "What influence brought you here?" Every one who is an adult, and has retained the faith, will tell you that it was the Spirit and power of God. No other influence nor power could have done this but that. Well, now, men will fight it, men are fighting it. It is strange to-day to see people who call themselves religious, advocating all manner of means to be brought against this people to destroy them. To shed their blood is thought to be justifiable; the killing of people in order to destroy an organization that they think is so full of menace; and yet we are told in the Bible – and we have been taught it from childhood, that the righteous never persecute the wicked, but it has always been the case that the wicked persecute the righteous; and we are told by the Savior himself that his followers should be hated of all men, and that men in seeking to kill them would think they were doing God's service. It was not the Apostles of Jesus who persecuted the wicked, it was not the righteous who hated them and who sought their destruction. There were no petitions went out from the humble followers of Christ against the Pharisees and against the religious sects of that day to have them destroyed, to have governmental aid to assist them in extirpating their heresies; nothing of this kind has ever been witnessed, but here we find to-day the professedly righteous, the ministers, advocating the most dreadful measures. Why I heard here a few days ago from one of our returned missionaries that the sermon of a notorious preacher in the East, delivered some time since, in which he advocated the wiping out of the Latter-day Saints by the use of arms and cannon and weapons of war – I was told that the sermon when it reached England was re-printed and distributed gratuitously at the doors of the churches. People rejoiced over it, thought it an excellent scheme, and yet you tell those people they are not Christians and they would be shocked, feel insulted and think themselves terribly abused by such a statement, and at the same time were rejoicing over the prospect of the Latter-day Saints being killed and the system being broken up by violence.

[JD 23:100 – p.101, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

How shall we feel respecting these matters? I have said that the people, so far as my observation has extended throughout this Territory, were rejoicing and feeling contented. How shall we feel? Shall we be disturbed? The man or woman who entered into this Church who was old enough to understand these matters, and expected anything different to this, was not properly informed. When I became old enough to understand the character of this work I made up my mind that it might cost me everything before I got through. I did not know what might be involved in it, what consequences; but I knew that others who had started out for salvation had been slain, and that Saints of God in every age have had to lay down their lives for the truth and that my Lord and Master Jesus Christ, had been crucified, and if I expected to live and reign with Him, that I must also be prepared to endure all things. The salvation that God has promised unto us is worthy of all this, or it is worth nothing. If we cannot sacrifice everything there is upon the face of the earth, that men hold dear to them then we are unworthy of that great salvation that God has promised unto the faithful. The man that cannot bring every appetite into subjection to the mind and will of God, that cannot forego everything of this kind, and that is not willing to sacrifice houses and lands, and father and mother, wives and children and everything that men hold dear to them, is unworthy that great salvation that God has in store for His faithful children. When I hear people say that they are Latter-day Saints, and will drink with the drunken; when I hear men talk about being Latter-day Saints who will not conquer their appetites, and will not bring them in subjection to the mind and will of God, I think very little of their professions. If we value this salvation as we should, there is nothing that will stand between us and it. We may love our wives as we love our own lives; we may love our children as we do ourselves; we may be willing to step between death and our wives and children and say, "If any be killed, let us be killed; if there is to be any hardship, let us endure it;" we may have this feeling, but at the same time we must love the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the cause that He established, better than we do our wives and our children, better than we do our own lives. There is nothing upon the face of the earth that we should love as we do the Gospel. God requires this of us. Therefore, if we are Latter-day Saints, what difference does it make what is brought against us? Suppose armies should be launched against us; suppose the measures urged by some so called divines, should be carried out; will it make any difference in regard to us and our future? Shall we be disturbed because of these threats being fulminated against us? Not in the least; for the reason that God is our Father – He stands at the head, and not one hair of our heads shall fall to the ground without His notice. Nothing can occur that He does not take cognizance of. He watches over us as well as the rest of the human family, and He will overrule everything for our good. We should, therefore, be the happiest people – as I fully believe we are – on the face of the earth. We maybe persecuted, maligned and threatened, it ought not to make the least difference to us in regard to our enjoyment. Our trust should be in something higher than man. There is one Being whom we call our Father, and that is God, whom we should fear; we should hold Him in reverence and be so afraid that we would never do anything to offend Him or to grieve His Holy Spirit. But as for man! What is man? What is there about man that we should fear him? We have seen men in the plenitude of their power array themselves against the work of God, and they have passed away one after another; but the work of God lives and will live. Opposers may fight it, rave against it; organizations may be formed for the purpose of crushing it, but they will pass away just as sure as God has spoken and as we live. This work that God has established will roll forth. The power connected with it cannot be crushed. Men may apostatize, as many have done, but it will not affect the work. The three witnesses of this Book of Mormon, from which I have read – Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer and Martin Harris – two of them are now dead – testified all their days that an holy angel came and showed them the plates from which this book was translated – even they fell away. They disagreed with the Prophet Joseph, and fell away from the Church, one of them at least, because of unchastity, the cause most fruitful above all others of apostacy. When a man indulges in unchaste desires or practices he cannot stand in this Church, he will apostatize sooner or later unless he repents. One of the witnesses – Oliver Cowdery – upon whose head, with that of Joseph Smith, the hands of John the Baptist were laid, upon whose head, in company with Joseph Smith, the hands of Peter, James and John were laid, even he fell away from this Church, and yet he never denied his testimony of the truth of this work, nor did Martin Harris. David Whitmer, the only surviving witness, is in the same condition. He, too, fell away from the Church during Joseph's lifetime, and became Joseph's enemy; but he never denied the truth of his testimony connected with the Book of Mormon, and still bears testimony to it to-day. These men, it might have been supposed, would have shaken the Church. Oliver Cowdery had the idea, notwithstanding the revelations he had received, that

when he fell away the Church would receive a great shock. There were twelve men chosen as Apostles from the midst of the people, and of these twelve six fell away from the Church and ranged themselves against the Prophet of God. They were determined to destroy the work if they could. This reminds one of the parable of the ten virgins. There were five wise and five foolish; one-half of them were unprepared to go out and meet the bridegroom. So with the Apostles, half of them fell away. But did the Church stop? no; and if all the Apostles had apostatized it would not have arrested the onward progress of this work, for God has spoken concerning it, and His word will be fulfilled. And shall we fear man? Shall we fear earthly organizations? Shall we fear threats? Shall our knees tremble and our hands and our hearts falter because men array themselves against the work of God? If we do, then we mistake entirely its character. No such feeling enters into the heart of any faithful man or woman connected with this Church.

JD 23:102 – p.103, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881

Now, my brethren and sisters, the Lord has made great promises unto us. I have read you one from this Book of Mormon. This land is a blessed land unto all the inhabitants of the earth who will act righteously, but is and will be cursed to those who will not. There is a curse and a blessing upon the land. No nation can prosper in this land that works unrighteousness, and it is a painful thing to say that our own nation, unless it repents, will meet with disasters sooner or later. It pains us to say this, but it is true. God has said it. It will be true about us. This land can only be blessed to us if we work righteously. Let us turn round and oppress the weak and do wrong, and God will curse the land to us. There will be trouble in the land among the inhabitants of the earth as long as they work wickedness, just as sure as God has spoken. There has been no nation prospered as our nation has. No government was ever framed by man that is so strong and so good and well adapted to the happiness of human beings as our government is. There never was a better instrument framed for the happiness of man than the Constitution of the United States. The men who framed it were inspired of God. The men who fought the battles of the Revolution were the same. Washington was inspired of God; he was sustained by the almighty arm of God; and the defeats that the mother country received were in accordance with the plan of God. This land was kept for this purpose. For centuries it was hidden from all the nations of the earth. It was not until the 15th century that God inspired Columbus to go forth and seek a passage across the Atlantic, and land upon some of the islands adjacent to this continent. His track was followed by others. All this was in the mind of God. We have it all plainly stated to us in this book (the Book of Mormon), and the reasons for it, the best possible reasons that could be given. It is said that the Norwegians had visited this country and that the stone tower at Newport is evidence of it. The Scandinavian antiquarians claim that it was thus discovered; but if so, it was not peopled. It remained hidden until the 15th century, and there was good reason for it. This land would have been overrun by other nations had it been discovered earlier, and there would have been no place for that which we now behold. But God preserved it; and He has said in the Book of Mormon, that so long as the inhabitants of this land serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ – they shall prosper and no nation shall have power over them. The Lord has also said that there shall be no kings upon this land. The attempt of Maximilian is an evidence of the truth of it. Backed as he was by the power of France and Austria, particularly by France, he was killed for his attempt; for the Lord has said there shall be no kings upon this land, and that it shall be a land of liberty unto the inhabitants thereof as long as they serve the Lord. And the prosperity that has attended the land thus far is due to this blessing. Those who contended for liberty in early days were men who desired to serve the Lord. They may have been mistaken in many things, but they were zealous in this and devoted to it, and many of them were willing that every human being should have the rights that they contended for themselves. But this is all changed to-day. There is a great change. You and I cannot worship God as we desire, without being in danger. We are told that it is because we are polygamists. Why, the earliest privations which we had to contend with, the scenes which are seared in the memories of these aged people, and these of middle age, were all passed through by us when polygamy was not known. When we chose to worship God, and said He was a God of revelation to-day, the same as He was 1800 years ago. There were men then, and there are men to-day, who would destroy us because we exercise that belief. Hence, I say, prosperity cannot attend a people who will trample upon liberty in that manner, and the party that arrays itself against the work of God cannot prosper.

JD 23:103, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881

When men have power and do right they will be sustained; but when they do wrong they go against the eternal principles of justice and against God. There are many thousands of men who know that Utah has not been fairly treated, but they have not the courage to say so, because with many who hold office it might cost them position. Visitors come here and are impressed with what they see, but many of them yield to the force of public opinion and say what they do not believe in their hearts. Thus it is that the tide of calumny has swelled and there is no one to throw obstacles in its way; we have endured its full force as it has rolled upon us, and must still stand up and endure it. Although it is so painful, it is not without profit; it teaches us many valuable lessons. I hope it will have a good effect upon us. I suppose it is to chasten us and to keep us humble, and if it will teach us to be liberal and not to oppress others, I shall be glad: liberty for every man in the land and every woman – liberty to the fullest possible extent for all, as long as they do not trespass upon the rights of their fellows. If a man wishes to worship an idol or an animal, a bull, a calf, a dog, or a serpent or anything else – liberty to do so as long as his worship does not interfere with the rights of his fellows. If he wishes to worship the God of Heaven, all right, he should not be interfered with. God has blessed the land in the words that I have read in your hearing, and if we were driven out of it, in five years it would return to its original desolation. This land of desolation God has changed into a fruitful field, because of the blessing on the land, and as long as the Latter-day Saints live righteously the land shall be blessed to them. The climate will be ameliorated; the soil will be fertilized; fruits will grow as they have done in this valley.

[JD 23:103 – p.104, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

When we first came here I remember the thoughts of many. They did not believe that we could raise any fruit here, and the man who first set out peach stones was laughed at because of the idea he entertained that they would grow. Very few believed they would grow. And to-day where can you find a better land for fruit than this? I suppose when we came many thought if we could raise bread enough, it would be as much as we could do, there being frost every month of the year. But now it is so charming a place that many covet it. When they got up that raid against us a few years ago, I was credibly informed that there were certain men here who actually went round and selected the places they would occupy! They indicted Brigham Young, Daniel H. Wells, and others for alleged crimes, and the hope was that we would scare away from here and then places could be had for the choosing.

[JD 23:104, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

But we came here to stay, here we expect to stay, and here we shall stay as long as we do right. And we shall not only stay here, but we shall spread abroad, and the day will come – and this is another prediction of Joseph Smith's – I want to remind you of it, my brethren and sisters, when good government, constitutional government – liberty – will be found among the Latter-day Saints, and it will be sought for in vain elsewhere; when the Constitution of this land and republican government and institutions will be upheld by this people who are now so oppressed and whose destruction is now sought so diligently. The day will come when the Constitution, and free government under it, will be sustained and preserved by this people. This is saying a great deal, but it is not saying any more than is said concerning the growth of this work, and that which is already accomplished. I have just turned to the revelation upon this subject, which says:

[JD 23:104, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

"And it shall come to pass, among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor, must needs flee unto Zion for safety. And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another."

[JD 23:104 – p.105, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

This revelation was given on the 7th of March, 1831. We have already beheld and are now beholding its fulfilment: the righteous are being gathered and they are coming with songs of everlasting joy: and this was given before there was a gathering place, and only eleven months after the Church was organized. And it is a

remarkable fact that to-day – I do not say it out of any improper feeling – our hands as a people, by a singular providence, are free from the blood of our fellow-men. We were driven out of this land. Our enemies were not content to let us remain in the States, on the land that we had purchased, they would not permit us to occupy the homes we had built, but compelled us to leave, and we came to the Rocky Mountains. And when the civil war broke out President Lincoln sent a communication to Governor Young, asking him if he could send troops to guard the continental highway and preserve it from the attacks of Indians. He responded by sending out companies of cavalry. They spent the time in guarding the mail route against the Indians, and thus, as I have said, our hands to-day as a people, are free from the blood of our fellow-citizens by this singular providence, through the acts of our enemies. Had we remained in the State of Illinois, or in Missouri, we should have been compelled – unless we had chosen to occupy a very anomalous position – to have taken sides in this fratricidal war, a war which Joseph Smith in the year 1832, predicted would take place. The revelation was printed in 1850 – though known to the church long before – stating that the war should commence between the north and south, at South Carolina. I suppose there is not a boy who has been brought up in this community who did not know of the revelation years before it was published, and, still longer, before it was fulfilled. I know I was taught concerning this revelation, when a boy, and I knew the time would come when there would be a bloody war between the north and south and that it would commence in South Carolina. Did it commence there? Yes. Joseph Smith predicted it 28 years before it occurred. And in the manner to which I have alluded, we were driven out and occupied a position where, though we did not go to war, our loyalty to the Union could not be questioned, for we responded to every call that was made upon us. Though we deplored the war, and did all we could by our preaching, counsels and warnings to avert it, we were true to our obligations; and yet at the same time – though we have men among us who took part in the war – as a people our hands are clean from the blood of our fellow-men. Our Church has not been divided into a church north and a church south. It is a church that belongs to the whole people of the north and of the south, and there are no sectional heart-burnings in our midst. God in his providence had made this a place of refuge from the north and from the south. They can come here without heart-burnings and without prejudice; no civil broils, no disunion; they have nothing to remember or forget connected with us. It is a church that is adapted to all. The black man is welcome, and he is entitled to the rites of the Gospel, though the Lord has shown that to his race the Priesthood is forbidden. The red man, and the yellow man and every man of every race and of every kindred and of every tongue, has a right in this Church and will be received into it and have place in it, just as sure as God has spoken. And we shall be preserved from future broils and disunion when they break out; we shall stand in places where we can maintain our loyalty and our truthfulness and our honor, and at the same time not interfere with the rights of any human being.

[JD 23:105, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

I have talked longer than I intended to. It is probably the last opportunity I will have of addressing you for some little time. I expect to leave for Washington before another Sunday comes. I desire earnestly in my heart that I may have your faith and prayers. I have felt greatly strengthened by the knowledge that I have had your faith, your confidence, and your prayers, and I go out now hoping I shall still have these, for they are more valuable to me than anything else. I should go weak indeed if I did not have the faith and prayers and confidence of my brethren and sisters. I do not believe there is another representative in the world, it may be said – and certainly not in our nation – who has more cause for thanksgiving in this respect than I have. I know I am backed and sustained by my entire constituency; I know I have their love and affection; I know their hearts go with me, and their feelings and affections are always towards me; I know in almost every household prayers are offered in my behalf; it gives me strength; and when I am assailed and when our people are assailed and our Territory, it gives me strength to know we are united, and that when I am in Washington, though I may be alone – which I am in one sense of the word – I have an influence and a power attending me, in consequence of this, that others do not have. God has preserved us, and he will preserve us and overrule evil for good. I feel hopeful and cheerful: this is a blessing God has given unto me. In the midst of the darkest hours I have always felt exceedingly cheerful: fear has been taken away from me.

[JD 23:105 – p.106, George Q. Cannon, November 20th, 1881](#)

I pray that you may be blessed exceedingly of the Lord; that His Holy Spirit may be poured out upon you; that peace may be given unto you and union fill your hearts: I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE F. D. RICHARDS,

Delivered at the General Conference, Salt Lake City,

Saturday Morning, April 8, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE LORD'S WORK – WARFARE NOT REQUIRED OF THE SAINTS – AN OVERRULING
PROVIDENCE – CORRUPTION AND PERJURY IN HIGH PLACES – VIOLATION OF THE
CONSTITUTION – FALSE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE SAINTS – WORDS OF COMFORT AND
EXHORTATION.

[JD 23:106, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

The greatly increased numbers of Israel, and the greatly diversified and multifarious necessities which are occurring, and which increase like the branches upon a great tree, call upon us each and all, to seek continually for the mind of the Lord, that in all our varied ministrations, labors and duties, we may perform the same acceptably to him and profitably to all of his children; not only to the Saints but to the inhabitants of all the earth, inasmuch as they will hearken to his word.

[JD 23:106, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

We have a vast number of witnesses and evidences of the mercy, the favor and blessing of God unto us, as a people, as well as to ourselves individually and as families, it being the privilege of all who live faithfully in Christ Jesus to see and acknowledge the hand of God in all things throughout their checkered lives.

[JD 23:106, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

This morning I am reminded of some choice, precious promises which the Lord has made to us in the dispensation in which we live, having a peculiar application unto us, though like blessings may have been promised to people in former generations, those now referred to were given especially to the Saints of the last days. There is one very significant saying in the revelations, you will find it in the Doctrine and Covenants, section 103, beginning at the 19th verse. It is as follows:

[JD 23:106, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

"Therefore let not your hearts faint, for I say not unto you, as I said unto your fathers, mine angel shall go up before you, but not my presence, but I say unto you, mine angel shall go before you, and also my presence,

and in time ye shall possess the goodly land."

[JD 23:106 – p.107, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

Here is a very definite and positive assurance that this work is His, that he is particularly to figure in it himself; that he has not entirely committed it, even to angels; as represented in the parable, so beautifully expressed in the Book of Mormon, where the husbandman calls upon his servants to come and help him to prune his vineyard for the last time; we are given to understand that so we are called to be helpers to the Lord our God, to prune his vineyard for the last time.

[JD 23:107, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

We should not allow the cares or corruptions of the world to lead us to forget that the work in which we are engaged is the Lord's work; we should never forget that the work to which all are called, God has undertaken to direct Himself; especially as it was commenced in former dispensations, but, for obvious reasons, remains to be consummated and perfected in the dispensation of the fulness of times in which we live. The Lord has also told us specifically in his revelations that it is his business to provide for his people. Most encouraging words – calculated to increase confidence in the hearts of all those who walk by faith before him.

[JD 23:107, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

Furthermore, he has condescended to tell us in the revelations given through the Prophet Joseph Smith, "For behold I do not require at their (the Elders) hands to fight the battles of Zion; for as I said in a former commandment, even so will I fulfil. I will fight your battles." Doctrine and Covenants, section 105, verse 14.

[JD 23:107, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

One after another passages might be repeated relating to the designs and purposes of God, all going to show that he has not let out the work to be done by chance or to be controlled by others, but that he will direct it himself.

[JD 23:107, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

Have we not evidence of these facts? We have as pointed and conclusive evidence of these things, already before us, as the Apostle Paul had when he told the Hebrews that, through faith the worlds were framed by the word of God; through faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should afterwards receive for an inheritance, obeyed; by faith he sojourned in the land of promise, etc. Let us look at two or three prominent features of our history for evidences of his divine favor in overruling affairs for our welfare according to the counsels of his own will.

[JD 23:107, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

In former times there was much destruction of life and a great deal of contention between the enemies of God's work and his people. The latter have at different times gone forth, and that by the holy command of heaven, to mortal combat. The Lord has told us in his revelations of the last days concerning the laws which governed warfare in the days of Abraham, of Lehi and Nephi, etc., which are detailed very minutely in the Doctrine and Covenants. He says:

[JD 23:107, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

"Behold this is the law I gave unto my servant Nephi, and thy fathers Joseph, and Jacob, and Isaac, and Abraham, and all mine ancient prophets and apostles.

[JD 23:107, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

And again, this is the law that I gave unto mine ancients, that they should not go out unto battle against any nation, kindred, tongue or people, save I, the Lord, commanded them. (Doctrine and Covenants, sec. 98, verse 32, 33.)"

[JD 23:107, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

For an account of the laws that justify warfare the Saints can read this section from the 23rd verse to the end.

[JD 23:107 – p.108, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

In those days there was more contention or mortal combat permitted and required, in order to maintain the rights of God's people and establish righteousness before his face, when idolatrous and all manner of worship, except that of the true and living God, prevailed among the nations generally. But it is not given unto us that we should contend with weapons of war; that inasmuch as we serve him, he will fight our battles for us. How has he done this? Have we forgotten how he managed to keep us out of the late terrible fratricidal war, when our great country was divided in a sanguinary struggle? How did he graciously regard us? It was by telling us to arise and go hence.

[JD 23:108, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

Some of you well remember in what haste we gathered our little remaining substance in Nauvoo, leaving our homes in the winter season, and how we crossed the river on the ice. History attests the fact that we left none too soon to escape the dire necessity of taking up weapons of war against our fellow-man. The great reason why David was not allowed to build a house to the Lord, was because he had been a man of blood. He had commenced to gather his thousands of talents of gold and silver together, and was ready to build, but the Lord told him he should not, that he had been too much a man of war, had shed too much blood; but that he might get the materials together, and that Solomon, his son, should build a temple to his name. It is plainly to be seen, in the wisdom of God, that the Saints are not to take that course; but on the contrary, the Lord requires of them that they preserve to themselves pure hearts and clean hands to build His Temples. Was not this a great and wonderful manifestation of his loving kindness, was it not a demonstration to a great people of his tender mercy in preserving us from that fratricidal strife that arose in the nation. Where is the heart that cannot be thankful for this? Here is one great, we may say, worldwide demonstration of his kindness and goodness to provide for his people, and to preserve them from dire calamities, the direst of calamities that overtake the human family. Let us then sense the feeling and spirit of the ancient prophet. Isaiah when speaking of the judgments of the latter days, that the watchmen should lift up their voices and speak comforting words to Zion. And what should they say? "Thy God reigneth." That is the word to us, brethren and sisters. "Thy God reigneth." Let us learn to know and sense it, put our trust in him, and learn that it is he that builds up nations, and it is he that levels them to the dust; that it is he that raises up and makes rulers and people to become mighty in the earth, and that it is he that permits them to go down into insignificance, shame and contempt.

[JD 23:108 – p.109, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

How has it been when our enemies in our midst, in violation of a sacred principle of the Constitution, have said that we should not bear arms, which we had been wont to do in celebrating the anniversary of our national independence, and for our own protection in this new and Indian country, and that too in accordance with a provision of the Constitution; when we submitted in silence to this indignity, what has been wrought out in our behalf? As if the heavens took momentary record of it, from that day to this the enmity that has existed among the unprincipled, low and degraded Lamanites upon our borders has been hushed to silence; the manner in which we have dealt with them has been felt for good. Terrible wars have been prevented by the influence of the Latter-day Saints among them, until to-day it is not necessary that any, in this region of country, should have arms to protect themselves unless it be from professed friends. Is there no God in this? Look all around us, God has made even our adversaries to be at peace with us. He has made the blessings of peace to be multiplied around us, until the very occasion for weapons of defence is removed. The wicked had

no sooner forbidden us to bear arms when God in his tender mercies and parental solicitude removed the very occasion of defence, leaving us at peace with all around us. The glorious tidings, "peace on earth and good will to man," have come sounding to us through the ages, and they are being echoed and re-echoed to us by the voice of those who hold the keys of the kingdom, and we see it not only in word but in power and demonstration of truth.

[JD 23:109, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

These are none other than the blessings of God unto us, my brethren and sisters. We ought to think of these things; we ought to acknowledge in gratitude this dispensation of his providence; and we should make it our business to sanctify ourselves before him; yea, let the man that has taken to his cups depart from them; and let he who has drunk of the spirit of the world, and who fraternizes with the ungodly, turn from the error of his ways, wash himself from the filth of unrighteousness and purify himself before God, and call upon his name that he may forgive and extend his pardoning favor. It is to be deplored that there are so many that are so easily to be civilized by this damning "civilization" that has come among us; it is an occasion of sorrow to the Latter-day Saints that so many are so easily drawn away to affiliate with the ungodly. When we remember the mercies and blessings of God to us, it is a fitting time to turn and seek his face and favor afresh, and renew our covenants before him, and become worthy in his sight.

[JD 23:109, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

I might enumerate many other instances of the goodness and mercy of God unto us, how he fed the suffering Saints with quails on the banks of the Mississippi, how he sent gulls to rid us of the crickets when they threatened us with starvation here.

[JD 23:109, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

I must refer to the time when the Lord permitted the United States to send an army to Utah. It was told to us that there were a million of bayonets in the States ready to be turned toward Utah. We did not count them, but we know the details of their coming and how the soldiery arrived here. They came with their mouths full of ribaldry, full of threatenings, full of animus and destruction towards President Young, his family, the Apostles, and towards all that were immediately associated with them, threatening to hang them like Haman upon a tree. But God in his mercy before they got here very much cooled their ardor; and when they arrived they came as harmless as any 4th of July celebrators. They marched in quiet through our streets, no man daring to commit an indignity as they passed.

[JD 23:109 – p.110, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

Our Heavenly Father sanctified this to our good, for while they scattered much means among us, scarcely an act of hostility was committed, and, when the time of terrible destruction came they marched away to the violence of death. Is not the hand of God to be seen in this? If so, should we not acknowledge with thanksgiving his mercy in thus making us the objects of such care. We ought to bestow the best efforts and energies of our lives to build up his kingdom, establish his righteousness, and make him our friend for time and eternity.

[JD 23:110, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

I would not dwell too lengthily upon these things, although they show the divine goodness and tenderness. Is there a loving father that deals more affectionately with his children than this? Could the Lord deal more lovingly with us? It is to be feared that his tender mercies are so abundant, and we become so used to them as to grow ungrateful.

[JD 23:110, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

A few words in regard to the fundamental law established for the guidance of the people of this great nation, called the Constitution of the United States, that instrument was framed by our forefathers, who purchased the power to do so with their blood; they were men who went into the revolutionary war pledging their lives, their fortunes, their sacred honor, and placed everything they possessed upon the altar of liberty. The Constitution they adopted has been admitted by European statesmen to be the grandest palladium of human rights known upon the earth. The flag of our nation has commanded respect in every part of this habitable globe, whether on land or sea.

[JD 23:110, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

All representatives and officers of the government, state or national, from the highest to the lowest, lift up their hands to heaven and swear that they will observe that Constitution and the laws of the nation or State, as the office may require, to the best of their knowledge and ability, so help them God. When Congress so far descends as to make special laws, and send forth its legislative missiles to us bearing the odor, power, and character of attainder, and ex post facto laws; when they can provide, directly or indirectly, for conviction without trial by jury; when they frame and pass measures having for their object the deprivation or spoliation of rights common to all citizens, and that in direct opposition to the provisions of the Constitution, as appears on the face of the Edmunds' bill, they themselves violate that oath of office which they took before God and their country. They may, standing in high places, think that it does not become citizens to question their acts; but citizens of this Republic are the sovereigns of the nation; and when the Constitution was created it was provided that every power not granted by that instrument was retained by the people. Public men, in the true spirit of the Constitution of our government, are the servants of the people, put in office to administer the will of the people as defined in that instrument.

[JD 23:110, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

When men in high places forget themselves, and in violation of their oaths dictate or forbid what shall or what shall not be observed as religious rites, they become amenable to the higher laws, and will have to answer to the charge of perjury to an immortal court, from whose decisions mortals have found no mode of appeal by any bill of exceptions.

[JD 23:110 – p.111, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

The principles upon which our government is founded are most excellent, and to all intents and purposes most satisfactory. The great and learned Webster, Clay, and their contemporaries, considered them a standard of liberty – far above that of any other country upon our globe; something that every American had cause to be proud of. If the American nation will be governed by its doctrines, it will extend to the whole human family the precious boon of liberty, and will make this land in reality an asylum for the oppressed of all nations. But we have come to a time when Congress has undertaken to dictate our ethics, to declare what we may or may not accept as tenets of religion. This is a right or power that is not conveyed in the Constitution; but on the contrary, Congress is expressly prohibited from making any law establishing any form of religion or preventing the free exercise thereof; this right of worshipping God according to the dictates of one's own conscience is the right of every American citizen.

[JD 23:111, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

Aside from what may be pronounced legal, there is an equity side of the court to which all God-fearing people have recourse. One principle of which the courts of the nation seem to have taken no consideration, but which the Latter-day Saints cannot afford to pass unnoticed, is this: Wherein it is given in the Constitution that the States shall make no law to impair the obligation of contracts. I wish to ask the people, not in the legal sense, but in the sense of equity, of righteousness and eternal truth, if the marriage relation is not to all intents and purposes a contract? Do we not enter into a covenant, a contract, an agreement with our wives. Yes; not only a contract, an agreement of a civil nature, as it is regarded in the world, but our contracts are of a higher

order, of a more sacred nature extending as they do in perpetuity from time into eternity. Now, if it is a violation of States rights to pass a law impairing the obligation of contracts in common financial matters, is it not a graver and more serious violation of the Constitution to pass a law impairing the obligation of contracts as between man and wife? It is laid down by the most eminent law writers of our country that properly maintained marital relationship is the true basis of all human society; it needs the solemn covenants of husband and wife to be taken into account, and then what follows? The reasons why contracts and faith in them should not be violated is because of vested rights that accrue under those contracts; and have you any vested rights, my brethren and sisters, under the contracts that you have made with your wives and husbands, have you not acquired under those covenants and contracts the most precious of vested rights – those of sons and daughters given you in the flesh? These are possessory rights, the value of which bear no comparison with any thing that can be called goods or chattels. We look upon the increase of our families, as the foundation of our eternal dominion, we cannot but look upon any hand impairing the obligation of these contracts as striking at the very root of our prosperity. Our children are our vested rights growing out of these holy relations, rights not only of a temporal but of an eternal, and finally immortal character, and of the highest possible consideration.

[JD 23:111, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

I apprehend while I talk upon this subject, that it is very improbable that the courts of the world would regard these matters in any such light, but they are matters which pertain to the laws of the living God before whose court we shall all appear and our rights be vindicated; those who have undertaken to deprive us of these rights will also appear and on such a writ of errors as will bring them effectually within the jurisdiction of the court.

[JD 23:112, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

The Lord has given unto us these rights, which we are learning to appreciate, but which the world know nothing of. Is it to be wondered at that they do many things, as did those who slew the Savior, concerning whom he said, "They know not what they do?"

[JD 23:112, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

The rulers of our land have undertaken to set snares for our feet, to bring us into subjection to the political will of the Republican party to teach us how to promote party discord, be oppressed with heavy taxes and become burdened with debt. Let us put our trust in the living God, and see that while we violate no law of man unnecessarily, that we do not violate any of the laws of God, so that we may be entitled to His protection and that his blessing may abide with us.

[JD 23:112, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

Not desiring to occupy too much time, I would exhort my brethren and sisters to renew their diligence in trying to honor the Lord by keeping his commandments, remembering our obligations to each other; that we continue preaching the Gospel to the nations, gathering the honest in heart who receive the word through the ministrations of the Elders; and inasmuch as this is God's work we have no need to fear. There are those who dwelt here in 1848–9, who for days and weeks, scarcely tasted bread. Those who have passed through these scenes will never fear anything that may come upon us again. I often think of the peculiar circumstances of the Savior when upon the earth, who when Herod the Great sent word to him, inquiring who this Jesus of Nazareth was; the answer of the Savior being, Go tell him that the birds of the air have nests, and the foxes have holes, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head. Think of it my friends; He by whom the worlds were created, who gave the law upon Mount Sinai; He who communicated with the brother of Jared, directing him to cross the sea and people this continent; He who was and is our great Ruler came and dwelt in the flesh, instead of making himself the possessor of houses and lands and earthly substance, had not where to lay His head. And after passing through a life of sorrows he was tried for His life, when the judge washed his hands, saying, he found no fault in Him. The fact was He was above the law, He was without sin, and of the

things of which they tried to convict him he was not guilty, wherein he said he was the Son of God, which they, in their blind ignorance, looked upon as blasphemy.

[JD 23:112, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

Now, we are charged with blasphemy, because we believe and declare that the holy Priesthood has been restored to us from heaven. It is made blasphemy to believe that Peter, James and John were sent from heaven to earth to ordain Joseph and Oliver, and because, as they had been instructed to do, they ordained others to the same Priesthood, and then commissioned them to go to all the world and preach the Gospel. This is put forth and published as one of the blasphemies that we believe in which has made us to incur the displeasure and wrath of this self-righteous generation. While we contemplate that the Prophets of God have been slain, their blood ruthlessly shed, and the nation has never made an expression to exculpate themselves from the act, they have never even expressed their disapproval of it, but, on the contrary, multitudes have said, they were glad of it, but that they disliked the way in which it was done.

[JD 23:112 – p.113, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

While this is upon the nation and until they wash their hands of it, we can but look upon them with sorrow and apprehension and dread for thus acquiescing in breaking and overriding the fundamental laws of the land; for if these things can be inflicted upon us they can be done to others. And they have been to others. Do you not recollect when the army came here, it was the nation's first effort against the "Mormons," against what they were pleased to term a "twin relic" – polygamy; and having extirpated the "twin relic" of the south – slavery, which was deemed necessary to secure the triumph of the republican arms, now the attack is made again upon the people representing the remaining "relic." They and we are in the hands of God, and it becomes us to move on in all our duties quietly, peaceably and prayerfully. The nation, of course, can cause us a great deal of bodily and mental suffering if God permits. They have already shown what they are capable of doing by their deprivations and arbitrary rule in the south; and we have every reason to believe they would do as much for us were it the pleasure of the Almighty to permit them.

[JD 23:113, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

The few men now sitting in Congress, from the Southern States, who had the manhood and the moral courage to protest against the measure, which has since become a law, aimed directly at our liberty and rights, knew from experience the effects of military law, and those usurpations which have tended to ruin their country after the desolation caused by the war. They had been through the furnace, they could feel anew the burnings of the fire, and they could see the grief into which we are to be crowded.

[JD 23:113, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

The question with us is, are we sufficiently devoted to the interests of the kingdom of God to enable us to confidently believe, without a doubt, that he will sustain us in all that we may be called upon to pass through? If we are he certainly will not permit any more to come upon us than we can endure and that will be for our good; because he is that God who is nearer to us than a friend or a brother.

[JD 23:113, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

He had told us that those who kept his commandments had no need to break the laws of the land. We made no law nor passed any ordinance contrary to the laws of the land; the law-makers of the nation made the law which brought us in conflict with our government; and, therefore, we must look to him to overrule this conflict, and trust that he will do better for us than we know how to ask or even to think for ourselves; provided, we pursue the path of duty faithfully and steadfastly.

[JD 23:113, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

I pray that we may so take consideration of our ways that we shall not feel vindictive to those who are vindictive towards us; but, on the contrary, rise above such a feeling upon the more elevated platform which was introduced by the Savior, in which he taught his disciples to do good to them who despitefully used and persecuted them. This is a lesson that we have not fully learned.

[JD 23:113 – p.114, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

May the Lord bless and prosper all who seek to do his will, and may his mercy be multiplied to all nations until the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God, and until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ; may we live and our generations after us to perform efficient and faithful service in bringing about his purposes. Oh, that our enemies might see the error of their ways, repent as in dust and ashes and place themselves in a condition to receive the favor of God, and thereby escape the terrible judgments that must sooner or later overtake those who wilfully battle against the truth.

[JD 23:114, Franklin D. Richards, April 8, 1882](#)

It remains for us to continue to bear our testimony to the world, to build our Temples, in which to perform the work for ourselves and our dead, essential to salvation and exaltation in his kingdom, and to build up a Zion to the glory of God. That this may be our determined purpose to a faithful consummation, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON,

Delivered at the General Conference, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, April 3, 1881.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

MODERN FULFILLMENT OF ANCIENT PROPHECY – RISE OF JOSEPH THE
PROPHET – ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST – PERSECUTIONS OF THE
SAINTS – THEIR UNDYING FAITH IN GOD – THE WORLD PROVING JOSEPH SMITH A
PROPHET – SATAN BUSILY AT WORK – THE GOSPEL OF LIBERTY AND HUMANITY.

[JD 23:114, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881](#)

It is with great pleasure that I meet with you, my brethren and sisters, in Conference to-day. And though in some respects I am not feeling very eager to address so large a congregation as has assembled this afternoon, still we all know that if we can get the influence and assistance of the Spirit of the Lord, there is no difficulty in speaking or advancing such thoughts and suggestions as are suitable.

[JD 23:114, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881](#)

It seems to me that of all men I ought to be most thankful. I certainly feel exceedingly happy in being in your midst, in beholding your faces, in sharing in your meetings, in partaking of your spirit; I am thankful I have this privilege, for such I esteem it.

JD 23:114 – p.115, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881

I have been absent, as you all know, for some sixteen weeks. During my absence I have enjoyed myself very much, that is, considering the circumstances. I have had excellent health, and I do not know that I ever felt better in my life, under the circumstances, than I have during the past winter. Of course there has been considerable discussion upon our cause and question, and considerable has been said about us; but so far as my individual feelings have been concerned, I have not been disabled, not for a single second. There is an excitement about this warfare, and the consciousness that victory will eventually perch upon our banners and that we are on the winning side, that makes such a contest pleasurable. I know this, that when everything is still – when the stream is quietly flowing along without a ripple – I begin to be uneasy. I expect you do. We have been accustomed now for so many years – in fact it may be said from the beginning – to contending with the turbulence of the elements; to battling with angry waves, that it seems to be the natural condition for us to be in. At any rate, we know when this is the case that somebody is a little disturbed about us, and that some think it necessary to be stirring up opposition against us. With the activity which prevails at home in the various departments of the work, the zeal that is being manifested among the Saints by the leading men in the various Stakes of Zion: with the labors of the home missionaries, the Young Men's and Young Women's Mutual Improvement Associations, the Relief Societies, the Sunday Schools, and the various organizations which have taken shape in our midst, together with the union of the people, and the sending of missionaries abroad in such numbers: with all these things at work, tending to consolidate the people, to make them of one heart and one mind, to preach the principles of truth, to declare to the inhabitants of the earth the salvation of our God, and to leave them without excuse for rejecting the truth; I say, with all these activities at home and abroad, together with the building of Temples – a great work which devolves upon us as a people; with all these things, it is no wonder to me that opposition should be fierce, and that there should be a great deal of talk about the "Mormons." We have been taught from the beginning that this would be the case; the earliest teachings that I can remember were to this effect, leading me forward, as you were led forward, to anticipate just such things, just such a warfare as that in which we are involved. Year by year, as this work develops, as the purposes of God unfold, do we see the literal, the definite fulfillment of the predictions that were uttered years and years ago concerning the work of God.

JD 23:115 – p.116, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881

The Prophet Joseph Smith's name has been known for good and evil among all the inhabitants of the earth, being regarded by some as a man divinely inspired, a prophet of the living God, his words treasured up as the words of a prophet should be; and by others, he is looked upon as an imposter, an ignoramus, a man in fact too bad to live. This Joseph Smith, who is thus known and has this repute among various people, is gradually being lifted up and made prominent, and through his being lifted up and made prominent the name of our God, whose servant he was, is being glorified. Thus Joseph Smith, whose predictions were uttered fifty years ago, and from that time down until he sealed his testimony with his blood nearly 37 years ago – this Joseph Smith is being proved to be a prophet, not by the Latter-day Saints alone – for we are doing comparatively little towards the vindication of his prophetic views, of this divine calling; for we are a feeble people; we are a people few in number, but the inhabitants of the earth, numerous as they are, by their words and acts, are establishing the divinity of his mission and proving that he is the man that we have testified he was from the beginning.

JD 23:116, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881

To me the ways of the Lord are very wonderful when I thus contemplate them. How wonderful are the Lord's works! How wondrous are His doings in the midst of the inhabitants of the earth! How strangely, and by what singular means he brings to pass his great and glorious purposes, using men, using nations, using

governments, as seems good to him, to effect his divine purposes! Those of us who have been brought up in this Church, who can remember the days that are past, the days of our weakness, the days of our oppression, the days when we were a broken and a peeled people, can call to mind how unlikely it was that the teachings we have received concerning this work would ever be fulfilled. We had faith that they would be. But it required the eye of faith and a heart of faith to see or to comprehend that they would be, as they have been, developed through the years that have intervened until the present time. The fulfillment of these teachings and predictions has brought to us confirmation of our faith; brought to us more and more with the greatest impressiveness the truth of that which we were told, and which, as I have said, was so unlikely to be fulfilled.

JD 23:116, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881

In the beginning, this work, before it was an organized body, that is when it was in its embryo, when but a few men had any knowledge concerning the purposes of God connected with it, excited hatred and brought forth contention. An obscure young man, without worldly influence, without advantageous surroundings, declared that God had again spoken from the heavens and that angels had again descended to the earth; testified that the Church of Christ was about to be re-established with its old powers, and that the everlasting Gospel, the old plan of salvation was to be again restored in its original purity, and with it the old authority, the everlasting Priesthood, by means of which men and women could be inducted into the Church of God by the administration of the old ordinances, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, with its attendant powers and blessings. The mere declaration of these things by a young man who was thus obscure, without influence, without the prestige of education or birth, immediately excited a fever in the neighborhood; an excitement was aroused, and men began to persecute him; they began to tell lies about him; they began to bring false charges against him. There was a restlessness begotten that could not be accounted for upon natural principles, or upon anything they could see with their natural eyes; it was entirely unaccountable. His family was calumniated; he was calumniated and slandered; every act of his life was turned over and made evil of, and charges of wrong-doing were hurled against him of which he was entirely innocent, and for which there was not even the color or semblance of truth.

JD 23:116 – p.117, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881

On next Wednesday, fifty-one years will have elapsed since the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized. It then consisted of six members. Not very numerous; you can count them on your fingers. It might be thought that so insignificant a body of people would escape attention. Not so, however. The whole countryside was aroused. A terrible thing had taken place. This Joseph Smith had dared to organize a Church. He had found some gold plates, had a "golden Bible." He had been a money digger; and he had done a great many things, and at last his audacity had culminated in the organization of a church. As I have said the whole countryside was in a flame.

JD 23:117, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881

"We cannot endure this; it is a disgrace to our city, our country, our township, to let such a vile fellow as he palm his impositions on the public. We must put a stop to it."

JD 23:117, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881

The result was, accusations, criminal accusations. Joseph Smith was brought before officers of the law upon every conceivable complaint. The papers heralded his disgrace throughout all the neighborhood, as far as they had circulation, determined to lie him down. There are certain fabulous attributes incorrectly ascribed to the creature called the octopus – or devil-fish. It is said that when it wants to devour its victims, it ejects an inky substance that fills the whole water around so that it can the more easily capture its prey. It was something in this manner that the press and pulpit endeavored to stifle the truth and to destroy those who testified that they had received it. The whole country was filled with every kind of slander. Human imagination was racked to invent stories. They said that Joseph Smith had tried to establish his divine calling by attempting to walk upon

the water, with cunningly arranged planks placed a short distance beneath the surface of the water, but that, fortunately, he had been detected in his imposition. They said he had tried to raise the dead, and that the man whom he tried to raise nearly died, because the apparatus which he had arranged for him to get air became accidentally deranged. There was no end of stories told by ignorant people, vile people, deluded people, wicked people, and even by men who called themselves ministers of the Gospel. You cannot think of anything that was not told, that was not sworn to – any number of witnesses could be obtained to testify to the truth of these falsehoods. At the same time it was said it would only be a little while until the system of which he was the head would burst up. "We have only to wait a while and it will disappear." But it did not disappear.

[JD 23:117, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881](#)

The Elders went forth regardless of the slanders, regardless of the falsehoods, regardless of the calumnies, preaching the word of God, preaching it in the spirit and power of God. Regardless of all these things they went – persecuted, derided, their names cast out as evil. Men considered it almost a disgrace to talk to them; if they received them into their houses their neighbors looked upon them as though they were entertaining lepers. "What, have you got a 'Mormon' in your house? Do you know what these people are?"

[JD 23:117 – p.118, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881](#)

Traveling without purse or scrip, as their predecessors had done in primitive days of Gospel purity, from town to town, from village to village, from hamlet to hamlet, bearing all kinds of insults and persecutions and hardships, they traveled the land, lifting up their voices everywhere where they had the opportunity, testifying in all humility that God had again spoken from the heavens; that God had again restored the truth in its ancient purity and power; that God had restored the ordinances of the Gospel as they once existed upon the earth; and declaring unto the inhabitants of the earth that God is a hearer of prayers and that he will answer their petitions when they call upon him in faith. Thus they went, traveling through the United States and Canada, and afterwards crossing the ocean to the Old World, proclaiming there the same truths. A strange thing to be heard in Great Britain – Great Britain! who had been sending out her missionaries by thousands to the remotest parts of the earth; who considered herself as dwelling in the blaze of Gospel truth, and occupying the foremost rank among civilized and enlightened nations! A strange thing for men from the wilds of America to come and preach to them the truth of heaven, to tell them the contents of their Bible. Presumptuous as it seemed, the Elders, nevertheless, did this. They had received the dispensation of the Gospel, and, like Paul, they felt it would be woe unto them if they did not preach it. And they went from land to land until every continent, almost every land, has been visited by them.

[JD 23:118 – p.119, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881](#)

While the missionaries were thus engaged, the work at home did not cease. Persecution at home was not arrested. Mobs continued to gather together as they had done before the Elders crossed the ocean; and it was not then the cry that "these Mormons were introducing patriarchal marriage, which we think hurtful to our civilization;" that was not the charge. In the early days the charges urged against the Saints when they went out West to the limits of the Republic, were, that they believed in anointing and in laying hands upon the sick; that they believed in revelation; that they believed in prophets; that they listened to the counsels and teachings of those prophets. Was not this very dangerous? But this was not all. It sounds very queer in these days to think that one of the gravest charges made against the Latter-day Saints by the mob that drove them from their homes in Jackson County was that they were Yankees and abolitionists! Designing men, seeking for pretexts that would answer the purpose of inflaming the minds of ignorant people, seized and used this as a good ground upon which to base designs for expulsion. Missouri was a slave State, and the Latter-day Saints were in the main New England people; they who were not were from New York, Pennsylvania and other middle States. But they were known as Yankees, and, as their enemies asserted, abolitionists – a suitable people to be pounced upon and driven out. They were driven out from Jackson County, and finally, to get rid of them, Lilburn W. Boggs, governor and commander-in-chief of the militia of the State of Missouri, issued an exterminating order, threatening the Latter-day Saints with extermination unless they left the State. There

was one alternative left to them if they remained in the State – apostacy. But Missouri's favor was not so desirable to the Latter-day Saints as the favor of their God, and they chose to abandon their homes and they marched out of the State as best they could. Now, during all these years, and subsequently, when we were being mobbed, plundered, and driven, the Latter-day Saints had an abiding faith, based upon the revelations that God had given through brother Joseph Smith, that the day would come when we should be a great people, when our virtues would be recognized, when our patriotism would be vindicated, when our loyalty to truth and to the principles of virtue and of good government, of pure republicanism would be established and the work of God with which we are connected become universal. Brother Joseph had predicted this. The Elders, the Saints, the people old and young believed it with all their hearts. The hatred of mobs, the burning of houses, the destruction of property, the expulsion from homes never weakened their confidence in the truth of these predictions, and their eventual fulfillment. That feeling had been implanted there by the Almighty; the Spirit of God had borne testimony to it in their hearts, and they never doubted it. Hated by a township, they foresaw the time when they would be hated by a county; hated by a county, they foresaw the time when they would be hated by a State; hated by a State, they foresaw the time when they would be hated by men who constituted a party who, it might be said, were the representatives of the nation; hated by a nation, they foresaw the time when they would be hated by other nations, until, as I have said, their loyalty to truth, to virtue, to good government, to good order and everything that is pure, holy and God-like, would be vindicated and established in the eyes of all men – by the nations at large, as well as their fellow-citizens.

[JD 23:119, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881](#)

How unlikely a thing to have been when there were but six persons composing this church! Yet the revelations given previous to that organization, the word of God as it has come down to us embalmed in that sacred book which contains the revelations given through the Prophet Joseph Smith, foretells in plainness just such results as these that I have alluded to. The spirit of this work, its character, the results which should follow it were plainly mapped out beforehand as though all the events connected with it had already taken place and were written by the pen of the historian, instead of that of the prophet. The historian can delineate with no greater accuracy (though he may give more details) when he writes the history of this people and the results of the labors of the elders of this Church, than it has been written for half a century.

[JD 23:119 – p.120, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881](#)

The inhabitants of the earth, contrary to their will, and despite their wishes, are contributing to establish the prophetic calling of Brother Joseph Smith, and to fulfill the revelations of God given through him. Hated as he has been; despised as he has been; derided as he has been, this is the result of their actions. The destiny of this people has been clearly foretold. Here are men whom I see around me, whose heads are whitened with years, whose bodies are frail and trembling, and women, too, who have been connected with this Church from its earliest days, who know of the truth of what I am stating, who know that there is nothing that they behold to-day that they did not behold by the spirit of prophecy and with the eye of faith years and years ago. And many things that are yet unfulfilled, that yet remain in the womb of time, to be yet brought forth. The destiny, as I have said, of the people, is written in heaven, it is enrolled in the archives of eternity. God has spoken it; the eternal fiat has gone forth, and it will never be revoked. We play our part; we figure as actors in these scenes. By and by others will come; the column of humanity will march on; the column from the eternal worlds will continue to descend. Myriads of the just are watching with, I might say, eagerness, the development of this work and they are doing their part, and unborn myriads are looking forward to the future of this work, small as it is to-day, insignificant as it is to-day. It is no enthusiasm or fanaticism that inspires these words; but it is the plain truth not half told; it is merely to hint of that which will be. For this is the work of the eternal Jehovah, the work spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world began; the great work that is to prepare the earth and its inhabitants for the coming of the Son of God. Who that reads this sacred book, the Bible, does not know that Prophets and Apostles, Seers and Revelators – all looked forward to the time when a great work should be done in the earth? They predicted it, they dwelt upon it, in inspired strains. Poets, too, who never laid claim to inspiration, have looked forward to the "golden age," have dwelt with delightful language and, it may be said, with inspired pen, upon that great time that should come in the history of our

race.

JD 23:120, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881

It is true as I have said, that from the beginning calumny and slander of every conceivable kind have been circulated concerning this work. It is so to-day. It goes the rounds of the country, and is believed in by the great masses of the people. The Latter-day Saints are looked upon by many as guilty of every conceivable crime. Their true characters are so bogged by misrepresentation, that strangers almost come into our borders as though they were about to enter a den of thieves – that is, strangers who do not know better. Murder, outrage, robbery, perjury, villainy of every kind is attributed to this people. Why should such a world-wide notoriety be given to a people who number no more than we? Why should such lengths be gone to in falsifying an innocent people? It might be thought that we, being so insignificant numerically, might escape notice; or at least such prominent notice; it might have been thought in the beginning that Brother Joseph Smith and his compeers would have escaped notice. It might be thought that when they were few in numbers and their influence did not extend beyond a township, that they might have escaped notice. But no, the world has seemed determined in a way that to the natural eye seems unaccountable, to uplift this people to importance, to give them a world-wide reputation, to advertise them throughout the earth. And why is this? The Latter-day Saints ought to understand it, and many of them do understand it. You know the powers that are at work – the same powers that blackened the Son of God, that made him appear so hideous that men in crucifying him thought they were doing God service – and were perfectly willing to have all the consequences fall upon them and their children; the same influence that caused an Isaiah to be sawn asunder, that caused a Daniel to be thrust into the lion's den, and that caused the death of nearly all of the prophets, and that produced the martyrdom of eleven of the Twelve Apostles, according to tradition; it is that same influence that never rested until every inspired man was destroyed from the face of the earth, that is still busy. This Satanic power has kept at work slaying the servants of the Almighty, including the holiest being that ever trod the earth – the Son of God.

JD 23:120 – p.121, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881

Is it not astonishing that the world cannot see these things? Think of the long list of martyrs, coming down through the ages from Abel; the best and the holiest men killed by their fellows, not because they thought them virtuous, not because they thought them holy, not because they looked upon them as pure; but because they were considered too dangerous to be suffered to live.

JD 23:121, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881

I wonder when I know that this has been the case that the world cannot see to-day, that the same spirit is abroad in the earth. It is not usual for wicked people to kill wicked people, that is, in the way the prophets and apostles were killed.

JD 23:121 – p.122, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881

Here is a feeble people in these mountains who have come here fleeing from persecution, carrying with them when they left their native States and launched forth into an untrodden and unknown wilderness, a love for the principles of liberty for which their fathers, many of them, had fought. Notwithstanding their persecutions and the vile treatment they had received at the hands of their fellow-citizens, they did not allow that feeling to dominate in their hearts; but loving the flag, the stars and stripes; loving the republic; loving the institutions of freedom, loving the Constitution, loving the laws, and carrying with them that love into the heart of the wilderness, and there laying the foundation of a great commonwealth they sought for admission as a State, and to have in that State every human right fully guarded and civil and religious liberty secured for people of every creed, and of no creeds, not seeking for alliance with Mexico, whose land they occupied, not seeking alliance with Great Britain, who was their neighbor on the north; not seeking alliance with the wild races, or endeavoring, or seeking to set up an independent republic, but their hearts going back fondly to the home of

their fathers, to the land which their fathers had helped to redeem and make free, to the Constitution upon which the government of the land was founded, to the flag for which their fathers had fought and bled, they showed to the world that persecuted as they might be, hated as they might be, despised as they might be, and driven as they might be, they could not extinguish within them the love of liberty, the love of true republicanism. This was the testimony which this people bore to the inhabitants of the earth; and it might be thought, as I have said, that the people who had done this, working with unceasing toil to reclaim the waste places and make them habitable and beautiful and a fit abode for themselves and their children; sending out missionaries at untold sacrifice to the nations of the earth to proclaim the Gospel and gather in the honest from their own land and from the remotest nations of the earth; doing this for years, until gradually, as we see, the stately structure of a great commonwealth rises up around us; law executed; liberty preserved; the utmost freedom extended to every human being throughout the length and breadth of these mountain valleys; life and property as secure here as they ever were in any of the States of the Union; strangers coming in here before the railroad was built, weary and foot-sore, received with hospitable kindness. This tabernacle, after it was erected, and before this was erected, the old tabernacle, and before that was erected, the bowery, opened to preachers of every denomination, men of every creed united to proclaim their tenets, to give us their views; women protected throughout this land with such sacredness that they, old or young, beautiful or homely, could traverse every valley and pass through every town north and south, night or day, without hearing a word that would be improper, without ever witnessing a gesture that would annoy them; emigrants with their wagons coming in and leaving them in town unguarded, and not a thing harmed or taken; – I say, it might be thought, viewing and witnessing these results – the virtue, the temperance, the good order, the frugality, the industry, the enterprise, the liberality, the honesty of the people, that somebody would think and say:

[JD 23:122, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881](#)

"What do all these attacks mean? Why is this crusade being waged against a people of this kind. Surely fifty millions of people with all the advantages of the age – the press, telegraph wires, pulpit, day and Sabbath schools, the wonderful improvements that are being brought out, – everything in fact, in their power, including the wealth of the world at their command, surely these fifty millions of people should suffer a few thousands of people in Utah, to dwell in some degree of peace without constantly urging on the dogs of war against them; without hounding on every vile fellow in the nation to rob them and to engage in crusades against them, with the assurance that they will be justified in doing so."

[JD 23:122 – p.123, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881](#)

But no, this is not to be; it is not thus written; it is not the destiny of this people. We would never be the people God intends and designs us to be if we were to be let alone. The warfare must go on; it is an unceasing one; the powers are arrayed one against another, with God on one side and the Adversary on the other. The devil is not going to relinquish his ground. He has tried falsehood from the beginning, and tried it successfully in many instances. It has been said of him that he was a liar from the beginning; and it is certain he has not lost his old characteristics. He has succeeded by means of murder many times in the history of our race. He has contrived by this agency to maintain his foothold in the earth for a long time. He thinks, like men think who steal things and keep them for a long time, that he is the owner of the stolen property. The man who jumps another man's land or claim, the longer he possesses it, the more assured he becomes that he ought to have it. Satan is imbued with this same idea; and he has recourse to the old method of warfare – lying; and lies are being circulated until the ear is tired listening to them. Every conceivable falsehood! Then he supplements lies with violence, and even murder has been resorted to. He thinks, if he can kill a man that puts an end to him; if he can kill a people that destroys them and their influence. But this time it is another sort of a work. God has spoken concerning this work; this is the last work that the Prophets or the Apostles have called the dispensation of the fullness of times. There was to be a time when Satan should have to recede inch by inch, step by step. That time has come. The column of the righteous, of the true is pressing onward; there is an irresistible power behind it. It will go forward gathering into its ranks the honest and virtuous from every nation; just as sure as we live this will be the case. It will gather people from every nation. It seems like a very strange thing to say, but on all proper occasions I say it with a great deal of pleasure, at home and from home,

that I have been taught from early life that the day would come when republican institutions would be in danger in this nation and upon this continent, when, in fact, the republic would be so rent asunder by factions that there would be no stable government outside of the Latter-day Saints; and that it is their destiny as a people, to uphold constitutional government upon this land. Now, a great many people think this is a chimera of the brain; they think it folly to indulge in such an idea; but the day will come nevertheless. There are those in this congregation who will witness the time that the maintenance of true constitutional government upon this continent will be dependent upon this people, when it will have to be upheld by us.

[JD 23:123, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881](#)

We are battling all the time for human rights. We did so in the States before we were driven out; we have done so throughout these mountains, and are doing so to-day, contending for our rights. Even before the great tribunal of our nation, Congress, the contest is going on; for attempts are constantly being made to wrest from us our liberties, as citizens; and we are standing our ground as best we can, pleading for our rights, pleading for liberty of conscience, pleading for that freedom which belongs to the country, which God has guaranteed through the Constitution; not for ourselves alone, but for every creed, for every member of the human family. We do not want liberty for ourselves alone; we desire every man to have it: liberty for Ingersoll, and all who believe as he does; liberty for the followers of Mohammed and all who believe in the Koran; liberty for Beecher and for those of his way of thinking; and even Talmage who has talked so badly about us, we would have him enjoy liberty; yes, and permit him to say what he pleases about us, to take what view he pleases of our belief and practices, and to tell everybody what he thinks about them. We would give him the utmost liberty to do this, and every other man, to say what they please about us or about anybody else, as long as they do not interfere with the rights and the liberties of the people against whom they are opposed, protesting always, however, that men in criticising others, should confine themselves strictly to the truth, or be held responsible to the laws for slanders and falsehood. All sects and all people should have this liberty, that is, liberty of conscience, liberty of speech and liberty of the press, as long as it does not degenerate into license, and interfere with the rights of others. We claim this for ourselves; we contend for it, and we shall contend for it until it is gained.

[JD 23:123, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881](#)

Now, my brethren and sisters, I forgot that it is Sunday; I do not know, however, but what this is as good Gospel as I can declare; it is the Gospel of humanity; it is the Gospel of truth. And I hope that you will ever be true to these principles. It makes no difference really whether you will or not, so far as this great work is concerned; but it is a glorious reflection to know that we are striving to accomplish these ends.

[JD 23:123, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881](#)

When I look at the wonderful deliverance that has been wrought out for us, it is a subject of amazement to me. Still our enemies continue to plot and get up machinations. It is all right, let them have their agency, let them do as they please; it ought not to disturb us or cause us a moment's uneasiness. Let them do as they please as long as they keep hands off.

[JD 23:123, George Q. Cannon, April 3, 1881](#)

I pray God to bless you and fill you with His Holy Spirit, and to bless His servants who may address us during this Conference, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Wilford Woodruff, May 14, 1882

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE WILFORD WOODRUFF,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday, May 14, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE – MAN ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD – THE FALL OF ADAM AND EVE
PREORDAINED – REDEMPTION AND RESURRECTION – THE GOSPEL IN ANCIENT AND IN
MODERN TIMES – FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY – A FALSEHOOD REFUTED – PATRIARCHAL
MARRIAGE – ITS PURITY AND ITS ETERNAL PURPOSE.

[JD 23:124, Wilford Woodruff, May 14, 1882](#)

I feel disposed to read a chapter in the Bible; the chapter that I shall read contains, perhaps, a stronger chain of truth concerning life and death, the fall and redemption of man, the redemption and resurrection of the dead, than any other I know of in the Bible.

[JD 23:124, Wilford Woodruff, May 14, 1882](#)

The speaker then read the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians, and said:

[JD 23:124, Wilford Woodruff, May 14, 1882](#)

Before proceeding to make any remarks upon this chapter, I wish to say that there is no person who knows, before entering this building, who is going to address the assembly, and, therefore, we have no prepared sermons to deliver, it may be a miller, or it may be a mason, it may be a carpenter, or it may be a farmer, a lawyer, a merchant, or otherwise; this practice is peculiar to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the tendency is to make the speaker, whoever he may be, depend upon the spirit of inspiration to guide his thoughts and dictate his remarks. And, as a general thing if God, through this means, gives us nothing to say, we can say nothing to instruct the people.

[JD 23:124 – p.125, Wilford Woodruff, May 14, 1882](#)

I have often expressed my views with regard to the position we occupy before heaven and earth, before God, angels and men, and the views of Jesus and His Apostles and Elders, as they have come down to us, give a key to what I wish to say upon this subject. If there is an Emperor, a King, a President, a ruler of any nation or people, whether a monarchy, kingdom or republic – that takes away from any of his subjects or fellow-citizens the right to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, he deprives them of a right which the God of heaven has guaranteed unto them. These are the sentiments of the Latter-day Saints. We believe in giving to all men freedom, freedom in spirit and action; we believe in religionists of every creed and faith enjoying the liberty to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, which right is guaranteed unto them by God Himself; and the man or set of men that would deprive their fellows of this God-given right, assume a responsibility that they must answer for before the bar of God. If I had the power and control of the whole world I would never think of depriving any man, woman or child of this natural, this inherent right, whether their religious views were true or false. Can you find from history that God at any time forced any man to heaven or hell? No, you can not. And we as Latter-day Saints claim this

right and privilege for ourselves to worship God, to believe in God, and to believe in the records of divine truth – the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants and the Revelations of God.

[JD 23:125, Wilford Woodruff, May 14, 1882](#)

A public speaker, a teacher of the people is held responsible before God and his fellowmen for the doctrine he teaches; if he teaches any other gospel than that laid down in the Bible and taught by the ancient Prophets and Apostles he is under condemnation, no matter who he may be. Paul realized this fact so keenly that he, in speaking about it on once occasion, said: "Though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed;" and he repeats this sentiment two or three times over.

[JD 23:125 – p.126, Wilford Woodruff, May 14, 1882](#)

I wish to say a few words on one of the verses I have read, the 22nd: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." The world, more or less, has found a great deal of fault with Mother Eve and with Father Adam, because of the fall of man; what I have to say with regard to it, I express as my own opinion. Adam and Eve came to this world to perform exactly the part that they acted in the garden of Eden; and I will say, they were ordained of God to do what they did, and it was therefore expected that they would eat of the forbidden fruit in order that man might know both good and evil by passing through this school of experience which this life affords us. That is all I want to say about Father Adam and Mother Eve. Adam fell that man might be, and men are that they might have joy; and some have found fault with that. It has been said that God commanded Adam to multiply and replenish the earth; and it has been said that Adam was not under the necessity of falling in order to multiply and replenish the earth, but you will understand that the woman was deceived and not the man; and according to the justice of God she would have been cast out into the lowly and dreary world alone, and thus the first great command could not have been complied with unless Adam had partaken of the forbidden fruit. We acknowledge that through Adam all have died, that death through the fall must pass upon the whole human family, also upon the beasts of the field, the fishes of the sea and the fowls of the air and all the works of God, as far as this earth is concerned. It is a law that is unchangeable and irrevocable. It is true a few have been translated, and there will be living upon the earth thousands and millions of people when the Messiah comes in power and great glory to reward every man according to the deeds done in the body, who will be changed in the twinkling of an eye, from mortality to immortality. Nevertheless they must pass through the ordeal of death involved in the change that will come upon them. The Savior himself tasted of death; He died to redeem the world; His body was laid in the tomb, but it did not see corruption; and after three days it arose from the grave and put on immortality. He was the first fruit of the resurrection. There was no prophet, no saint or sinner, from the days of Father Adam to the days of Jesus that ever rose from the dead through the keys and power of the resurrection. Although we read of some who were restored to life, but this was not what is termed the resurrection.

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With regard to redemption, Paul said: All the children of Adam are redeemed from the fall by the atoning blood of Jesus, and all infants are redeemed as well as other people. There is no infant or child that has died before arriving at the years of accountability, but what is redeemed, and is therefore entirely beyond the torments of hell, to use a sectarian term. And any doctrine, such as the sprinkling of infants or any religious rite for little children is of no effect whatever neither in this world nor in the world to come. It is a man-made doctrine, and therefore not ordained of God; and I will defy any man to find in any of the records of divine truth any ordinance instituted for the salvation of little innocent children; it would be unnecessary on the face of it, and the only thing that can be found is where Jesus took the little ones in his arms and blessed them, which is and would be perfectly right to do according to the order of God. But the sprinkling of infants or the doctrine that infants go to hell under any circumstances, is a doctrine ordained of man and not of God, and is therefore of no avail and entirely wrong and displeasing in the sight of God. So much about the infants. I will say again they are redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, and when they die, whether of Christian, Pagan or

Jewish parentage, their spirits are taken home to God who gave them, and never go to suffer torments of any kind.

JD 23:126 – p.127, Wilford Woodruff, May 14, 1882

Another subject I wish to say a few words upon: "In Christ all are made alive." Since the day that sin entered into the world men have been held accountable for their own acts, and it has been known upon this earth from the day, at least, that Cain slew his brother Abel. And sin has presented itself in different grades; there are murder, blasphemy, lying, stealing, whoredom, and abominations of many different forms, which have followed man from generation to generation. For there was a power that dwelt upon the earth in the form of thousands and millions of fallen spirits, one-third of the hosts of heaven, which had been cast out of heaven with the devil in the great rebellion, who remain in that condition and who do not possess tabernacles, and they make war upon the Saints of God, wherever or whenever they are found upon the earth, and upon all men; they seek to destroy the whole human family, and have done so from the beginning until the present day, and they have not ceased their labors, nor do they intend to while Satan remains unbound. All the children of men who arrive at the years of accountability are guilty of sin, all being inclined to do evil as the sparks are to fly upwards. "What shall we do to be saved" was the cry of the people who heard the preaching of Peter on the day of Pentecost, and the same may be said to be applicable to all men in every generation. The answer would be, obey the law of the Gospel. This is the safe means given for the salvation of the human family. The law of God, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which Gospel contains the laws of God; it contains the ordinances, it contains the commandments, and any man that breaks them is guilty before God. And I will here say, as I wish to be understood by all men, that our faith is, there never has been but one Gospel upon the earth, though to-day there are six hundred three score and six different religious faiths, all more or less diverse one from another; but there is but the one true and everlasting Gospel, and never will be any more, and it is the same Gospel that was taught to Adam, to Noah, to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the Patriarchs, and which Jesus and the Apostles preached; it never did vary in the least in one single instance, nor never will. And I say, if we teach any other Gospel than that which was taught by Jesus and His Apostles, we teach a false Gospel and shall be under condemnation before God, angels and men.

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What is the Gospel as taught by Jesus himself? The very first principle was faith in the Messiah; this was the first principle ever taught to man. When Adam, after being driven from the garden of Eden, went to Adam-ondi-Ahman to offer sacrifice, the angel of the Lord asked him why he did so. Adam replied that he did not know, but the Lord had commanded him to do it. He was then told that the blood of bulls and goats, of rams and lambs should be spilt upon the altar as a type of the great and last sacrifice which should be offered up for the sins of the world. The first principle, then, ever taught to Father Adam was faith in the Messiah, who was to come in the meridian of time to lay down his life for the redemption of man. The second principle was repentance. And what is repentance? The forsaking of sin. The man who repents, if he be a swearer, swears no more; or a thief, steals no more; he turns away from all former sins and commits them no more. It is not repentance to say, I repent to-day, and then steal to-morrow; that is the repentance of the world, which is displeasing in the sight of God. Repentance is the second principle.

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I have heard many men say, no ordinances are necessary, that belief only in the Lord Jesus Christ is necessary to be saved. I have not learned that myself from any revelation of God to man, either ancient or modern. But on the contrary, faith in Christ, repentance, and baptism for the remission of sins were taught by patriarchs and prophets and by Jesus Christ and His Apostles. Baptism for the remission of sins is an ordinance of the Gospel. Says one, baptism is not essential to salvation. Jesus not only taught it but rendered obedience himself to that requirement, not that He was baptized for the remission of sins – but, as He said, "to fulfill all righteousness," thus in this, as in all other respects giving the example for all who follow. When these principles of the Gospel are complied with a man is then a fit subject to receive the Holy Ghost; and this holy

gift is bestowed to-day as it was anciently, by the laying on of hands by men possessing the authority to administer in the ordinances of the Gospel. These are the first principles of the Gospel which we Latter-day Saints believe in and teach to our fellow-men.

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Joseph Smith received the ministration of Angels, and he by revelation organized the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and he was taught by those who ministered unto him what to teach to the people, which was the everlasting Gospel.

JD 23:127 – p.128 – p.129 – p.130, Wilford Woodruff, May 14, 1882

Again, men received the Holy Ghost through the imposition of hands, after being baptized for the remission of sins. The Holy Ghost was imparted in that way, according to the promise of those who preached the Gospel. Joseph Smith when he organized this Church in 1830, organized it by revelation; and while we had hundreds of churches and systems and religions, not a single denomination upon the earth at that time preached the Gospel as taught by the ancient prophets and apostles, or had a church organized on the earth, with Prophets and Apostles, or with signs following the believers as in ancient days. Can you tell of one? I never heard of one until I heard the Elders of this Church preach the Gospel and set forth the order of God. When God commanded Joseph Smith to go forth and organize the Church, what authority had he to do so? None at all until he was ordained under the hands of those who had held the keys of the Priesthood upon the earth. And I will say to this assembly in the days of Jesus Christ, he taught these principles to the Jews; he brought the Gospel to the Jews, and established his kingdom among them, and it came with all its gifts, graces and powers: the sick were healed; devils were cast out; the gifts were manifested among them. But the Jews rejected him, and they finally put him to death, – He and His Apostles. He came to His own Father's house but He was not received; and then, according to command, this Gospel went to the Gentiles – we are all Gentiles in a national capacity, we are not Jews, the Jews are another class of men; they put the Savior to death, and have suffered for 1800 years in consequence, – they have been trodden under the feet of the Gentiles even until the present day. Those that took part in that deed and those who sanctioned it, said, Let His blood be upon us and our children after us. The Gentile Judge was willing to release Him because he could find no fault in Him; but the feeling and sentiment of the Jews was, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" What infidel is there, no matter who he is, who does not believe in God, let him read the revelations of heaven and see the fulfillment of prophecy from the beginning of Genesis to our day, and he will see them fulfilled to the very letter. There is nothing that has been predicted by Jesus or the Apostles, but what has already been fulfilled to the very letter as far as time will admit, and what has not will be. When, I say, the Gospel was preached to the Gentiles, it went to them in all its power, its beauty and glory, Priesthood and ordinances as it was offered to the Jews. And Paul, in writing to the Romans, told them not to be highminded, but to fear; for if God spared not the natural branches, who were the Jews, because of their unbelief, how could he be more merciful to the unnatural branches, who were the Gentiles? Has there been the true Church of Christ upon the earth since the Apostles were slain? Can you find a Church upon the earth organized as it was in that day? No, not one. The Gentiles followed the example of the Jews in their unbelief, and in putting to death those who bore the holy Priesthood; and instead of the Church of Christ has sprung up every kind of Church during the last 1,800 years. But in these the last days, God has again restored the everlasting Gospel; and any man who believes the Bible must believe the fulfillment of revelation, and he cannot believe in the fulfillment of prophecy without believing that God would send again to the earth angels to deliver that Gospel. And why send an angel for this purpose? Because the Gospel was taken from the earth in consequence of the unbelief of the Gentiles, and the powerful opposition that was brought against the comparative few who represented it. And in fulfillment of the revelation of St. John, John the Baptist came to Joseph Smith and conferred upon him, after a period of preparation on his part, the Aaronic Priesthood, which authorized him to preach and to baptize for the remission of sins, and to administer the sacrament, but not to lay on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost. In due time, however, Peter, James and John appeared to him also and conferred upon him the Melchizedek order of Priesthood and Apostleship, which gave him the power to organize the kingdom of God upon the earth. These are truths whether the world believes them or not. It makes no difference; it is the work of

Almighty God, and he is the originator of it. How is it with the Elders of Israel? God has called men from the plow, the hammer and anvil, from the carpenter's bench, etc., unlearned and weak mortals, and they have been sent out to the world to bear record of this new and everlasting Gospel restored in our day. And what have they said to the Methodists, the Baptists, and all other religionists and classes of men. God Almighty has given unto me a dispensation of the Gospel and I offer it to you; he that believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, and that I am his servant having His Gospel message to declare to all those to whom I am sent, and repents and is baptized for the remission of his sins, shall receive the Holy Ghost. This has been the purport of the message we have borne to men and nations for the last fifty years. And now if God has nothing to do with this, how is it that we have been able to gather together thousands and tens of thousands from about all nations under heaven by the simple proclamation of the Gospel—message? How long would it be before Joseph Smith or any other man who would go forth bearing the message that we do, and making the promises that we make, would be found out to be an imposter unless the promises he made were genuine and looked upon in such a way as to give entire satisfaction to those who hearkened to his word? The whole secret of our success as far as making converts is concerned is, that we preach the same Gospel in all its simplicity and plainness that Jesus preached, and that the Holy Ghost rests upon those who receive it, filling their hearts with joy and gladness unspeakable, and making them as one; and they then know of the doctrine for themselves whether it be of God or man. And this Gospel of Christ which we offer is what has led this Church from its first organization until to—day. And, as I have often said, had it not been for the Gospel revealed to us, we might have labored until we were as old as Methusaleh, and Utah to—day would have been as barren as it was in 1847, when we first came to these valleys. At that time we found a barren desert, yes, as barren as the desert of Sahara, with no mark of the Anglo—Saxon race. But travel through Utah to—day, and we find houses and cities, gardens and orchards, meeting—houses and tabernacles and school—houses and dwellings, with the blessing of God attending the labors of the people; and a community of people from almost every nation taken from the various sects and parties, and they are here through the inspiration of Almighty God, and I know it. We have not had power of ourselves to influence any man or woman with regard to these things. They have been influenced by the testimony of Jesus Christ, and by the Gospel of the Son of God. These are principles by which all men are saved. All men are saved by and through the blood of Jesus Christ, through obedience to the Gospel.

[JD 23:130, Wilford Woodruff, May 14, 1882](#)

I realize our condition and the position occupied by this generation. I know we are looked upon as a bad people, and we are considered a very ignorant people. There never were more epithets heaped upon Jesus Christ and the Apostles than upon the Latter—day Saints. Why is this? Are we so much worse than the world? No, we are not. What then is the matter? The Lord Almighty has set His hand to gather His people, and to build up his Zion and to establish his Church in these the last days; and the world do not like the doctrine we teach, as it lays the axe at the root of the tree, and consequently we have been persecuted from the time that this Church was organized until to—day; and the persecution will continue more or less until He reigns whose right it is to reign, until the Lord Jesus Christ comes in the clouds of heaven to reward every man according to the deeds done in the body.

[JD 23:130, Wilford Woodruff, May 14, 1882](#)

Now I want to say to the Latter—day Saints, we are called to a certain work, and we have been called of God, and we, as Elders, have gone forth whithersoever we were sent, taking our lives in our hands, traveling hundreds and thousands of miles without purse or scrip. I have waded swamps and swum rivers, and have asked my bread from door to door; and have devoted nearly fifty years to this work. And why? Was there gold enough in California to have hired me to do it? No, verily; and what I have done and what my brethren have done, we have done because we were commanded of God. And this is the position we occupy to—day. We have preached and labored at home and abroad, and we intend to continue our labors, by the help of God, as long as we can have liberty to do it, and until the Gentiles prove themselves unworthy of eternal life, and until the judgments of God overtake the world, which are at the door. Does this generation know what awaits them? Does our own nation? No, the world is ignorant of what must, sooner or later, befall them.

Here is the Christian world professing to believe the Bible, can you show me wherein any of the predictions of the prophets, whether those of Jonah to the city of Nineveh, or those of Isaiah to Israel, or to Tyre and Sidon and other ancient cities and peoples, have fallen unfulfilled? No, there is no man can point to a single prophecy of the servants of God that has failed in its fulfillment. Does not the Christian world know that the Bible is full of revelation pointing to this day and age of the world? Let them read the revelations of St. John given him while upon the Isle of Patmos and they will know what judgments await this generation before the coming of the Son of Man. There is a work for somebody to perform. But when we undertake to declare in all seriousness that God has anything to do with the work in which we are engaged they will laugh you in the face, and the reason is, they have departed from God and are entirely unable to comprehend his ways or his purposes; and instead of believing the plain and literal meaning of the word of God, they spiritualize it to suit themselves. Daniel was prepared to enter the den of lions; the three Hebrew children were not afraid of the fate that awaited them; the Apostles were valiant for the truth and shrank not from death for its sake, and why could those men and others under similar circumstances stand by their convictions without flinching? Because, in the first place, they had the truth and they knew it for themselves; and in the second place, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, sustained them as that power alone can in all the trying scenes through which the people of God are called to pass. And this is so to-day. What the Latter-day Saints have done by way of preaching the Gospel under all kinds of difficulties, building up cities and subduing waste lands, and establishing themselves in the earth, they have done by the revelations and commandments of God to them.

JD 23:131, Wilford Woodruff, May 14, 1882

I will say a few words concerning a certain principle, and why I say it is because we cannot help looking at the signs of the times as they appear to-day. I was reading in the NEWS last evening a speech reported to have been made by Joseph Smith, son of the Prophet Joseph Smith, in which he accuses us of pursuing an entirely different course from that of his father; that his father had nothing to do with the endowments which form a part of our religious faith; and that his father had nothing to do with the patriarchal order of marriage; and he accuses our bishops of polluting the women of their several wards so that they are not fit for wives. This last accusation is so palpably false and so utterly mendacious as to be entirely unworthy of our notice, and I believe I ought to apologise to this congregation for referring to it at all. But it shows how weak must be the hope and faith of men who pretend to be teachers among the people when they descend to traduce the character of innocent men by wilfully lying in the hope of bolstering up and establishing their own peculiar cause. And with regard to the others: I wish to say, that Joseph Smith utters falsehoods when he says what he is reported to have said about his father: for I bear record to this congregation, and I ask our young people to bear it in mind after I am gone, that Joseph Smith first made known to me the very ordinances which we give to the Latter-day Saints in our endowments. I received my endowments under the direction of Joseph Smith. Emma Smith, the widow of the Prophet, is said to have maintained to her dying moments that her husband had nothing to do with the patriarchal order of marriage, but that it was Brigham Young that got that up. I bear record before God, angels and men that Joseph Smith received that revelation; and I bear record that Emma Smith gave her husband in marriage several women while he was living, some of whom are to-day living in this city, and some may be present in this congregation, and who, if called upon, would confirm my words. But lo and behold, we hear of publication after publication now-a-days, declaring that Joseph Smith had nothing to do with these things. Joseph Smith himself organized every endowment in our Church and revealed the same to the Church, and he lived to receive every key of the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods from the hands of the men who held them while in the flesh, and who hold them in eternity.

JD 23:131 – p.132, Wilford Woodruff, May 14, 1882

I feel to say to the Latter-day Saints everywhere, brethren and sisters, do good and you will reap good; what you sow you will also reap. What our nation sows that it will also reap, and what it measures to others will be meted back to it heaped up, pressed down and running over. I have peculiar feelings in reflecting upon the condition of our own nation. Here are the Methodists and Presbyterians and others all combining to use their

influence religiously and politically to put down "Mormonism," which they say is an abomination in the land, and a great stain upon our nation's escutcheon. "O, my God," I feel to say, "I would our nation could see and understand things as they really are." I want to ask a question. When the sixth angel sounds his trumpet revealing the secret acts of men to an assembled world, which will include us, what will be the feelings of the present generation and the rulers and leading men and women of our nation as well as those of other nations, and the leaders of the Christian world when that angel declares unto all those who have condemned and cried against the Latter-day Saints, especially those who have taken a leading part, saying, "You yourselves are defiled with women, and your own acts which are recorded on high will rise in judgment against you. I say to this nation, and especially to those who are actively engaged in bringing about a crusade against us under the cloak of religion, "Sin lies at your own doors, and what you measure unto us will, according to the eternal law of retribution, be meted back to you, and you cannot escape it." We declare to all men that the God of heaven commanded Joseph Smith to introduce and practice the patriarchal order of marriage, including the plurality of wives. And why? Because it was the law given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob for certain purposes; that holy men might have their wives and children with them in the morning of the first resurrection in their family organization to inherit kingdoms, thrones, principalities and powers in the presence of God throughout the endless ages of eternity. Ladies and gentlemen, the Latter-day Saints are not the people you think they are; they are not guilty of the crimes and wickedness they are accused of, but on the contrary, they are as a people, free from the sins and abominations of this generation. We are represented as being a community of adulterers, and as being murderers. We are no more guilty of such crimes than were Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. What God has revealed unto us, and that which we know ourselves to be right and true, we cherish and revere; and the covenants that we have entered into in consequence of the revelations of God to us, we hold sacred. Our wives and children we love and respect, and we could no more deny them their claims upon us as husbands and fathers, than we could deny our God.

[JD 23:132 – p.133, Wilford Woodruff, May 14, 1882](#)

Another thing, there is no man that has ever lived who can claim a wife or child in the resurrection unless he and she were married and sealed by divine authority by a man delegated of heaven to perform the ordinance of marriage. All contracts not ordained of God entered into by men, end with this life, and are therefore without binding effect in the world to come. And herein is the difference of the position of the Latter-day Saints and of the Christian world with respect to the married state. The nature of our marriage covenant is sacred and binding both for time and eternity, and I would just as soon think of denying my God as to sever the relationship existing between me and my wives and children. Our plural wives and our children are just as dear to us as the one wife and the children of the Gentiles are to them; and what is more, we have married our wives by command of God, and by authority of His Holy Priesthood, which has been restored again to earth; and if we prove faithful and true to Him and to one another, we shall claim our wives and children in the world to come. Amen.

George Q. Cannon, November 14, 1880

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON,

Delivered at the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, November 14, 1880.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

HOW THE GOSPEL IS PREACHED BY THE ELDERS – VALUE OF THE TRAINING THEY
RECEIVE – HISTORICAL COMPILATION OF EXPERIENCES OF THE ELDERS WOULD BE
INTERESTING – PROSPECTS OF THE RISING GENERATION – FAITH OF THE ANCIENTS
RESTORED – FULFILLMENT OF THE DESTINY OF THE CHURCH CANNOT BE HINDERED – THE
SAINTS PURIFIED BY TRIAL.

[JD 23:133, George Q. Cannon, November 14, 1880](#)

It is exceedingly pleasing to me – and I have no doubt it is to all the Latter-day Saints – to hear the testimony of the servants of God who have gone forth as missionaries to the nations of the earth, and have returned bearing a faithful testimony concerning the work of God, and giving their experience in declaring the word unto the people.

[JD 23:133 – p.134, George Q. Cannon, November 14, 1880](#)

The labors of the Elders of this Church are, in some respects, the most extraordinary of all the labors of the children of men with which I am acquainted. The preaching of what is called the Gospel is not uncommon. There are thousands upon thousands of men who profess to be ministers of life and salvation, and to be servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, who devote their lives to the proclamation of those principles which they esteem necessary to salvation. But it is not a common thing for men to go forth, putting their trust in God and relying upon him for that sustenance which is necessary to enable them to live and to perform their missions. We have missionaries of various denominations who have come here, as they say, to enlighten us, to dissipate our errors, to put us on the right path, and to point out to us a better plan of salvation than that which we possess. But they come here because they are paid to come. They make their living by coming. It is a profession like that of the physician or surgeon, who comes here to administer to our physical ailments. In this respect the Elders of this Church differ from all others. They go out without purse and scrip, relying upon the Lord, putting their trust in him, devoting their time, their energies, and the ability that God has given unto them for the purpose of enlightening their fellow-men concerning that which they know to be the truth. I do not know any greater evidence than this that men could give to their fellow-men of their sincerity. And when men go forth in this way they are very likely to live so that the spirit of the mighty God of Jacob will be with them, they are likely to feel after it, to seek in faith to obtain God's blessing. When a man is hungry, when he is without money, when he has no friends, he is very apt to feel after some Being that has power; if he has any faith in God he is very apt to exercise it, and by the constant exercise of that faith, if he did not know before he went upon his mission that God lives, that God is near, that he hears and answers prayer, he would be very likely to learn these things before a great while, and so become strengthened in his faith so that he would ask, believing when he did ask that he would receive the very thing that he desired. God in his mercy has commanded his people to take this course. He has commanded his Elders to go forth and preach his Gospel, not for a salary, not for hire, not for the sake of enjoying pleasant times and the favor of mankind, but that they may be the means in his hands of saving the world and of bearing such a testimony to the world concerning this Gospel, that it will be left without excuse, at the same time promising his servants that he would raise up friends to them that they should have their needs supplied. It is one of the most remarkable things connected with this Church, that from the day it was founded until the present time no man has gone forth called of God to proclaim the Gospel in faith, but he has returned bearing testimony that God has opened his way, that God has fed him, that God has clothed him, that God has put it into the hearts of people to assist him, that he has traveled by sea, traveled by land, traveled amongst strangers in lands where strange languages were spoken – yet at no time has he ever lacked for food, raiment, or any of those things which were necessary to enable him to accomplish the mission upon which he had been sent.

As a people, brethren and sisters, we do not appreciate the value of this training. I am satisfied that we ourselves scarcely comprehend the blessing there is in such educational conditions. In an age of almost universal skepticism it is of the utmost value to us as a people that we should receive the training that our Elders get when they go abroad among the nations of the earth preaching the Gospel. Without it we should lack opportunities of testing the Lord, of being tested ourselves in regard to our faith, of proving to our own satisfaction that God lives, and that God hears and answers prayer, and that he does interpose in behalf of the humble, the weak and the insignificant when they approach him in faith in the name of Jesus and ask for this interposition. A perusal of the journals of the Elders of this Church who have kept daily record of that which they have endured and witnessed, and the various incidents of their missions would be as interesting as the acts of the Apostles in the New Testament; for God has manifested Himself in the most extraordinary manner in their behalf. Many of this people, before they heard of the organization of the Church, read the acts and teachings of the Apostles and of the Savior, and also Paul's Epistles, and their souls yearned for a day of such power upon the earth. Many who are here to-day, many thousands throughout this Territory, who are now connected with this Church, have wished that they could have lived at a time when these acts were being performed, when such men as are described in the New Testament had an existence upon the earth. But the history of the Elders of this Church – the miracles and manifestations of God's power which they have witnessed and been the instruments in performing – would make a book far larger than any record we have handed down to us.

JD 23:135, George Q. Cannon, November 14, 1880

To-day, the existence of God may be said to be only known by personal experience, to comparatively few people. Thousands throughout Christendom think they know, because of their traditions, that God lives and that Jesus is the Son of God. Their fathers, their mothers, their priests, their school teachers, have indoctrinated them with the idea that there is such a Being as God, and that Jesus his Son is the Savior and redeemer of the world, and they fancy they know and understand these things. But how many are there who can testify, by personal experience that they know that God lives? How many can say that they have asked for and received, through imploring in the name of Jesus, the very blessings that they desired and needed? Comparatively few people out of the masses that live upon the earth. Hence it is that God has removed himself far from them, and they say there is no use in calling upon God, there is no use in inculcating a belief that he will hear and answer prayer, that he will interpose in behalf of individuals, or that he will suspend – to use another phrase – great natural laws to accomplish certain results. Yet God does not suspend natural laws when he interposes in behalf of his people. We are told in the New Testament that Jesus ascended in the sight of certain individuals into heaven. The law of gravitation apparently may be said to have been suspended, or the law which confines bodies to the earth – the law by which we are governed; but the Savior understood a higher law; he understood laws by which he could accomplish this, and at the same time not interfere with the general law that governs human bodies, and so in all these matters God can interpose his power; he can hear and answer the prayers of those who are humble and seek unto him. He can give unto them the desires of their hearts in a way that is his own; He can operate by unseen influences upon men's minds, and lead them to do certain things that will result in the fulfillment of the desires of others, concerning which they have offered their prayers unto the Lord. In this respect the Latter-day Saints occupy, so far as I know a unique position.

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Brother Nicholson remarked that he could see among the young men who had gone forth to preach of late years, a wonderful zeal, and growth in faith. This will be more and more the case. The agencies that are now at work in our midst, our Sunday Schools – the scholars of which number upwards of thirty thousand – our Young Men's and Young Women's Associations – the members of which are numbered by thousands – are doing a vast amount of good. The young are being trained in the reading of the Scriptures. And who can read the Scriptures without believing that God is, and that he hears and answers prayers? What is there in the Bible to lead a reader to believe that faith shall not be exercised to-day as much as at any time in the world's

history, or that revelation from God shall not be enjoyed to-day as much as 1800 years ago? He who reads the Bible and believes in the equality of man, believes in the justice of God, and his unchangeable character, that he is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, will have faith spring up in his heart concerning the possibility of having knowledge from God, and of God's speaking, of sending his messages to the earth to-day as well as he did in ancient days. I do not believe that a child can be found who, if the New Testament be given to him or to her, and he or she read it without the bias which comes from the interposition of friends and the comments of teachers, will not have faith in God, and will not desire to know why it is that God does not work miracles in these days, and why God's power is not manifested now as it was in ancient days. These inquiries will naturally spring up in their hearts, and their desire to share in these blessings will be as natural to them as any other thoughts would be. Certainly, they will have no idea unless they are taught it, that these gifts and blessings are no longer to be enjoyed by men upon the earth. It is false teaching that generates such ideas in the mind of the children of men, not the Bible itself, not the New Testament, not anything that is written within either of those books, but they are ideas that come from outside of the Bible. But it is said if these things have not ceased, if it was not the will of God that they should cease, why is it that we do not have these manifestations now as they had in ancient days? Why is it that God does not speak now? Why is it that angels do not minister unto men now? Why is it that the Holy Ghost is not poured out now? Why are there no persons possessing the gift of healing, and other manifestations of the power of God? Why is it that Christendom has been for ages without these blessings and gifts in their midst?

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These are very reasonable inquiries, and the answer to them is to be found in the history of the Church, in this fact: that mankind would not permit a servant of Jesus to live in their midst who did such things, from the days of himself and his apostles down to the days of the restoration of the Gospel in its purity to the earth. Inspired men have not been permitted to live in their midst. Even men who professed to have a little light, who did not profess to have received revelation, but who claimed that it was their privilege to seek unto God and to find him and obtain knowledge from him, to a certain extent, were persecuted unto death. Read the history of the various reformed churches from the days of the Apostles down until the present time, or to within fifty years, and you will find that this has always been the result. Mankind have been determined that a reformed religion, and certainly revelation from God, should not be introduced in their midst. They would not have it. We have seen it in our own age, in this enlightened nation, occupying the foremost rank of all the nations of the earth, prominent for liberty, and for the freedom of its government, laws and institutions.

[JD 23:137 – p.138, George Q. Cannon, November 14, 1880](#)

Joseph Smith, the Prophet of God, did not arrogate to himself any superiority over his fellows, but he said that every man might be a prophet of God, might have the testimony of Jesus Christ, if he would live for it. He did not go among the people and say, "I have been chosen and elected to be something superior to all the rest of you; I have received blessings which no other man can receive." This was not his doctrine nor his teaching, but he said that every man that would obey the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and have the ordinances administered to him by one having authority, should receive the Holy Ghost, and that would make him a prophet, it would fill him with the Spirit of God, which is the spirit of prophecy; and because he declared this, because he declared the equality of man before God, because he contended that the souls of men in the nineteenth century were as precious in the sight of God as they were in the first century of the Christian Era, or at any time anterior to that era; because he declared that God was the same in these days as he was in ancient days; because he declared that God was not a God who made distinction among his creatures; that he did not manifest light to one generation and refuse it to another who were equally faithful in seeking for it – because he declared these doctrines in this nation and in this age his life was sacrificed. Our existence to-day in these mountains, the existence of Utah as a Territory in its present form, is due to religious intolerance, and is due also to the fact that a community has grown up who contend for religious equality before God, who claim that they are as good as their fathers in the sight of God, who contend that, however weak and fallible they may be, they at least are the children of God, and the heavens are open to them, if they have equal faith, as they were to their fathers who lived 1,800 or 2,000 or 3,000 years ago. Utah became an organized territory

because of this fact; that there had been begotten in the hearts of the people the feeling to seek after God as their fathers did, to seek for him that they might find him and obtain knowledge from him for themselves, not content to read of the blessings, of the powers, and gifts, and of the ordinances of salvation that were extended to others, thousands of years ago. The mere reading of these things would not satisfy this people. Nothing short of the actual realization of the blessings would satisfy the yearnings of their soul. And they stand to-day as a living protest against religious intolerance, and in favor of the old faith that existed upon the earth thousands of years ago, seeking for the old paths, teaching their children that God is the same to-day that he ever was, and that they must seek unto him as they did in ancient days to obtain knowledge of him and from him. And we began in this way: The Lord commanded us to go without purse or scrip – a good way of testing us to see whether our desires to know him were real or not – to go out in the midst of a cruel and unfeeling world, opposed to us, opposed to the ideas we entertained, priests feeling as they did in ancient days, that their craft was in danger. "Why," said they, "here are men who will destroy all our creed. We shall have no pay for our preaching if this becomes popular, our profession will be destroyed," and from the day that proclamation was made to the present time the strongest opponents of this Church and of this people have been men who preach for hire, and whose creeds have been in danger by the proclamation of these truths. To-day religious conventions cannot be held without "Mormonism" being introduced and advanced as something against which the power of the nation should be directed.

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The Lord has been with us and has helped us or we could not have done what has been done. It has been his blessing, it has been the manifestation of his power, that has shielded and upheld this people. His word has gone forth concerning this work. It will not return unfulfilled. Commencing with six members, this Church has increased until it is a power in the earth, and there is no nation which has not heard of this strange people living in the midst of the Rocky Mountains. The ideas we have taught are revolutionizing the earth, silently and slowly in some respects, but nevertheless as thoroughly. We are few in number, but the power and influence of the ideas which we advocate wield a power that we here do not fully understand. This will increase. As I have said to you and to others, the qualities that are possessed by the Latter-day Saints will never die. They cannot die unless you kill the people themselves. Talk about destroying this work! When you destroy the Church of Christ, and virtue, union, industry, frugality and temperance from the face of the earth, the world will destroy "Mormonism," as it is called. But a people with such qualities as we exhibit, as God has developed within us, cannot be killed. Ideas have been begotten and given birth to that will continue to grow and increase until they fill the whole earth, because they are true and divine. If there were only half a dozen men left alive who had this organization and held these principles, they would continue to grow and gather adherents and spread on the right hand and on the left. The principles are indescribable in their character. A faith has been begotten, a faith been born that will continue to live and increase and spread abroad, from the very fact that it is true, and truth always finds a lodgement in the hearts of the honest. There is no way to destroy this unless those who entertain a belief in it are destroyed. That can be done, but it is not likely to be done. It was done in the days of the Apostles, for the reason that the churches were scattered abroad, here and there. They were surrounded by their enemies. Satan had power in the earth. The Apostles were slain one after another. Every man that raised his voice in favor of divine revelation from God, or contended for the equality of man before God, and the unchangeableness of God, was slain. The Church was scattered abroad. Paul built up branches throughout Asia Minor. Other Apostles built branches of the Church wherever they could find a place where the people would receive the truth. But they were surrounded by adverse influences, and the Apostles and Saints were not allowed to live. And we in this day would be destroyed if we were alone, if these influences were left to operate against us. You surround a few people by multitudes who are actively hostile and aggressive against them, and how difficult it is for them to maintain their foothold! This was the condition of the churches in the days of the Apostles. They were scattered abroad throughout Europe, Asia and Africa, and on many islands. The Apostles had gone forth wherever they could find an opening. Thousands had been organized into the Church, and in these various branches there were men who had inspiration from God, who had the authority of the Holy Priesthood, who could ask of God and receive from him knowledge for the guidance of the people. While these men remained the Church continued to grow. But persecution sought the lives of men of this character. They were singled out and slain until not one was left, until a universal silence

reigned. Throughout all the nations of the earth, not a voice was heard to disturb the silence, no heavenly messenger, no voice from the eternal world, no man that had the authority to say, "thus saith the Lord." The heavens became as brass over the heads of the children of men, all communication was cut off, and of course the Church fell, the Priesthood departed, the ordinances were changed, and those who survived with a little faith accommodated themselves to the circumstances surrounding them. That was the condition in early days.

JD 23:139 – p.140, George Q. Cannon, November 14, 1880

But how the condition has changed! God in his mercy concealed this continent from the eyes of the world. For ages it remained here a secret place. Neither the Atlantic nor the Pacific could be penetrated until the set time came. Then a man was found who was moved upon by the Spirit of God. He became possessed of an idea that would not die, and his idea prevailed eventually. Ships were launched upon the great ocean, and the continent of America was discovered. God has revealed the reason this continent was concealed for so many ages. If it had been known to early ages, it would have been overrun, and there would have been no room for the great work of the last days. But he organized a government upon this land. He sustained the men who founded it. He filled them with His Spirit and enabled them to fight all the battles necessary to establish religious, social and political freedom, and a system of government was formed under which his kingdom could be set up, with all its institutions, without interfering in the least with the Constitution. In the Lord's own due time this Church was brought forth. The messengers of life and salvation were sent to the nations of the earth proclaiming that God had established His Church, and inviting them to come to a land of liberty. Thousands have been gathered here from that day to this, fulfilling in a most remarkable manner the predictions of the prophets concerning the gathering of the people in the last days. The circumstances which surrounded us are very different from those which surrounded our predecessors. We are a compact body. We believe in gathering; we believe in one people of one faith living together, worshiping God according to the dictates of their own consciences. This presents a solid phalanx against opposition and persecution. We cannot be slain to-day in detail as our brethren were 1,800 years ago. The ideas we believe in are being disseminated among our children. We are increasing. The teachings of history are that a people like us have a destiny, and they cannot be prevented from fulfilling it. You take two communities, one a multiplying community and the other only partially multiplying, and what will be the result? But I need not dwell upon this. There is a line of thought connected with this which you can reflect upon at your leisure.

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God has given unto us the conditions that are suitable for the accomplishment of the great work that he has said shall be established and carried forward in the last days, and we are connected with it; and there is this to distinguish it from all others – it is not a man-made system. Men may say and think what they please about it, but from the President of the Church down to the last man who has entered into the Church in sincerity there is a faith and a knowledge that this work is of God, and the Presidency believe this as much as the humblest man in the Church and more too. It is this that gives power, it is this that gives influence. It is because they are filled with a knowledge concerning it that they have lived it, that they have contended for it, that they have passed through persecutions to establish it, that they are not unwilling to die for it, if it should be necessary. And this is the case with the whole people. Why? Because they are deluded? Because they are dupes? Because they are deceived? No, but because God has opened the heavens and poured out His Holy Spirit upon them and given them a testimony for themselves of the truth of this work. The Norwegian, the Swede, the Dane, the native of Switzerland, or the German, Frenchman, Irishman, Englishman, or the American, together with the Icelanders, Sandwich Islanders – all receive it in their own lands, all bearing testimony in the self-same words, that God has given them a testimony of the truth of this work. Destroy it! You might as well try to destroy the heavens themselves, or to overthrow the throne of Jehovah. It is true. It will live. Men may fall away – for men are weak mortals – man may deny the faith, man may say this is all a delusion; men may die, but the grand truth still lives. It has found a lodgement in the hearts of honest men and women. And they are increasing. Their children are multiplying. They are spreading abroad on the right hand and on the left, living virtuous, temperate, frugal, industrious lives, loving God and loving their neighbors.

Are there exceptions? Yes, we are human. The devil still lives, and he has power to tempt. Therefore we have exceptions in our midst. Nevertheless those qualities are increasing and multiplying. Men are found who possess them, and those growing up to manhood and womanhood are also found to possess them. They know God and ask Him, believing that they will have the desires of their hearts granted unto them. And thus the work of God is spreading abroad throughout the earth, finding a place in the hearts of people, humble, it is true, but people who are independent – people who are the noblest of earth's sons, for the reason that they are not afraid to embrace that which is unpopular. The work of natural selection is going on in that way. This Gospel is naturally selecting the best of the people from the midst of the earth – men and women in humble station, from the lower ranks of life, in the most of instances, although there are some exceptions, some noble exceptions; but notwithstanding the lowliness of their origin and their surroundings, they are people of independent thought, people who dare embrace a truth though it be unpopular, and cling to it in the midst of all the influences that are brought to bear against them. Out of such materials the Lord is building up a Church, building up a people, bestowing His blessings upon them.

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It would not do for His people to be anything else but valiant, and when they pass through the ordeal they will be like gold seven times purified. In days gone by it was the mob, it was the burning of houses, driving the people from their lands, and this has been followed by ordeals just as trying in their character, as far as testing the people is concerned. By this process the people are becoming stronger in the Lord. Their feet are planted upon a rock. They have proved God for themselves, known him for long years in the midst of trials, temptations and vicissitudes such as no other people on the face of the earth know anything about.

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I thank God for this. I thank him every day that I live for this Church. I thank him that I am a Latter-day Saint. If I can only have a name among this people I feel as though I could have no greater comfort. I wish to be associated with a people of this kind, a people who love the Lord and are willing to do anything to show their faith in and their love for him, and if it were necessary, to lay down their lives for the truth. I cannot help loving a people of this kind. They have weaknesses and faults. I have them too. We are alike in this respect. If they will bear with me I will strive to bear with them. I know this is the Church and Kingdom of God. I know that those who cling to it will, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, receive glory and exaltation at his right hand. I know that people who love him, as the Latter-day Saints do, and are willing to make sacrifice, will not be forgotten by him. He will not forget them in the day that he makes up his jewels; he will bless them and honor them.

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That we may remain faithful and true unto the end, and be counted worthy to receive an exaltation in the kingdom of our God is my prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882

DISCOURSE BY ELDER GEORGE G. BYWATER,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, June 4, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

HUMAN RIGHTS – ORIGIN, DUTY AND DESTINY OF MAN – CORRECT KNOWLEDGE DUE TO
DIVINE REVELATION – TRUTH EVER ABSOLUTE AND UNWELCOME TO THE WORLD – GOD'S
AUTHORITY UNRECOGNIZED – THE WORLD'S PRESENT STATE AND FUTURE PROSPECTS.

[JD 23:142, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882](#)

Among the loftiest conceptions of the world of mind, relative to the purposes and being of man, has, in human wisdom, been formulated to be the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. This sentiment has found an echo in every age, when the intelligence with which man is inherently endowed has been favored with a development to a degree adequate to this conception. And although this principle in the general bearing upon human interests is accepted by the intelligence of all countries and all peoples, we discover that our principles and sentiments are in advance of the moral and intellectual culture requisite to their full and complete development. But wherever and whenever the best cultivated minds have been moved to pronounce their conceptions upon the destiny of man, they have ever incorporated those principles and those rights in their constitutional manifestoes. And amid the multitudinous concerns and divine interests, in which the human mind is engrossed, there is always a sacred spot reserved for the welcoming and christening of those principles in the human heart. Moreover, whenever these principles have been invaded and the sanctity of the conditions involved in them has been imposed upon by ignorance and superstition or unbridled and uncultivated passions, they have ever resulted in sorrow, distress and anguish to the family of man.

[JD 23:142, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882](#)

In speaking a few Sabbaths ago I made reference to the genesis or origin of things, and quoted an inquiry which was very beautifully put by the intelligent individual who made the inquiry, namely, "Whence are all things, and whither do all things tend?" and then remarked that the highest and loftiest aim of man must necessarily be to obtain the conception of his origin and his final destiny. Short of this, his life would be an aimless life, and his acts would be acts without intelligent motives; they would be disconnected: they would bear no reference to the past, no reference to the future, but would be acts produced as the result of the force of circumstances, urging an acquiescence and recognition of the pressure by which he was surrounded, and yielding to the authority of that force.

[JD 23:142 – p.143, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882](#)

But to the free and intelligent man and woman who ascend above the narrow zones and stratas of human life, who rise to a higher plain of intellectuality and who begin to perceive the vast extent over which human interests are spread and the undoubted right of association of those interests to go in one grand fraternal whole, in one bond of human unity, they must be led to inquire into those matters, and in doing so to satisfy themselves, at least, according to their highest standard of knowledge, and their widest scope of experience and observation, so that they might have in view an object, a mark, a prize towards which they should aim, a prize for which they should run a race, a work to be performed for which they should receive a reward; impelled by the eternal, heaven-born endowments which, under favorable influences and proper circumstances, they would feel awakened within them, impelling them, urging them to advance to a higher standard of moral and intellectual excellence, and be able to perform a work for the advancement of their race, for the amelioration of the condition of human society, that they might leave the world, in some small degree though it may be, the better for their living in it.

We conceive, my brethren and sisters, that these are motives that no well-directed line of thought can escape, that these are feelings that no heart imbued with the genuineness of its nature, which we inherit as the patrimony of our Father and God can entertain, without being moved thereby; and we certainly could not become oblivious to these considerations whatever may be the conditions or conceptions in which we find ourselves and those with whom we are more immediately associated in the fabric of human society – we must feel that this great, grand, dominating principle is ever presenting its modest claim upon our allegiance, that we should not only desire to enjoy the right to life but the right to liberty, and the right to pursue happiness according to our highest conceptions of that happiness and that liberty.

JD 23:143 – p.144, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882

As Latter-day Saints we feel that this is our prerogative; we feel that the words which I have quoted, although I stated that they were formulated by human wisdom, but I beg to qualify that statement by a word or two to convey my meaning more clearly to you upon this subject. It is true that we draw a line of demarcation between human wisdom and wisdom from above – between the human and divine; that we draw a broad line by which we distinguish the one from the other; but when we express ourselves in harmony with the common principle which enters into the structure of our faith, as Latter-day Saints, we find that this line becomes more and more attenuated; we find that it loses that distinctness which we once thought should ever exist between what we call temporal and spiritual, and we find ourselves, being guided by the inspirations of our faith and the principles which we have espoused, coming nearer and nearer into a union, and more closely in harmony with that sentiment expressed by one of the ancient prophets: "Fear God and keep his commandments: this is the whole duty of man." This sentiment was uttered long centuries ago, when men, according to modern writers and speakers, were supposed to enjoy only the light of Paganism, guided by the government of barbarism in the lower stages of the scale of human elevation – in the dark ages. But, my friends, if there is a sage or philosopher that has ever uttered a sentiment or declared a principle or enunciated a law by which he would give birth to his conception of the philosophy of life, of the purpose of human existence, that could express it more forcibly, more philosophically or in stricter harmony with the principles of exact science than this ancient Prophet, then I know not his name nor am I acquainted with him as an author.

JD 23:144, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882

Permit me, in a few words, to illustrate my meaning upon this principle. We will suppose that a master builder has conceived a plan for a magnificent structure, for a beautiful residence, for a temple of worship, for a temple of science, for a temple of freedom, a temple of truth; and he would embody, as the result of his deep and practical investigation into the wants and necessities embodied in his conception, a necessary provision to meet those wants, to supply those necessities, and to accord with the character of the work, or the results to be produced after the work should be completed, that there was no part of the plan conceived as being unnecessary or beyond what was called for, or any part of the structure that was built for nought, and that might as well be disposed of as to have it; but he would feel that he had completed his ground plan, the several floor plans, even to the topmost stone or the last elaborate and artistic touch of the painter's brush or mechanic's chisel, according to the genius of decorative art, that it was all necessary to carrying out the external principles and character and importance of the work to be performed and of the results to follow the completion of this labor.

JD 23:144, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882

If this be true in works of art, if this be true also in the various labors of life, in the domain of agriculture as well as the domain of art, in every department of nature as well as in every department of art, we see design and purpose, we see invention and system, we see the indelible mark of intent upon every part designed to constitute the entire and perfect whole; and we would say that the man who would conclude that the work of such an architect, of such a master builder, was unnecessary, was simply an utterance of mind that was

unfavorable to more mature investigation of such matters, and consequently could not be considered a competent judge upon such a subject.

[JD 23:144, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882](#)

We regard man as the highest form of intellectual and moral existence with which we are acquainted. We regard man as the most perfect embodiment of all the creations of nature with which we are acquainted. He possesses the highest development of a nervous system, the most complex organization in all its parts, the most fruitful brain, producing the grandest results witnessed in every form of animated existence; and if this be true – and I have never yet seen a man who could be considered by his best friends to be sane who doubted it – then we must admit that if man who is created with a complement of capabilities, with a capacity for advancement in knowledge of a variety of degrees and kinds, and that he is adapted in his mental and moral nature to perform works that are productive of the highest possible good, not only to himself as an intelligent being, but to all subordinate or inferior forms of life with which he is surrounded, we certainly cannot fail to come right into the presence of this inquiry: "Whence are all things, and whither do all things tend?"

[JD 23:144 – p.145, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882](#)

Many and wide are the speculations indulged in by men who feel free to give themselves the most unbounded latitude in their speculations, forming theories not only devoid of ingeniousness, not only devoid of truth and symmetry, but possessing some features of fascination for the intellectual and good among mankind; yet, where do we find in the whole realm of mind, where through all the ages that have gone by, men that have wandered and gleaned information from every open avenue among the various civilizations which the words of history give unto us a knowledge of, is there a more rational and consistent solution of this question than is found in the writings of the most ancient historian and primitive lawgiver, Moses: "God made man in his own image; in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

[JD 23:145, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882](#)

If then, my friends, we have an origin – and there is no doubt but that we have; and there are very few men with whom I have come in contact that have ever hesitated to admit man's origin. It will therefore be rational to enquire whence are we. But to trace back through the ages that have elapsed and take a retrospective gaze into the past and endeavor to unearth the history of lost civilization; to exhume from the buried ruins the intelligence that existed upon the surface of this globe during the long, long centuries that have gone by, and there glean the very cream and gather together the most precious sentiments ever enunciated by sage or philosopher, can we find anything superior to this? No, we cannot, my friends; there is none on record. Pardon my freedom in making so broad and conclusive a statement; but I speak after many years reflections, and after considerable research.

[JD 23:145 – p.146, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882](#)

And although, my beloved brethren and sisters, many grand and cherished principles have been brought to light by man's will and power of investigation, by seeking to open nature's temples and explore her departments and endeavor to comprehend law through phenomena, and formulate the laws of nature in harmony with the connected and continuous occurrences of events, with the uniform appearance and re–appearance of her operations, and they have been gratified with the glorious results which have followed the earnest, the honest and indefatigable labors of good men, men who have sacrificed friends and homes and associations, who have bid adieu to their dearest friends on earth, sacrificing all the comforts and luxuries with which they were surrounded to embark on the ocean of peril and uncertainty in pursuit of principles which they felt were to be discovered, and results to be attained by persistent and indefatigable labor. They have traveled to earth's utmost bounds; they have endured hardships, and many of them have sacrificed their lives in order to accumulate a fund of human knowledge to add to those experiences which seem indisputably necessary to build up society upon its more enduring basis. Yet, my friends, have they ever brought to light by

their researches, without naming those worthies for whom I entertain profound respect, a great many of them, have they ever introduced to the human family such a plain, such a clear, lucid and satisfactory explanation of the principles of which I have spoken, and to which I am now alluding – the design of man and his final destiny upon the earth – as is given in the records of revelation. It is true that the scientific man is satisfied that there is a high destiny awaiting man; that there is an ultimatum pertaining to his being that science cannot unfold, that philosophy cannot teach, that man's experience and observation cannot gather the materials for the solution of; but they see a grandness in the structure of the human frame, they see a profoundness in the constitution of his mind; they see such a variety of adaptations and combinations in his person that augurs for him a higher life and nobler results and grander purposes, than are presented within the narrow realm of his mortal sphere, in which he now sojourns. But to say what that life is, to explain what will be his future destiny and the future destiny of the human family at large, the earth and the universe, who can tell? The wisest of men here bow their heads in humility, their countenances become more or less suffused with expressions of humiliation. They stand in the presence of the future, the effect of which they feel, but the character of which they do not comprehend; and they will say with Professor Proctor and others, that whatever may be the laws that will bring to pass the resurrection of the world, as the prophets have said, it will die and pass away; what will be the laws and powers and forces that will make themselves manifest in the resurrection or regeneration of matter, they do not know, but they believe that there exists in nature an intelligent power which will conduct her operations to eternal perpetuity.

[JD 23:146, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882](#)

My friends, we are indebted to revelation as the source of knowledge; we are indebted to God and angels, and the spirit of revelation, for our understanding of those divine principles which afford a clear and final solution to these important and vital inquiries. As Latter-day Saints we appeal to this source; and while we do not ignore any truth, come from where it may, or wherever found, whether upon Christian or heathen ground, we hail the light of the everlasting Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ which has been revealed in our day and dispensation as the only unerring, as the only truthful and unqualifiedly certain mode of interpretation by which we can attain to a knowledge of these things. We may say, the works of God and the word of God both constitute the avenues of human information, and that whoever ignores the one deprives himself of much of the benefits which flow from accepting the other; that there are two doors which open to the temple of truth, and they are both indispensably necessary to engage man's full capacity and to endow him with the principles of knowledge, and with the purposes of his being here upon the earth, together with his origin and final destiny.

[JD 23:146 – p.147, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882](#)

My beloved friends, I feel grateful for a knowledge of these things; I feel thankful that God has restored again the fulness of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and that we are living in the dispensation in which God has foretold through his ancient servants the prophets that he would make known his mind and will concerning the earth and its inhabitants, and his purposes in relation to them; and that he will bring to pass all of his great and grand designs as they have been foreshadowed in the volumes of revelation from the earliest period of his speaking to the children of men to the present hour. And as Latter-day Saints we rely especially and entirely upon him for absolute truth. Although men deny this, they say there is no such thing as absolute truth, that all truth is relative. But we have learned, through the revelations of God, and taking them as a standard, that there is a great deal of false reasoning here. Truth is absolute in its nature. Man's apprehension of it may be only partial and imperfect; he may know two few of its sides, comprehending it not in its entirety; and, therefore, to form a perfect and unerring judgment as regards its force and power and character requires a thorough application of its elements. I aver that truth is absolute. It is admitted by our wisest men that the existence of God is an absolute existence; we accept this admission, and say that whatever truth emanates from him, is an absolute truth. It may be beyond our comprehension. Truth may come unto man in relative quantities. It may be revealed in the form of line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. It nevertheless comes to us in the character and absoluteness of his character, and this, we say, is stamped upon every principle that emanates from his divine presence.

As a community of people we have received this Gospel; we have embraced its first principles. We have gathered ourselves together to these mountain valleys in fulfillment of prophecy to be further taught of him. We are entering into the development of that work which has been the theme and burden of the prophetic song of men who lived long ages ago. We live in an age of revelation. We live in an age of Prophets and Apostles and inspired men. But who believes this? Here is a question, who believes it? It was asked in the day of the Savior, When the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth? When and where, I ask, has a dispensation of God to the children of men found a universal acceptance? We know of no time in the world's history when the intelligence of the masses of mankind has been of that advanced and refined culture as to accord the right to the Creator of the universe to dictate a government for the children of men. They have ever assumed the role en masse or in the great majority, that they had the right to dictate to themselves. This is strikingly illustrated in the parable of the Savior, in which is represented a vineyard and the giving charge of it to stewards to cultivate it and take care of its fruit. This having been done, the Lord of the vineyard sends his servants or messengers to investigate as to the management and working of their stewardship. But when they came, making known their business to those in charge, were they received as they should have been? No, but on the contrary, they agreed among themselves that it was their right to manage their own affairs according to their own will and in their own way, and that it was their right to dictate to themselves. Vox populi, vox dei. We are the voice of God; we know what is best for ourselves, etc. And they took the messengers that were sent unto them by the master and owner of the vineyard, and beat one and stoned another, etc.; and they returned and reported the cruelties that had been inflicted upon them. By this act they ignored the right and authority of the Master to make any inquiries as to the management of affairs. Finally the Lord of the vineyard said: "I will send my Son, surely they will reverence my Son." He came, and they recognized him; said they, "He is the heir, let us kill him."

JD 23:147 – p.148, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882

My beloved brethren and sisters, and friends, this is a very truthful, a very forcible illustration of the spirit that has been manifested by the generation of the children of men in our own age, when God has again sent a divine messenger, crying repentance to the people and inviting them to forsake their sins and return to the Lord their God, and recognize his right to dictate to them the form of government they should live by.

JD 23:148, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882

How is it to-day in this nation, that boastingly iterates and re-iterates from one part of our common country to the other the rights of men which are embodied in the noble Constitution of the country, and expressed in the words I quoted, "Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Do they recognize God's right to rule? No, my friends, and I must say, pardon the allusion, in the sarcastic though too truthful article of Mrs. Gail Hamilton, with regard to the power and effects of science and the power and effect of the Christian world in their prayers for our late lamented President Garfield, when she tauntingly throws up to them that they have no faith; that the prayers of the whole world were turned, that the whole Christian world bowed itself, asking and pleading with heaven to save unto us our President; but the only prayer answered was that of the wretched and despised Guiteau, the assassin. There is too much truth in this sarcasm. Would we rule God out of the government; would we rule Him out of the Constitution, claiming the right to rule ourselves and dictate the conditions upon which we would live, or would we say with one of old, that "to fear God and keep his commandments is the whole duty of man." It is with regret that we have to record the admission, that the general sentiment of to-day, is, that God has nothing to do with human affairs, which only expresses the real state of things as they now exist. But then this is merely a fulfillment of a prophetic utterance. In the latter-days, said Timothy, many false prophets should arise and also false teachers, who would teach the doctrine of devils. Forbidding to marry, (but tolerating prostitution); that men would become "covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers; that they would be "without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of them that are good." That they would also be traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. "Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof."

What is the state, not only of our own glorious Republic, but of the governments of the world – whither are we drifting? We have eyes, but whether we can see enough of the circumstances that are to constitute the grand panorama spoken of in Holy Writ, is another question. It may be that they are too close to our doors to be seen distinctly, and that we are unable in consequence to comprehend their magnitude and foretell their results. Be that as it may, we nevertheless are right in the presence of these sorrowful facts of human history.

JD 23:148, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882

May we, as Latter-day Saints, be faithful, trusting in God. May we be like Daniel of old, though the king should forbid we should pray; though princes and rulers should tell us we shall not worship God only as we are permitted to, that we must accept and abide by popular opinion and bow in deference to popular prejudices, shaping our convictions after the ethics and theories of men, may we still trust in Him, and still be found at the post of duty and devotion.

JD 23:149, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882

Is this the age of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness? Is this the age when we are to enjoy those immunities and guarantees which the highest conservators of human wisdom, the founders of our great Constitution were enabled to give unto us, to bequeath unto us as their patrimony? Alas! alas! It is in this instance as in that expressed by Oliver Goldsmith:

JD 23:149, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,

Where wealth accumulates and men decay.

JD 23:149, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882

When men will tell you that the constitution is not sufficient; that we have grown beyond it – that there is no sacredness to be attached to any institution that comes short in its provisions to supply means by which party purposes and popular prejudices can be fostered and carried into execution, that all these things must go by the way – I fear for my country; I fear for any nation and any people so situated. For remember, this is not the only age that mankind has lived. We go to Egypt, we go to Chaldee and to Central Arabia, and we find these relics of an ancient civilization, many phases of which would put to the blush the vanity and pride of the intelligence of the age in which we live. They have gone; the generations then living have melted away. And the generations that now live will pass away; but God lives and rules, and his purposes will roll on. And, pardon me, I will close my remarks with another couplet:

JD 23:149, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882

"Yet I doubt not through the ages

One eternal purpose runs,

And the thoughts of men are widened

By the process of the suns."

JD 23:149, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882

And by the development and the upholding of the principles of nature God is consummating his designs, which will terminate in the salvation of man and the perfection of the earth as a residence for the redeemed of all past ages, when the light of the sun will not be needed, for the glory of God will be the light, and intelligence and truth shall flow as the mighty ocean, and knowledge shall cover the great deep, and no man then need say, Know ye the Lord, for all shall know him from the least to the greatest; and every man in every place will meet a brother and a friend.

[JD 23:149, George G. Bywater, June 4, 1882](#)

May God in His own due time hasten these things, and we, His children, be prepared for every dispensation of His providence, in my prayer, in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Lorenzo Snow, April 7th, 1882

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE LORENZO SNOW,

Delivered at the General Conference,

Friday, A. M., April 7th, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

ANCIENT AND MODERN ISRAEL COMPARED – GOD'S WORK PROGRESSIVE – HIS
OVERRULING

PROVIDENCE.

[JD 23:150, Lorenzo Snow, April 7th, 1882](#)

The speaker read the 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th verses of the 14th chapter of Exodus, and then said:

[JD 23:150, Lorenzo Snow, April 7th, 1882](#)

There is an important lesson contained in these verses, and the lesson is not only applicable to this community as a whole, but to each individual. It appears that the children of Israel at the time referred to in the passage I have read, were not very well acquainted with the Lord, or with his ability to carry out his purposes. They, however, had not the opportunities of becoming acquainted with him, as have the Latter-day Saints. They had seen some of the works of the Lord wrought in the presence of the Egyptians as well as in their own presence; but their hearts had not been touched, neither had their understandings been enlightened by the intelligence of the Holy Spirit, as has been the case with the Latter-day Saints, and therefore, when they were brought to face the Red Sea, which, to all human appearance, was impassable, and with the armies of the Egyptians pressing close upon them, their hearts failed them.

[JD 23:150, Lorenzo Snow, April 7th, 1882](#)

The Latter-day Saints in latter days have been placed in circumstances very similar. I well remember in my own experience the Latter-day Saints being placed in situations where it became very necessary for them to

rely upon their knowledge of the things of God and their faith in His power to carry out His purposes.

[JD 23:150, Lorenzo Snow, April 7th, 1882](#)

It is not at all strange that the Israelites at that time, possessing the little knowledge they did, should be considerably alarmed, or that they should display a great amount of ignorance and folly, having expressed themselves to Moses as being in doubt as to the propriety of attempting to deliver them from their fettered condition, notwithstanding the Egyptians had been so severe upon them, and had taken the lives of their children, yet they had so little faith in the word of the Lord through their deliverer, Moses, that they were willing to still continue slaves rather than place themselves under the direction of the Almighty. They wished to know of Moses if there were not sufficient graves in Egypt that it became necessary for them to be destroyed by the army of Pharaoh in the wilderness, and chided Moses for the course he had pursued, and wished themselves back in bondage.

[JD 23:150 – p.151 – p.152, Lorenzo Snow, April 7th, 1882](#)

I do not think the Latter-day Saints in any period of their history have displayed such weakness and lack of faith; however trying our circumstances may have been, we have never been guilty of such pronounced ingratitude to God. At the time the mob came against us in Missouri there were but a few of us, and the circumstances were such it was impossible to expect deliverance except through the intervention of the Almighty. There may, it is true, have been some persons at that time whose hearts failed them under the very trying circumstances in which we were placed; but they were very few. The Latter-day Saints had received the Gospel accompanied by the Holy Spirit; and it was in consequence of that miraculous influence and power that was and had been upon them at various times, which caused them to have faith in their deliverance. They did not display the weakness and folly that we see manifested in the children of Israel on the occasion referred to in the verses I have read, as well as on many other occasions. There were a few, however, that wished to turn back to Babylon and give up their faith, the ordeal being too severe. In reading ecclesiastical history we find that even the prophets on certain occasions, displayed more or less weakness; and I have thought that Moses exhibited a little on this occasion, that is, if the translation be strictly correct. He saw the difficulties, and although he had more faith and knowledge in his bosom than all the faith and knowledge of the people put together, yet there seemed to be a feebleness in the course that he advised on this occasion. With the Red sea in front and the army of Pharaoh pressing closely in the rear, the state of affairs, of course, seemed critical, and it was apparent to all: and while the people were bewailing their condition Moses gave instructions, saying, "Fear ye not" – now that part of it was excellent, and may apply to the Latter-day Saints, and will always be applicable in whatever condition they may be placed; but the after part of the instruction I would scarcely think was exactly applicable on that occasion, and it certainly would not be to the Latter-day Saints in any situation or circumstance, namely, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." It appears from this verse which I will read, that Moses began to cry unto the Lord for deliverance; and the Lord answered him saying: "Wherefore cryest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." There was no standing still; there never has been since the day that the Almighty commenced to establish His work, the people have always been required to move on and never stand still. Although the Lord will work and accomplish wonders in regard to the deliverance of His people when impediments arise in the path of their progress and no human power or ability can remove them, then God by His power will do so, but it is the business of those who profess to be engaged in His work to move on, to go forward, and that too without murmuring or having to be urged; so long as there remains a step forward to be taken, that step should be taken. As in this case it was not wisdom for the people to stand still to see the salvation of the Lord, but the word was, move on, go forward, have faith, so that when they should come to the water's edge and place their feet therein, that then the Lord would either move upon the Egyptians to stay the hand of destruction, or show His power in delivering them in some other way; but so long as they could make a move in the direction that God through Moses had appointed, it was their duty to do so.

[JD 23:152, Lorenzo Snow, April 7th, 1882](#)

It may appear through our ignorance in not understanding fully the ways of the Lord and His purposes, that in our onward march in carrying out the programme before us, we sometimes come to a stopping place for the time being, but the fact is, there is no such thing in the programme, and there cannot be providing the people continue their labors putting their trust in the promises of God. The Apostles, notwithstanding the opportunities they had of acquainting themselves with the purposes of the Almighty, through personal converse with the Son of God, thought there was a time when they would have to stand still, and cease their labors as ministers of God. When they saw the Savior hanging upon the cross in the agonies of death, their hearts failed them, and they concluded that all was over with them. They had thought that Jesus was to be king of Israel, and deliver them from the Gentile yoke, but now their hopes seemed vain and all was lost; now said their leader, let us go a fishing. Was there a cessation of the work of God, when Jesus was suffering upon the cross? No, the work was still going on, but the Apostles did not understand it; they did not seem to comprehend the act; that the purposes of God were being carried out when He was suffering upon the cross; but when Jesus appeared to them after He arose from the tomb, He gave them to understand that in His suffering and death the words of the prophets were being fulfilled; and He opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures. But the High Priests of the Jewish faith, and all those who were foremost in the crucifixion of the Savior, believed they had accomplished their purpose in putting to death Him whom they feared would take away their name and nation, and doubtless felt satisfied with their work, especially as He failed to come down from the cross, when they cried out, If He be the Son of God let Him come down from the cross.

[JD 23:152 – p.153, Lorenzo Snow, April 7th, 1882](#)

There is no standing still with the Latter-day Saints. When we were driven from Kirtland and Jackson County by mob violence, the purposes of God were being fulfilled and the work was undergoing changes necessary to its growth and progress, and the trials and afflictions incident thereto were necessary to the proving of the Saints and the establishment of the kingdom of God upon the earth. And I would say, let the motto be to every Elder in Israel, and to every person worthy to be called a Saint. Fear not, and never stand still, but move on. Let the farmer go forward making improvements, plow and sow and reap; and those engaged in proper and useful enterprises continue to do what seems good according to the Spirit of God that may operate upon them, and let every man be faithful and very diligent in keeping the commandments of God, and cultivate the desire to do good to those around him; and if, in reflecting on the past, we find we have not acted strictly in accordance with the dictates of our consciences and duty, let us make ourselves right before God and man, that we may be prepared for every event that may transpire. Let the work of building temples and houses of worship go on; let Israel continue to educate their children and bring them up in the fear of the Lord, and let the Gospel still be carried to the nations afar, and Israel be gathered and the people always be found moving on as the purposes of God continue to be fulfilled. Do not stand still and expect to see the salvation of God, but move on so long as there is a step to be made in the direction that he has commanded, and then see the salvation of the Almighty. This is the work of God, and he is directing its course and progress in the earth, and this work should ever be uppermost in our minds; and so long as we are found in the path of duty we can surely remain fixed and unmoved and determined in our purpose, and thus exhibit to the world our faith and devotion to the principles of truth which God has revealed, as did the Saints when they were driven from their homes as recorded in the history of the Church. And because of this exhibition of faith God blessed us wonderfully and miraculously after we had passed through the trials which followed in the accomplishment of this work, trials which seemed indeed to the world almost unbearable. However we regard those afflictions, they were not so very disagreeable. When the three Hebrew children, for instance, had been brought to a certain position, cast into the fiery furnace because of their undying faith and integrity, they could not after all perhaps have been placed in more pleasing and agreeable circumstances. A holy being, it is said, appeared and walked with them, side by side in the midst of the flames; and so with Daniel under similar circumstances. Did they wait to see what God would do for them? No; it was "move on" with them. They knew that in the hands of their Master were held the issues of life and death, and that to die in Him is to live, live eternally, to go on, on to perfection until they should become even like unto Him; and having a living, an abiding faith, and a knowledge of the true and living God they were ready to live and they were ready to die for the truth. It was not with those men as it was with the children of Israel of whom I have read. They were in possession of

knowledge through the operation of the Holy Ghost which prepared them for any circumstances in which they might be placed. And so with regard to the Latter-day Saints: When compelled to sign over our property to the mob in Missouri, we were advised to disperse and mix up among the people and not attempt to gather together again; and yet under these circumstances the Lord moved upon the legislature of the State of Illinois to grant us a city charter in which there were favorable provisions that were not found in any other charter. And this was as he had told us he would do, namely, that he would soften the hearts of rulers from time to time that they should show favor to his people. I do not believe, as some do, that no good can come out from Nazareth. We talk sometimes rather harshly about some of the politicians of our country, and deservedly, too; but notwithstanding the illiberal and unjust policy they show towards us, I believe they can do us a great deal of good provided the Lord operates upon the hearts of ruling men, as he has done in the past, and as he will do in the future, which will result in their showing and granting us favors and blessings that many now little imagine.

[JD 23:153 – p.154, Lorenzo Snow, April 7th, 1882](#)

The circumstances under which we came to these mountain valleys are well known; they need not be recited now. After we had passed through the chastisement, the Lord moved upon our national government to bestow favors upon the people of God. They gave us what is called the Organic Act, a bill of rights as good as we could expect from their hands, and what was more, they conferred political favor upon our leader, our Prophet and President, Brigham Young, by making him Governor of the Territory. And who would have thought of such a thing? Any man that would have predicted such a thing at the time we were being driven from Missouri, would have been considered to say the least, an enthusiast. And besides that, one of our United States judges was a Mormon Elder; the Secretary of the Territory was also a Mormon Elder. And who, let me ask, did this? Was it the Congress or the President of the United States? Well, now, I would dislike very much to say anything that could be construed into ungratefulness on our part or in failing to recognize all the good that our nation has designed to do us, for we recognize it as our uncle, and sometimes it has been a pretty good uncle; but, notwithstanding, we see in all this the hand of our God, who through them, has wrought out this good and this deliverance for his people, while we are ready and willing to acknowledge an overruling Providence in the good that comes to us; and for one I am ever ready to acknowledge that good also can come out of Nazareth. We can certainly afford to suffer a little when at times we perceive magnanimity displayed towards us by our government, which has been the case in the past, and which I firmly believe will be in the future despite the pressure that is being brought to bear against us and the nature of the means that are being now employed.

[JD 23:154, Lorenzo Snow, April 7th, 1882](#)

The Lord moved upon rulers in former generations; he moved upon infidel kings to favor his people, and he is the same God now as then.

[JD 23:154 – p.155, Lorenzo Snow, April 7th, 1882](#)

We talk about the Edmunds bill, what it is going to do I do not pretend to say, neither do I think that its framers and abettors know what is going to come of it. One thing I have noticed, and that is that Congressmen themselves differ widely with regard to certain of its provisions; and that being the case it would perhaps, become us to wait and watch. But there is one singular feature about it relating to plural marriage. And about that allow me here to say, I happen to have some knowledge of it as a principle of revelation belonging to the religion we have espoused. I was personally acquainted with Joseph Smith during twelve or fourteen years and, of course, through him I first learned what I now know about that principle. And as to his being a man of truth and honor I, nor any one else that knew him, have any reason to question for a moment. But then I never went forth to preach the principles of this Gospel depending entirely upon any information I received through him or any other man; but I believed on his words, coming as they did to me as the words of truth, from an inspired man of God; and from that hour the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost which all men may receive and enjoy, has confirmed the truth of what he had told me, and it became knowledge to me of that nature which no

man can give or take away. And now, as there is good, more or less, to be found elsewhere, the Edmunds bill is not without its good; and, therefore, I say, let us accept the good and feel thankful therefor. That extraordinary bill legalizes the issue of plural marriage up to the 1st day of January, 1883. Now, who could have expected so much good to come out of Nazareth? Uncle Samuel is now and then a pretty good uncle after all. (Laughter). And, mark you, the framers of the Bill have been too considerate as to distinctly provide that the children thus legalized must be the offspring of marriages performed according to the rites and ceremonies of the sect known as the Latter-day Saints. In the language of the small boy I say, "good enough." (Laughter.) Now, if any of our Gentile friends have been indiscreet, or should hereafter be guilty of bigamy, their offspring of course are not so favored. (Laughter.) We ought to be thankful for this unexpected favor, and indeed I have no doubt we are. I really never expected that the law-makers of our nation would ever legalize plural marriages as performed for the last thirty years or more. If the Lord is able to do a thing of this kind through men who framed that strange and singular bill, our open and avowed enemies, what is he not able to do? What may we not expect if we remain faithful and true to the trust reposed in us?

[JD 23:155, Lorenzo Snow, April 7th, 1882](#)

The Lord very possibly may cause a heavy pressure to bear upon us, such as will require great sacrifice at the hands of his people. The question with us is, will we make that sacrifice? This work is the work of the Almighty, and the blessings we look for which have been promised, will come after we have proven ourselves and passed through the ordeal. I have no special word to this people that there is, or that there is not, before them a fiery ordeal through which they will be called to pass; the question with me is, am I prepared to receive and put to a right and proper use any blessing the Lord has in store for me in common with His people; or, on the other hand, am I prepared to make any sacrifice that he may require at my hands? I would not give the ashes of a rye straw for any religion that was not worth living for and that was not worth dying for; and I would not give much for the man that was not willing to sacrifice his all for the sake of his religion.

[JD 23:155, Lorenzo Snow, April 7th, 1882](#)

Well, I close my remarks by saying to one and all, Move on! move on, and see the salvation of the Lord, and not stand still. Amen.

Charles W. Penrose, June 4, 1882

REMARKS BY ELDER CHAS. W. PENROSE,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday, June 4, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

HOW TO FIND OUT GOD – HOW MAN MAY KNOW HIMSELF – NECESSITY OF DIVINE
REVELATION – HOW AND BY WHAT MEANS RECEIVED – TESTIMONY OF THE LATTER-DAY
SAINTS – THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF MAN – HIS MORTAL EXPERIENCE AND ITS
PURPOSE – THE FATE OF THE WICKED THE LOT OF THE RIGHTEOUS – ETERNAL LIFE AND

HOW IT MAY BE ATTAINED.

[JD 23:156, Charles W. Penrose, June 4, 1882](#)

It is written in the Scriptures, that "man by searching cannot find out God;" and the experience of all ages has proven the truth of this. We are living in an age of great intelligence, at a time when the wise things which have been said and written by sage, philosopher and prophet centuries ago can be read and reflected upon; and when men can bring to bear their own researches, their own experience and the facilities which they have for gaining information, upon the investigation of the subject of Deity; yet, we find that people who now live are as much at sea in regard to this matter as any people who lived in former times. If we take up the works of the wise men who live upon the earth in our times and read their remarks concerning God, we are forced to the conclusion that they, like the people for whom they write, know little or nothing of the subject upon which they touch.

[JD 23:156, Charles W. Penrose, June 4, 1882](#)

Many years ago certain divines of the Church of England, chosen for the purpose, endeavored to formulate a creed in which they tried to explain to the people what God is. And after making a number of very contradictory and foolish assertions, they came to the conclusion that God is "incomprehensible." Man, by searching cannot find out God, the only way whereby man can come to the knowledge of God is by communication from God, and if the people receive what he does communicate they may find out clearly and truthfully what he is, and what are his designs and purposes in relation to them.

[JD 23:156 – p.157, Charles W. Penrose, June 4, 1882](#)

"Man know thyself," is another saying; not in the Holy Scriptures, but just as good as though it were. Man cannot know himself, cannot comprehend himself any more than he can comprehend Deity by his own reflections. Unless the Creator who made him, and who comprehends what he was made for reveals it to him, he cannot comprehend even his own being. Who is there that understands the nature of that intelligent spirit which inhabits the tabernacle of man? A good surgeon can take the human body and dissect it; point out its various parts and their relation one to another, and name every bone and every muscle and every sinew and every nerve. But there is something even pertaining to the body, (leaving out the spiritual part of man) that gives the body life, which he cannot grasp or comprehend. The vital force that gives animation to the body is beyond his ken. And every man who has studied himself to any degree whatever, knows that there is something about himself besides the life of the body; that there is something superior to the body, and to that vital force which animates the human frame. How did that intelligent being get into his physical nature, and where did it come from? Did it come into existence with the earthly body, or did it exist before? When the common lot of humanity comes and we "shuffle off this mortal coil" and our bodies go into the ground, each part separating from the other, and the elements go back whence they came, does this spiritual, this intelligent being which inhabited the body still exist, or does that also separate into particles? Who knows of himself, and who can comprehend this by his own reflections? No man. Unless we get some information from the Being who made man, we cannot comprehend ourselves, much less can we of ourselves comprehend the Being that made us.

[JD 23:157 – p.158, Charles W. Penrose, June 4, 1882](#)

The inhabitants of the earth in the different ages have had a great many duties; they have formed ideas concerning God in their own minds, and they have worshipped that which seemed to them the clearest representation of Deity. Some of the idols which men have worshipped appear very foolish to us; they are no doubt indications of the low degree of development of the people who set them up as objects of worship. But here, in the 19th century, among people called Christians, we hear a great deal about God, the God of the Bible, the God that made man, the God that rules the universe, and when we inquire of the wisest men we have in Christendom in regard to this Being, they tell us that he is incomprehensible; they tell us that he is an

immaterial being whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere: that he has no body and no parts and no passions; that there is nothing which can represent him; there is nothing like him in the heavens above or in the earth beneath, and that man's mind cannot grasp anything about him. They say he is one, and yet he is three; that he is not three but is one. That there are the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost – three separate substances, and yet not three but only one. They say that one of these three beings without a body had a body; that one of the three parts of this partless being had both a body and parts, and that he, the Son, was in all things like the Father, and was also like us excepting that he was without sin, but had passions as we have. This is the result of the attempt on the part of the wise men of Christendom to find out God for themselves. It is impossible, and is so laid down in Holy Writ; "man by searching cannot find out God." The only way that can be relied upon whereby man can find out God is by obtaining information from the Almighty Himself. "Well," say the people, "but he does not communicate anything to any of the inhabitants of the earth." Why not? Has he not power to manifest Himself to mortals? Is He so great and mighty and so far above the human family that He cannot reveal Himself to humanity? "No. He used to do so hundreds of years ago." And why does he not do it now? "Because the day of revelation has gone by," they say. Who told them so? The fact is that for a long period the people have not been expecting to receive revelations from God. They have not sought for them and, therefore, have not obtained them. But we find in the Old Scriptures a promise something like this: "Return unto me and I will return unto you, saith the Lord: Even from the days of your fathers you have gone away from mine ordinances and have not kept them," you have "transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances and broken the everlasting covenant;" now "return unto me and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts."

[JD 23:158 – p.159, Charles W. Penrose, June 4, 1882](#)

We also find in the scriptures the declaration, that God changeth not, that he is "the same yesterday, to-day and forever." And we may reasonably infer that if God was a God of revelation hundreds of years ago, he is the same God of revelation to-day, only the people do not inquire of him, they do not seek unto him in the right way that they may obtain communications from him. The Apostle James declares, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed."

[JD 23:159, Charles W. Penrose, June 4, 1882](#)

It appears then that God may be approached; that we may ask of him, but if we do ask of him we must ask in faith. We must believe. If we do not believe we will not obtain. This principle of faith seems to be the means of approaching the Almighty. If we take up the Bible and read how the ancients received revelation, we find that they approached God by faith. And further, we learn that when God communicated anything to them they tried to carry it out in their practice; they tried to embody in their lives those instructions and communications. As Brother Bywater, who preceded me this afternoon, has quoted: "Fear God and keep his commandments. This is the whole duty of man." Those holy men of old, when they learned anything from God were willing to carry it out, no matter what the cost might be. God held communion with them by means of the Holy Ghost, which seems to be the natural means of communication between God and man.

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The word and will of God were revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Why should we not receive this blessing of heavenly communication in our day? As Latter-day Saints we have our names cast out as evil, simply because we believe in this doctrine of receiving communication from God. We are simple enough to believe that God will speak to people now if they will approach him in the right way. Men have borne testimony that they have received communication from above, and have made known the same to us; and having believed on their word and done exactly as they directed us, God has confirmed the truth of their words upon our hearts, with signs following. And now we can say ourselves we know that God lives, that he communicates to men; we know the channel of communication is opened up between the heavens and the

earth, and that the people of the nineteenth century, by taking a proper course and exercising faith in the right way, and being humble enough to carry into effect the commandments which the Lord gives when he does manifest himself unto them, can obtain communication from on high by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, by dreams and visions, and by the visible manifestation of God's power in the midst of his people.

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This is our testimony to the world, and it is for this that we are opposed; this is the ground work of the opposition applied to us in what is called the Christian world. For if the fact be admitted that the Latter-day Saints are the people of God and those who preside over them are the servants of God, that they receive communications from him, and that this is His Church, that would be to admit also that all other churches are the churches of men and not of Christ; that those who minister in them are not delegated of heaven and that the doctrines they teach are merely the doctrines and commandments of men. Thus our faith comes in contact with the established systems of Christendom.

JD 23:159, Charles W. Penrose, June 4, 1882

Now, the Lord has made known to us a few simple truths in regard to our being – who we are, where we came from, what we are here for, where we are going to, and what is to be our final destiny. These things in our minds are not mere articles of faith, they are not myths, they are not mere opinions or sentiments, but they are to us, to use the language of Brother Bywater, "absolute truths;" they have been revealed from the Almighty, and are his word to us and not the say-so of men. God has borne testimony of the truth of them in our own hearts; and to us they have become absolute truths. We are not left in doubt about them; they are to us facts as palpable as the fact of our existence.

JD 23:159, Charles W. Penrose, June 4, 1882

I have not time to dwell upon this subject, but I will mention two or three facts that God has made known to us, and will leave them for the reflection of the congregation. God has made known to us, in the first place, that we – the real beings, the intelligent spirits which are entabernacled in these mortal frames – are the offspring of Deity, the children of God, as much so as our bodies are the offspring of the children of men; that just as men and women are the sons and daughters of men, so far as their earthly bodies are concerned, so the spirits which inhabit these bodies are beings born of the Almighty God in the eternal worlds. This spark of intelligence that exists in the human form is stricken off from the eternal flame of Deity; the children of men are the offspring of God. And when Jesus told his disciples, in addressing the throne of grace, to say, "Our Father who art in heaven," he said that which was absolutely true, not in a spiritual or Methodistical sense, but as an absolute fact. God is our Father, and we are his sons and daughters. Our earthly bodies are framed in the image of God; they are framed to fit our spirits which are the offspring of God, which are therefore in his image, according to the law that every seed brings forth its own kind. A comprehension of the offspring of God will therefore lead to an understanding of God Himself.

JD 23:159 – p.160, Charles W. Penrose, June 4, 1882

These spiritual beings now sojourning upon the earth in mortal tabernacles, dwelt in the bosom of eternity and were with the Eternal Father "when the morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy" on beholding the organization of this earth. We were there and we joined in the heavenly chorus. Said the Apostle John: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." By that time we will be able to comprehend God, notwithstanding the assertion of the learned of the world to the contrary. We were sent down upon the earth to dwell for a time that we might learn the laws which govern this lower sphere, that we might have a portion of it framed as a body in which we should dwell, that in it and through it we might become acquainted with sin which is the transgression of law, and learn that only by obedience to law is happiness possible for the offspring of God; that only by obedience to eternal laws and wholesome regulations

can man be made happy in time and in eternity. And by becoming acquainted with darkness we can appreciate the light; by becoming acquainted with pain and sorrow we can appreciate perfect bliss and happiness; by coming in contact with death, and understanding it through experience we may comprehend the blessings of life, preparatory to an endless existence in the presence of the Father to dwell in perfect submission to his eternal laws. We are here for experience, and while we dwell in mortality there are lessons to be learned and that must be learned, if needs be through suffering. It is our privilege, while here in the school of experience and adversity, far from our ancient home, to struggle up to the light from whence we came, and by the power of the Holy Spirit to obtain a knowledge of the past, a comprehension of the present, and an unfoldment of the future; for "when the spirit of truth is come he shall guide you into all truth, and he shall take of the things of the Father and of the Son and show them unto you; he shall show you things to come, and shall bring to your remembrance things that are past, he shall give you knowledge of the present and shall unfold to you the future." This is the office of the Holy Ghost in bestowing its gifts and blessings upon men.

JD 23:160, Charles W. Penrose, June 4, 1882

Now we can learn our duty, we can learn what is the mind and will of God concerning us. The Lord has manifested a great many things to us while in mortality which has had the effect of stirring up the opposition of the world and the powers of darkness against us. This is a necessary experience as it tends to develop our being, and so long as we have this warfare to fight, if we carry out strictly the commandments of God, we shall have more present joy, more present satisfaction and more present pleasure than if we were in accord with the world, as we have the consciousness that we are doing what is right, and we also have the gratification of knowing that the Lord will plant our feet upon the rock of eternal truth and in his own time will bring us up to mingle and dwell with those who have overcome, and who move in a higher sphere of intelligence. Our duties are pointed out and made known to us as fast as we are prepared for them. We have the means whereby we can learn the will of God, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, as fast as we develop and grow up to the comprehension of higher truths; and in every man's heart who walks in the ways of life is this spirit prompting and directing, and encouraging him to refrain from evil.

JD 23:160 – p.161, Charles W. Penrose, June 4, 1882

After we have performed our mission upon the earth the spirit will be liberated from the body and will go to a place prepared for it, and that place will be according to the acts of the individual while dwelling in earthly life. The spirits of the wicked will gravitate together, while the righteous will go to their place in the paradise of God, where they rest from their labors. The wicked go to a place prepared for them, not however, a place of literal fire and brimstone as taught by some religious teachers, but a place where they will have a knowledge and remembrance of their wickedness, and at the same time be without a knowledge of the future; their condition will be a state of awful suspense, not knowing what their fate will be; while the righteous will dwell together, and having served and communed with God while tabernacling in the flesh, they will have closer communion in the spirit, and be prepared for the glorious reign to come. Then when the resurrection day shall dawn, the righteous, they that have been faithful, who have been planted in the likeness of Christ's death and raised in the likeness of his resurrection; having walked in his ways, and followed his example, will be brought forth in the morning of that great day; for the trumpet shall sound and the voice of Christ shall be heard, and they will come forth and stand erect again upon the earth in their own bodies, every part and particle restored to its proper part, making a whole and perfect frame; not a natural body, but a spiritual body; not a corruptible body, but an incorruptible body, made out of the same elements, purified and quickened by the power of God. And they will stand upon their feet again and enter into the presence of the Father, and be made like him. They will be in his perfect image and in his perfect likeness. And while eternal ages roll along they will pattern after the works of their Eternal Father; as he does, so will they do, and they will all work together in perfect harmony with celestial beings, one spirit pervading the whole.

JD 23:161 – p.162, Charles W. Penrose, June 4, 1882

I have briefly outlined a few ideas embodied in our religious faith and have not time to pursue the subject further; suffice it to say, that man is the offspring of God, and was born in another sphere; that he is only a sojourner upon the earth for a short time; that his destiny is to be made in every respect like the Father, possessing as he does an immortal, eternal spirit, which, in course of time, through obedience to the laws of life and salvation, will dwell in an immortal, eternal body, by means of which he will be in communion with all that is good and beautiful, great and glorious throughout the boundless universe, and he will be under the inspiration and direction of the Father, and in the presence of the Son and all holy beings who are like him. In respect to the rest of the children of men, they will each occupy that station for which they are fitted by their earthly acts. But to enter into the presence of God and enjoy a fullness of his glory and be associated with him in the government of the universe, there is but one path, one gate to enter in by, one place of salvation, and that is the Gospel of Jesus Christ as preached by himself when upon the earth and revealed anew in this our day; the systems that men have invented being ineffectual and powerless to save. All the sects of Christendom in that respect are like the sects of heathendom, they must pass away. What truth they have emanated from God, for all truth comes from Him; but their systems are organizations of men, and they, therefore, must all perish in their time and season, whilst the kingdom of God which is being set up on the earth will remain and continue to spread forth and prevail, until the whole earth is subdued to our Father and brought into complete subjection unto him; that it may be purified from evil and the dominion of sin which has invaded it for centuries, and that Satan and his hosts may be banished for ever from its pale, and this world be made radiant and glorious, transfigured, as the Savior was upon the mount, and come up among the worlds redeemed, refulgent in its own splendor, shining like the sun in the firmament. And the ransomed of the Lord will walk thereon, clothed in white raiment, rejoicing in the presence of the Eternal whom they will recognize again as their Father; for the past, now shut out by the veil of the flesh, will come back to them, and all their former history will return to their minds; those memories which were shut out by tabernacling in the flesh will come back again, and all their past experience upon the earth and in the spirit world will be fresh to their minds, never to fade away. Then will they comprehend God, being quickened in him and by him, dwelling in his presence and filled with the fullness of his glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Orson Pratt, September 6, 1880

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE ORSON PRATT,

Delivered at the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, September 6, 1880.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL IN THE LATTER DAYS – SIGNS PROMISED TO FOLLOW
BELIEVERS AS ANCIENTLY – THE GOSPEL IN FORCE UPON ALL THE WORLD – SINCERITY
NO EXCUSE FOR WILFUL DISOBEDIENCE – A POSITIVE PERSONAL TESTIMONY ATTAINABLE
THROUGH OBEDIENCE – UNAUTHORIZED ADMINISTRATIONS UNRECOGNIZED OF GOD –
NEW

In the year 1832 the Lord gave a revelation concerning the calling and sending forth of his servants, the missionaries, among the nations. I will read you a few paragraphs or verses in relation to their calling, commencing at the 64th verse of the revelation that was given on the 22nd day of September, 1832.

"Therefore, as I said unto mine Apostles I say unto you again, that every soul who believeth on your words, and is baptized by water for the remission of sins, shall receive the Holy Ghost; and these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name they shall do many wonderful works; in my name they shall cast out devils; in my name they shall heal the sick; in my name they shall open the eyes of the blind, and unstop the ears of the deaf; and the tongue of the dumb shall speak; and if any man shall administer poison unto them it shall not hurt them; and the poison of a serpent shall not have power to harm them." That is a very curious commission to be given in the nineteenth century of the Christian era to those that are called in our day; very curious. If Joseph Smith, through whom this revelation was given, was not called of God, the promises here made would not be fulfilled. On the other hand, if God is the author of this revelation, then all the world may prove for themselves the divinity of His word. An imposter would take very good care to so word his language in the promises that there would be a double meaning to them, and if they were not fulfilled in one sense they might perhaps be fulfilled according to a second interpretation, and thus he would escape the obloquy of being an imposter. But the Lord does not deal with the human family in this double kind of dealing. All his promises are yea and amen, plain, pointed, definite, no two meanings about them. Here we are told that inasmuch as the servants of God, the missionaries, should go forth "that every soul" – meaning every person among all people, languages, nations and tongues, – "who believeth in your words," – believeth on the testimony of these missionaries that go forth – "and is baptized by water for the remission of sins shall receive the Holy Ghost." Now can you make out two meanings to that? Or is there only one meaning? "They shall receive the Holy Ghost." And then in order that every soul in all the world might know whether they were true believers or not there were certain signs promised to them. "And these signs shall follow them that believe." Believe what? Believe in your words, the words of you missionaries. What shall they do? "In my name they shall do many wonderful works; in my name they shall cast out devils; in my name they shall heal the sick; in my name they shall open the eyes of the blind, and unstop the ears of the deaf; and the tongue of the dumb shall speak; and if any man administer poison unto them it shall not hurt them; and the poison of a serpent shall not have power to harm them." Is there anything indefinite in that? Does it say that these signs possibly may follow those that believe? Does it say perhaps you will receive the Holy Ghost, perhaps you may have power to heal the sick, perhaps you may have power to open the eyes of the blind, etc. No, that is not the language. Here is a definite promise made to them. To the missionaries alone? To whom was this promise made? To every soul in all the world that would believe and receive the testimony of these missionaries. Here we see something very similar to the commission that was given – and referred to by Brother Reid in his remarks – in the last chapter of Mark. The ancient-day servants of God were sent forth to all the world, to every creature, and the language of our Savior to them was that all, in every part of the earth that should believe their testimony should be saved. Then in order that there might be no mistake in regard to believers and unbelievers, he told them that certain signs should follow them that believe. Do you discover any difference between the former-day commission, 1800 years ago, and the latter-day commission? I do not discover the least difference between the two. Did the Lord verify and fulfill his promises to the former-day missionaries? He did. In the same last chapter of Mark we are told that the servants of God, the Apostles, went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. How did he confirm it? By fulfilling the promises in the last chapter of Mark, that they in all the world might know whether they were Gospel believers or not. Well, what was to become of all other sects that did not believe? They shall be damned, says the Savior. He did not say, "If you are sincere in your belief you will get into heaven whether you receive the message I sent you or not." He did not say, "If you come across any sincere people don't baptize them, don't try to get them to believe your message, for they will get into heaven anyway." They had only one proclamation to deliver to all people whether that people were sincere or insincere; whether that people worshipped idols or worshipped something else, whether they were infidels or whatever might be their profession, the commission was – tell them that if they do not believe your message they shall be damned. No

half way business about it, it was not half a commission. Does the latter-day commission testify of the same things? Let me read a little further. "Verily, verily I say unto you, they who believe not on your words, and are not baptized in water, in my name, for the remission of their sins, that they may believe the Holy Ghost, shall be damned, and shall not come into my Father's kingdom, where my Father and I am." Just the same as the ancient commission. It did not excuse the ancient commission; it did not excuse one person in all the world however sincere, whatever the profession might be, every man, every woman among all nations, kindreds and tongues, all were to be damned if they did not receive the message that these servants of God took to them. Just so it is in the latter-days. If it was anything else we would not believe it, we could not look upon it as divine. God only had one message for the people to receive, and all that received it were to be blessed, and all that would not receive it were to be damned. That is our charity, that is the charity of the ancient Apostles and servants of God, that is true charity. If we should come and tell you that you Protestants, and you Methodists, and you Baptists, and you Campbellites, and you Church of England members, and you Roman Catholics, that if you are only sincere you would all get to heaven we should have no charity for you; but when we come and tell you that if you do not repent of your sins – you Catholics, Protestants, and all other denominations – and receive the message that God has commissioned his servants to declare in your hearing that every one will be damned. This is true charity, just as it was in the ancient days. But is this in force upon all people, says one? Yes; we will read the next verse. "And this revelation unto you and commandment, is in force from this very hour upon all the world, and the Gospel is unto all who have not received it. It is a witness unto all nations that they may receive the truth and be prepared for the great day of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord, in relation to sending this mission forth among the inhabitants of the earth, did not desire that the people should have any dubiety upon their minds. He did not want them to hope merely that they were right and to be all the time trembling and quivering for fear they were not right; but in order that they might be sure, as the ancient believers were, he tells every soul that will receive this work that these signs shall follow them.

JD 23:165 – p.166, Orson Pratt, September 6, 1880

Now, then, here in this house, probably are many hundreds of believers that have manifested their faith by receiving the message of the Gospel, and they have further manifested their faith by gathering out from the various nations and coming here to Utah Territory. They are believers. Is there any chance for them to doubt? How can you doubt if you yourself heal the sick, cast out devils, open the eyes of the blind, or cause the lame to leap? If you yourselves have received the Holy Ghost, and these signs are following you, is not this a testimony that you are Gospel believers? And if these signs do not follow you, on the other hand, you know that you are not Gospel believers. No dubiety, no uncertainty, no hanging our heads down and doubting whether we are believers or not. Here is an undoubted testimony to every Latter-day Saint that if they are true Gospel believers these signs shall follow them, and if these signs do not follow them they are not true Gospel believers. Does this apply not only to Latter-day Saints but to all people? Yes. If the Methodists want to know whether they are true Gospel believers let them ask themselves the question if the signs follow them that are promised to believers; if they do not, they know they are not Gospel believers. So with the Presbyterians, so with the Baptists, so with every Christian denomination under the whole heavens. They can all prove themselves by the word of God; they can all know whether they are true believers according to the true Christian religion, or whether they have false hopes – merely something that is leading them along in a crooked path. When people have the signs they have a good foundation for their hopes; their hopes are built upon something that is like a rock; they stand firm and steadfast. But when they have not the signs and the promises are not fulfilled to them, where are their hopes? They are gone, they are the hopes of those that are flattering themselves they are Christians when they are not. And they are afraid to compare themselves with the New Testament and the Gospel contained therein; they are afraid to come to the light of the Gospel; they are afraid to read the promises of Jesus, or if they happen to read them exclaim, "We must do away with these. It won't do for us to acknowledge that the promises of God made to believers can be enjoyed in our day." Let us read the first promise in the last chapter of Mark. Not only were these signs promised, but Jesus said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Do you Christians believe that you will be saved? Do the various denominations among the four hundred millions of Christians in America, in Europe, and in other parts of the earth – do these four hundred millions of Christians expect to be saved? Oh, yes. What makes you think so? You don't have the signs which follow the believers, and how

can you hope for salvation? Why should you hope for it? Why expect to be saved in the kingdom of God? The promises are made to believers, they were not made to those that have not the signs. One promise was just as sacred as the other, and if you have not the signs of believers you have not the promise of salvation. Very curious Gospel, says one. Well, there is no mistaking that gospel, we can all of us know on what ground we are placed. If we cannot obtain the promises made to the people anciently, namely the signs, how shall we obtain the greater promise of eternal life and salvation in the world to come? Surely if the people cannot have faith to get the little promises, how can they expect to get the greater promise? All their faith is foolishness, their faith is all founded upon sand, and they go blindfold to the other side of the veil to wake up and find they never had received the Gospel. But, says one, we have received the Gospel. Our ministers have preached it long and loud generations before "Mormonism" came upon the earth; we and our fathers have heard it. It is one thing to hear the Gospel as recorded in the New Testament, and another thing to enjoy the blessings of it. It is one thing to read about people receiving the Holy Ghost, and it is another thing for you to be baptized and receive the Holy Ghost. It is one thing to be baptized by a man holding authority from God who has the right to baptize, and another thing to be baptized by one holding no authority from God, and no right to baptize. Do you suppose that the signs would follow those that had the ordinance of baptism administered by a man that had no authority. No. For instance there is the Methodist baptizer, the Presbyterian baptizer, and the baptizers of the various religious denominations – most of them baptize, some of them for the remission of sins, and some because they suppose their converts have already received a remission of sins. Perhaps they may perform the ordinance by immersion – the true mode of baptism; but can an unauthorized man baptize his neighbor and that be called baptism in the sight of heaven? No. A man that is not called of God, a man that has no revelation, and says there has been none since the close of the first century of the christian era, all his administrations are as invalid as it would be for a heathen priest to baptize you, or for any person upon the face of the whole earth to come and baptize you. Such baptisms are not good; they are illegal; they are unlawful; they are not accepted of God unless the administrator is a true servant of God, and if he be a true servant of God, the signs will follow him, and if the signs do not follow him he has no authority to baptize. No wonder then that four hundred millions of people have been without the signs. There has been nobody authorized to baptize them to begin with. A true believer is a man that receives the ordinances, and not only believes in them but manifests his faith by his works. He obeys the ordinances and the blessings follow. The blessings do not follow the four hundred millions because they have not obeyed, and they cannot obey without there is a man authorized to administer the ordinances.

[JD 23:166 – p.167 – p.168, Orson Pratt, September 6, 1880](#)

Well, says one, what do you Latter-day Saints say about the authority to administer these ordinances? We say, and have said from the beginning of this Church, that the Lord God Almighty, who sits upon His throne in yonder heavens, has spoken again to the inhabitants of the earth. He has called by name his servants. He has sent forth angels in glory from his holy presence, and they have administered the authority of the apostleship, and bestowed it upon the heads of men to administer again among the children of men in all the ordinances of the Gospel. This is our testimony. Has it ever been that since the rise of the Church? It has. We never have varied from that testimony. What further do we say? We say that among all people, nations, kindreds and tongues, Christians, heathens, Mahommedans, and the savages upon the islands of the sea – that among all these nations there is no authority, not one person among all their denominations that has the least particle of right to baptize you, or to administer the sacrament, or to lay on hands that you may be baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, according to the ancient pattern and order of things; not one of them; they are all powerless, they are all without authority, without revelation, without any knowledge that comes from God direct to themselves in this age. No man among them has been called of God, as was Aaron. Everybody knows that Aaron was called by new revelation. He did not have to go back to revelations given 1800 years before he was born to tell him how God commissioned somebody before the flood; he did not have to do that; but says he, "I have been ordained" – how? – By a revelation from God. "Moses set apart Aaron. He is thy brother. I call him by name. Set him apart to the Priesthood, ordain him, let him be clothed upon with priestly garments, let him administer and his administration I will accept." This was the substance of the revelation, and calling and commission that was given to Aaron, the servant of God. Is it true what Paul said, that no man can take the honor of the Priesthood to himself unless he was called of God as was Aaron? If that be true there

must be more revelation in order that there may be a calling. You that say the canon of scripture is full, that no more scripture has been given since John the Revelator left the earth, what becomes of your callings? You have none – that is, that are divine. No wonder, then, that while the world were wandering in darkness without God, without any true knowledge from the heavens direct to themselves, without the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, without the organization of any true church, without prophets, without revelators, without inspired men – no wonder that God has again commissioned an angel from the heavens to begin the work on the earth. Brother Reid spoke during his discourse about Joseph the Prophet – how he was called, that the Lord appeared to him, that Jesus appeared to him, and that angels appeared to him and conferred upon him authority and power. There is no wonder that the Lord should send his angels and thus appear in order to begin the work on the earth where so much darkness reigns. It is called a day of Gospel light by these four hundred millions of people. A day of Gospel light! Well, all the Gospel light they have is the history of a Gospel preached 1800 years ago. They have no power to administer in it. They have the history of something, without any power to partake of it; that is, you cannot be baptized, you cannot receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, you cannot receive the Lord's Supper for want of administrators; but can read about it, you can read how the authority was once on the earth. That is some satisfaction, is it not? How much satisfaction I do not know. It is something like the case of a man who, after traveling a long journey, arrived at a place where he knew there was a splendidly spread table. But the door was locked and the key was lost – nobody could introduce him to that table to eat that he might appease his hunger. How very satisfactory it must be to that man to know the history of such a good spread table, and yet no power to get to the table. Just so it is with these four hundred millions of Christians. It is so much satisfaction to read how the believers in ancient days were baptized by one holding authority to baptize, and how they could distinguish themselves from unbelievers; but, alas, say they, "We cannot partake of it; no blessings of the Gospel for us; no one to let us receive the same Gospel. We would like to feast like unto the ancient Saints, but is it not enough – our priests say it is – to know how others enjoyed these blessings?" Now that is precisely the situation of this generation.

JD 23:168, Orson Pratt, September 6, 1880

This is true charity. If I were to come and tell you that you are all in the right path inasmuch as you are honest and sincere, and walk in your various doctrines and principles, it would be false charity, it would be flattering you to walk in paths that were wrong, it would be flattering you that you had hopes of salvation when you had none. But we do not do this. This flattery we leave to other portions of the world, we leave that to the Christian denominations that are without any of the powers and gifts of the ancient Gospel. Let them flatter, let them occupy this position, let them have this false charity; but as for us we have the plain naked truth – plain as words can make it – to tell unto all people, namely, if you will believe and receive the Gospel you shall be blessed, not with common-place blessings, but with the supernatural gifts of the Gospel, and on the other hand that every soul of you that do not receive it shall be damned. Amen.

Joseph F. Smith, June 18, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday, June 18, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

MAN A MORTAL AND AN IMMORTAL BEING – TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL
DEATH – REDEMPTION THROUGH THE ATONEMENT AND GOSPEL OF CHRIST – SONS OF
PERDITION – MAN'S PRE-EXISTENT, DISEMBODIED AND RESURRECTED STATES – JESUS
CHRIST THE GREAT EXAMPLE – THE RIGHTEOUS TO BE CONFORMED TO HIS IMAGE – HIS
SIMILARITY TO THE FATHER – HIS MISSION NOT COMPLETED AT HIS DEATH – HIS
RESURRECTION AND THE REDEMPTION OF HUMANITY.

JD 23:169 – p.170 – p.171 – p.172, Joseph F. Smith, June 18, 1882

We are called mortal beings because in us are the seeds of death, but in reality we are immortal beings because there is also within us the germ of eternal life. Man is a dual being, composed of the spirit which gives life, force, intelligence and capacity to man, and the body which is the tenement of the spirit and is suited to its form, adapted to its necessities, and acts in harmony with and to its utmost capacity yields obedience to the will of the spirit. The two combined constitute the soul. The body is dependent upon the spirit, and the spirit during its natural occupancy of the body is subject to the laws which apply to and govern it in the mortal state. In this natural body are the seeds of weakness and decay, which, when fully ripened or untimely plucked up, in the language of scripture, is called "the temporal death." The spirit is also subject to what is termed in the scriptures and revelations from God, "spiritual death." The same as that which befell our first parents, when through disobedience and transgression, they became subject to the will of Satan, and were thrust out from the presence of the Lord and became spiritually dead, which the Lord says, "is the first death, even that same death which is the last death, which is spiritual, which shall be pronounced upon the wicked when I shall say, Depart, ye cursed!" And the Lord further says, "But, behold I say unto you, that I the Lord God gave unto Adam and unto his seed, that they should not die as to the temporal death until I the Lord God should send forth angels to declare unto them repentance and redemption (from the first death) through faith on the name of mine only begotten Son. And thus did I, the Lord God, appoint unto man the days of his probation, that by his natural death he might be raised in immortality unto eternal life, even as many as would believe, and they that believe not unto eternal damnation, for they cannot be redeemed from their spiritual fall because they repent not." From the natural death, that is the death of the body, and also from the first death, "which is spiritual" there is redemption through belief on the name of the "only Begotten Son," in connection with repentance and obedience to the ordinances of the Gospel, declared by holy angels, for if one "believes," he must also obey; but from the "second death," even that same death which is the first death, "which is spiritual," and from which man may be redeemed through faith and obedience, and which will again be pronounced upon the wicked when God shall say, "depart ye cursed," there is no redemption, so far as light on this matter has been revealed. It is written that "all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men who receive me and repent; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven unto men." If men will not repent and come unto Christ, through the ordinances of His Gospel, they cannot be redeemed from their spiritual fall, but must remain forever subject to the will of Satan and the consequent spiritual darkness or death into which our first parents fell, subjecting all their posterity thereto, and from which none can be redeemed but by belief or faith on the name of the "only Begotten Son" and obedience to the laws of God. But, thanks be to the Eternal Father, through the merciful provisions of the Gospel all mankind will have the opportunity of escape or deliverance from this spiritual death either in time or in eternity, for not until they are freed from the first can they become subject unto the second death, still if they repent not "they cannot be redeemed from their spiritual fall," and will continue subject to the will of Satan, the first spiritual death, so long as "they repent not." I have been speaking of those who repent not, and thereby reject Christ and His Gospel, but what of those who do believe, repent of their sins, obey the Gospel, enter into its covenants, receive the keys of the Priesthood and the knowledge of the truth by revelation and the gift of the Holy Ghost, and afterwards turn away wholly from that light and knowledge? They "become a law unto themselves," and "will to abide in sin," of such it is written, "Whoso breaketh this covenant after he hath received it, and

altogether turneth therefrom shall not have forgiveness in this world nor in the world to come." And again – "Thus saith the Lord concerning all those who know my power and who have been made partakers thereof, and suffered themselves, through the power of the devil to be overcome and to deny the truth and defy my power – they are they who are the sons of perdition of whom I say that it had been better for them never to have been born, for they are vessels of wrath doomed to suffer the wrath of God with the devil and his angels in eternity; concerning whom I have said there is no forgiveness in this world nor in the world to come; having denied the Holy Spirit after having received it, and having denied the only Begotten Son of the Father, having crucified him unto themselves and put him to an open shame." Now, there is a difference between this class and those who simply repent not and reject the Gospel in the flesh. Of these latter it is written, "they shall be brought forth by the resurrection of the dead through the triumph and the glory of the Lamb," and "shall be redeemed in the due time of the Lord after the sufferings of his wrath." But of the others it is said, "they shall not be redeemed," for "they are the only ones on whom the second death shall have any power." The others never having been redeemed from the first, cannot be doomed to the second death, or in other words, cannot be made to suffer eternally the wrath of God, without hope of redemption through repentance, but must continue to suffer the first death until they repent, and are redeemed therefrom through the power of the atonement and the Gospel of salvation, thereby being brought to the possession of all the keys and blessings to which they will be capable of attaining or to which they may be entitled, through the mercy, justice and power of the ever-living God, or on the other hand forever remain bound in the chains of spiritual darkness, bondage and banishment from his presence, kingdom and glory. The "temporal death" is one thing, and the "spiritual death" is another thing. The body may be dissolved and become extinct as an organism, although the elements of which it is composed are indestructible or eternal, but I hold it as self-evident that the spiritual organism is an eternal, immortal being, destined to enjoy eternal happiness and a fullness of joy, or suffer the wrath of God, and misery – a just condemnation, eternally. Adam became spiritually dead, yet he lived to endure it until freed therefrom by the power of the atonement, through repentance, etc. Those upon whom the second death shall fall, will live to suffer and endure it, but without hope of redemption. The death of the body or natural death is but a temporary circumstance to which all were subjected through the fall and from which all will be restored or resurrected by the power of God, through the atonement of Christ.

[JD 23:172 – p.173, Joseph F. Smith, June 18, 1882](#)

Man existed before he came to this earth, and he will exist after he passes from it; and will continue to live throughout the countless ages of eternity.

[JD 23:173, Joseph F. Smith, June 18, 1882](#)

There are three classes of beings, or rather man exists in three separate conditions before and after his probation upon this earth – first in the spirit or pre-existent state, second in the disembodied state, the condition which exists after the dissolution of the body and spirit until the resurrection takes place, and third in the resurrected state. For instance, some fourteen hundred years before the coming of Christ into the world to sojourn in the flesh, he showed himself to the brother of Jared and said, "Behold, this body, which ye now behold, it the body of my spirit, and man have I created after the body of my spirit; and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit, will I appear unto my people in the flesh." He further declared, "Behold I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people. Behold I am Jesus Christ." Here "Jesus showed himself unto this man in the spirit, even after the manner and in the likeness of the same body, even as he shewed himself unto the Nephites" – that is prior to his coming in the flesh. This I consider typical of the first condition of all spirits. Again it is written, "for Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit, by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water," etc. Thus we see that while the body of our Savior slept in the tomb, He went in the spirit, and preached His glorious Gospel to "the spirits in prison," who were disobedient in the days of Noah, and were destroyed in the flesh by the flood. This was their second condition or state in the spirit awaiting the resurrection of their bodies which were slumbering in death. "Marvel not at this," saith Jesus,

"for the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his (the Redeemer's) voice and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." In reference to the third condition or state we will refer to the account given of the risen Redeemer before his ascension. John tells us that he appeared unto his disciples three times after his resurrection, on which occasions he ate bread, broiled fish and honeycomb, and opened the eyes of their understanding, that they began to comprehend the Scriptures and the prophecies concerning Christ. But when he appeared unto them "they were terrified and affrighted and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet that it is I myself; handle me and see me; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." Here is presented the true type of the resurrected being. And after this manner are all those who have their resurrected bodies, and there are many of these, for we are told in the scriptures, that, "the graves were opened, and many bodies of the Saints which slept arose and came out of the graves, after his resurrection, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many." This class of beings dwell in heaven, or in the paradise of the just, having been counted worthy to come forth in the first resurrection, even with Christ, to dwell with him and to be associates with and members of the kingdom of God and his Christ. These comprise the three conditions or estates of man in heaven. Not all, however, of the disembodied spirits enjoy the same privileges, exaltation and glory. The spirits of the wicked, disobedient, and unbelieving are denied the privileges, joy and glory of the spirits of the just and the good. The bodies of the Saints will come forth in the first resurrection, and those of the unbelieving, etc., in the second or last. In other words, the Saints will rise first, and those who are not Saints will not rise until afterwards, according to the wisdom, justice and mercy of God.

[JD 23:173, Joseph F. Smith, June 18, 1882](#)

Christ is the great example for all mankind, and I believe that mankind were as much foreordained to become like him, as that he was foreordained to be the Redeemer of man. Whom God did foreknow – and whom did he not foreknow? "He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." It is very plain, that mankind are very far from being like Christ, as the world is to-day, only in form of person. In this we are like him, or in the form of his person, as he is the express image of His Father's person. We are therefore in the form of God, physically, and may become like him spiritually, and like him in the possession of knowledge, intelligence, wisdom and power.

[JD 23:173, Joseph F. Smith, June 18, 1882](#)

The grand object of our coming to this earth is that we may become like Christ, for if we are not like him, we cannot become the sons of God, and be joint heirs with Christ.

[JD 23:173, Joseph F. Smith, June 18, 1882](#)

The man who passes through this probation, and is faithful, being redeemed from sin by the blood of Christ, through the ordinances of the Gospel, and attains to exaltation in the kingdom of God, is not less but greater than the angels, and if you doubt it read your Bible, for there it is written that the Saints shall "judge angels," and also they shall "judge the world." And why? Because the resurrected, righteous man has progressed beyond the pre-existent or disembodied spirits, and has risen above them, having both spirit and body as Christ has, having gained the victory over death and the grave, and having power over sin and Satan, in fact having passed from the condition of the angel to that of a God. He possesses keys of power, dominion and glory that the angel does not possess – and cannot possess without gaining them in the same way that he gained them, which will be by passing through the same ordeals and proving equally faithful. It was so ordained when the morning stars sang together, before the foundations of this earth were laid. Man in his pre-existent condition is not perfect, neither is he in the disembodied estate. There is no perfect estate but that of the risen Redeemer, which is God's estate, and no man can become perfect except he becomes like them. And what are they like? I have shown what Christ is like, and he is like his Father, but I will refer to an undoubted authority to this people, on this point, "The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's, the Son also, but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of spirit; were it

not so the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us." Doc. and Cov., Sec. 130. There is not time to refer to the many scriptural passages which might be cited in proof of these important facts, enough already has been referred to, to place the matter beyond a doubt.

JD 23:173 – p.174, Joseph F. Smith, June 18, 1882

It is believed by many in the Christian world, that our Savior finished his mission when he expired upon the cross, and his last words on the cross, as given by the Apostle John – "it is finished," are frequently quoted as evidence of the fact; but this is an error. Christ did not complete his mission upon the earth until after his body was raised from the dead. Had his mission been completed when he died, his disciples would have continued fishermen, carpenters, etc., for they returned to their several occupations soon after the crucifixion, not yet knowing the force of their holy calling, nor understanding the mission assigned them by their Master, whose name would soon have been buried with his body in the grave to perish and be forgotten, "for as yet they knew not the scripture that He must rise again from the dead." But the most glorious part of his mission had to be accomplished after the crucifixion and death of his body. When on the first day of the week some of the disciples went to the tomb with certain preparations for the body of their Lord, they were met there by two men clothed in "shining garments," who said unto them, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here but is risen. Remember how He spoke unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified, and the third day rise again." And not until then did the disciples remember these words of the Savior, or begin to understand their meaning. Why were they thus forgetful, and seemingly ignorant of all they had been taught by the Savior respecting the objects of his mission to the earth? Because they lacked one important qualification, they had not yet been "endowed with power from on high." They had not yet obtained the gift of the Holy Ghost. And the presumption is, they never would have received this important and essential endowment had Christ's mission been completed at the time of his death. It may seem strange to some who may not have reflected on this matter fully, that the disciples of Christ were without the gift of the Holy Ghost until after his resurrection. But so it is written, notwithstanding the Savior on one occasion declared, "blessed art thou Simon, etc., for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." While Jesus was with them he was their light and their inspiration. They followed him by sight, and felt the majestic power of his presence, and when these were gone they returned to their nets and to their various occupations and to their homes saying, "we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel, but the chief priests and our rulers have delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him." No wonder that Jesus exclaimed unto some of them, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have written."

JD 23:174 – p.175, Joseph F. Smith, June 18, 1882

If the Disciples had been endowed with the "gift of the Holy Ghost," or "with power from on high," at this time, their course would have been altogether different from this as the sequel abundantly proved. If Peter, who was the chief Apostle, had received the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the power and testimony thereof prior to the terrible night on which he cursed and swore and denied his Lord, the result would have been very different with him, for then he would have sinned against "light and knowledge," and "against the Holy Ghost," for which there is no forgiveness. The fact, therefore, that he was forgiven, after bitter tears of repentance, is an evidence that he was without the witness of the Holy Ghost, never having received it. The other disciples or apostles of Christ were precisely in the same condition, and it was not until the evening of the day on which Jesus came out of the grave, that he bestowed upon them this inestimable gift. John gives a careful description of this important event which concludes as follows: "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you; as my Father sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this he breathed on them and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them," etc. This was their glorious commission, and now were they prepared to receive the witness of the Spirit – even the testimony of Jesus Christ. Yet they were told to "tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high," which they did. Jesus further told them that if he went not away the "Comforter" – that is the Holy Ghost – would not come unto them, but if he went away he would "send him," and he it was who should testify of Christ, and of the Father, and bring to their remembrance "all things whatsoever" he had

commanded or taught them, and it should "lead them into all truth." Thus we see that the resurrection from the dead, not only of Christ but of all mankind, in the due time of the Lord; the endowment of the Apostles with the Holy Ghost, and their glorious commission from Christ, being sent out by him as he was sent by the Father; the opening of the eyes of the disciples to understand the prophecies of the Scriptures, and many other things did Jesus after he cried out upon the cross, "it is finished." Further, the mission of Jesus will be unfinished until he redeems the whole human family, except the sons of perdition, and also this earth from the curse that is upon it, and both the earth and its inhabitants can be presented to the Father redeemed, sanctified and glorious.

[JD 23:175, Joseph F. Smith, June 18, 1882](#)

Things upon the earth, so far as they have not been perverted by wickedness, are typical of things in heaven. Heaven was the prototype of this beautiful creation when it came from the hand of the Creator, and was pronounced "good."

[JD 23:175, Joseph F. Smith, June 18, 1882](#)

Much might be said in continuation of this subject, but I see that my time has expired. Amen.

John Taylor, July 24, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered at the Funeral Services of Bishop Reuben Miller,

at Mill Creek, Monday, July 24, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE DEATH OF THE FAITHFUL NO CAUSE FOR MOURNING – THE PERPETUITY OF THE
PRIESTHOOD – PROBATIONARY INGRESS AND EGRESS – ALL KNOWLEDGE COMES FROM
GOD – TEMPLE-BUILDING AND ITS PURPOSES – EXHORTATIONS TO THE SAINTS.

[JD 23:175, John Taylor, July 24, 1882](#)

I thought I would come here to-day to mingle my condolence and sympathy with yours while paying the last token of respect to the remains of your husband, your father, your friend, your Bishop.

[JD 23:175 – p.176, John Taylor, July 24, 1882](#)

These are occasions that cause us to feel sorrowful, and yet we should not sorrow at the departure of a good man – a highminded, honorable man, a good Latter-day Saint, as I have always esteemed Bishop Miller to be. I am told that many of you were not born when Brother Miller was first installed Bishop; that there are only two women, of whom his wife is one, and three men that are now living in the Ward when he was first ordained Bishop here; and that he has during his bishopric blessed, when children, a great many of the

congregation assembled here to-day.

[JD 23:176, John Taylor, July 24, 1882](#)

When a man who has been faithful and true leaves the world to go into another state of existence, what is there to mourn for? Should his family mourn? No. They cannot help the natural feelings of sympathy that well up in the heart at the departure of their friends; wives cannot help having sympathy for their husbands, and husbands for their wives, parents for their children, and children for their parents. The family of Brother Miller have lost a good husband, a loving father, a faithful friend, and under such circumstances they mourn when they are deprived of his society and his counsel.

[JD 23:176, John Taylor, July 24, 1882](#)

When men leave this earth they leave it to occupy another sphere in another state of existence. And if, as is the case with Brother Miller, they hold the Priesthood that administers in time and in eternity, having fulfilled this part, as many others have done who have left the world, and as our deceased brother has done, they hold that Priesthood in the eternal worlds, and operate in it there. It is an everlasting Priesthood, that administers in time and in eternity. And the Gospel that we have received unfolds to us principles of which we were heretofore entirely ignorant. It shows us the relationship that exists between God and man, and it shows us the relationship that exists between men who have dwelt upon the earth before and those who exist to-day. It shows that while God has revealed the Priesthood to us upon the earth and conferred upon us those privileges, that in former generations he revealed the same Priesthood to other men, and that those men holding that Priesthood ministered to others here upon the earth; and that we are operating with them and they with us in our interests and in the interests of the Church and kingdom of God, in assisting to build up the Zion of God, and in seeking to establish truth and righteousness upon the earth; and that there is a connecting link between the Priesthood in the heavens and the Priesthood upon the earth.

[JD 23:176 – p.177, John Taylor, July 24, 1882](#)

God, our heavenly Father, has gathered unto himself, through the atonement of Jesus Christ, very many great and honorable men who have lived upon the earth, and who have been clothed with the powers of the Priesthood. Those men having held that Priesthood and administered in it upon the earth are now in the heavens operating with the Priesthood in the heavens in connection with the Priesthood that exists now upon the earth. Consequently I do not feel sorrowful when I see a good man go, and yet in some respects I do. There is something painful about the separation. But I look upon it a good deal as it was with us when we were coming to this land. Said you to your friends when they were leaving: "Thomas, Mary, James or William, you are going away to Zion; I am sorry to see you go, and yet I am glad you are going." We feel sorry to part with our friends; but when the struggle is over, when they have battled with the world and the powers of darkness, and by the Spirit and power of God have overcome and triumphed, having remained true and faithful to the last and have gone to join the hosts in the eternal worlds, to associate with the eternal Priesthood that exists there, do we feel to mourn? No, I do not; there is no cause to mourn; it is a cause of rejoicing. By and by we shall follow; for we expect to mingle with them.

[JD 23:177, John Taylor, July 24, 1882](#)

A few days ago I attended the funeral of one of my wives; and while doing so I looked upon the great city of the dead. I thought to myself, here are thousands of honorable men and women who are sleeping the sleep of peace, who have served their God, and who have got through with the affairs of this world; and that while their bodies are decaying here, their spirits are soaring in the heavens. Do I feel sorry for them? No, they have gone to rest, and all is peace with them, according to the mind and will of God in relation to those matters, He having appointed unto man that he must die.

[JD 23:177, John Taylor, July 24, 1882](#)

Since the organization of the world myriads have come and have taken upon themselves bodies, and they have passed away, generation after generation, into another state of existence. And it is so to-day. And I suppose while we are mourning the loss of our friend, others are rejoicing to meet him behind the veil; and while he has left us, others are coming into the world at the same time, and probably in this our territory. There is a continuous change, and ingress of beings into the world and an egress out of it. As near as my memory serves me, from one-third to one-fourth of our population to-day are children under eight years of age. There are thousands of men upon the earth to-day, among the Saints of God, of whom it was decreed before they came that they should occupy the positions they have occupied and do occupy, and many of them have performed their part and gone home; others are left to still fulfill the duties and responsibilities devolving upon them.

[JD 23:177, John Taylor, July 24, 1882](#)

I was remarkably struck on looking at the three mottoes before me, one is, Holiness to the Lord, which I suppose was placed there by your late Bishop. There is something beautiful and glorious in the contemplation. And when I heard Brother Gardiner speak about his visits with Brother Miller to talk over the things of the kingdom of God, it indicated to me that his heart and feelings were interested in it, as well as interested in the welfare of the county, as others have testified of. We should all have those feelings, not only Bishops and Presidents but all the people ought to be interested in one another's welfare. Our welfare and happiness depends upon our obedience to the laws of God, upon our conduct before him in all our acts. We wish to have inscribed not only in our meetinghouse, but in our hearts and acts, Holiness to the Lord, God is my God, God is my Father, God is my friend; and I wish to devote and dedicate myself unto Him, ought to be the feeling of every man and woman, and especially of every Latter-day Saint. Let there be no act of my life, no principle that I embrace, that shall be at variance with these words which were first inscribed by the Almighty, and prophesied of that it should come to pass in the last days, that even upon the bells of the horses should be written "Holiness to the Lord." That is not in name only, but it is to be written on the tablets of our hearts, as with a pen of iron, for when this principle shall become universal, righteousness will extend "from the rivers to the ends of the earth."

[JD 23:177 – p.178, John Taylor, July 24, 1882](#)

Then, here is another motto: "Thy kingdom come." All these things are full of meaning and interest. This was taught by Jesus to his disciples when they came to him, saying, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples. Said he, "When you pray, say, Our Father, who art in heaven." Who? Our Father. What, my Father and your Father? Yes; and the God and Father of the spirits of all flesh. Our Father who art in heaven; hallowed be Thy name. Let me reverence Thee, O God, in all my doings, in all my acts, in all my proceedings, in all my associations with men and with the Church and kingdom of God and with the world – let me always reverence Thee. Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. What kingdom? What is the meaning of "thy kingdom come?" It means the rule of God; it means the law of God; it means the government of God; it means the people who have listened to and who are willing to listen to and observe the commands of Jehovah; and it means that there is a God who is willing to guide and direct and sustain his people. Thy kingdom come, that thy government may be established, and the principles of eternal truth as they exist in the heavens may be imparted to men; and that, when they are imparted to men, those men may be in subjection to those laws and to that government, and live in the fear of God, keeping his commandments and being under his direction. Thy kingdom come; that the confusion, the lasciviousness and corruption, the evil and wickedness, the murder and bloodshed that now exist among mankind may be done away, and the principles of truth and right, the principles of kindness, charity and love as they dwell in the bosom of the Gods, may dwell with us.

[JD 23:178 – p.179, John Taylor, July 24, 1882](#)

"Thy will be done." Not my will, not my desires, not my wishes. I do not know, you do not know, what would be good for us; I do not know what would be good for this people only as God teaches me. I do not want to teach my ideas; I want to know the will of God, and then teach it. We should all seek to know the will of God, and then do it. Thy will be done. What brought you and me here? Did we have any knowledge of the will of

God? Not until he revealed it. Did we have any knowledge of the kingdom of God? Not until He revealed it; and numbers of us have very little knowledge of it to-day, very little indeed. We have very little knowledge of the kingdom of God; and yet we have been here year after year, and have been taught for many years the sacred principles of truth communicated by the holy Priesthood, but we hardly comprehend them. Is there a principle that we have received associated with the Gospel of the Son of God, that we should have received if God had not revealed it to Joseph Smith His Prophet? No; we knew nothing about them. Is there anybody among these aged and gray-haired men who came to an understanding of even the first principles of the Gospel until he revealed them anew? No. Do you know it? I know it to be a fact. I knew Joseph Smith and Brigham Young very well and other prominent men of this Church; and I have met with men in different nations, of all grades and classes of position and intelligence, and I know that they do not know the principles of eternal truth as God has revealed them to us. Have we anything, then, to boast of or to glory in? I have not, only in God. But I thank God our Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Priesthood that existed, that God in his mercy has been pleased through their instrumentality to again restore the everlasting Gospel, bringing with it light, immortality and eternal life.

[JD 23:179, John Taylor, July 24, 1882](#)

What did we know about the ordinances of the Gospel – could I find them anywhere? There is not a man living to-day that could, only as God revealed them, and I am at the defiance of any man to say that he knew anything about the principles of the everlasting Gospel until God revealed them. Did any of us find out anything about the Gospel? No. Who knew anything about the gathering? The prophets had spoken about it, but who comprehended their words? Nobody. Did they know anything about gathering men together to a land of Zion that should be, or about the kingdom of God that was to be set up? Some of them would talk about what Daniel saw, but they knew nothing about it; and they are in the dark about it to-day, for no man can know the things of God but by the Spirit of God, and they cannot obtain that Spirit only by obedience to His law, and hence there is so much misapprehension about us, and they will remain in the dark until they obey the Gospel of the Son of God. What do they know about the future? Nothing. What do they know about the celestial, or the terrestrial or the telestial glory? Nothing; they do not comprehend anything about these matters; and when they leave this world, as a prominent philosopher has said, they take a leap in the dark. We know where we are going; we know where Brother Miller has gone. God has revealed these things to us, and consequently we are enlightened. But did we find it out by our own wisdom and intelligence? No, it was the Lord who revealed it.

[JD 23:179, John Taylor, July 24, 1882](#)

And what about our dead, and what about our Temple building? That is a singular thing for men to be engaged in. Do you find anything like it anywhere else? No. I remember talking with Baron Rothschild when showing him our Temple. He asked what was the meaning of it. Said I, Baron, your Prophets centuries ago, when under the inspiration of the Almighty, said that the Lord whom you seek shall suddenly come to his temple. "Yes," he said, "I know they said that." "Will you show me a place upon the face of the earth where God has got a temple to come to?" Said he, "I do not know of any such place." But if your Prophets told the truth, then there must be a Temple built before your Messiah can come. Said he, Is this that Temple? No, sir. What is this then? It is a Temple but not the Temple your fathers spoke of. But you will yet build a Temple in Jerusalem, and the Lord whom you seek will come to that Temple. What is this for, he enquired? Among other things that we may perform the sacred ordinances about which we are so much maligned, wherein we make eternal covenants with our wives, that we may have a claim upon them in the resurrection. Who revealed this? God our Heavenly Father. And because he has revealed these things, and because we are fulfilling these things, our nation, groveling in darkness, wrapped in midnight gloom, knowing no more about God and eternity than that piece of iron railing, makes it criminal for us to form associations that are to exist "while life or thought or being lasts or immortality endures" – associations with our wives and children, with our fathers and mothers, with our friends and associates, so that when the last trump shall sound and the dead hear the voice of the Son of God, that we with them may come forth to obtain the exaltation which God has prepared for those that love him, keep his commandments, and are obedient to his laws. Shall we forego these

things and give up our hopes of eternal lives and exaltations at the instance of low, degraded, corrupt, besotted and benighted men. Verily I say unto you, Nay. We are after truth, exaltation and eternal lives; exaltation for ourselves, for our fathers and mothers and for all men and women who can comprehend the law of God, and who will obey his precepts and not reject the Gospel of his Son.

[JD 23:179, John Taylor, July 24, 1882](#)

These are the things that we seek, and God is with us and will be with us, and will sustain us, and no power on earth or in hell can stop the progress of this work; for it is onward according to the decree of Almighty God, and will be from this time henceforth and forever. And as the prophets have said, so say I, woe to those men and woe to that nation or to those nations that lift up their hands against Zion, for God will destroy them. I prophecy that in the name of the Lord God of hosts. And he will be with his Israel, and will sustain his people and bring them off victorious; and if faithful to the end we shall obtain thrones, principalities, powers, dominions, exaltations, and eternal lives in the kingdom of our God, and Brother Miller will be there. Let us try to emulate his good example and seek to do that which is right in the sight of God and man. God has given us great principles and put us in possession of great blessings. Let us appreciate them. Let us, in all sincerity, be honest and virtuous, truthful, holy and pure. Let us abstain from covetousness, fraud, lasciviousness and corruption of every kind, and be indeed and in truth what we profess to be, the Saints of the living God.

[JD 23:179, John Taylor, July 24, 1882](#)

God bless you in time and throughout the eternities to come, in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE ERASTUS SNOW,

Delivered at Logan, Saturday Afternoon, May 6, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

GOD'S PECULIAR PEOPLE CALLED A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS – THEIR MINISTRY THUS
FORESHADOWED – THE MELCHIZEDEK AND AARONIC PRIESTHOODS – THEIR
RESTORATION IN THE LATTER-DAYS – THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL – EPHRAIM AND
MANASSAH – THE LINEAGE OF THE PROPHET JOSEPH SMITH – PREDESTINATION AND
ELECTION – THE DISPERSION AND GATHERING OF ISRAEL – THE PRIESTHOOD ENDLESS,
ADMINISTERING IN TIME AND ETERNITY – THE BLINDNESS OF THE GENTILES TO THE
THINGS OF GOD – THE RESULTS OF PERSECUTION – THE FUTURE OF THE FAITHFUL.

[JD 23:180, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882](#)

I will call the attention of the congregation to the words of the Lord through Moses, spoken to the children of Israel, contained in the 5th and 6th verses of the 19th chapter of Exodus:

[JD 23:180, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882](#)

"Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed and keep my covenant, then shall ye be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine.

[JD 23:180, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882](#)

And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."

[JD 23:180, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882](#)

In connection with this passage I will read the words of the Apostle Peter, as recorded in the 5th verse, 2nd chap. of 1st Peter:

[JD 23:180, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882](#)

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

[JD 23:180, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882](#)

Also the 9th verse of the same chapter:

[JD 23:180, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882](#)

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called ye out of darkness into this marvelous light."

[JD 23:180 – p.181, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882](#)

Elder Penrose referred this morning to the fact of so large a portion of the Latter-day Saints being called and ordained to bear some portion of the Priesthood, remarking that at times he had queried in his mind as to why this was so appointed unto us. This reminded me of the Scriptures I have just read in your hearing. The consideration of the subject involves the whole mission of the Latter-day Saints. The promise of God to ancient Israel contained in the first text sets forth the purposes of Jehovah in choosing the seed of Abraham especially and separating them from other peoples and nations, and taking them under His especial care and guidance, and leading them as he did out of Egyptian bondage with a mighty hand and an out-stretched arm and planting them in Canaan in fulfilment of the promises made to their father Abraham, and to Isaac and Jacob. And when God called Abraham to leave his father's house and go to a land which he should show him and which he afterwards promised to him and his seed for an inheritance, he had this in view, to make of him and his seed a peculiar people; to make of them instruments in his hands of accomplishing good for the benefit of the world.

[JD 23:181, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882](#)

He promised Abraham on another occasion that in him and his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. And although this had reference chiefly to the coming of the Son of God through his lineage, who was to be the Chief Apostle and High Priest of our profession, the Redeemer of the world, it implied the fact also that through his seed the Gospel should be carried to all the world, and the oracles of God delivered to men; that prophets and righteous men should be raised up who should act as the mouthpiece of God to the people among whom they should live, and they should have Abraham for their father. Among his descendants

also, his Temple as well as the Tabernacle should be established, and the ordinances were to be revealed through them and the Priesthood conferred upon them, and the word of God preserved among them and handed down to future generations, thus maintaining the true character and knowledge of God, and perpetuating the same upon the earth. This was a great work that the Lord purposed concerning the seed of Abraham, and it was for this reason and purpose that he promised to establish his covenant with them forever.

JD 23:181, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882

Now the Priesthood referred to in Scripture had not reference alone to that lower or lesser order known as the Levitical Priesthood which was confirmed by covenant upon Aaron and his seed and upon the house of his fathers, the tribe of Levi, which Priesthood officiated in offering sacrifices and all the lesser duties pertaining to the law; but it comprehended something more than this, the Priesthood as a whole, including the Melchizedek or that holy order of Priesthood after the order of the Son of God. And when Moses was made the mouthpiece of the Lord to Israel in this precious promise we find them hearkening to him and keeping his covenants, they being a peculiar people unto him, above all the earth, a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood; and he referred to them as a whole people and not to the Levites alone, and to the Priesthood, as I before remarked, as a whole including, of course, the Melchizedek Priesthood, hence the words of Peter: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy nation."

JD 23:181, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882

The same great purpose and object prevail at the present time. The calling and mission of the Latter-day Saints are to fulfill what is here promised in these Scriptures – to bring about the restoration of scattered Israel, the establishment of Zion, the preparing a people for the coming of Christ; a people who are to be Saviors upon Mount Zion, and thus fulfilling one of the prophesies of one of the Jewish prophets concerning the Zion of the latter days, that Saviors should come up upon Mount Zion to save the house of Esau, but the kingdom should be the Lord's. No matter how many might be employed in this work of salvation, as Saviors upon Mount Zion, all should labor as helpers and co-laborers with Christ in the salvation of men.

JD 23:181 – p.182, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882

God has promised in the revelations given to the Latter-day Saints to make known unto them the fullness of all former dispensations, and he has confirmed upon his servants in this dispensation of the fullness of times the keys of all former dispensations and revealed all the ordinances made known to the ancients; and, therefore, it is our calling to complete the work that was inaugurated in former dispensations of God to man. At first Joseph Smith received the gift of seeing visions and the gift of translating dead languages by the Urim and Thummim, and when he had exercised himself in these gifts for a season, he received the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood, together with his Brother Oliver, under the hands of John the Baptist, who was a resurrected being, and who was the last of the Jewish High Priests under the dispensation of the law, the only son of Zachariah the High Priest, and a child of promise, who was beheaded by order of Herod, having first performed his mission in preparing the way of the Lord, and having preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, testifying of Jesus that was to come, and baptizing those who received him, including the Savior himself. John having finished his mission, sealed his testimony with his blood, rose again from the dead and continued to hold those keys of the Priesthood which he inherited from his fathers and which were confirmed upon him by the angel of the Lord when he was eight days old. And he was a fit and proper person to send to confer those keys of Priesthood upon Joseph and Oliver. In due course of time, as we read in the history which he has left, Peter, James and John appeared to him – it was at a period when they were being pursued by their enemies and they had to travel all night, and in the dawn of the coming day when they were weary and worn who should appear to them but Peter, James and John, for the purpose of conferring upon them the Apostleship, the keys of which they themselves had held while upon the earth, which had been bestowed upon them by the Savior. This Priesthood conferred upon them by those three messengers embraces within it all offices of the Priesthood from the highest to the lowest. As has been often taught us that the keys of the presidency of this Apostleship represent the highest authority conferred upon man in the flesh. And by

virtue of these keys of Priesthood the Prophet Joseph from time to time proceeded to ordain and set in order the Priesthood in its various quorums as we see it to-day in the Church. And if the question be asked why, and for what purpose, the answer would be the idea conveyed in the language I have quoted: In accordance with the design of the Lord to raise up a peculiar people to himself, a holy nation, a royal Priesthood – a kingdom of Priests, that shall be saviors upon Mount Zion, not only to preach the Gospel to the scattered remnants of Israel, but to save to the uttermost the nations of the Gentiles, inasmuch as they will listen and can be saved by the plan which God has provided.

JD 23:182 – p.183 – p.184, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882

The first important labor of this ministry is to go abroad and preach the Gospel to the nations. The Gospel of the kingdom must be preached to all people and nations and tongues before the end can come; and by the preaching of the word and the administering of the ordinances of the Gospel, is Israel sought out from among the nations among which they are scattered, especially the seed of Ephraim unto whom the first promises appertain, the promise of the keys of the Priesthood. For it must be remembered that of all the seed of Abraham whom the Lord chose to bear the keys pertaining to this holy order of Priesthood, the seed of Ephraim, the son of Joseph, were the first and chief. While the tribe of Levi, unto which Moses and Aaron belonged, was specially charged with the administration of affairs of the lesser Priesthood under the law, yet Ephraim, the peculiar and chosen son of Joseph, was the one whom the Lord had named by his own mouth and through the Prophets, to inherit the keys of presidency of this High Priesthood after the order of the Son of God. In this also we see the fulfillment of the covenants and promises of God; not that Joseph by birthright inherited this blessing, for Reuben was the first-born among the twelve sons of Jacob; but we are told in Chronicles, the 7th chapter, that Reuben forfeited this birthright by his adultery, and that God took it from him and conferred it upon the sons of Joseph; and of the sons of Joseph he chose Ephraim as the chief; and while the Patriarch Jacob, as we read in the 49th chapter of Genesis, adopted into his own family two of the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, yet he placed Ephraim the younger foremost, and blessed him with the chief blessing, saying, that Manasseh shall be great, but Ephraim shall be greater than he; he shall become a multitude in the midst of the earth. Another Scripture also says concerning scattered Israel, that Ephraim has mixed himself among the people; and speaking of the gathering of Israel in the latter-day dispensation, the Prophet Jeremiah has said that God would gather Israel and lead them as a shepherd does his flock, and says he, I am Father to Israel, but Ephraim is my first-born. Now, if Ephraim has been scattered and has mixed himself with the people until their identity is lost among the nations, how are they going to be recognized and receive the promised blessings – how is it that Ephraim shall be the first-born of the Lord in the great gathering of the latter-days? If we turn back to the blessing which Moses gave to the twelve tribes of Israel, as found in Deuteronomy, we shall there see that in blessing the tribe of Joseph, he especially charged them with the duty of gathering the people from the ends of the earth. Said he, Joseph's horns are like the horns of unicorns, which shall push the people together from the ends of the earth, and they are the thousands of Manasseh and ten thousands of Ephraim; showing that it shall be the ten thousands of Ephraim and thousands of Manasseh who shall be in the foremost ranks of bearing the Gospel message to the ends of the earth, and gathering Israel from the four quarters of the world in the last days. Whoever has read the Book of Mormon carefully will have learned that the remnants of the house of Joseph dwelt upon the American continent; and that Lehi learned by searching the records of his fathers that were written upon the plates of brass, that he was of the lineage of Manasseh. The Prophet Joseph informed us that the record of Lehi, was contained on the 116 pages that were first translated and subsequently stolen, and of which an abridgement is given us in the first Book of Nephi, which is the record of Nephi individually, he himself being of the lineage of Manasseh; but that Ishmael was of the lineage of Ephraim, and that his sons married into Lehi's family, and Lehi's sons married Ishmael's daughters, thus fulfilling the words of Jacob upon Ephraim and Manasseh in the 48th chapter of Genesis, which says: "And let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the land." Thus these descendants of Manasseh and Ephraim grew together upon this American continent, with a sprinkling from the house of Judah, from Mulek descended, who left Jerusalem eleven years after Lehi, and founded the colony afterwards known as Zarahemla and found by Mosiah – thus making a combination, an intermixture of Ephraim and Manasseh with the remnants of Judah, and for aught we know, the remnants of some other tribes that might have

accompanied Mulek. And such have grown up on the American continent. But we are not informed that the Prophet Joseph and the first Elders of this Church who were called and chosen of God to bear the Priesthood and lay the foundation of this work, were descended from any portion of those remnants that peopled America anciently, and whose history is given us in the Book of Mormon. Yet we find in the Doctrine and Covenants the declaration concerning the first Elders of this Church, that they were of the house of Ephraim; and another passage referring to the wicked and rebellious, says, they shall be cut off from among the people for the rebellious are not of the seed of Ephraim. And there is a passage in the Book of Mormon which is a part of the prophecy of Joseph written on the plates of brass and quoted by Lehi, concerning the Prophet Joseph Smith, who, it says, was to be raised up in the latter days to translate the records of the Nephites, and whose name should be Joseph, and who should be a descendant of that Joseph that was sold into Egypt, and also that that should be the name of his father.

[JD 23:184 – p.185, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882](#)

Now if the Prophet Joseph Smith was that chosen vessel out of the loins of Joseph, it may be asked by some, what evidence have we of this lineage? I answer, the testimony of God, the best of all testimony, for no record kept by mortal man can be equal to it; and that, too, by reason of that quaint but sensible old maxim, "it takes a wise man to know who his father was, but a fool may find out who his mother was." And even if we had the lineage of the fathers, it would not be as sure and certain to us as the word of the Lord. For he has had his eye upon the chosen spirits that have come upon the earth in the various ages from the beginning of the world up to this time; and as he said to Abraham, speaking of the multitudes of spirits that were shown unto him in heavenly vision, you see that some are more noble than others? Yes. Then you may know there were some others still more noble than they; and he speaks in the same manner of the multitude of the heavenly bodies; and said he to Abraham, thou art one of those noble ones whom I have chosen to be my rulers. The Lord has sent those noble spirits into the world to perform a special work, and appointed their times; and they have always fulfilled the mission given them, and their future glory and exaltation is secured unto them; and that is what I understand by the doctrine of election spoken of by the Apostle Paul and other sacred writers: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be confirmed to the image of His Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren." Such were called and chosen and elected of God to perform a certain work at a certain time of the world's history and in due time he fitted them for that work. It will be remembered when Jeremiah was called of God in his youth that he, in order to excuse himself, complained of his youth and of his being slow of speech, that the Lord said unto him that he would be mouth for him and matter to his heart, for, he said, he knew him and called him from his mother's womb to be a prophet unto the nations. And so he called John the Baptist by sending his angel Gabriel to his father Zachariah, and giving him a promise that his wife Elizabeth, though old and barren, should yet conceive and bear a son, and that his name should be John, who should be a forerunner to the Savior to prepare the way before his face. And so he elected the seed of Ephraim to be that peculiar people I have referred to, that holy nation, a kingdom of Priests, a people to receive the covenants and oracles, and to be witnesses to certain nations of the God of Israel. And how strict were his commands that they should have no other Gods but him, that they might be a standing rebuke to the idol worshippers, and to all who believe not in the true and living God.

[JD 23:185 – p.186, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882](#)

Now the same spirit of revelation that sought out the Prophet Joseph from the loins of Joseph who was sold into Egypt, and that raised him up in this dispensation to receive the keys of the Priesthood and to lay the foundation of this great work in the earth, has also called the children of Abraham from among the kingdoms and countries of the earth to first hear and then embrace the everlasting Gospel; and the remnants of the seed of Ephraim who were scattered from Palestine and who colonized the shores of the Caspian Sea and thence made their way into the north of Europe, western Scandinavia and northern Germany, penetrating Scotland and England, and conquering those nations and reigning as monarchs of Great Britain, and mingling their seed with the Anglo-Saxon race, and spreading over the waters a fruitful vine, as predicted by Jacob, whose branches should run over the wall. Their blood has permeated European society, and it coursed in the veins of the early colonists of America. And when the books shall be opened and the lineage of all men is known, it

will be found that they have been first and foremost in everything noble among men in the various nations in breaking off the shackles of kingcraft and priestcraft and oppression of every kind, and the foremost among men in upholding and maintaining the principles of liberty and freedom upon this continent and establishing a representative government, and thus preparing the way for the coming forth of the fullness of the everlasting Gospel. And it is the foremost of those spirits whom the Lord has prepared to receive the Gospel when it was presented to them, and who did not wait for the Elders to hunt them from the hills and corners of the earth, but they were hunting for the Elders, impelled by a spirit which then they could not understand; and for this reason were they among the first Elders of the Church; they and the fathers having been watched over from the days that God promised those blessings upon Isaac and Jacob and Joseph and Ephraim. And these are they that will be found in the front ranks of all that is noble and good in their day and time, and who will be found among those whose efforts are directed in establishing upon the earth those heaven-born principles which tend directly to blessing and salvation, to ameliorating the condition of their fellow-men, and elevating them in the scale of their being; and among those also who receive the fullness of the Everlasting Gospel, and the keys of Priesthood in the last days, through whom God determined to gather up again unto himself a peculiar people, a holy nation, a pure seed that shall stand upon Mount Zion as saviors, not only to the house of Israel but also to the house of Esau.

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Now the work of carrying the Gospel to the nations and gathering the people, mighty as it is, is not the chief, it is but laying the foundation for the still greater work of the redemption of the myriads of the dead of the seed of Israel that have perished without the fullness of the Gospel, who too are heirs to the promised blessings; but the time had not come when they passed away for the fulfillment of all that God had promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob concerning their seed: Ezekiel in the 37th chapter of his book beautifully illustrates this doctrine in his vision of the valley of dry bones. I respectfully refer you to it. The substance of the vision is this: The Lord showed Ezekiel a valley full of dry human bones; and he asks him if those bones can live. Ezekiel answered, "O Lord God, thou knowest." The Lord then tells him to prophecy to the bones: Oh ye dry bones. Hear the word of the Lord; and as he did so there was a shaking, and behold the bones came together, bone to its bone; and according to the word of the Lord through him, flesh and skin and sinews came upon them, and the breath of life came into them, and lo, and behold, they stood upon their feet an exceedingly great army. The Lord then tells the Prophet that these are the whole house of Israel; and that they complain of the non-fulfillment of the promises upon their head, saying, "Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: all are cut off for our parts. But he further tells him to prophecy unto them, saying, "Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel," etc. And by whom shall this great and marvelous work be accomplished? I answer, by the thousands of Manasseh and the ten thousands of Ephraim; by this same people who shall search out and gather together the house of Israel, and who will come up as saviors upon Mount Zion.

JD 23:186 – p.187, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882

Paul tells us concerning the Melchizedek Priesthood, that it is after the order of an endless life, without beginning of days or end of years; or, in other words, that it is eternal; that it ministers in time and also in eternity. Peter, James and John and their fellow-laborers still minister in their Priesthood on the other side of the veil; and Joseph Smith and his fellow-brethren still minister in their office and calling under the counsel and direction of the same Peter, James and John who ministered on earth, and who conferred upon Joseph the keys of their Priesthood; and all the Elders of this dispensation who prove faithful and magnify their calling in the flesh will, when they pass hence, continue their labors in the spirit world, retaining the same holy character and high responsibility that they assume here. And these men will be engaged there hunting up the remnants of their fathers of the house of Joseph through Ephraim and Manasseh; and then all the other tribes of Israel; while their children and children's children remaining in the flesh, holding the same Priesthood, are building and will continue to build Temples and enter into them, and there officiate for the whole house of Israel, whose bones are dry and hope lost; but with whom it will be, as the Apostle Peter has expressed it, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath

begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." When Peter buried his Lord he buried his hope also, and when in this state of mind he said, "I go a fishing." He returned to the old mode of living, and his fellow Apostles accompanied him. After toiling all night and catching no fish, the Savior appeared to them, but the disciples did not know him; and after learning that they had caught nothing, he told them to cast the net on the other side of the ship, and instantly the net was full of fishes. And straightway the inspiration of the Almighty was upon Peter, who said, that's the Lord; that's one of his tricks. And the impetuosity of his nature was such that he could not wait, but threw himself into the water to go and meet the Savior, knowing that it was He just as well as if the Father himself had told him so. And when they got ashore they found that their Lord had prepared food for them, of which they all partook. And then the Savior takes Peter to task by giving him to understand that He had called him and fellow-apostles to be fishers of men, and says to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these," (fish)? Peter answered, "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." The Savior said unto him, then "feed my lambs;" repeating his question and admonition three times. This rebuke was sufficient for Peter all the rest of his days; we never hear of his going fishing again.

[JD 23:187, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882](#)

The morning of the resurrection dawns upon us. Ere long we will find Joseph and his brethren overseeing and directing the labors of the Elders of Israel in the Temples of our God, laboring for the redemption of the dead, which work will continue during the thousand years rest when the Savior will bear rule over the whole earth.

[JD 23:187, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882](#)

The Gentile nations comprehend not these things. Congress and the hireling priests are blind and ignorant to them. And why? Because they have not been "born again," being in the same condition that Nicodemus was when the Savior told him that except a man were born again – that is born of the water and the Spirit – he could not enter into (or see) the kingdom of God. They talk about religion, and they profess to be teachers of Christianity; so far as they honestly believe, and show by their works, that Christ was the Son of God, so far God will have them in remembrance; so far as they honestly receive those principles of morality that should govern men in their walks of life and their intercourse with their fellows, and do respect and strive to live them, so far will he hold them in honorable remembrance, and they will be numbered among the honorable of the earth, and the mercy of the Lord will reach them in his due time; but the hypocrite who conceals his wicked heart under the cloak of religion, who has a form of godliness, but denies the power thereof, all such will he waste away.

[JD 23:187 – p.188, Erastus Snow, May 6, 1882](#)

Understanding this as we understand them, we do not wonder at this class of persons combining with the powers of earth to throw stumbling blocks in the way of this community. But will the Lord suffer them to bring persecution upon us? Peradventure he may; and he will if it is necessary to prune the vineyard, to cleanse his people from sin, to purge out evil and frighten away the hypocrites in Zion; for it has been decreed that fearfulness shall surprise the hypocrites in Zion; and if he suffers the wicked to combine against us, he will overrule it for the salvation of the righteous. The righteous can endure trials, realizing as they do that:

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Behind a frowning providence,

He hides a smiling face.

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And that after much tribulation comes the blessing. And such are of Ephraim. Amen.

Lorenzo Snow, May 6th, 1882

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE LORENZO SNOW,

Delivered at Logan, Sunday, May 6th, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CHARACTER – TRAITS THAT ARE ADMIRABLE – HOW TO HAVE
INFLUENCE WITH HEAVEN – WHY MEN SHOULD DO RIGHT – THE CULTIVATION OF
SPIRITUAL GIFTS – THE THINGS OF GOD MUST BE SOUGHT AFTER – FASTING, PRAYER,
DEVOTION AND SACRIFICE.

[JD 23:189, Lorenzo Snow, May 6th, 1882](#)

The speaker commenced by reading the first ten verses and the 18th verse of the 35th chapter of Jeremiah; also part of the 139th Psalm; and then said:

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I read these verses with a view of riveting more forcibly upon our understanding a principle which I desire to present for consideration, namely, the establishing of a proper character, as Latter-day Saints, before God our Father.

[JD 23:189 – p.190, Lorenzo Snow, May 6th, 1882](#)

I am under the strongest impression that the most valuable consideration, and that which will be of the most service when we return to the spirit world, will be that of having established a proper and well-defined character as faithful and consistent Latter-day Saints in this state of probation. In cases where a stranger applies for employment, or an office of trust, it is often required that he produce papers attesting his worthiness, from reliable parties, letters of recommendation and of introduction which are exceedingly useful in their way, assisting in obtaining favors and privileges which otherwise would be difficult to secure. It is, however, comparatively easy to obtain a written character, as it is termed, a character that one can put in his pocket; and, indeed, according to my observation it is not infrequently the case that people are the bearers of written characters which their real and true character fails to attest. There are those among us who are recognized as members of this Church who take a vast amount of pains to be favorably known by those around them, but whose real character, or the inwardness so to speak, of such people, is veiled or disguised, being to all outward appearance reputable Latter-day Saints, but whose inward character, the character that is written indelibly upon their own hearts, would, if known, render them unfit for the association and fellowship of the people of God. Now this prayer that I have referred to – "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" – is very significant; it was a prayer that David in the principal course of his life could conscientiously and with a degree of confidence offer up to the Lord. But there were times when he would feel the faltering and quivering sensation of weakness in offering up a prayer of this kind.

I have reason to believe that many of the Latter-day Saints, during a great portion of their lives, could approach the Lord in all confidence and make this same prayer – "Search me, O God, and know my heart, and see if there be any wicked way in me;" but if we, as a people could live so as to be able at all times to bow before the Lord and offer up a prayer like this, what a delightful thing it would be, what an attainment we should have acquired in righteousness and good works! To every person who has at heart the preparing of himself for the great change, that is the work of regeneration, I would recommend that he adopt this prayer of David, and see how near he can live according to the light that he has, so as to make it in all sincerity part of his devotions to God. Many fail in coming up to this standard of excellence because they do things in secret where mortal eye cannot penetrate, that has a direct tendency to alienate them from the Almighty, and to grieve away the Spirit of God. Such persons cannot in their private closet use this prayer; they could not unless they had repented of their sins and repaired the wrong they may have committed, and determined to do better in the future than they had done in the past, and to establish a character before God that could be relied upon in the hour of trial, and that would fit them to associate with holy beings and with the Father himself when they shall have passed into the spirit world. In order to arrive at the state of perfection that David did when he poured out his soul to the Lord in the prayer that I have referred to, we must be true men and true women; we must have faith largely developed, and we must be worthy of the companionship of the Holy Ghost to aid us in the work of righteousness all the day long, to enable us to sacrifice our own will to the will of the Father, to battle against our fallen nature, and to do right for the love of doing right, keeping our eye single to the honor and glory of God. To do this there must be an inward feeling of the mind that is conscious of the responsibility that we are under, that recognized the fact that the eye of God is upon us and that our every act and the motives that prompt it must be accounted for; and we must be constantly en rapport with the Spirit of the Lord. We should strive earnestly to establish the principles of heaven within us, rather than trouble ourselves in fostering anxieties like the foolish people of the Tower of Babel, to reach its location before we are properly and lawfully prepared to become its inhabitants. Its advantages and blessings, in a measure, can be obtained in this probationary state by learning to live in conformity with its laws and the practice of its principles. To do this, there must be a feeling and determination to do God's will.

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There are many things that I admire in the character of the prophets, and especially in that of Moses. I admire his determination to carry out the word and will of God with regard to Israel, and his readiness to do everything that was in the power of man, assisted by the Almighty; and above all I admire his integrity and fidelity to the Lord. There is something very beautiful and lovely to contemplate in the character of the children of Rechab of whom I have read: there is something that ought to command the admiration of all men, and indeed, God himself admired it and recognized it in the great promise that he made their father as a recognition of this remarkable virtue exhibited in their character, namely, "Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me forever." How comforting and consoling, what a feeling of gratification and joy to the heart of a parent to receive such a promise from the Lord, because of the obedience of his children in strictly adhering to this counsel; his posterity forever should be represented among those who should stand before the Lord. And God admires the men and women to-day who pursue a course of rectitude and who, notwithstanding the powers of Satan that are arrayed against them, can say, Get thee behind me Satan, and who live a righteous, a godly life, and such people have influence with God and their prayers avail much. Moses, for instance, had such power with the Almighty as to change his purposes on a certain occasion. It will be remembered that the Lord became angry with the Israelites, and declared to Moses that he would destroy them, and he would take Moses and make of him a great people, and would bestow upon him and his posterity what he had promised to Israel. But this great leader and lawgiver, faithful to his trust, stood in the gap and there plead with the Lord on behalf of his people; by the power that he could exercise and did exercise, he was the means of saving the people from threatened destruction. How noble and glorious Moses must have appeared in the eyes of the Lord, and what a source of satisfaction it must have been to him to know that his chosen people, in their obstinate and ignorant condition, had such a man at their head.

In Jonah again we find an interesting trait of character. When upon the raging waters, and fears were expressed by the sailors as to their ability to save the ship, Jonah, feeling conscience–stricken at the course he had taken in not proceeding to Nineveh as commanded of the Lord, came forward and confessed himself as being the cause of the disaster that was about to befall them, and was willing to be sacrificed in the interest of those on board. Also in other prophets and men of God, although they may have on certain occasions, like Jonah, exhibited weaknesses, there is something really grand and admirable shown in their character. But such traits of character as we find evinced in the ancient worthies are not the products of accident or chance, neither are they acquired in a day, a week, a month, or a year, but are gradual developments, the results of continued faithfulness to God and to truth, independent of either the plaudits or criticisms of men.

JD 23:192, Lorenzo Snow, May 6th, 1882

Written characters do not always amount to much; they are well enough in their place however. It is important that we, as Latter–day Saints, should understand and bear in mind that salvation comes through the grace of God, and through the development in us of those principles that governed those righteous people before mentioned. The idea is not to do good because of the praise of men; but to do good because in doing good we develop godliness within us, and this being the case we shall become allied to godliness, which will in time become part and portion of our being. I will refer again to the Rechabites, and the strong temptation that they were under when invited to the Temple of God, and there, in one of the apartments, asked by Jeremiah, one of the greatest Prophets, to drink wine; or, in other words, to do something that they had been instructed by their father not to do. But they could not be moved, the teaching of their father had found an abiding place in their hearts, and the consequence was that they utterly refused to do what the Prophet of God told them to do. The Lord Himself admired the course that they took in this matter, and was led as I before said, to make such a glorious promise to the house of Rechab; and I would not be astonished to know that among this people may now be found some of the descendants.

JD 23:192 – p.193, Lorenzo Snow, May 6th, 1882

Do we not at times do things that we feel sorry for having done? It may be all very well, provided we stop doing such things when we know them to be wrong; when we see the evil and then reform, that is all we can do, and all that can be asked of any man. But undoubtedly, it is too much the case with some that they consider and fear the publicity of the wrong they commit, more than committing the wrong itself; they wonder what people will say when they hear of it, etc. And, on the other hand, some are induced to do certain things in order to receive the approbation of their friends, and if their acts fail to draw forth favorable comments or to be recognized, they feel as though their labor had been lost, and what good they may have done was a total failure. Now, if we really desire to draw near to God; if we wish to place ourselves in accord with the good spirits of the eternal worlds; if we wish to establish within ourselves that faith which we read about and by which ancient Saints performed such wonderful works, we must, after we obtain the Holy Spirit, hearken to its whisperings and conform to its suggestions, and by no act of our lives drive it from us. It is true that we are weak, erring creatures, liable at any time to grieve the Spirit of God; but so soon as we discover ourselves in a fault, we should repent of that wrongdoing and as far as possible repair or make good the wrong we may have committed. By taking this course we strengthen our character, we advance our own cause, and we fortify ourselves against temptation; and in time we shall have so far overcome as to really astonish ourselves at the progress we have made in self–government and improvement.

JD 23:193, Lorenzo Snow, May 6th, 1882

We have received a Gospel that is marvelous in its operations: through obedience to its requirements we may receive the choicest blessings that have ever been promised to or bestowed upon mankind in any age of the world. But, like the child with the toy or the plaything, we too often satisfy ourselves with the perishable things of time, forgetting the opportunities we have of developing within us the great, the eternal principles of

life and truth. The Lord wishes to establish a closer and more intimate relationship between himself and us; He wishes to elevate us in the scale of being and intelligence, and this can only be done through the medium of the everlasting Gospel which is specially prepared for this purpose. Says the Apostle John: "Every man that has this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He (Christ) is pure." Are the Latter-day Saints applying the principles of the Gospel to their lives, and thus accomplishing the design of God?

JD 23:193, Lorenzo Snow, May 6th, 1882

We sometimes, though perhaps not to a great extent, trouble ourselves about some probable or possible persecution that our enemies may bring upon us. We look upon the past history of the Church and see that the Lord has suffered our enemies on certain occasions, to destroy our houses, despoil us of our property and drive us from one place to another. We say, such things have been allowed; and we query in our minds, whether they will still be permitted to bring trouble upon us, and if so, to what extent. We acknowledge that God has blessed us – that he has given us houses and lands, flocks and herds, and has put us in the way to obtain the conveniences and comforts of life. We, no doubt, appreciate our temporal condition, and would dislike very much to be deprived of these blessings we enjoy. And some wonder as to how far the hand of oppression will be allowed to disturb the quiet of our mountain homes, and whether we as individuals, will ever pass through what this people endured in early days. This is a matter that should not trouble the Saints of God particularly; but what to my mind is far more important is, what can we do under the circumstances to elevate ourselves still higher in the righteousness of our God. What advantages, blessings and privileges does this system of salvation, which we have obeyed, afford, and what means shall be employed to realize them? If there should be a sacrifice demanded it will be very opportune for all those who wish to make their religion a study, and who are endeavoring to conform to its requirements, by living it in their everyday life, to show their willingness to bow to the will of Jehovah, acknowledging his hand in adversity as in prosperity.

JD 23:193 – p.194, Lorenzo Snow, May 6th, 1882

I remember very well the cloudy and stormy days of Kirtland, and how foolishly some people acted. There were men who occupied high standing in the Church, who disgraced themselves, having behaved in a manner which afterwards brought the blush of shame to their cheeks. There was a reason for that. Had they lived so that they could have offered up in their hearts David's prayer, they would not have been numbered among those who apostatized and fell in the hour of trial. It would be well to examine ourselves, hold communion with ourselves in the secret closet, to ascertain how we stand as Elders in Israel before the Lord, so that if need be we may renew our diligence and faithfulness, and increase our good works.

JD 23:194, Lorenzo Snow, May 6th, 1882

There is no doubt, speaking of the people as a whole, that we are greatly improving in the sight of God. But although this is undoubtedly the case, I am convinced there are persons among us endowed with spiritual gifts and susceptible of cultivation, that could be exercised, if they chose, to a far greater extent than they are, and who could move much faster in the ways of holiness and get much nearer to the Lord. But the spirit which attends the things of this world is operating upon them to that extent that they do not increase those spiritual powers and blessings; they do not place themselves in that close relationship to the Lord that it is their privilege, as men holding the holy Priesthood, called and chosen to perform a special work in the midst of mankind. As it was with Peter and the rest of the Apostles in the days of their gloom, when the Master, the Savior of the world, hung upon the cross, their hope and prospects sunk in darkness, having lost the real spirit of the mission to which they had been called, in their despair, they said, Let us go a fishing; let us return to our nets, to our former business. So it is with some in our day. There are men among us upon whom the Spirit of the Almighty once rested mightily, whose intentions were once as good and pure as those of angels, and who made covenants with God that they would serve Him and keep His commandments under every and all circumstances; and many of such were ready and willing to leave their wives and children to go or come as the case might be in the interest of the cause they had espoused. But how is it now with some of those Elders? They do not feel so to-day. Their affections are set upon the things of this world which the Lord has enabled

them to acquire, that they wait now until they are called, and in many instances when called, they obey more out of a desire to retain their standing and position, than a real heart-felt love of the labor to which they may have been called.

JD 23:194, Lorenzo Snow, May 6th, 1882

This is the condition of all men, no matter how well they start out, who allow their thoughts and affections to run after the world and its ways, and it is a plain and indisputable proof that when this is the case with men they love the world more than they love the Lord and His work upon the earth. Having received the light of the everlasting Gospel, and partaken of the good things of the kingdom, and being of the seed of Israel and heirs to great and glorious promises, we should labor with fidelity and diligence to accomplish what God has designed to do through us; we should be men and women of faith and power as well as good works, and when we discover ourselves careless or indifferent in the least, it should be sufficient for us to know it in order to mend our ways and return to the path of duty.

JD 23:194 – p.195, Lorenzo Snow, May 6th, 1882

When our friends are stricken down by sickness and disease, or when our little ones are in the agonies of pain and death, there should be Elders in our midst who have educated themselves so thoroughly in developing the gifts of the Spirit within them, and in whom the Saints have such perfect confidence, that they would always be sought after instead of doctors. There are men among us who possess the gift of healing, and might have great faith; but they do not exercise the gift, they do not live for it, and, therefore, do not have the power to use it so effectually as they might. There are men in this Church who are as good in their hearts and feelings as men ever were, but lack faith and energy, and do not obtain really what it is their privilege to receive. If their faith, their energy and determination were equal to their good feelings and desires, their honesty and goodness, they would indeed be mighty men in Israel; and sickness and disease and the power of the evil one would flee before them as chaff before the wind. Yet, we say we are a good people and that we are not only holding our own but making great advances in righteousness before God; and no doubt, we are. But I wish to impress upon you, my brethren and sisters that there are Elders among us endowed with Spiritual gifts that may be brought into exercise through the aid of the Holy Ghost. The gifts of the Gospel must be cultivated by diligence and perseverance. The ancient Prophets when desiring some peculiar blessing, or important knowledge, revelation or vision, would sometimes fast and pray for days and even weeks for that purpose.

JD 23:195, Lorenzo Snow, May 6th, 1882

As Saints of God, Elders of Israel, we should be willing to devote time and labor, making every necessary sacrifice in order to obtain the proper spiritual qualifications to be highly useful in our several callings. And may the Lord inspire every heart with the importance of these matters that we may seek diligently and energetically for the gifts and powers promised in the Gospel we have obeyed.

Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE MOSES THATCHER,

Delivered at the General Conference, Saturday, April 8th, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE MISSION OF THE HOLY GHOST – COMMISSIONS OF THE ANCIENT AND MODERN
APOSTLES – UNBELIEF, DIVISION, SUPERSTITION AND FANATICISM – SINCERITY NO
EVIDENCE OF TRUTH, BUT ALWAYS ENTITLED TO RESPECT – MARRIAGE COMMANDED OF
GOD AND FORBIDDEN BY MAN – MORAL COURAGE AND ANTI-"MORMON"
LEGISLATION – RIGHTEOUS AND UNRIGHTEOUS DOMINION – THE PURITY OF THE ELDERS
OF ISRAEL – THE WORSHIP OF WEALTH AND ITS POVERTY – PUBLIC OPINION AND
INDEPENDENCE OF CHARACTER – THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS NEVER DESTINED TO BE
SLAVES – PERSECUTION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES – EXHORTATION TO LOYALTY,
LONG-SUFFERING, KINDNESS, INTEGRITY AND RIGHTEOUSNESS.

[JD 23:196, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

I have been very happy in attending the meetings of this Conference. I have rejoiced in listening to the remarks of brethren who have spoken; and earnestly hope that I may be influenced and guided in the remarks I may make, by the same spirit and power which has actuated them. Realizing as I do, that God is working in the hearts of the Saints and is, at the same time, holding as in his hands the destiny of nations, I have seen no happier day than this. And, while proscriptive, ex post-facto laws, abridging the liberties of the people have been, and others may hereafter be enacted by the law-makers of the nation, still the honest and good, the meek and pure in heart rejoice in the Holy One of Israel, who while preserving their lips from uttering guile makes steadfast their feet in Zion, that they slip not.

[JD 23:196 – p.197, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

I am not aware that we, as a people, have any policy marked out by which to meet the issues or overcome the annoyances which may be forced upon us, but with those who merit the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost, all will be well. The sight of the eye, the hearing of the ear, the touch of the hand may each and all be deceived, but the instructions of the spirit are in all things correct. The combined senses may misguide or fail, but he who happily secures the companionship of the Holy Spirit, walks in the ways of life and neither fears, becomes weary nor faints by the wayside. Christ as the author of human redemption – himself a willing sacrifice – comprehending by his divine nature, the fulness of this great truth, commanded his disciples to tarry at Jerusalem until endowed with power from on high – until he should send the Comforter whose mission it was to show them things to come, bring all things which he had taught to their remembrance and lead them into all truth.

[JD 23:197, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

They had listened to the words of life and light as the marvelous sermon on the Mount came from the divine lips of their Lord and Master: they had seen him touch the eyes of the blind, making them to see again, the ears of the deaf to hear, and had witnessed his power quicken into life, the decomposing body of the dead; they had traveled throughout the land of Judea with, and perhaps watched many weary nights to keep him from the injury of those who desired to harm him; they had eaten and drank with, and slept by him, listening by night and day to the inspired instructions; but, notwithstanding all the experience thus gained during years of unsurpassed opportunity for learning the truth as it was in him, they were not yet fully qualified and authorized to preach that perfect law of liberty – the Gospel of their Redeemer. Hence the command, "Tarry ye in the City of Jerusalem until ye be endowed with power from on high."

The Comforter which came to them is the same that has come to us, and his mission then, as we have demonstrated it now to be, was to bring things to the remembrance, show things to come and lead unto all truth. No man has authority to preach the Gospel and administer its ordinances without a commission from Jesus Christ; and the seal of such commission has always been, and always will be the gifts, blessings and endorsement of the Holy Ghost, which, not only leads to the form, but also to the power of godliness.

JD 23:197, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882

It is this that cheers the hearts of the Latter-day Saints, brings knowledge of things past, present and to come, unites and makes them in their testimony, hopes and aspirations, distinct from all the world – a peculiar people.

JD 23:197 – p.198, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882

The Elders of Israel acting under the authority of an endless Priesthood, bear the message of peace, of life and salvation to the inhabitants of a fallen world. Without money and without price they visit the ends of the earth and, while warning the wicked of the judgments to come, they urge the honest and good to gather, before the coming of the great and dreadful day when Babylon shall fall. Bearing a faithful testimony, they speak of that which they know and testify of that which they have experienced, saying, "do the will of the Father and you shall know whether the doctrine is true or false." In this, their testimony differs from that of the ministers of all other religious denominations, and they not only speak as having authority, but they have it. Where, outside of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is there a man authorized to make the promise of the knowledge of God by revelation as the reward of obedience to the principles of the Gospel? Who, beside the Elders of this Church are commissioned to perform ordinances in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost through which, and by which the Comforter comes to the obedient penitent, leading him into all truth and showing him things to come? Who, beside them are authorized by God, commissioned by Jesus and endorsed by the Holy Spirit to preach repentance, baptism and the laying on of hands, saying to the inhabitants of the earth, "believe in the doctrines of Jesus Christ, repent of all sins, be immersed in water for their remission and have hands laid upon you for the reception of the Holy Ghost, and you shall know these things to be true, for, through obedience to the law of life, comes the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy.

JD 23:198, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882

Ask the members of the so-called Christian sects if their ministers come to them offering such a test of their authority to speak in the name of Him who descended beneath all things that he might arise above all things – ask them for the testimony of Him who led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men, what gifts they have to offer, what promises of godly knowledge they have to make? Ask them for the testimony of Jesus and to show the plan of salvation built upon the rock of revelation against which the gates of hell cannot prevail, and you will be made painfully to feel that they have none of these things. A form of godliness they may exhibit, but the power, they do not have.

JD 23:198, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882

"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them."

JD 23:198, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882

Such was the commission given to the Apostles anciently, and the gifts and blessings, some of which I have enumerated, following the believer whose faith led to works, were evidences of the authority of the Lord's disciples who bore that commission. Their testimony being true and faithful, received the endorsement of the Holy Spirit.

[JD 23:198, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Unlike ministers of the various Christian denominations the Elders of this Church claim no part of the commission given by the Lord to his ancient Apostles, but they do claim, and do have authority from Jesus Christ to preach his Gospel, and the signs that followed believers then follow them now, as thousands can testify. Most so-called Christians have long since discarded the idea of works, holding that salvation coming only by grace, belief alone, is essential.

[JD 23:198 – p.199, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Now, I hold that they have not only discarded all works, but belief as well. My reason for so doing is I think logical and conclusive. Jesus declared that certain signs should follow them that believe, but modern divines do not even pretend that any one of the signs enumerated follow those that accept their teachings. Therefore, relying upon the words of the Lord, we must, we are bound to conclude that they do not even believe the Gospel, or if they do the promise of Christ certainly fails. I am aware that such a conclusion gives a choice between but two horns of a disagreeable dilemma, but we had nothing to do in the arrangement of matters which have brought it about; we only speak of facts as they exist. Again, ask the ministers of any of the Protestant churches where they got their authority to preach? They will tell you not from the Roman Mother Church which claims Apostolic succession from Peter, but they will refer you I think, in most instances, to the words of Jesus already quoted, wherein he instructed his disciples to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, etc. They will tell you that here is where they get their authority, and they claim that commission is to them as well as to those to whom it was directly given. Let us submit the test and see how this claim stands. Those who anciently had the commission and authority were endorsed by the spirit and power of God which caused certain heavenly gifts and blessings to follow those who believed their testimony and teachings. Do any of those gifts and blessings follow the believers in the teachings of modern divines who claim the same authority and commission? No, not one. They the ministers themselves hold them non-essential, and hence done away. They are, indeed, done away so far as our Christian friends are concerned, and so is the authority and commission of their ministers done away, so far as the endorsement of their teaching by the Holy Ghost is concerned.

[JD 23:199, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

I desire here to bear my testimony that the gifts and blessings enumerated by the Savior as those that should follow believers, do follow in this day, the authoritative preaching and administration of the ordinances of the Gospel, and that the Elders of this Church are clothed with authority from God. It did not come from the Roman Mother Church, nor from any of her Protestant daughters, but was restored to earth in our day by Peter, James and John, to whom Jesus Himself gave it. In their charge it was authority that bore fruit as testimony of its efficacy and divine power; committed to the charge of God's servants it does likewise in this age among this people.

[JD 23:199, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Lacking the revelations of the Holy Ghost, men and self-constituted ministers are not led into all truth but teach, instead thereof, opinions and vain imaginings. As an instance I refer to a sermon preached not long since by an eminent divine in the East for whose liberal views and outspoken advocacy of them in many respects I entertain admiration, for they have, in my opinion, a tendency to liberalize the ideas of some who otherwise would have inclined to religious bigotry or, on the other hand to infidelity. In seeking to illustrate how the various Christian sects were moving heavenward this divine, compared the kingdom of God to the

city of Philadelphia, which has numerous railway connections leading from almost every direction but all centering in that city. Upon these numerous railways daily move many trains composed of numerous cars containing many people traveling from various directions on different roads, but all bound for the city of Philadelphia. Now this doctrine being broad and liberal would certainly commend itself to every thoughtful and charitable Christian did it not, when tested by the Master's perfect standard, reveal a defect – a fatal one too, which all who rely upon it must eventually find to their disappointment and sorrow. The doctrine however attractive, is absolutely untrue, for Jesus Himself has declared that there is but one way, "Straight is the gate and narrow is the way, (not many ways like the roads leading to the city of Philadelphia), and few there be that find it."

[JD 23:199 – p.200, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Now why do eminent, educated, influential men, who have chosen the ministry as a profession, and who pretend to teach the Gospel to others, advocate as doctrine ideas so diametrically opposed to the eternal truths advanced by Christ himself? The answer is simple, lacking the inspiration and revelations of the Holy Spirit – having no Comforter to lead them into all truth, bring things to their remembrance and show them things to come, they teach for doctrine the opinions of men. Being filled with worldly wisdom but not the power of God. "They divine for money and preach for hire." Again Christ prayed that his disciples might be one with Him as He was with the Father, and that all should believe the words of the disciples that they might be one with Him, as He was one with the Father. Are Christians claiming belief in those words, one? No, the various denominations are not only divided against each other, but in some instances are divided among themselves. During the late civil war, as was stated yesterday, members of the same church south of the Mason and Dixon line were praying for the destruction of their brethren of the same church north of it, while, on the other hand, those north were making a like petition to the same God against their brethren south of that line. According, however, to their own idea of God, He could hardly have heard and answered either party; for, having no body he could not hear, and having no passions he would have been indifferent, had he been able to hear.

[JD 23:200, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Notwithstanding this, however, many, very many on both sides were destroyed and, as we believe, needlessly. Of one thing we may be certain, and that is the members of the various Christian denominations are not one. Therefore there is but one of two conclusions at which the reasoning and thoughtful can arrive. Either God has ceased to answer the prayer of His Son, or the various conflicting religious sects are not believers in the Gospel. And as they put great stress upon faith or belief, I have endeavored and think I have not failed to show that they are not even true believers, for they are certainly not united and one with Christ as He is one with the Father, nor as His ancient disciples were one with Him.

[JD 23:200, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

In mentioning these matters, I have tried to do so in a respectful manner, having regard for the feelings of those who differ from us in religious affairs. There are many people in the world who do not believe as we do, but for whom I entertain a high personal regard; for according to the light they have, they are moral, honest and just, and are as devoted to what they believe to be right as we possibly can be. Thousands and hundreds of thousands of people in the world are just as sincere as we are; but to be sincere in a matter does not make that matter true.

[JD 23:200 – p.201, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

While at the City of Mexico recently, I saw many exhibitions of religious devotion and sincerity. On certain feast days people there do strange things. I have seen women walk upon their knees three miles over rough stony roads, being rewarded at the end of their painful journey with a plaited crown of thorns placed upon their heads, while being carried upon the shoulders of strong men, amid the cheering multitude, who praised them for having accomplished what they believed to be a saintly, meritorious task. Again, I have seen ladies

of refinement, wealth and influence trail their rich satin and velvet robes through the dirt and filth accumulated upon the floors of the great cathedral, for hours they would kneel in adoration before an image, while being jostled by ignorant, degraded, vermin-covered Indians, worshipping at the same shrine. On other occasions I have witnessed for weeks together the revelry of Catholic maskers who frequented the streets, theatres and balls, night and day. At some of those masked balls it was said scenes were enacted that were so immoral in their tendency that the general of the Mexican army issued orders prohibiting officers and men of the army from attending them. And yet, at the termination of the thirty days' dissipation, religious sincerity caused those poor, ignorant people to feel free from sin after confessing to their priests and receiving absolution for all their abominations and securing a great black mark in the form of a cross in their foreheads. Now, while these things, and many others which I have no time to mention, appeared very repugnant, immoral and debasing in their practice and tendency, yet I respected those people in their religious belief, customs and ceremonies as I desire to respect the people of other creeds so long as they do not infringe upon the rights and liberties of others. For God intends that all should be absolutely free in such matters. When Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden, the doctrine of free agency was fully established and endorsed by the Creator, for He there gave a conditional commandment, obedience to which was to perpetuate life, disobedience was to bring death, but the choice was left with the man and woman, and from that day to this he has intended that man should act upon his own agency; that he should be permitted to receive the truth, choosing the path that leads back to the presence of God and the knowledge that comes from above; or, on the other hand, to reject it, following in the path which leads to ruin and destruction.

[JD 23:201, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

In this great American government a man should be free to worship the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; he should be equally free to worship a mountain, a stream, the sun, moon, or anything or not to worship at all; so long as his practice and belief do not interfere with the inalienable rights guaranteed to man, so long should he be free.

[JD 23:201 – p.202, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

From the time when God gave to man and woman their free agency in the Garden of Eden, making the law and defining the penalty for breaking that law, I can find nothing in the revelations that would bind or fetter the soul or the body of the children of men. There was, however, one unconditional command; it was given in the generation of the heavens, when God created man and woman in His own image; and that command still rests upon the fishes of the sea, upon the fowls of the air, upon the beasts of the field, and all beating throbbing nature naturally obeys the edict, "multiply and replenish the earth." This great unconditional, unrepealed law is still in force. The Roman Catholic church, as it has done heretofore, may issue edicts binding certain members of that church to celibacy, making the union of man and woman obnoxious, but that great command is nevertheless still binding. The Roman church and our own Government, in their blind efforts to defeat the purposes of God, may continue to forbid marriage, and thus fulfill ancient prophecy, but their efforts should not surprise us. Is there anything occurring in the midst of the Nation to-day that we have not anticipated? I have recently returned from the east, and I rejoice exceedingly in what I saw manifested there. Does God hold the members of Congress responsible for their acts as he does the Elders of this Church? No. They will be judged by the light they have and no more. They are, many of them, educated, and are men of influence, possessing, however, but little genuine moral courage. Notwithstanding the evident disregard for principle manifested by some of them touching affairs in which we are interested, I confess that I lost confidence in them with the deepest regret, and find it most difficult to withdraw the faith formerly reposed in the law-makers of our great nation. I still desire and hope to be able to continue praying for them and for the President and cabinet, that they may honor the positions to which the people have called them. We will uphold, sustain and pray for them at least until God rejects and condemns their works. There is salt in the nation yet. I try to comprehend the feelings of faithful Abraham when pleading for Sodom and Gomorrah; which, had they contained five righteous men, might have been spared.

[JD 23:202, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Now, I think there are a great many more than five righteous men – righteous according to the light they have, in the United States; good men too, who, while they cannot see as we see, and while they cannot endorse our peculiar ideas in regard to the plan of human salvation, love liberty, cherish the memory of our forefathers, and regard the foundations of this great government so highly that they could not even under the pressure of public opinion, vote for a measure so radically wrong, a measure so thoroughly unconstitutional as every lawyer must know the Edmunds law to be. There were a few honorable members of Congress whose high regard for the labors and sacrifices of our forefathers precluded them from advocating that infamous measure which strikes with deep intent and a spirit born of hatred, at the very foundation upon which our government and the liberties of the people rest. Those honorable gentlemen, in opposing the bill, counted the cost by realizing that their course in the matter might offend their constituents, who by reason thereof, might retire them forever from the walks of public political life.

[JD 23:202, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Now I must admit that it would have required nerve and genuine moral courage to enable members of the Republican party to vote against the passage of that bill when the party lash was being swung around them as I have never before seen a party lash used. To overcome the fear arising from the contemplated action of constituents at home, and the cut and the sting of the party leaders in Congress, required more courage than we could reasonably expect from members of the dominant party. Moral courage is a virtue possessed by few men in this gilded age in which ambition, rather than principle, too frequently is the moving cause which prompts to action. When, therefore, party leaders, sarcastic and unscrupulous, shake their fists under the noses of their timid followers, daring them to place themselves upon record as advocates of "Mormonism" by opposing measures intended for the bondage of "Mormons," it is indeed difficult, and we ought not to expect weak men, under such circumstances, to do what is right.

[JD 23:202 – p.203, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

I remember before going East, certain petitions to Congress were being circulated in the midst of the Latter-day Saints, which were afterwards, I understand, signed by about 65,000 people, and what was the prayer of those petitioners – did they ask Congress to endorse polygamy, or in the least manifest sympathy for the marital relations of the Latter-day Saints? No. The burden of the prayer of this community was to give us a trial before condemning us, to hear our cause before convicting and executing us; in other words, that an investigating committee be sent to the people of Utah to see them as they are; to come, if need be, into our homes and pry into every detail of our social relations, and then judge the tree by its fruits. If the children of the Latter-day Saints, as has been asserted, are frail in body and weak in intellect, we asked the statesmen of our land to come and demonstrate it for our benefit and their information, or send a competent and reliable commission to investigate the matter for them. If we are an immoral people – as we have been accused of being – we want the nation to say so through the mouths of honorable men. That is what we prayed for. Our petitions were not heard, I doubt if they were even read, and, yet, have we any feelings of enmity towards our nation because of it? I have not, not in the least. There is not a man, woman or child in all this broad land for whom I have one particle of hatred. Thank God for that. That is what my religion has taught me. And while I know that I am by no means perfect in keeping that higher law which Jesus gave, namely, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you, I am trying to become so. That is a law of the Gospel which we must all eventually observe in spirit and practice. I am trying to pray for men who by night and day use their influence and every means in their power to crush out a people whom I love, and who are innocent before God of the vile slanders constantly heaped upon them. When we, as Saints of the Most High, shall have learned to love our enemies and pray for those who despitefully use us – shall have learned it so well, that prayerful humble practice impresses it upon the tablets of our hearts, from which every desire to oppress our fellowman has been eradicated, then, and not till then will the government rule, and dominion be given into the hands of this people.

[JD 23:203, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Zion will be redeemed, God's kingdom bear sway and His people, under Christ Jesus our Lord, will rule when the law goes forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

[JD 23:203 – p.204, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Much has been said about the domination of the "Mormon" Priesthood. In Europe, in the States of the Union, and even in Mexico it has been stated that "Mormons" are controlled like slaves, being obliged to yield obedience, right or wrong, to the behest of Church leaders. I bear my testimony that the statement is utterly untrue. No part of the Union possesses a freer and more independent people than these mountain valleys. Indeed I hesitate not to say that their equal in fearlessness of wrongful church, political or other influences cannot be found elsewhere. They neither crouch beneath public opinion nor cower before the pulpit and press. The names of prominent business men of Eastern cities, with whom for years our merchants have done business, appeared in the public prints as the vice-presidents of anti-"Mormon" meetings; thus making them seem to join in the raid against our people. When asked regarding the matter a number confessed that their names had been used without either their knowledge or consent. But they had not the moral courage necessary to stem the current of public opinion and run the risk of incurring the displeasure of the press by withdrawing their names; and, while disclaiming to me personally, any sympathy with the anti-"Mormon" raids, then so numerous in the East, they dare not publicly so express themselves. Now, while expressing sympathy for those who, under any circumstances, could be placed in such a position, I am bold to assert that nowhere in Utah among Latter-day Saints could such a thing be found. Such domination, ecclesiastical, political or social does not exist in Utah among the "Mormons;" possibly it may exist in the midst of those comprising their enemies, and known here as the "ring." Whatever may have been said or whatever may hereafter be asserted regarding the domination of the "Mormon" Priesthood, I know no people who regard more highly the individual rights of man or who are more willing to defend them than the people called "Mormons," who here, as elsewhere, have the moral courage to protect and defend their names while maintaining their individuality. I don't think they would hesitate to defend the oppressed whether Jew, Gentile or "Mormon," nor would they sacrifice in their lack of independence, principle or persons at the shrine of public opinion or popular prejudice. The "Mormon" Priesthood dominates the affairs of the "Mormon" people upon the principles of righteousness and equity. Outside of these it has neither power nor authority. I wish this were equally true with the religious, political and social organizations throughout the Union; but it is not, as I have already shown. When principle is sacrificed to prejudice there can be neither safety nor stability. Acting upon such a basis men become great in small things, but small in greater matters.

[JD 23:204, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Did principle or a proper regard for the rights of man prevail in the Senate and House of our National Congress, pending the passage of the Edmunds law? It is true a number of honorable members in each branch recognized and protested against the passage of that unconstitutional and un-American measure, but how few, if any, comprehended the opportunity afforded a great statesmen to stem the current and by the force of patriotism and the power of right, rise above the waves of popular prejudice and, striking out of disguises stand proudly upon the solid foundations of constitutional law while victoriously battling for human freedom and the natural rights of man. Such an opportunity had made Webster, Clay or Sumner even greater than the great men we now esteem them. The thought of such as they were, the devotion to principle, liberty and right exhibited by Washington, Jefferson, Adams, and others in their struggles for human freedom, have made me proud to be an American citizen. But when I see sacred principles, for the establishment of which our fathers devoted property, honor and lives, trampled under foot by our national lawmakers, in order to answer the fanatical demands of religious bigots against a few thousand loyal citizens in Utah, I blush and almost wish I had been foreign born.

[JD 23:204 – p.205, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Aside from these drawbacks evidencing the degeneracy into which statesmen are falling, I have ever been proud of my citizenship. Of but one thing have I ever been prouder and that is of my allegiance to God and

His laws, and a love for His kingdom and people. For these I have patiently, and almost uncomplainingly, endured the scorn and ridicule of many people in various countries. This I could never have endured, being naturally proud and perhaps over-sensitive, had it not been for the comforting influence which accompanies a knowledge of truths revealed in our day.

[JD 23:205, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

During twenty-five years of experience in the Church, having been more or less in the missionary field since I was fifteen years of age, I have met thousands of people in Europe and America who thought of "Mormonism" and the "Mormons" only with contempt, believing the system to be a fraud they thought of its advocates as wicked deceivers. Under other circumstances I have been thrown into contact with men and women who, while appearing chaste and fair without, were foul and corrupt within, but who nevertheless, would act as though the touch of a "Mormon" Elder was pollution. Hundreds of times I have been forced to notice the reluctance of men, themselves not averse to the destruction of chastity, to publicly appear in the company of Elders, whom I knew, would suffer their right hands to be burned from their bodies rather than look upon a woman with lust, much less seek to destroy virtue, or defile themselves with the unclean.

[JD 23:205, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Whatever the world may think or say to the contrary, the Elders of this Church are the purest men on earth, and there are abundance of facts with which to substantiate the assertion. They are not all, perhaps, what they should be, but take them as a whole – consider their works, their sacrifices, trials and temptations, and in that virtue that comes of chaste thoughts, words and actions, they have no rivals in this world; for, as married men, they are true at home and abroad to their marital vows; as single men they are equally true to God and their covenants. With men of the world these things may be of but little moment, with us they are of vital importance, for upon the basis of sexual purity shall be perpetuated that which is noble, good and lovely.

[JD 23:205, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

The love of wealth, a desire for luxury, or an ambition for fame may move the world, and stir men to ceaseless activity; but for us and our children there is more happiness, peace and salvation in the quietness and purity of our simple homes, than can be found anywhere else.

[JD 23:205 – p.206, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

In some of the Eastern States, especially in the larger cities, the evidences of increasing prosperity appear numerous. Trade and commerce, pushed by enterprise and capital, are accumulating wealth in the hands of the far-seeing and shrewd very rapidly, and the luxurious habits manifested in the erection and decoration of magnificent palatial residences, is only equalled by the rich personal ornaments of their owners. To excel in these things the highest ambition of the worldly is excited to the utmost extent, and intelligent men and women too often sacrifice truth and honor in the mad strife for gain. Wealth, or the love of it, is fast becoming the God of the Christian world. To what extent their idolatrous worship produces happiness I am not aware, but am personally satisfied to cast my lot with the poor, despised people of Utah; who, having less of the things of this world, have more of the imperishable things of God. Possessing the keys of inspiration, we are able to draw upon the only true source of happiness, and our path, if we are faithful, will grow brighter and brighter, until the perfect day. Were we able to convince the rulers of nations of this fact, they would, I have no doubt, willingly forego all earthly hopes of worldly fame and the honors of men, and meekly receive that which has been so freely given to us. If God were to open the eyes of the Queen of England and the President of the United States, as He has opened our eyes, I think they would rejoice as we have rejoiced, with a boundless gladness. But they, like millions of others, having never been born of water, cannot even see, much less enter the kingdom of heaven. Could they do so and receive the manifestations and revelations, the companionship and instructions of the Holy Ghost, they would willingly exchange the honors and emoluments of their offices, for the persecution and slander to which all who live godly in Christ Jesus are

subject.

[JD 23:206, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

They have their mission and work to perform; we have ours. We would gladly confer upon them and others a knowledge of that which we have received from God, if we could, but we cannot. The wealth of this world can neither purchase such knowledge, nor can the influence of the mighty and great ever become potent enough to secure it for themselves and convey it to others, except upon the simple conditions prescribed by the Master and to which we have yielded a willing obedience.

[JD 23:206, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

As this people have been obedient to God, so have they been loyal to the government. I desire to ask those composing this vast congregation, if you are a disloyal people? You are frequently accused of being so. Do you not regard the Constitution of our nation with respect and veneration? Have you not taught your children that the Declaration of Independence is the highest bill of rights which man has ever bequeathed to man? Have you not held up to them for emulation the character of the father of his country, the great George Washington? When recently gazing upon his monument in Washington, D. C. which has been so many years in building, I asked myself the question: Is all this mass of polished marble being accumulated and put together with such accurate nicety and at such vast expense because George Washington was willing to float with the current of public opinion, right or wrong, or is it because he had those noble sentiments which beat and throb, in generous hearts for freedom? He, while possessing many ideas of the English aristocratic school, was no weather-cock to be turned by the passing breeze. How few men in the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, appear to have been close students of history. Had they been such they would have seen in the characters of Washington, Jefferson, and the Adams's something far different from that possessed by the average statesmen of our day. Close students of history should be able to sense the fact, that in emergencies when the waves of popular feeling run high, great men whose hearts beat for liberty and freedom come to the front but they do not float with the tide, nor are they swerved by prejudice or biased by public opinion.

[JD 23:206 – p.207, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Public opinion followed Jesus Christ into the garden of Gethsemane when, alone and unwatched by His Apostles, He prayed to the Father for strength to endure suffering which caused drops of blood to ooze from every pore of his agonized body. Public opinion followed him to the bench of the heathen judge who, being above the prejudices of the age, washed his hands of innocent blood and said: "I find no guilt in this man." But the self-righteous Jew – the hypocritical Scribe and Pharisee – cried out, "Crucify Him!" "Crucify Him!" "His blood be on us and our children." Public opinion has caused rivers of human blood to flow; sacrificing, it is said, sixty millions of lives during the reign of the inquisition. Who can think of the dark and cruel work of those days and years of religious superstition and bigotry without a shudder of horror?

[JD 23:207, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

In the museum at the City of Mexico I have gazed upon the mummied forms of men and women who lost their lives under the pressure of the religious public opinion that fed flames, and instituted racks, in that land.

[JD 23:207, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Public opinion, backed by persecution, drove our fathers across the deep, and planted the Pilgrims upon Plymouth Rock, ready to perish if needs be for God and liberty. Had they been of the class predominating to-day in our National legislature, a free government on this land would have been unknown to the present generation. But they were noble, self-sacrificing men who, loving liberty better than life, could neither cringe to the dictates of kingly power nor bow to the behest of priestly authority. Hence, that conscience might be

free and God worshipped accordingly, they braved the dangers of the sea in search of a land of freedom, a home for the oppressed. And here, upon the choice land of Joseph, still persecuted and hated, the survivors prospered and grew and became strong under the blessings of God, until their noble hearts and generous brains produced thoughts and actions that led to one of the grandest and most successful efforts, in the interest of human freedom, the world has ever known. How strange, how unreasonable it seems that the children of those noble ones, should ever become oppressors. Thus attesting the truthfulness of the saying: "The oppressed of to-day may become the oppressors of to-morrow."

[JD 23:207 – p.208, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Persecution, prompted by religious bigots, and urged forward by public opinion incited to deeds of violence, and sacrificed in a cool, premeditated and bloody manner the Prophet Joseph and the patriarch Hyrum Smith, at Carthage in the free and sovereign State of Illinois. Unappeased with the blood of martyrs, it devastated cities, villages and farms, pillaged homes, killed defenceless women and children, and finally drove us as a people into these mountains. I remember as a child, the pains and sorrows of those days of destitution when the aged and the young together walked weary miles with blistered feet in the hot sands that formed a part of the wilderness which stretched out between the so-called civilization and the place of peace and rest, so much desired by our people. Heat and cold, hunger and thirst, were each and all forgotten in the intense desire to be free from the cruel persecution of our enemies. We asked for neither riches nor fame, but around the camp fires at night the people were inspired with but one prayer during the weary days of that long journey – it was for peace and rest – freedom to worship God without being molested, without being persecuted by cruel, relentless enemies. For the enjoyment of these blessings we were willing to forego the comforts of life, associate with savages, and dig roots with which to keep body and soul together, as many of us had to do.

[JD 23:208, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

For a time we enjoyed comparative peace, but bitter prejudice manufactured and fostered by Christian divines and political demagogues, has followed us with malice unparalleled. Securing the support of public opinion it sent, in 1857, an army to Utah to despoil our people, while sedition ripened in the heart of the nation. In 1862 it culminated in a congressional enactment against a religious tenet, notwithstanding the positive and explicit prohibition of the Constitution which forbids Congress to pass any law "respecting the establishment of religion or preventing the free exercise thereof," it urged and succeeded in passing the Poland law, under the provisions of which "Mormon" citizens were deprived of trial by an impartial jury of their peers, and by the decision of biased judges were not only subject to, but some of them actually were, tried by packed juries. At the demand of the clergy of the various religious denominations throughout the Union the Edmunds bill, substantially as it was drafted by clergymen and carpet-bag officials here, became law; and without excuse or apology citizens in Utah are deprived of franchise, a sacred, blood bought right, without which no American can ever feel proud or properly exercise the liberties bequeathed by our fathers to their children.

[JD 23:208, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Now what does it all mean? What can be the object of this unjust, inexcusable, unholy raid? Can it be possible that the dominant party holding the reins of government, desire to make of the people of Utah a race of slaves – fit subjects for fetters and chains? I hope not. But if such is the object would it not be well to transport us to the flats of the Mississippi river, to the swamps of Louisiana, where association with the black freedman might accustom us to the chains of slavery that now lie rusting in the blood of thousands that were brave and true – willing sacrifices at the shrine of human liberty and the equal rights of man.

[JD 23:208 – p.209, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

There, perhaps, restraining bonds might fret and gall until the love for liberty and the rights of free men might be forgotten. Not so in these mountains. They are high and noble and grand. They are the mighty bulwarks of our God. The snows that drift upon their lofty peaks, the waters that leap down their steep sides and rush

through their rugged gorges, are full of the harmony that accords with our love for freedom. The very air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, the soil we walk upon, inspire the soul with thoughts and a love for liberty undreamed of in lands that produce oppressors. Loyal citizens of a great government, honest, frugal, just, charitable and obedient to constitutional law, we desire to continue while fulfilling our mission of peace on earth and good will to man, but while our surroundings remain unchanged and Nature's bulwarks stand, with the blessings of God we never can become slaves. Oppressions, frauds and wrongs we may for a time endure. We may as in the past be subjected to annoyances and to the petty tyranny of small tyrants, but we know in whom we trust, and we are not ignorant of what the final result will be. Traitors may arise and seek to trample upon the provisions of the Constitution, but right here in these mountains – on the backbone of the continent – will grow the men who will preserve intact that sacred inspired charter of human rights, under the just provisions of which millions will rejoice long after usurpers and traitors shall have been buried in oblivion. And right here in this connection I desire to repeat what I have said in public once before. In reviewing the tribulations through which the Saints have passed, and while contemplating the wrongs which they have endured at the hands of despoilers, I have felt and said, rather than be robbed as my father on several occasions was, on account of his religion, I would endeavor to have facts plainly submitted to the President of these United States, so that he might fully understand the situation, and then, before I would permit my possessions – the hard earnings of years of toil – to go into the hands of those who covet our property, and who would rob us, as our fathers were robbed, I would deed it to, and make a present, if he would accept it, of all the property I have to the President and his successor in office forever, as a perpetual reminder, that here, in free America, whole communities of citizens have been plundered, persecuted and deprived of the peaceful possession of property without cause and without redress.

[JD 23:209 – p.210, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

It is said "there are no persons in Utah who desire the property of the "Mormons" except upon the fair basis of purchase." I would be glad if this were true, for I wish to think well of all men, and especially of fellow-citizens, but I fear recent movements and present indications will scarcely warrant belief in the statement, and if future developments of the plot of conspirators do not demonstrate that polygamy was the chosen pretext with which to excite and blind the public mind, while unscrupulous tricksters sought to transfer the revenues of the Territory and virtually the property of the majority of the people through increased and excessive taxation, to the control of the insignificant minority in this Territory, then I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet. The passage of the Edmunds bill and the means used to make it law, are but a part of the plot concocted in this city and endorsed by certain parties east against the rights and liberties of the people of Utah. The peculiar mathematical calculation by which Governor Murray succeeded in counting about 1,300 votes for a person almost unknown here, a greater number than over 18,000 cast for Hon. George Q. Cannon, the people's choice for Delegate to Congress, was but another part of the programme, and one which has, thus far, deprived us of representation in the National Legislature, and rendered nugatory, to the majority in this Territory, the sacred right of franchise. The late President Garfield, in a public State document, declared, in effect, that as a person who plotted against the life of the king in a monarchical government committed treason, so one who tampered with the ballot-box and thereby deprived the citizen of his right of franchise also committed treason. If this be sound doctrine and authoritatively enunciated, what crime has the Governor of Utah Territory committed? If the canvassing of those votes and the issuance of a certificate of election to a man who received only about one-fifteenth of the whole number, foreshadow the future action of our chief executive, what have the people of Utah to expect, by way of justice, from him? Being neither of, nor from among us – depending upon others for the tenure of his office and the amount and payment of his salary, we have, perhaps, no reason to expect sympathy or disinterested service, but we do have a right to expect unbiased justice in the administration of official duties.

[JD 23:210, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

No American citizen having the love of liberty and the rights of man at heart, can endorse the course pursued by the Governor in the Cannon-Campbell case. I cannot and never expect to. From childhood I have been taught to respect officials because of the dignity of their offices, and it may be possible to respect the office

after having lost confidence in the man occupying it. As people, our regard for the Government ought perhaps to enable us to do this in the future, as in the past. Faithful, loyal citizens can afford to do it, and much more, if necessary.

[JD 23:210, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

But says one, "You are thought to be neither faithful nor loyal to the Government, and it is believed by many that you make secret covenants against it." In answer I have this to say: The brain that concocted and the heart that prompted such accusations were possessed by the wicked and cruel. We have proven our loyalty under circumstances, most trying circumstances, in which actions were more weighty than words, deeds than promises.

[JD 23:210 – p.211, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

The patient, heroic endurance of the "Mormon" battalion while making their wondrous march of 2,030 miles, the planting of the Stars and Stripes on these mountains and in these valleys, then Mexican soil by their fathers, brothers, sisters and wives are historical facts, and so are the circumstances under which these things were done, historical facts establishing love for, and loyalty to our country that no honest man can ever question. As to making secret covenants against the Government, I never was requested to do it, and would have spurned the request and the person making it if I had been. As applied to this people the charge is false as those who make it. I think, however, I can understand why these false and unjust accusations are made. We have been treated from the beginning like an unloved child, when asking for bread we have been given a stone, for a fig we have been given a serpent. Now, who ever knew a father to be just to an unloved child? Or one unwilling to listen to the accusations of the favored against him? And here may be applied the saying "We can forgive those who injure us, but those we injure, never." And that is just the position we occupy. We have been injured, repeatedly injured, and those who have injured cannot forgive us. They hate us because they know they have wronged us. If statesmen and lawmakers disregard the Constitution by overriding and trampling on its provisions in their efforts to solve the "Mormon" problem, I hold the act to be no less treasonable than if performed by private citizens. I say treasonable because disregard for the Constitution by the nation's lawmakers, must ultimately result in their rejection by the people, or in the dissolution of the Government. Thus the charge of law-breaking and disloyalty might more consistently come from, than against us. Of one thing we are certain: that which is a crime to an individual or a community cannot become a virtue in law-makers, even though advocated as an expedient. George Washington, in his farewell address to the American people, foreseeing, perhaps, what might occur, uttered the following forcible sentiments: "If, in the opinion of the people, the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed." Very different are these sentiments from those uttered not many years since by a prominent republican leader in the House of Representatives, who, when asked if he, as a lawyer, would state to the House that the measure introduced by him, and then under consideration by it, was in its provisions in harmony with the Constitution, answered with a sneer, "Why, any justice of the peace would tell the gentleman it is not constitutional, but it is a measure we want and one we shall pass, and by the time its constitutionality is tested, it will have accomplished the object we have in view." The same sentiments as those we have referred to were clearly and unhesitatingly uttered by members of Congress pending the final passage of the Edmunds bill. They show the drift of the party, perhaps the spirit of the times, in which the sentiments of Washington are below par. Other members, while not entertaining such views, lacked moral courage to oppose them. Some of them came privately and confessed that the Edmunds bill was an infamous measure; but, said they, what can we do? Public sentiment is against your people, and we dare not defend you; if we do, our constituents will withdraw their support, and we shall be retired." The force of such reasoning we may not comprehend, but we do feel that we have no desire to have any man sacrifice himself or his prospects for us. We are used to oppressions, and with the help of God we can stand all the special ex post facto laws and bills of attainder which Congress may pass and the President approve, and we don't expect much sympathy or friendship from the outside either; for we have proven years ago that a man never has

fewer friends than when he needs them most, nor more than when he needs them least. Does a knowledge of this fact tend to destroy our confidence in man? No, I think not, but it does tend, by showing how weak and unreliable man is, to increase our trust in God.

JD 23:211, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882

In asking for a commission of honorable gentlemen to visit Utah to investigate affairs before passing judgment upon us, we did express as I said before, a hope that we might be fairly tried before being convicted. The signers of these petitions knew, and their enemies here knew that the charges constantly heaped up against this people could be proven utterly false if a chance to do so were afforded. But that is just what certain parties did not want, fearing that a thorough investigation conducted by honorable men would defeat their plot against the people of Utah. I speak of these matters as I understand them. I am not and never have been radical, but have desired always to view things from an impartial standpoint.

JD 23:211 – p.212, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882

Irrespective of creed or color, I think there is room in Utah for all who wish to locate in the Territory, and those who are here and others who may come hereafter, should be protected in the enjoyment of their rights, and should be free to exercise them so long as they do not infringe upon the rights of others. In these matters Gentile, Jew and Mormon should stand upon the same level. So far as I am concerned I would contend for, and if necessary defend the liberties of the one as soon as I would those of the other. Naturally I am inclined to be timid, and am disposed to shrink from troubles rather than to court them, believing it to be better to suffer wrong than to do wrong; but there are circumstances under which even the cowardly throw off their timidity, and fearlessly assert their rights. I am not able to say how patient, long suffering and kind this people may prove under the oppressions which wicked plotters may bring upon them; but of one thing I am certain and that is, God will permit nothing to occur to our hurt. Nor will he, if we are faithful, permit the wicked to do anything that will not ultimately prove beneficial to those who love and obey Him. With the companionship of the Holy Spirit the doctrines of the Priesthood will distil upon our minds as the dews of heaven, and we have nothing to fear. The time may be near at hand when men's souls will be tried, but those possessing the inspiration of the Almighty, will bear the test as the faithful and true in other ages have done. Unaided by the power of God, we might be placed under circumstances that would cause us to fear and tremble and possibly plead for life at the sacrifice of allegiance to Him. Under the pressure of fear Peter denied his Lord and Master, but that transpired before he was "endowed with power from on high." From the day of Pentecost, when he received the Comforter, until his death no power on earth or beneath could have induced him to do such a thing. This fact is attested beyond doubt, by what we know of his life and labors subsequent to that awful night, when the powers of earth and hell seemed to prevail even over the Son of God.

JD 23:212, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882

Deprived of the sustaining powers of the Holy Spirit, the Latter-day Saints might yield to the fear of artillery, bullets and bayonets, so often recommended by Christian divines as the best means with which to solve the "Mormon" problem; but with that spirit such agencies become impotent. Confidence in God destroys fear, and a knowledge of the resurrection of the just, takes away the sting of death. The inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit have prompted the Presidency and Apostles of this Church to open meeting-houses and Tabernacles for ministers of various religious denominations to preach in; while our Elders were being persecuted, hunted and sometimes whipped by members of these same denominations. The contrast between the treatment which we have given and that which we have received is very great. And if we have not under every circumstance "turned the other cheek to be smitten," we have at least tried to do good for evil. Without purse or scrip our Elders have faithfully sought to preach the Gospel in every Christian land; and while we, here in Utah, have extended courtesy and kindness to ministers of Christian denominations, many of our Elders have wandered like outcasts, sleeping under the hedges and in the woods with leaves as their only covering, like their Master, having no place other than that provided by nature, to lay their heads. Others when provided with places of rest have been called out and flayed with hickory withes. Poison has been

administered in the food of some, and others have been killed.

[JD 23:212 – p.213, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

How exactly similar this treatment is to that received by the Saints of old; and yet Christians appear to be utterly unable to learn a lesson from the parallel. To them nothing good can come out of Nazareth, and the kingdom of heaven they cannot see, for they have not been born again. The world loves its own, but it loved not the disciples of Jesus because he called them out of the world. On the same principle the world cannot love us. Let us realize this fact, and while being just to all men, let us live the religion of Jesus Christ, and trust in God. If we are pressed on all sides from without, it will tend to unite and make us all the more solid. Snow is soft and yielding, melting easily under the genial rays of the sun, but press it hard from every side and it congeals into a frozen mass, and in that state is capable of resisting mighty forces.

[JD 23:213, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Pressure from without, as observed before, will tend to unite and make us better and stronger. Better because the spirit manifested towards us by the wicked, will cause us to lay aside the little envies and jealousies that may have existed among us. Stronger, because the hatred of our enemies will teach us to trust more fully in God. And in doing this we shall learn to follow the example of the faithful and true. A special law was passed for the sole purpose of entrapping the three Hebrew boys. It failed. When questioned by the wrathful king they could not say whether God would preserve or suffer them to perish, but they could say that "they would not fall down and worship the image which the king had made." No fault could be found with Daniel, so those who were jealous of his growing influence and power succeeded in securing the enactment of a special law which they knew he must violate or be false to his God. But Daniel was true to God, and with his face turned toward Jerusalem, prayed as before. How many Daniels or Hebrew boys we have among us I do not know. Lions' dens and heated caldrons, prisons and dungeon cells, the rack and the rope, have each and all been used to punish those unwilling to forsake God, or disobey His laws. They have their terrors, but the blood-stained pages of history attest that they have been failures when applied as means with which to change men's religion, violate conscience, or coerce the human mind. As it has been in the past, so it will be in the future; the faithful being inspired with the Holy Ghost, will set their hearts upon the redemption of Zion, and relying upon the promises, will turn their faces towards Jerusalem, pray as before, and follow Jesus Christ in life and death. Let the wicked rage and the adversary exert his power, the righteous will gain the victory, and when thrones are cast down the Saints shall prevail.

[JD 23:213 – p.214, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Let us maintain the Constitution of our country, and all laws enacted in conformity therewith, realizing that the destruction of the Constitution must lead to the ruin and destruction of the Union. Let us honor the rulers of the nation and uphold them, by faith and prayers as long as it is possible to do so. I desire to regard the President as an honorable man. As the chief executive of a great nation he should have the confidence and respect of the people. Should he select honorable, unbiased gentlemen for the Utah commission, as I have reason to hope he will, they can do much towards modifying the unjust law under which they must act, but whether such are appointed or not, we must continue to pray for our enemies and those that spitefully use us, until by and by we shall learn the lesson so well that when the little stone cut out of the mountains without hands shall roll forth, become a mighty mountain, fill the whole earth, and the Saints of the Most High have the rule and dominion they will never be disposed to oppression.

[JD 23:214, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

I pray for the peace and blessings of God to be with all Israel, and with the honest everywhere. Thousands are misguided and deceived by priests who preach for money and divine for hire; ministers who make merchandize of the souls of men. The mother of Harlots has "made all nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication," just as John the Revelator saw she would do, but among those nations are many

honest, upright ones. For them I pray. In conclusion let me impress upon your minds the spirit of inspiration given through Joseph the Prophet, while incarcerated in Liberty Jail, while suffering the abuse of his enemies, and while being deprived of his liberty and the association of family and friends for the Gospel's sake, he says, "No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the Priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness and by love unfeigned.

[JD 23:214, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

By kindness and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile.

[JD 23:214, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost, and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reproved, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy; that he may know that thy faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death.

[JD 23:214, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly, then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God, and the doctrine of the Priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven.

[JD 23:214, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion, and thy sceptre an unchanging sceptre of righteousness and truth, and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee for ever and ever.

[JD 23:214, Moses Thatcher, April 8th, 1882](#)

May God enable us to learn these things, and to be true and faithful to Him, is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

John Taylor, August 6th, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered at Logan Conference, Sunday Afternoon, August 6th, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE TEMPLE AT LOGAN – THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC – CHURCH ORGANIZATION – DUTIES OF ITS
OFFICERS – TREATMENT OF TRANSGRESSORS – AN INTERESTING ANECDOTE AND ITS
MORAL – VARIOUS OFFICES AND CALLINGS OF THE PRIESTHOOD, ETC. – THE GUIDANCE

OF GOD – HONOR DUE TO HIS PRIESTHOOD – GROWTH AND PROGRESS OF GOD'S WORK – ITS
OPPOSITION BY THE WORLD – THE REGENERATION OF THE LAMANITES AND GENERAL
SALVATION OF MAN.

JD 23:215 – p.216, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882

There is one thing I wish to speak about which has already been referred to, that is, in regard to your Temple. I can join with the brethren in saying that I am very well pleased with the progress made on that building, and with the energy and liberality that has been manifested towards it. For one I have not a word of complaint to make about anything; I think that things have been done and managed very well. Some of the speakers have given the Trustee-in-Trust credit for doing something towards it; but then, that is nothing – it is your means not mine particularly, only as one of you. And what you have done you have done outside of these things, and consequently I think there is a little more credit due to you than to the Trustee-in-Trust. The people in this Temple district have furnished about three-fourths of the means, and the Trustee-in-Trust about one-fourth. Now we do not wish to have any of the employees deprived of what is justly their due; for the laborer is worthy of his hire – I did not like to hear some of the remarks this morning to the effect that we were in debt; we calculate to pay our debts as we go along, and then we feel that we have acted justly and are free from all responsibilities and care; for all just demands ought always to be met. We have kept things along pretty well, and I think that we will be able "to put it through." I have been talking with Brother Card, who is the superintendent of the Temple, and also with the Temple committee; and I will tell you what I am prepared to do, if you are prepared to follow suit, and thus stop all remarks about tardiness of pay, for it is proper that all just obligations ought to be and must be met. Brother Card thinks that the sum of \$20,000 will complete the building. I do not know whether his figures are too much or too little, but if that is sufficient, it seems as nothing compared with what we have already done. We have got accustomed to it; and it is much easier doing a thing when you are used to it than when you are not. There is a proposition to the effect that a fifty cent donation be made; if that be done and the people are willing to respond to it, all well and good; and whatever amount is subscribed, I will, as Trustee-in-Trust, add my proportion to it, according to the pro-rata in the figures mentioned. What do you say, do you think you can stand it? (President W. B. Preston, I think we can, we'll try), Brother Preston says he thinks you can or will be found trying. I do not know what your donation will amount to, and therefore I will undertake to say now that the Trustee-in-Trust will be good for \$5,000, which it is stated will be a fourth of the sum required to finish the work. I would like to know now whether you are willing that I, as Trustee-in-Trust, should help you to the amount of \$5,000? All that are willing raise up the right hand. (A forest of hands went up.) I believe that is carried. (Laughter.) Now I want you to put to that the sum of \$10,000. (Here President Taylor's attention was called to the fact that he had made a mistake, that the proportion of the people would be \$15,000 instead of \$10,000.) I am reminded that I have made a mistake, that it should be \$15,000. Will the clerk please give us the correct figures so that we may do things understandingly. (The clerk ascertained that the Trustee-in-Trust had paid more than one-fourth but not quite one-third.) We will not be too precise about these matter, perhaps it would be as well to err on that side as on the other, for in any event, we are all of us desirous to see the work progress and have all our liabilities met. Well, we'll let it go at 10,000. I propose to give you my portion on demand that these men may get their pay, and then allow you a little time to get in your harvest which will give you an opportunity to accomplish your end of the matter. What do you say? The question was put to vote and carried unanimously.

JD 23:216, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882

There were some remarks made about liquor drinking this morning, and some people seem to think that there is a great difficulty about managing these things, but I don't think there is if we can only manage ourselves. I feel like giving you credit for what you have done in this respect, and hope that you will be able to keep it up.

JD 23:216, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882

I want to state here, that God has organized His Church in such a way that all of these matters can be arranged within the Church, law or no law, if we will only do our duty, and each of us magnify our calling and our Priesthood in the various positions that we occupy in the Church and kingdom of God. And it is a much better principle than the civil law, as the civil law is frequently perverted by mal-administration and made to operate in such a way as to trample on the rights of man.

JD 23:216 – p.217, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882

The organization of the Church is after the plan that exists in heaven, and according to the principles that God has revealed in the interest of His Church upon the earth and for the advancement and rolling forth of his kingdom. We start in with the Teacher and with the Priest, whose duty it is to know the position of all the members in their several districts; if they do their duty they will know really and truly the position of all those who come under their charge. Their duty is very simple. What is it? They are to see that there is no hard feeling existing in the breasts of the Saints one towards another; that there are no dishonest or fraudulent acts, no lasciviousness or corruption, no lying, false accusations, profanity or drunkenness; and that the people call upon God in prayer in their various households – the father and mother and children, and that all perform their various duties and do right. I look upon it that the Teachers and the Priests occupy a very important position in the Church and kingdom of God; and that if they perform their duty aright, there will be no hard speaking; there will be no hard feelings, no bitterness or wrath; there will be no fraud no lasciviousness of any kind, no drunkenness, nor will there be any bitter or improper feelings of any kind; for it is their right and privilege to look after these things, and not only their right and privilege but their duty; and if they do not fulfill this, they are not magnifying their calling and Priesthood. But if they are and people are disposed to listen to them, then everything will be right in regard to this matter. And if there are those who are not disposed to listen to them and to do right, then it becomes the duty of the Teachers, after pleading with them and doing the best they can, to report them to their Bishop; and then it devolves upon him to do his part, not in anger or animosity or in the spirit of vindictiveness, but as a savior; and the Teacher and the Priest ought to act in the same way. And while God has organized His Church upon the earth after the plan that exists in the heavens, it is for the various officers in the Church to fulfill the duties devolving upon them, acting in all kindness, long-suffering and mercy before the Lord, yet with justice and judgment, that the law of God may be honored, that the principles of righteousness may be exalted, that the workers of iniquity may be ashamed, that the meek may increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men may rejoice in the Holy One of Israel; that righteousness and truth may prevail among the people of God; and we may act not in name only, but in reality as the Saints of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

JD 23:217, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882

If any persons then should feel that they are aggrieved by the acts of the Teacher or the Bishop; if they should think that they have been unnecessarily harshly dealt with, they have the right of appeal to the High Council – High Priests selected from among the people and set apart because of their fidelity, their integrity, their honor and their justice – at least these are the kind of qualifications necessary to fill this calling. And if upon an appeal to the High Council on any of these matters (of course including drunkenness), they find there has been unnecessary harshness, it would be for them to remedy the evil, to see that justice is done and that no man is oppressed; on the contrary that all have their rights, freedom, liberty and equal justice in righteousness without fear or favor.

JD 23:217, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882

When things are attended to in this way they move along all right. If professed Saints will not obey the law of God, but violate the commands of the Almighty, they are not fit to be the servants and handmaids of the Lord. We are told that they must be dealt with according to rules laid down in the law of God, by the proper persons that He has placed in His Church for that purpose.

JD 23:217 – p.218 – p.219, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882

I heard a man not long ago say that in the place he lived he had seen a great many people drunk; it was one of those places abounding with saloons in which they could get beastly drunk; and that some of those who thus indulged were Elders, High Priests, etc. The man himself was a High Priest. If I had seen such men I should have gone to them and told them what course to pursue to stop those infamies. Every Elder in Israel ought to be on the watch-tower as watchmen upon the walls of Zion. Where iniquity prevails or evil of any kind, it is for them to do what they can to stem the current of evil and to lift up and exalt the people that they may comprehend correct principles, live their religion and be prepared to receive the blessings of Jehovah. When I was quite a boy – I was not a Mormon then, but I had principles of humanity nevertheless – there was an old gentleman whom I respected, he was a good man, a praying man – he had a wife who did not want to pray, and who interfered with his devotions; she was uneasy and turbulent, and a kind of thorn in his flesh. Under these trials he got along very well, but it used to drive him to the Lord. After a while she died and he married again; this time to a very amiable lady; his wife was so pleasant and agreeable that the change in his circumstances was very great. Being thus comfortably situated he became remiss in some of his religious duties, and commenced by giving way to the temptation of liquor. Seeing the course he was taking I went to him. I felt a little bashful on account of my youth at the time, but because of long friendship and out of respect for his many good qualities, I felt it a duty to bring these delinquencies to his notice; I told him that I had seen him drunk a few days previously, and that it had hurt me very much to see him in such a state, as his course had always been exemplary and he was a man whom I respected very highly. He appreciated my good feelings, saying that he felt disgraced and promised to mend his ways. Now that was not "Mormonism," but it was a correct feeling. Cannot we, as Latter-day Saints, do as much good as those who are not Latter-day Saints? Cannot we go after our brethren and sisters when they do wrong, with love and affection, and lead them in the paths of life? But then, if they will not do it after much persuasion, it becomes our duty to deal with them as the law of God directs; but in doing this we ought to be full of love and kindness one toward another, and not be harsh, acrimonious or desirous to place them in a wrong; such feelings do not become Latter-day Saints. We ought to cherish feelings of kindness and love and longsuffering; but we do not want our charity to cover too many sins. Everybody is at liberty to do this, whoever he may be, it being our privilege to do good, to try to redeem and exalt our fellow-men, and to act as saviors upon Mount Zion. But when people will not do right, are we to foster the wrong? No, God forbid. We talk sometimes about the celestial glory, the terrestrial glory and the telestial glory, do you think that a man will get the celestial glory if he does not abide the law of the celestial kingdom? You Latter-day Saints know better. Well, then, if men are disposed to do wrong, to violate the commandments of God and yield to evils of various kinds, is a Bishop authorized, or is the High Council authorized to cover up those sins and allow them to go on? I tell you No, they are not. And if the Priest and the Teacher do not do their duty, it is for the Bishop to look after them to see that they do their duty. And if the Bishop does not do his duty in this respect, it becomes the duty of the President of the Stake to do it, to see that righteousness prevails, that the principles of truth are sustained, that the Gospel of the Son of God is honored, and that the principles of equity, justice and righteousness and the fear of God are maintained in their purity in the Stake over which he presides. And if the President of the Stake does not attend to this duty, then it devolves upon the First Presidency to see that no iniquity exists in the Church. And when these things are done we are then in a position to approach God our Heavenly Father to ask and receive, to seek and find and to knock and have the door opened unto us.

[JD 23:219 – p.220, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

And besides these offices, which are the leading, prominent media or channels through which these things are reached, there are other methods by which they can be adjusted. The Twelve, where they go, are expected to regulate matters of this kind. We have a Quorum of High Priests in each Stake, and it is for them to exercise themselves and their influence individually and as a Quorum in the interests of righteousness and virtue and the maintenance of the principles connected with the kingdom of God. They have no particular position or calling; they are ordained to the High Priesthood, and it is for their President to meet with them and have them humble themselves before God, and seek for the guidance of His Holy Spirit and the light of revelation; "for this ordinance" we are told in the Doctrine and Covenants, "is instituted for the purpose of qualifying those who shall be appointed standing Presidents or servants over different Stakes scattered abroad, and they may travel also if they choose, but rather be ordained for standing Presidents; this is their office and calling saith

the Lord your God;" that they may comprehend the principles of law, of government, of justice and equity, and watch over, not only themselves, but their families and friends, associations and neighborhoods, and act as fathers in Israel, looking after the welfare of the people and exerting a salutary influence over the Saints of the Most High God.

[JD 23:220, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

Again, we have our organization of Seventies, and they ought to see that there is no iniquity among their quorums – no drunkenness, no whoredom, no fraud, nothing that is wrong or improper, unholy or impure; but that they are men of God chosen and set apart as messengers to the nations of the earth, and wherever they reside it is their duty, and it is the duty of all men in Israel, to see that there is no iniquity, to use their influence on the side of right, and to put down wrong.

[JD 23:220, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

Then again, the same thing will apply to Elders. The Elder is ordained in many instances to act as a standing minister among the people, to preach to them, to instruct them as we are doing and as your missionaries are doing and as others are doing, preaching among the people at home, and frequently going abroad as circumstances may require.

[JD 23:220, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

Now, while we are here, we do not want to hear a man laugh and say, "Brother so-and-so is as drunk as a fool." Why do you not go to him and speak of this evil to himself? Why do you not go and try to put him on the right road, and tell him to walk in it? Why not ask him to go with you before the Lord to confess his sins, to seek for assistance to overcome his weakness? In doing this you help him, and you help one another to do right, not in the spirit of laughter or lightness; that is not becoming the Saints of the Most High, but it should be in the spirit of kindly regard and affection.

[JD 23:220, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

We have also our Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations, and I am pleased to find so good an influence prevailing among them, yet there are many things that are wrong even among them. They need watching over; they require to look after one another and use a kind supervisory care over their morals, and if any among them should go astray, to admonish them and lead them in another path. Then we have our Young Ladies' Associations; they are trying what they can do in leading the female youth in the right way. And when they see the daughters of Israel liable to be led astray, let them labor with them, treat them kindly, preserve them from evil, and guide them in the paths of life. We none of us are preserved only as we are preserved of God.

[JD 23:220, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

Brother Joseph F. Smith spoke rightly this morning when he said, that no man could guide this kingdom; he cannot unless God be with him and on the side of the Elders of Israel. But with Him on their side, all things will move on aright, and the intelligence and the revelations of God will be poured out. His law will be made known and the principles of truth be developed; or it is not the kingdom of God. And we all of us ought to humble ourselves before God, and seek for the guidance of the Almighty.

[JD 23:220, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

There are forces at work in the world that will in time overturn the world, which are to-day sapping the foundation of all governments and eating as a canker the foundation of all rule and dominion; and by and by their thrones will be cast down and nations and empires will be overturned, for God will arise to purge the

world from its iniquities, its evils and corruptions. And we have more or less of the principle of insubordination among us. But there is a principle associated with the kingdom of God that recognizes God in all things; and that recognizes the Priesthood in all things; and those who do not do it had better repent or they will come to a stand very quickly; I tell you that in the name of the Lord. Do not think that you are wise and that you can manage and manipulate the Priesthood, for you cannot do it. God must manage, regulate, dictate and stand at the head and every man in his place. The ark of God does not need steadying, especially by incompetent men without revelation and without a knowledge of the kingdom of God and its laws. It is a great work that we are engaged in; and it is for us to prepare ourselves for the labor before us, and to acknowledge God, His authority, His law and His Priesthood in all things.

[JD 23:220 – p.221, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

I have men come to me sometimes with some great complaints to make about their Bishop. I hear them, but I either send them back to their Bishop or to their President as circumstances dictate. Then I have Bishops come to me finding fault with their Presidents. I send them back to their Presidents, and write to those whose business it is to attend to it. I acknowledge every man in his place and office, whether President, Bishop, Priest, Teacher or Deacon; and then they should acknowledge everybody over them, or God will destroy them. I tell you that in the name of the Lord. I know what I am saying. I tell you it is the word and the will of the Lord. Do not be wise above what is written. Do not be too anxious to be too smart, to manage and manipulate and to put things right; but pray for those that God has placed in the different offices of this Church that they may be enabled to perform their several duties. The Lord will sustain His servants and give them His Holy Spirit and the light of revelation, if they seek Him in the way that he has appointed, and He will lead them and lead you in the right path. This is the order of the kingdom of God, as I understand it, and not the other. And it is for us to learn that order and be obedient to it. And thus by obedience to the law of the Priesthood, drunkenness and all other immoralities can be rooted out and overcome.

[JD 23:221, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

The work of God is growing and increasing, and it will continue to do so until the words of the prophet will be fulfilled who said, "A little one shall become a thousand; and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time" but He expects every man in his place to magnify his calling and to honor his God. And while there are evils of the kind I speak of, there is a great amount of good, of virtue, of self-abnegation, and a great desire to do the will of God, and carry out His purposes. And it is for every man and every woman to do his and her part.

[JD 23:221, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

The Relief Societies are doing a great work generally throughout the land; and the Young Men's and the Young Women's Associations are doing a great work; but I am sorry to say I sometimes hear of occasional acts of fornication among our young people. Our young men go to labor on railroads and mix up with the foul mouthed and corrupt, and I am sorry to say, that once in a while they copy after their ways. Fathers and mothers, look after your sons. You members of the different societies, look after your members and try to save the erring and lead them in the paths of life.

[JD 23:221, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

There is a great zeal and a great interest manifested in Sunday schools, which is also very praiseworthy. It is a good work for us to be engaged in. Continue in it. And let all perform their parts, whether in Sunday school, in Relief Societies, in Mutual Improvement Associations or otherwise; and let all seek to act with a single eye towards the glory of God.

[JD 23:221 – p.222, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

We are living in an important age. Time is marching on, and events of great magnitude and importance are transpiring. The nation in which we live has been moved against us. That is all right so far as God permits it; but if we fear him and keep his commandments as a people, no power arrayed against us can harm us. God will come forth to the deliverance of his people, and he will save his elect if they will only do right and obey his laws. We can do nothing unless assisted by the Almighty, neither can this nation, only as he permits. If we do right he has told us "the wrath of man shall praise me, and the remainder I will restrain." God lives, and his eyes are over us, and his angels are round and about us, and they are more interested in us than we are in ourselves, ten thousand times, but we do not know it. We become self-willed and captious, and lack in a great many instances that liberality, kindness and charity that ought to dwell in the bosoms of the Saints of God. The Lord is a great deal more interested in his work than we are. We think a great deal about our farms and our houses, our wives and our children, which is all very proper. He is thinking about the redemption of the earth, the regeneration of the world, the salvation of the living and the dead, and the accomplishment of the purposes spoken of by all the holy Prophets since the world began. And it is for us to be co-workers with him. He is pleased with your efforts in building this Temple; and the angels rejoice as they see you go forth to prepare a place in which you may labor for the living and the dead. People will be called upon to labor, as a mission in those Temples when built. And you will rejoice too, for while you are engaged in the work of God, it always brings peace and joy. A Temple built to the name of the Lord is a most delightful place to labor in: we feel that we are saviors upon Mount Zion, and that the kingdom is the Lord's, and that we are operating for God and not for ourselves, but in the interest of our common humanity and in the salvation of the world.

[JD 23:222, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

Let us attend to our duties and do not get up any quarrels in our families. Husbands treat your wives with kindness and try to make your home a heaven for them; and train your children in the fear of God. Then you sisters, treat your husbands aright; be full of kindness, for we are, as the old woman says, all "poor, miserable, independent sinners." We have need of more longsuffering, we need the assistance of one another, and the help of the Almighty. Let us try to do right.

[JD 23:222, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

There are a great many things open to my mind which I would like to talk about; there are one or two, however, to which I will refer. We have a great work to perform? Who? We Seventies, we Elders we Priests. What have we to do? We are required to build Temples and administer in them. What else? We have to take the Gospel to the world, as we have been doing and are doing, and to progress with it; to advance correct principles among men, and to lead them in the paths of life and salvation; to gather them to Zion and to teach them when we get them here; to go on and control matters; to learn to manage ourselves and our own affairs, and not trouble ourselves too much with outside matters.

[JD 23:222 – p.223, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

We talk sometimes about the nation being inimical to us. Whoever dreamed of anything else? I never did. What did the Elders preach to you, say 10, 30 or 40 years ago? It was that the people of the world would grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. Do you expect it is going to get better? I do not. What did Jesus say in his day? He said: "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own," that is the kind of love that exists in the world. It does not amount to much – it is love to-day and hate to-morrow, as the case may be. But continued the Savior: "Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." What did he say again? "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Then there is nothing strange about it, is there? Some people think that because the priests of Baal lie so outrageously about us, that we ought to be angry. Why that is their profession; for they are of their father the Devil, his works they will do, and he was a liar from the beginning. By and by when we and they get through, we shall find that all liars will have their portion with hypocrites and unbelievers; and they together with whoremongers and

sorcerers, will be found outside the holy city. But we have to take the brunt of it. No matter, we can stand it. As I said to some prominent gentlemen – Members of Congress – who were here recently, You are cutting up rather peculiar antics down in Washington. It does not matter much, however, as our potatoes grow all the same. That is how I feel about it. Let them attend to their father's business, and we will attend to our Father's business, and trust in him and pursue that course that will be right in his sight. We do not want to get up any excitement about anything. Let us lean upon the Lord, seek to Him and ask for what we want, do right and we shall receive. And while they are treating us badly we will treat them as well as the circumstances will admit of, and follow out the instructions of Jesus, who told us to do good for evil; and so far as we are concerned we will save them if possible, in spite of themselves.

[JD 23:223, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

The Lord is operating upon the Lamanites, and many of them are being baptized into the Church. Some people think all that we have to do is to baptize them, that they are a poor miserable set of outcasts. This is not the case. Some of us were poor miserable outcasts before we came into the Church, and we needed the ministrations of the Elders, the teachings of the Holy Priesthood, and the blessings arising from the organization of the Church. Do not you think that they need the same kind of treatment? How would you like a mission, some of you High Priests and Seventies, to proclaim the Gospel to that fallen race, that Israel may have an equal chance with us, for God expects it at our hands. We received that record (Book of Mormon) through their ancient prophets and those same prophets are now beginning to communicate with them and to unfold unto them the work that he has commenced with us, and we shall have more of these things by and by. It is proper that our feelings should be drawn out after those whom the Lord is operating upon, that we may act in conjunction with the Lord in leading them in the paths of life.

[JD 23:223 – p.224, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

This is a duty that devolves upon you Elders of Israel, for as he has commenced to labor with them we ought to be one with him. I have taken the liberty recently to request the Twelve to attend to this; and they will call upon the Seventies, the High Priests and others, that is, they will if they do their duty. What do you think of it? I think that the field is enlarging and that our labors are increasing and becoming more extensive. We ought to feel like little children; we ought to feel like humbling ourselves before God, seeking to be one and to enjoy the light of His Holy Spirit, saying O Lord God, I am a poor feeble creature, thou hast called me to Thy work and hast clothed me with the Holy Priesthood; and now I want to magnify it; I want to be a savior on Mount Zion; I want to preside anywhere, or preach anywhere, or do any labor that Thou shalt call upon me to do, that I may feel that I am Thy servant and that Thou art my God, and that I am for Israel, and for the salvation of the white man, the red man and all mankind. That is the position we are in. These are some of the things of which you will hear more by and by. I thought I would only tell you a part as perhaps you could not bear it all.

[JD 23:224, John Taylor, August 6th, 1882](#)

God bless you, and God bless all Israel, and God bless all who are in favor of righteousness, truth and equal rights; and may the Lord God confound the enemies of Israel, and all who are opposed to just rule and righteous government, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE ERASTUS SNOW,

Delivered in the Salt Lake Assembly Hall,

Sunday Afternoon, February 26th, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE MARRIAGE QUESTION – LAWFUL CONCUBINAGE AND ITS UNLAWFUL
COUNTERFEIT – VARIOUS VIEWS CONCERNING THE UNION OF THE SEXES – PLURAL
MARRIAGE AMONG THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS – THE EXAMPLE AND CHARACTER OF
ABRAHAM – EXHORTATION TO JUSTICE AND EQUITY – CHRISTIAN CRIMES IN NEW
ENGLAND – OPPRESSION WITH ITS REAL AND PRETENDED OBJECT – FRUITS OF
"MORMONISM" PRISONS AND PENALTIES POWERLESS TO STOP THE LORD'S
WORK – THE GODGIVEN BOON OF LIBERTY TO MAN – THE FINAL TRIUMPH OF HIS CAUSE.

[JD 23:224, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882](#)

Since coming to the stand I have been requested to address the congregation.

[JD 23:224, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882](#)

I will read the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th verses of the 25th chapter of Genesis.

[JD 23:224, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882](#)

"And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac.

[JD 23:224, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882](#)

But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years.

[JD 23:224, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882](#)

Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.

[JD 23:224 – p.225, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882](#)

How far I shall confine myself to the matter contained in this passage I cannot say. The present eventful period of our lives, the prejudices which now move the people of our nation concerning us, and the pressure that is being brought upon us chiefly through the religious element of the country to influence Congress to extraordinary legislation against us, are perhaps, the reasons why my mind reverts to the historical facts contained in the Scripture I have just read, which was given unto us by men of old who, until quite a recent date, have been generally revered by all Christians; and even now a large majority of the Christian sects of America respect and reverence the ancient fathers, their teachings and writings while the sacred Book is

closed, but ignore in their daily lives what those worthies believed and practised.

[JD 23:225, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882](#)

The word translated concubine in this Scripture must not be confounded with the modern practice which obtains so largely in the great cities of Christendom, and with the more wealthy portions of old communities. I refer to the practice sometimes called concubinage, the practice of marrying under the law one wife, and at the same time keeping privately one or more mistresses who are not obtruded upon society, having no claim to the honored name of wife – a practice which permits those who indulge in it to gratify the carnal passions at the expense of public virtue, and at the risk of entailing disease upon unborn posterity, as well as at the expense of the present and eternal welfare of their partners, I will say in sin; for no right-minded, correct-thinking person can pronounce it otherwise than it has been pronounced by the sacred writers both of the old and New Testament – a species of lewdness and, if not classed with open harlotry, a violation of sacred marital vows. Those who have solaced their consciences or justified themselves in this departure from law and public sentiment, no doubt feel partial justification from the practices of the ancients who were looked up to and revered; but such was not the concubinage of Abraham, nor any of the ancient patriarchs, such was not the system that obtained under the law of Moses in ancient Israel.

[JD 23:225, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882](#)

The word translated concubinage in King James version of the Bible, is translated by Luther and is found in Scandinavia and Germany, where the Lutheran translation still prevails, as meaning an associated wife. In the Danish Bible it is hustru for wife and medhustru for concubine; the sacred name of wife is given to both classes, the preposition med connecting them together and conveying the idea of the second class being an associated wife, or a wife in a secondary or subordinate position, in contradistinction to the first. Close students of the Bible have not failed to recognize this as being the character of the plural wives of Moses and the prophets. And it was practised as an institution of the Jewish nation down to the coming of our Savior, and, so far as any scriptures appear in the New Testament, this institution was neither abrogated nor in anywise condemned, while harlotry and promiscuous intercourse of the sexes – adultery and fornication are condemned in the severest language.

[JD 23:225 – p.226, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882](#)

We have a great variety of views in Christendom, as to the will and mind of God pertaining to the union of the sexes as relating to each other, to the state and to our present and future happiness. The Latter-day Saints regard the intercourse of the sexes, both in time and in eternity, as regulated by sacred law given by our Father in heaven who has organized us male and female for a wise purpose in Himself, and that purpose is made manifest in the first great command given to our first parents, namely, to multiply and replenish the earth. And the saying to the woman after her transgression as written in the book of Genesis, that her desires should be towards her husband and he should rule over her – the desires planted in the breast of the woman tending to draw to the opposite sex culminating in a union, is a wise dispensation of Providence for the accomplishing of the great end in view to encourage and stimulate them to multiply and replenish the earth, and take upon themselves the cares, labors, anxieties and responsibilities attending the rearing of families. And among the many different views entertained in Christendom concerning the commerce of the sexes we might say, there exists every variety of belief and practice growing out of these beliefs. We have in Christian America a religious sect – not very numerous to be sure – who held the union of the sexes to be sinful in any form whatever. This sect I hardly need say is the Shaking Quakers; and to become a member of their society, – a person already married would be required to dissolve his marriage relationship; a husband and wife joining that society would be required to do the same, and to abstain from each other for ever afterwards, all connection with the sexes being strictly forbidden as an evil that may be tolerated in the carnal world, but not among those who desire to appear pure and holy before the Lord. This first commandment referred to, as having been given to father Adam and mother Eve, was in the days of their purity, before their transgressions, when they were worthy to converse with God face to face; this being the case, if there was no other reason,

what philosophy can condemn that command or a proper and just effort to keep it? There is no reason, to my mind, to condemn it, when regulated by law, as an act of impurity; to do so would be a direct reflection upon the wisdom and purity of God Himself.

JD 23:226 – p.227 – p.228, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882

Of course, this is the general view taken of it by Christian nations, as shown in their acts and in their laws regulating it. Although the Roman Catholic Church prohibits intercourse with the sexes to sacred orders, they being, according to the rites of the church forbidden to marry. And however much some may doubt the iniquity of their holy vows, it is a matter too well known to call in question. The more general sentiment of Christians recognizes the purity and uprightness of marriage of a man to one woman; and they quote the following words of the Apostle Paul to testify to it, "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." But the majority of modern Christians consider that for a man to marry more than one wife while she lives and is his wife is sin. Now I will undertake to say respecting the two conditions of marriage, single and plural, that where the duties and obligations are the same, and the husband is equally honorable, just and virtuous, faithful and true to his wives and children, that there is not necessarily any greater impurity existing between such a man and his plural family, than between a man and his single family; that there is not necessarily a defilement of the marriage bed, that there is not necessarily defilement of the body or spirit. When the institution of marriage is founded in religious sentiment and is confirmed by the enduring love of husband, wives and children, and the responsibilities attending that relationship, as we find it in many of the ancient worthies, there is not necessarily any defilement in plural marriage. There was not necessarily defilement in father Abraham and other ancient patriarchs and prophets who took to themselves a second or a third or a fourth wife, any more than there was in those who confined themselves to one wife. Nor have I ever heard from any creature – and I have read and heard much and reflected much, because our institution of marriage has invited discussion and reflection upon this subject. I have never yet heard an argument that, to my mind, appeared sound against the marriage of an honorable man to two women any more than to one. And the only argument that has ever been presented that has had a semblance of soundness is the generally admitted fact of the near equality of the sexes which would seem to foreshadow the general purpose and design of providence that one man should have only one wife. I have never heard an argument relating to the physical effects of the institution, nor as relating to the state of society that could not be applied just as appropriately to monogamy. The opposers of plural marriage make many declarations against us which are untrue, which they do not understand because they accept the reports of certain persons who give way to a lying spirit, and misrepresent and belie people far better than themselves. The selfishness and weakness of human nature, the evils which manifest themselves from time to time between families and between husband and wife, and between wives and children are quoted as evils greatly to be deplored as growing out of this system. I will only say in regard to this, that those best acquainted with the inner workings of the system among the Latter-day Saints throughout all of their settlements, if they testify honestly and truthfully as to the result of their careful observations extending over a period of over thirty years – the time that this system of plural marriage has been practised by us in these mountains, they would, in effect, say, that there is less discontent, less strife and fewer family broils and less divorce, and less casting off wives and casting upon the community of children without care, than would be found in the same number of monogamic families. And I may here say, that statistics will bear me out in making this assertion. To those who are not posted in the matter this may appear incredible; and the majority of the christian world would think it impossible judging from their standpoint; and what they see and hear among themselves, and judging by the spirit by which they are animated, they would, I admit, pronounce this a thing impossible. But it is simply because they are not imbued with the faith of the Latter-day Saints, and this being the case they cannot understand the motives that prompt us to enter into this relationship. They cannot comprehend the spirit that governs us, the devout God-fearing spirit of self-sacrifice which leads us onward to all that is noble, forbearing and long-suffering, that teaches us to love one another and to be charitable to all men, and which teaches us that the relationships which we make through the marriage covenant are but the foundation of eternal glory and exaltation in the worlds to come; and it also teaches us that the glories of the future that open up before us are greatly dependent upon the faithfulness of our relationships and associations in this life; and that a man must be found capable to properly govern and guide his family and preserve in time the wives

and children that are given to him, leading them in the way of life and salvation, and rearing his children in all that is pure and praiseworthy, so that he can receive them in the morning of the first resurrection, there to have the Father confirm upon him his wives and children, the foundation of his individual kingdom which will exist for ever and ever. The outside world cannot comprehend this, and simply because they cannot believe it. It is this same religious sentiment that prompts women and the best of women, the most devout women, women of the purest motive and character to enter into this sacred relationship, and to cause them to determine in their own minds that they would sooner be associated with a man who has proven himself a man of integrity, a man of strict virtue and honor, who can be relied upon by God and man – they would rather trust themselves with such a man than to be the only wife of a man devoid of these qualifications, a man who, perhaps, for the want of such high motives would be the victim of many vices, of whoredom, of concubinage or illicit intercourse with the sexes, and defile himself and destroy the confidence of his family in him, or he would perhaps indulge in drunkenness and other kindred vices which would be the means of producing the same result. And such has been the experience of many women in monogamy. And I do not say that the weaknesses of mankind do not manifest themselves in plural families; I do not say that there are not some who may be urged on by fleshy lust, but if there are it results in their making shipwreck of their faith and becoming, in time, a lasting disgrace to themselves. But where there is one example of this kind, under our polygamic system, there are at least two under the monogamic order that might be cited, who make shipwreck of their faith, who sacrifice their honor, and whose family send forth a wail of grief for the loss of confidence in husband and father. Adultery, fornication, whoredom, God will judge; every form of licentiousness He has condemned in His word from the beginning of the world to the present. And if follies are manifested by some who profess to be Latter-day Saints in this direction, so we may cite similar weakness manifested by ancient men of God; not, however, to justify such cases but merely as examples of human weaknesses.

[JD 23:228 – p.229, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882](#)

Referring again to Abraham, and his wife Sarai. They are held up in sacred Scripture as models of noble character, purity of purpose, piety, devotion and superior integrity to God, who hesitated not to obey Him at all hazards even to the sacrifice of that which was nearest and dearest unto them. This Sarai, one of the noblest of women, received the promise of her son Isaac while in old age, a promise made to her by the angel of God, and this because of her barrenness and because too of the integrity of her heart towards her husband and her willingness to sacrifice her womanly feeling in giving to her husband other wives. And after she had given to Abraham Hagar, that she might bear him children, mark the Scripture: It was for the purpose that he might not be childless because she was childless. It was after she had thus sacrificed her womanly feeling, thereby manifesting her love and integrity to her husband, that the Lord had compassion upon her and granted the desire of her heart, promising her that she should in course of time bring forth a son, and telling her that his name should be Isaac, in whom and in whose seed all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. And it was after this lad was partly grown, that God commanded Abraham to take this promised child on to the Mount Moriah, and there build an altar and offer him up as a sacrifice. Abraham in this was tried as few men ever were tried; for his love was great for his son whom he would naturally regard as a special gift of the Lord to him, through whom no less a personage than the Messiah himself should come. Yet Abraham doubted not, he paused not to consider what the possible result might be of keeping this command; but he trusted in God as Paul said of him, "that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead from whence also he received him in a figure." He trusted in God and doubted not; and proceeded to Mount Moriah and there built an altar, and when everything was in readiness he bound the lad, and while in the act of raising the deadly knife, he heard a voice saying, "Abraham, Abraham, lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." And then the Lord went on to say, that because of this willingness on the part of Abraham to obey Him even to the sacrificing of his only son, "That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore," etc. Now, I will give back unto you your son, and in blessing I will bless him and multiply him, and in him and his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. It was because of this precious promise, no doubt, that he desired to give his sons opportunities to develop and to make manifest among the surrounding tribes the character that was in him, that he divided out his goods and gave gifts to the sons of the other wives and sent them away, but gave his chief inheritance to

his son Isaac.

[JD 23:229 – p.230, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882](#)

While contemplating this I can hardly refrain from dropping a word of exhortation to my brethren who may be drawing near the close of life, not to neglect to make such disposition of their worldly effects as will suitably provide for their wives and children while they (the brethren) yet live, following the example of Abraham, not that by any means would I encourage this example in all particulars; for it is not always as it was in the case of Abraham that God has made choice of one particular son in whom their seed shall be called; but common justice and equity requires of every father to deal fairly with each wife and child according as God has dealt with him in this world's goods, that he may retain their esteem after he shall have departed from them. Nor should he trust too much to the uncertainty of courts at the present time; for we have in too many instances seen to our sorrow that federal courts, whenever they have had it in their power, or wherever they could, either by strained construction of the law, or by omissions of the law, wrong a plural family by giving to the first wife and her heirs that which should have been equitably divided among all the family, they have never missed the opportunity of doing it, thinking that by bringing oppression and injustice to bear they will succeed in discouraging the practice of this system of marriage. There is nothing in the faith of the Latter-day Saints or in the laws of God touching this matter that would prompt aught but justice and equality to all the wives and children. The duty of the husband is plain in this respect. And the duty of all wives and children is to love each other and the husband and father; all cherishing that love of the Gospel which binds our hearts together, and which alone can carry us through the trials and tribulations of life, and lift us up at the last day.

[JD 23:230, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882](#)

One would suppose from the hue and cry abroad in the land, which emanates chiefly from the clergy, that they are afraid the institutions of the Latter-day Saints will contaminate the whole land. What hypocrisy! I can hardly exercise patience sufficient to treat it with any degree of sobriety.

[JD 23:230 – p.231, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882](#)

I am a native-born American; I was reared in the State of Vermont. In my early days the doctrine taught to our first parents, to multiply and replenish the earth, was popular; but during the period of my life that has elapsed, it has been almost totally ignored by the social circles of New England. When I last visited the old homestead, an old aunt nearly ready to go into her grave, told me that it was irregular for people now-a-days to have large families. And it seems that this is the prevailing sentiment of that region; for in traveling through New England it was rarely I saw a woman with more than two or three children. Any of the older families, those honored matrons of New England, who lived contemporary with my mother, thought it honorable to raise large families; but my old aunt who was one of the last of that stock, has, by giving way to allowing the influence of death, has imbibed false notions; and when she thus expressed herself to me I knew she was not speaking the honest sentiments of her heart. To-day infanticide and foeticide are popular. Modern doctors and doctresses have arisen, men and women who are skilled in what are called the diseases of women, whose special practice is preventing fecundity, thereby securing to husband and wife the pleasures of self-gratification without bearing the responsibilities of maternity, and the trouble and expense of rearing children. These doctors and doctresses and the American students who have learned to practice their hellish arts, are to-day engaged in undermining the constitutions of wives and mothers; yes, child murder, this damnable doctrine of devils has become popular throughout New England, and is fast spreading over the American continent. And now it is the Irish woman, who believes in raising children, the foreign element that comes to the country that are considered the vulgar people; and were it not for this flood of foreign immigration the staid New England element would soon become extinct, and I say, in the name of Israel's God, the sooner the better unless they repent of their murders, their whoredoms and their abominations that ascend to the heavens and are a stench in the nostrils of the Almighty. And, yet, it is this New England element whose garments are stained with the blood of innocence, that has found its way through our western States, that has worked heart and soul with the hiring priesthood in firing up the national heart, and that is

urging on hostile legislation against the best and purest people that exist upon the American continent. Is it public morality they seek? Is it the cause of public and private morality they champion? If so, we may repeat what we have so often said, which is so extremely unwelcome for them to hear: Weed your garden first at home, and then let your virtues be directed to the crying evils and sins of your large cities; and let child-murder cease, and hang those infernal doctors who by means of their hellish arts are destroying the life of your offspring, and thus preventing the fulfillment of the first great command that God gave to our first parents; first petition Congress to pass laws to deal with the murderers and murderesses of the nation, the adulterers and adulteresses and all those who deal in shame, through whose wickedness the seeds of decay and death are transmitted to posterity. But methinks I hear one say, if this were done, and the laws were enforced, the large majority of the nation would be convicted. And it reminds me of a remark made recently by a gentleman in Congress. It was proposed that the bill, now being urged in Congress against polygamy, be so amended as to include adultery; the gentleman to whom the proposition was made was at first inclined to endorse the amendment, but on reflection, he turned to his friend and said, if that be done it would leave us without a quorum in the House. No, my friends, it is not adultery they wish to punish; it is not whoredom they wish to punish; it is not the cause of public or private virtue they champion; it is merely the hue and cry of the bigotry of our time against a people who are aiming at a higher morality than now exists, who are aiming to do away with and effectually destroy out of their midst the evil that is sapping the strength and vitality of our nation – a community that does not seek to shun the responsibility and the cares and labors and expense and trouble of rearing families and of educating them and making their children honorable men and women, husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, citizens of the state and defenders of human liberty.

[JD 23:231 – p.232, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882](#)

We are accused of being governed by priestcraft and priestly influence. I do not believe there is any portion of this community in any part of the land who are moved by priestly influence to half the extent that Judge Edmunds and the advocates of the bill that he champions against us are; and their consciences must teach them that they are hypocrites, and that they are but pandering to bigotry, and that their acts are not the acts of statesmen, but the acts of cringing politicians and demagogues. The Priesthood of the Latter-day Saints belongs not to the lords but the commons; to men who have helped make the roads, to build the bridges and to kill the snakes; to men who have battled with the difficulties of a new country, and who by their hardihood and toil have subdued the wastes and redeemed the desert; men who have turned the mountain streams out of their course on to the new and virgin soil, making the land fruitful with fields and farms, gardens, orchards and vineyards; men who build houses, mills and factories, school-houses and churches, and who raise families and who take care of and educate their children. These are the men who hold the Priesthood, and who wield an influence in the midst of this people; and this class of men is properly represented in the legislature now in session, and they are asked to step down and out and let the government of the country pass into the hands of adventurers. Not that I would insinuate that there are not a goodly number of honorable men among us who are engaged in legitimate business pursuits, men who could be trusted to administer the government affairs of the Territory if they would follow their own hearts and consciences, and not allow themselves to be bull-dozed as certain members of Congress are by the hireling Priesthood of the age. We could trust the judgment of such men; we could trust their natural good sense, and their business habits; but there are few who can be trusted to stand like a towering rock in the midst of the raging ocean, proof against the waves and surges of popular prejudice that pass over the land. And because of this the Latter-day Saints have been chary with regard to whom they exalt to power; and the few that have their confidence in this respect, are men who have never robbed or betrayed them. And honorable business men, bankers, merchants, miners, railroad men, etc., who have no political or religious standing to jeopardise are satisfied that the affairs of our Territory have been administered honorably and honestly.

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Tricksters and adventurers clamor for free schools, but how many of them and those whose sentiments they voice really want to support them? A hobby is a nice thing to ride, and such people have many, but they must be hobbies that do not cost much. It is rumored throughout the land that the children of the Latter-day Saints

are growing up in ignorance; those who utter those statements either know nothing of what they say, or they wilfully and deliberately lie. Some may think these are hard words; it is language admissible under the circumstances, and it is easy to understand, plain and right to the subject, and I mean every word of it. The statistics of the country bear me out in it; and whoever will examine the census for the last decade may satisfy themselves on this point, namely, that percentage of illiteracy in Utah is less than one-half of that of the whole United States. They say the offspring of plural marriage tends to idiocy as well as illiteracy, which, however, is fallacious and clearly without foundation in fact. Let men of discernment and honor pass through our land, examine our schools and see the turnout of our forty thousand children at our Sabbath-schools, and hear the questions put to them and their answers to the same; let them attend our children's jubilees in our Tabernacle and look upon fifteen thousand faces radiant with youth and beauty, and hear their songs and other exercises, and they may at once satisfy themselves whether the children of the Latter-day Saints are either ignorant or idiotic. The late census shows that Utah's percentage of idiocy, as well as illiteracy, is more than fifty per cent less than that of the United States; it may also show that nowhere upon the American continent is there a place of the same age as Utah that has so many common schools in which are taught the common branches of an English education, and that too without a dollar's aid from the general government. And our numerous children are all well cared for; and if we cannot indulge in all the excesses of fashion that are common in aristocratic circles, we are content to know that we are doing well; we are content where our wives are well housed, well fed and well clothed with fair advantages of education, self reliant and loving one another. And we are satisfied that ere long they will be a tower of strength in the land, not to menace the institutions of our country as enemies, as foolish men and women insinuate; not to menace public morality or private virtue; but to the contrary, when the nation, ripe in sin and iniquity, led on by reckless demagogues and politicians, shall applaud the acts of the legislators and judges and leading men in laying the axe deep in the tree of liberty, until they shall sap the juices that give life to our institutions, and thus undermine the foundation of good government, it will be sons and daughters of polygamous Utah, that will be found the true friends of human liberty, the true friends of that heaven-born freedom that has come to us through the fathers of our nation. The love of liberty is born in them, and human liberty is a part of the everlasting gospel; and God Almighty has decreed – and let Judge Edmunds and Congress and all the world hear it – that the gospel of the kingdom is established, never more to be thrown down or given to another people, that its destiny is to grow and increase and spread abroad until it shall fill the whole earth, and no power in earth or hell can stop it. "O, but," say they, "we are going to imprison you polygamists and disfranchise you." Supposing you do stop our voting, will that stop our tongues? "O, but we'll imprison you." Imprison and be damned. [Amen, by voices in the congregation] for you will be damned anyhow. [Laughter.] "We will imprison your wives, too, and we will not only stop from voting the men who have more than one wife, and we will not only stop the second or third, but also the first wife from voting." And why? Because she, like Sarah of old, gave to her husband other wives. Some of the law-makers of our nation would not only imprison Abraham were he living now, and also his plural wives, but they would disfranchise and imprison Sarah, his first wife, because she consented to his marrying other wives.

[JD 23:233, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882](#)

Well, this war is not a war of flesh and blood. We are not going to fight it with swords and cannons and weapons, but by the power of truth, by the word of God, and the eternal principles that our fathers fought for and established upon this American continent, and which God has decreed shall prevail upon this land. And blessed are they whose lives are bent on maintaining the principles of civil and religious liberty, for they will reap their reward, if not in this life, in the hereafter.

[JD 23:233, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882](#)

In all ages when the people of God listened to the voice and counsel of apostles and prophets, they enjoyed the blessings growing out of human freedom, and the tyranny and oppression of kings and rulers was impossible. There never was a kingly power placed over ancient Israel except against the remonstrance of the prophets; and it will be remembered especially in the case of Israel when they openly clamored for a king to rule over them and to lead them to battle, how that Samuel warned them and plead with them, foreseeing, as

he did, what the results would be. And the students of the Book of Mormon know how the Nephites progressed in establishing the principles of civil and religious liberty, and how that freedom extended throughout their borders, and how that prosperity and greatness attended their administrations under the counsels and teachings of the wise and just men who lived in their day.

JD 23:233 – p.234, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882

Those who suppose that prisons and penalties are going to stop the spirit of truth in its onward march to triumph and greatness, or the influence and power of the truths of heaven which God has established in the hearts of the Latter-day Saints, comprehend not the designs of God, nor the spirit by which this people is actuated, that spirit which is leading them on, and which enabled them to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods in Missouri and Ohio, and which still will enable them to sacrifice their all for the sake of the liberties of the everlasting Gospel, if God shall permit it to be so. What are houses and lands, what are goods and chattels, what is this city or thousands of cities like this compared with the liberties of the Gospel, the principles of worshipping and serving God according to His revealed will? God still lives who has led us all our life long to these valleys, and He will guide and direct our steps. But oh how strange that men pretending to be statesmen should read history so poorly as to suppose that by might and power, by bonds and penalties they can chain men's thoughts or prevent them from acting according to their convictions. The power of might may destroy me – destroy you; it may break up homes and demolish cities, but it will be like the Canada thistle when it first made its appearance in New England. This weed was a great pest to the farmers, and it became a question among that class how to prevent its spreading. Some attempted to dig the thistles out, but they would spring up again all around the old stalk, and it was conceded by others that they could not be controlled. There was one man who owned a plantation who was determined to work vigorously for their extinction upon their first appearance on his land; and so determined was he that when he first discovered their whereabouts upon his plantation he built a log heap over them and set fire to it, leaving a pile of ashes to mark the spot where the thistles appeared. On the following season, to his great surprise, he found that where the log heap stood there was a perfect bed of Canada thistles, that the ashes left from the fire was just the food for the thistle to thrive on. So you will find it will be with us. After political demagogues and hireling priests and adventurers shall have expended their strength in trying to dig up and fire out of the land what they term "Mormonism."

JD 23:234, Erastus Snow, February 26th, 1882

May the Lord help us to prove true to the trust that He has reposed in us, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

John Taylor, August 20th, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered at Ephraim, Sanpete County,

Sunday Morning, August 20th, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE WORK OF GOD AND BUILDING UP OF ZION – PREACHING, TEMPLE BUILDING AND
OTHER DUTIES – CORRUPTION AND HYPOCRISY OF CHRISTENDOM – RIGHTS OF THE
LATTER-DAY SAINTS AS AMERICAN CITIZENS – THE SAINTS COUNSELED TO BE PURE,
HONEST, UPRIGHT, CHARITABLE, LONGSUFFERING AND FORGIVING – DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN BIGAMY AND POLYGAMY – UNJUST LEGISLATION AND AMERICAN JUSTICE –
GOD

FOR ISRAEL AS LONG AS ISRAEL IS FOR RIGHT.

[JD 23:235, John Taylor, August 20th, 1882](#)

The work of God is onward, and we as His servants and people propose with His help to carry it on to completion. Some people do not like it very well, but we cannot help that. I do not think Lucifer likes it, but we cannot help that either. We are here as the representatives of God upon the earth to accomplish his purposes, and to carry out his designs, to spread forth his Gospel, to build up his kingdom, to establish his Zion, and to promote the welfare and happiness of all people of every color and of every clime, according to the mind and will of the Lord as it shall be made known to us from time to time. This is what we are here for, as I understand it, and this is what we will do, God being our helper, and no man nor set of men can stay the purposes of Jehovah, for the enemies of God will wither and weaken from this time forth and forever. I will say that in the name of the Lord. The Lord is with his people, but he does not approve of all our acts. Still we are, generally, striving to do what is right and observe his laws.

[JD 23:235, John Taylor, August 20th, 1882](#)

We have a great work before us, a very great work to accomplish. God has laid it upon us and we expect to do it with his assistance. We have the Gospel to preach to the nations, a message that the Lord has given unto us to promulgate to all peoples; and to accomplish this purpose the Church of God is organized with Presidents and Apostles, with Seventies, High Priests, Elders, etc. A large amount of this labor is being done, and has already been done by my brethren around me as well as by myself. We have been among the nations of Christendom traveling without purse or scrip, trusting in the living God, to make known to the peoples of the earth the great things which he has revealed for the salvation and the exaltation of the world.

[JD 23:235 – p.236, John Taylor, August 20th, 1882](#)

Our mission has principally been to preach the first principles of the Gospel, calling upon men everywhere to believe in the Lord God of heaven, he that created the heavens and the earth, the seas and the fountains of waters; to believe in His Son Jesus Christ, repenting of their sins, to be baptized for the remission of the same; and then we have promised them the Holy Ghost. In doing this the Lord has stood by us, sustaining those principles that we have advanced; and when we have ministered unto men the ordinances of the Gospel, they have received for themselves the witness of the Spirit, even the Holy Ghost, making known to them for a surety that the principles that they had received were from God. And in regard to this I can say as Paul said on a certain occasion – "Ye are my witnesses," for this whole congregation, with few exceptions, know this to be true. The Twelve and the Seventies, the High Priests and the Elders are called upon to visit the various nations of the earth and see that the word and will of God pertaining to them is carried out. For we are all the offspring of God, and as we are interested in the welfare of our children, so our heavenly Father is interested in the welfare of all his children. He has sent forth the light of his truth and the spirit of revelation to gather together his sheep, and in this respect, as it was in the days of Jesus, so it is to-day. "My sheep (he said) hear my voice; they know me and follow me, and a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of a stranger." Under the influence of this spirit and Gospel we have been gathered together in one in our Stake

organizations, in our Ward organizations, in our Priesthood organizations, and in all those principles that God has revealed for the guidance, protection and instruction of the Saints, that we may be prepared to operate and co-operate with God in all things in the interest of his people, in the interest of the nations, in the interest and welfare of all men who will listen to the words of life, and then to do the very best with others, as God does. That is about the position we occupy to-day.

[JD 23:236, John Taylor, August 20th, 1882](#)

We are gathered here to the place we denominate Zion. There have been Zions before. Enoch had a Zion which was translated and which is reserved till the latter days. And we have a Zion to build up, which we shall do with the help of the Lord. We certainly shall accomplish these things no matter what the ideas and feelings of men may be in regard to it. Zion is onward and upward, and the Lord is directing and manipulating the affairs of His Church.

[JD 23:236, John Taylor, August 20th, 1882](#)

We have our Temples to build, and we are doing it, and I certainly have no complaints to make, and I do not think that the Lord has. I think that the Lord is well pleased with the actions of the people in this respect, and with their zeal in carrying out some of these leading principles which he has had in his mind from the commencement of the world.

[JD 23:236 – p.237, John Taylor, August 20th, 1882](#)

We are living in the latter times, in the dispensation of the fullness of times when God will gather all things in one, whether they be things in heaven or things on the earth. We are living in a time when we have to operate and co-operate with the Almighty, and with the Priesthood, that has existed upon the earth before we came here for the benefit, blessing and salvation of the human family. Many of the purposes of God have been spoken of and pre-figured, in some instances darkly and dimly, in others more vividly and plain, pointing out and portraying the purposes of God pertaining to the human family; and these purposes will all be fulfilled. They will not be thwarted; God will not permit them to be. He has his work to perform and he is interested in the welfare of his Israel, and in the accomplishment of those things spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world was; and he will carry out his own purposes in his own way and time as he sees best.

[JD 23:237, John Taylor, August 20th, 1882](#)

Now, what are we doing? We are sending the Elders abroad and they have been and are still going; the Twelve and the Presidents of Seventies are selecting and calling upon them and they are going to the different nations, and I am pleased to see the spirit generally manifested; I think that the brethren begin to comprehend the nature of their missions and calling from the fact that there are very few excuses made now-a-days. The tenor of the letters that I receive now in answer to those sent to brethren calling them to perform a mission, is something like this: I have received your letter and am grateful to be considered worthy to be called. I will be ready at the time appointed." When men comprehend their position they feel it an honor to be engaged in building up the kingdom of God and of being heralds of salvation to the nations of the earth.

[JD 23:237 – p.238, John Taylor, August 20th, 1882](#)

When we build our Temples, what then? The brethren of the Twelve have been calling some men and women to go and labor in them. The old men whose heads are whitened with the passage of time are not without zeal, but they have not the strength to cope with the hardships attending a foreign mission; and therefore some of them will be called to minister in Temples. I should esteem it a very great privilege, if my time were not engaged in other things, to be engaged in such a labor, because there is a spirit and influence about that kind of work that is happifying, producing peace and joy, and tending to enlarge the mind of those that are engaged in ministering for others as Saviors on Mount Zion, whilst the kingdom is to be the Lord's. We feel in our

hearts a desire to bless and benefit mankind, and to present the Gospel to all to whom the Lord gives us the power. That is one work that we have to perform. Another is, the building of Temples. Another is, the rearing of our children in the principles of righteousness. And in doing this do we need the assistance of outsiders? I think not. When our Elders go abroad, they are sent to teach not to be taught; and if they should need teaching the ministers of Christendom could not teach them for they are not competent to do so. That reminds me of a statement that I heard in which a pious minister figures conspicuously. It was this: He stated, and his statement was published widely throughout the United States, in the religious journals, that whilst preaching to some of you Sanpete people, he held the Bible in one hand and was obliged to hold a pistol in the other. Where is this said to have occurred? (Pres. Peterson answered, "In this house over here," pointing to the old meeting house.) But then he was a pious man, and other pious men published it, and it was copied in all the pious newspapers and published as truth; and probably many pious men made it the text for their Sunday sermon. What a fortunate thing you did not hurt him. (Laughter.) Now, do we want our children taught by such people? I think not. We want something of truth; we want something of integrity and honor; we want something after the character referred to by David: "Lord, who shall dwell in the holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. * * He that swareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. He that doeth these things shall never be moved." We want men and women of integrity and truth as the teachers of our children, in order that our children may grow up in the fear of the Lord and full of integrity and righteousness.

[JD 23:238 – p.239 – p.240, John Taylor, August 20th, 1882](#)

Then they talk to us about our virtue. I think that some of these people had better attend to their own affairs. We do not want their system of what they call morality introduced amongst us; we can do without it very, very well. Why do we speak of these things? Because they are matters which concern us. Whilst men and women come here ostensibly to promote your welfare, they hail from places where the most outrageous infamies are perpetrated. Do we wish these corrupting influences introduced into our midst? I think not. Let them cleanse their own Augean stables where they came from, and then talk to us if they wish about purity. Do we want them to teach our wives and daughters how to murder their children – a practice that is prevalent in the places they came from? I should rather think not, nor do we wish the influence of people so educated to introduce their contaminating, corroding and damning practices amongst us, the emanations from such a source are like a pestiferous plague endangering, polluting and contaminating everything that comes within its reach. Newborn children are murdered by the thousands in the large cities of the east; and do they stop this evil? No. I have been told over and over again that it is not fashionable for women of the places where many of our would-be "Christian" teachers hail from, to have more than one or two children. And what do they do with the rest? To tell it in plain terms, they have a fashionable way of murdering them – either before or after they come into the world. This started with what was called Restellism; it was then denounced as infamous; the plague has now spread until nearly the whole nation is inoculated with it. Are these the kind of people that we wish to correct our morals. I speak of these things for your information. But what will you do with these people, would you persecute them? No; but we do not want them for our teachers. I would not introduce such people to my family, neither would I introduce them to our schools to contaminate our children with the vices that prevail in the places they come from. I do not know anything about the persons that are among you, neither have I heard anything about them excepting this heroic minister of pistol notoriety. (Laughter.) I am reminded too of a move that a number of these so-called ministers of the Gospel made a short time ago in appealing to the nation to help them to root out the abominations which they affirm exist here. Why do I speak of this thing? Because I have a duty to perform as your teacher. We observe all laws and principles that are correct, true and virtuous, and if there is anything else contrary to this we have from time to time called upon our Bishops to purge themselves and their wards from it, and I call upon them here to do the same thing. I have been abroad among the nations of the earth, and so have many of my brethren, and did I ever go into England, Scotland, France, Wales, Germany, or any other nation where I have been, and attempt to stir up sedition and trouble, or defame the people I was among? No, never. The Elders of this Church have been taught differently and they have acted in accordance with the teachings they received. We came to this land as religionists to serve God, fleeing from the face of persecution; we came here because we could not be protected in the places we left. Now that we have come here have we practiced anything that is contrary to

correct principles? Not that I know of. Have we the rights of American citizens? We most assuredly have. Has any person in this nation any more rights than we? Not if we have our rights given unto us. As American citizens we possess as many rights and privileges as any other citizens in these United States. What have we to do? We do not propose to barter them away, nor to relinquish them without a struggle. Do you mean to get up a revolution? Oh, no. We mean to contend for all principles that belong to free American citizens; and while there is law, justice or equity in the land, we design to contend for our rights inch by inch, and we do not mean to be despoiled of our rights without a struggle. We propose to maintain our franchise in this boasted land of liberty. This is the position we propose to take. If they disfranchise us as they did Brother Cannon; if we have men who do not know the difference between 1,300 and 18,000 we do, and we will contend for those principles that God has committed to us. In reading some of the histories pertaining to the dealings of God with man and the dealings of the devil with him you will find that Satan sought to rob man of his free agency, as many of his agents are seeking to do to-day; and for this cause Satan was cast out of heaven. God will have a free people, and while we have a duty to perform to preach the Gospel, we have another to perform, that is, to stand up in the defence of human rights – in the defence of our own rights, the rights of our children, and in defence of the rights of this nation and of all men, no matter who they may be, and God being our helper to maintain those principles and to lift up a standard for the honorable of this and other nations to flock to, that they may be free from the tyranny and oppression that is sought to be crowded upon them. This is a duty we have to perform, and in the name of Israel's God we will do it. It is a duty that our families demand of us; it is a duty that the honest in this nation demand of us, and that God demands of us; and we will try and carry it out, God being our helper. And if other people can afford to trample under foot the sacred institutions of this country, we cannot. And if other people trample upon the Constitution and pull it to pieces, we will gather together the pieces and rally around the old flag, or what is left of it, and proclaim liberty to the world, as Joseph Smith said we would. Is that treason? I do not know; no matter, it is true. Are we going to hurt anybody? No. If they were hungry I would feed them; if they were naked I would clothe them, and learn to do good for evil as Jesus did. But I would say, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret, unto their assembly, mine honor be not thou united." Do them good? Yes, but do not enter into the associations referred to. We want to mix up with honorable men and women.

[JD 23:240, John Taylor, August 20th, 1882](#)

I have made some plain remarks, but they are nevertheless true, and I have nothing to take back. Will we rebel against the nation? No. This nation has done a very great deal towards propagating human liberty. We read it in our schoolbooks, and we hear it sometimes proclaimed on the 4th of July, when we talk of the brave things the fathers of this nation performed in the defence of human rights, and it is a great pity, I think, that it should have been so short lived, for while the altar of liberty is yet stained with the blood of the patriots who fought for human rights, it seems almost too bad to make that same altar a forge whereon to make chains to fetter the human mind, to retard the progress of freedom, and to deprive man of his inalienable rights. It is a lamentable thing to reflect upon, yet it is true. It was a sad spectacle that we noticed some time ago in Mr. Evarts, secretary of the nation, calling upon the nations of Europe to assist the United States in crushing out a religious people. We have seen a great many things of a similar kind. Judge Poland and his operations; then the course pursued by Senator Edmunds against an innocent and persecuted people will place him in a very unenviable position.

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What course shall we pursue? We purpose to contend for human rights, for the Constitution of the United States, and for the rights and privileges of man and the freedom of humanity. We will try to live our religion and keep the commandments of God. People are wondering what the Commissioners will do. They will do what the Lord will permit them to do and nothing more. Shall we trouble ourselves about the action of Congress? No. We will put in a word for the liberty of man, equal rights and constitutional principles, and these we will maintain so far as God gives us power. When we have done that we will live our religion; we will cleave unto God and unto truth, maintain virtue, purity and righteousness, and seek for the Spirit of the Lord; we will be humble, faithful and diligent, and we will pray for our enemies and for all men. Jesus when

he was put to the test and men were clamoring against him, not only clamoring but they had nailed him to the cross, used these words: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" they are ignorant, besotted and dark, not acquainted with the principles of righteousness; they know not what they do, Father, forgive them. Then we find the Apostles speaking, calling upon them to repent and be baptized that their sins might be blotted out. When? Then? No. When? When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and he shall send Jesus Christ, who was before preached unto you;" and not till then.

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What more have we to do? To become saviors upon Mount Zion; to be full of kindness and longsuffering and contend against the sins and corruptions of the world, and cherish purity and holiness in the Lord our God. What else? Some people tell us we ought to proclaim polygamy. We have no such mission. Further, if we were to proclaim the principle that they call polygamy, they could not obey it. We believe in celestial marriage, in celestial covenants, in men and women being united for time and for all eternity. Are we going to suffer a surrender of this point? No, never! No, never! We intend to be true to our covenants in time and in the eternities to come. They call it bigamy. What is a bigamist? A man who marries one wife promising to be true to her, and afterwards representing himself as an honorable man, marries another one and deceives both of them. He is a breaker of covenants. A polygamist does not do that. Abraham, Jacob, David and Solomon did not perpetrate such infamies. Nor do we. Bigamy is an institution of a perverted Christianity and not ours. We make covenants with our wives, and we will be true to them and they to us in time and in eternity. Supposing, I say, we were to preach this doctrine to the world, and tell them what David and Abraham and the Patriarchs did, and they were to say we accept it; could we administer in it? No, and they could not enter into this thing. There are only a few in Utah associated with this matter, comparatively, and those none but the most honorable, pure and virtuous, yet our nation has seen fit to condemn everybody, the non-polygamists as well as the polygamists, because the non-polygamists happen to live in the same place as the polygamists. Thus nine-tenths are proscribed for what the other tenth are alleged to have done. That is the kind of justice we have administered now-a-days.

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But if the nation can stand this kind of legislation, we can as long as they can. We will try to do right and fear God, and observe His laws, and seek to pursue that course that our Heavenly Father will approve, and we will have His Spirit to be with us and rejoice together in the fullness of the Gospel of peace. And we will build Temples; and we will build up the kingdom of God, and God will be on the side of Israel, if Israel will only be on the side of right, laying aside covetousness, corruptions and follies of every kind, and will cleave to the truth, He will bless us and we will be blessed in time and throughout the eternities to come. Amen.

Joseph E. Taylor, September 3rd, 1882

DISCOURSE BY ELDER JOSEPH E. TAYLOR,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, September 3rd, 1882.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

DEPENDENCE UPON THE HOLY SPIRIT – THE GATHERING AND ITS
OBJECT – SACRIFICES REQUIRED OF THE SAINTS – THE RISK OF
REJECTING THE TESTIMONY OF THE TRUTH – PROFESSION AND PRACTICE,
PRETENSIONS AND PRINCIPLE – IMPENDING TRIALS AND
TROUBLES, TRUST IN GOD – TIME AND ETERNITY, BODY
AND SPIRIT – "MORE BLESSED ARE THEY THAT BELIEVE AND
HAVE NOT SEEN" – THE SPIRIT OF TRUTHFUL INTUITION
THE SAFEST GUIDE – EXHORTATION, COUNSEL AND INSTRUCTION.

[JD 23:242, Joseph E. Taylor, September 3rd, 1882](#)

It is a matter of surprise to people not of our faith when they are made acquainted with the fact that Elders of this Church are called promiscuously, as it were accidentally, to address the congregations that are assembled from time to time in this and other places in the midst of this people; that they appear before the congregation without any text, without any sermon, without giving any thought whatever to preparing the subject or subjects upon which they may speak. And these Elders have, by experience, learned the lesson that it is very necessary and essential for them to depend upon the Holy Ghost for their inspiration, for its assistance, for its influence, to enable them to speak and instruct the people as the Lord desires they should be instructed. What do I know about this audience this afternoon? Here is a sea of faces before me beaming with intelligence. I feel the influence of the various spirits of the people composing this congregation. They are all centered upon myself, or if my Brother was speaking, they would be centered upon him or whoever the speaker might be.

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Some have come to worship God with honesty of purpose, to partake of His holy sacrament with clean hands and pure hearts, and are worthy of partaking of these sacred emblems of the death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. They also come to listen to words of instruction, and many of them have a yearning desire, perhaps, to receive comfort to their souls, information, perchance, upon some particular point of doctrine connected with their holy religion. And then again, there are those in this congregation who have come here simply out of curiosity, having no particular interest in anything pertaining to the worship of this people, or the sacrament of which they are partaking; having no particular fondness for the doctrines taught by the Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, nor any of the principles incorporated in the faith of this people, but simply to see and out of sheer curiosity to listen that they may afterwards talk about what they have seen and heard according to their capacity and intelligence to understand and to comprehend that which they hear. A great number of this vast congregation have come from distant nations; they have heard the testimony of the servants of God, thousands of miles from the place they now occupy. They have received that testimony; they accepted and cherished that testimony in their hearts and it has led them to bid adieu to fatherland, to scenes of childhood, of youth, of mature age in many instances, to come to this land which they believed then and still believe to be the land of Zion, to be taught in the ways of the Lord, to be made acquainted with the principles of eternal truth, to comprehend the law of God, and to have an opportunity to practice that law in their lives and conduct. They have come also for the purpose of enjoying the companionship of the people they love – a people who feel as they feel, who believe as they believe, who are inspired as they have been inspired, and are to-day inspired; they have come to this land for the purpose of receiving ordinances pertaining to their future existence.

[JD 23:243, Joseph E. Taylor, September 3rd, 1882](#)

By far the greater portion of the people who have thus come, have made sacrifices for this purpose, have checked natural feelings that have arisen in their bosoms, have severed kindred ties, associations, affinities and affections. What for? "I want to hear the voice of God; I want to hear the words of inspiration; I want to become acquainted with the law that my Father has given for me as well as the rest of his children to be governed by; I want to be placed under the immediate teaching, instruction and counsel of those whom God has raised up and inspired by His Holy Spirit. I love you, my father; I love you, my mother; I love you, my sister, my brother and my child; but I love God more. I must yield your society; I must sacrifice the associations that I have enjoyed with you, because you cannot think as I think; because you cannot feel as I feel; because you are not inspired as I am inspired." We might mention other sacrifices that have had to be made, other things that have had to be yielded, given up, parted with, for this holy purpose and this holy desire that I have named this afternoon; for the feeling that permeates the hearts of these Latter-day Saints permeates their entire being, absorbs their entire thought, and their entire affection, for a true Latter-day Saint is fully devoted to his God and to his religion, spirit and body; it affects his time, his talent, every energy that he possesses, and wherever can be found among this people a man who has any reserve, he is not devoted to his God as his religion demands that he should be.

[JD 23:243 – p.244, Joseph E. Taylor, September 3rd, 1882](#)

Those present have had, in the main, equal opportunities with myself to become acquainted with the truths of eternal life. They have been taught where I have been taught; they have eaten, figuratively speaking, at the same table where I have partaken; and yet this afternoon I stand before you as a teacher and an instructor of the very people that have had equal opportunities with myself to learn and become acquainted with the law of God. How can I teach you? How can I instruct you? Upon what principle can I furnish you with the bread of life? Only by the power of the Holy Ghost, by its inspiration, by possessing its gifts. Is there any man without this Spirit, without the inspiration of this agency among the Latter-day Saints, from the President of the Church down through all the ramifications of the Priesthood, that is prepared to teach the people the law of God of himself? No, and I am bold to declare it this afternoon; neither is there a minister upon the face of this broad land or in all Christendom that can go before his congregation and feed them with the bread of life, unless he possesses the gift of the Holy Ghost, and speaks by virtue of that gift.

[JD 23:244, Joseph E. Taylor, September 3rd, 1882](#)

We send our Elders abroad, thousands of them; we have sent them for many years that are past, and until the Lord says to his servants stop, we shall continue to send them even to the most distant parts of the earth. For what purpose? To preach the Gospel, to proclaim the simple truths of eternal life, to explain to the understanding of the smallest mind what God expects and desires of the people in this last dispensation of the fullness of times. What Elders have been successful? The men that have stood before the people, and by the power of the Holy Ghost have declared the word of the Lord God to them; and here let me say in this connection, there never was a congregation that listened to a discourse delivered by an Elder of Israel, and that discourse was delivered by the power and demonstration and Spirit of the Almighty, but there came to every man and woman in that congregation a response by that same Spirit, "that is true." It bore testimony there and then to the truth of the remarks of the servant of God, and by this means, and by this means only will those who reject the truth stand condemned before God in the day that they will appear before Him to give an account of their acts in this life.

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Simply as a man; is not every man equal to myself? As far as opinions go, are not my neighbor's just as precious and of as much value to him as mine are to me? Any ideas that I may possess, no matter how rational, apparently logical, no matter how reasonable they may sound; are not the opinions of every other man just as much value to him as mine are to me? Certainly they are. We occupy the same place, we are on an equality in this respect; but when we proclaim the word of the Lord, when we undertake to make known the decrees of the Almighty, and the plan of salvation, and we do it by the power and demonstration of the Spirit,

every man who rejects that proclamation will do so at his own risk, and will stand condemned before God, because he will not receive of that Spirit, not because he did not receive the reasoning of the man who spoke, but because he rejected the influence of the Spirit of God, by which he spoke.

[JD 23:244 – p.245, Joseph E. Taylor, September 3rd, 1882](#)

I remarked at the outset that a part of this congregation had undoubtedly been gathered from distant nations having an object in view, with a design in their minds. Let me ask a few questions in connection with this: Are we pursuing this object? Are we following out this design? Are we continuing in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Gospel of the Son of God? Are we developing righteousness in our lives? Are we making that righteousness manifest in our conduct? Are we sustaining the principles that charmed our hearts many years ago, thousands of miles distant from here? Have we grown in knowledge of the principles of life and salvation over and above that which we understood many years ago? What is our standing in the midst of the people and before God to-day? These are plain questions, but pertinent; and we should propound these questions to ourselves often and thus become our own catechizers. If we find we are lacking in any one particular we should take immediate steps to remedy and defect, any neglect, and should cease any wrong-doing of which we may have been guilty. We can afford to serve God, but we cannot afford to take a contrary course; we cannot afford to apostatize and deny the truth; we cannot afford to become recreant to the principles we have espoused; we cannot afford to go back upon our covenants. We profess more. We declare more. I may use another term, which may be strictly correct, we pretend more than any other people upon the face of the earth. We have a right to do this, but when our pretensions are made known, when our professions become the property of others, to the extent that these pretensions are understood, we should be consistent therewith. Many of us were asked by our friends, will you not abandon "Mormonism?" No. Will you not leave the society of that people, and not go out to that wild wilderness country, but stay with us? We answered most emphatically, No. And our presence here to-day and for the many years that are past, testifies that that was what we meant, if we did not say so in so many words. Now the same scenes, the same conditions, the same society, the same influences, the same evils, unbidden, unsought for, undesired, have presumed to locate themselves in our midst. Shall we affiliate with that which we once abandoned, drink with the drunken, shake hands with the evil-doer, fraternize with the sinner, defile ourselves before God, and forsake the holy covenants that we have made? These are plain questions. We have gone too far; we have become possessed of too much understanding; we have professed too much to be able to afford to go back again and partake of any of the evils that we left in Babylon, years and years ago. And if we do so we shall do it at our own risk, and that risk and its consequences will be most terrible for us.

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We are threatened, we are menaced; we feel it strongly, very sensitively, very keenly; and we shall remember well in the days, in the years and in the times that are to come the instruments that have made these threatenings, and that have dared to raise their arms and their voice and their influence against us, while in the pursuit of the principles of eternal life. What then is our course? In whom is our trust? In God; in his power; in his arm; in his strength. Have we not made his acquaintance? Has he not revealed himself to us in the Gospel that we have received? Do we feel tremulous in the day of trouble – that God will leave us and forsake us? Is this our condition? If it is we are not living our religion; if it is we are not keeping our covenants; if it is we have not cherished the influence of the Spirit of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, or it would produce other results.

[JD 23:245 – p.246, Joseph E. Taylor, September 3rd, 1882](#)

It is true we number a very few people; numerically speaking our strength is weak. Many other things might be quoted concerning our position that are equally true; but understand this one thing – and the world of mankind will know it by and by – that we have set out to serve God, to keep his commandments, to build up his Church, to redeem his Zion upon this earth, without considering any consequences in the least. That is the condition. We have accepted the consequences; accepted conditions as they exist, with the powers of hell

perchance sometimes combined together to force those unpleasant conditions upon us. Yes, when death itself shall stare us in the face and seem to be inevitable, for to that extent will the Lord try and prove some of His people, to see if they will keep His commandments. Even then God expects us to remain firm and unshaken. Shall we turn to the right hand? No. Or turn to the left hand? Never. Turn round entirely and take a backward course? No, not by the help of the Eternal One. And this world will know, and the enemies of God's people will know by and by of the strength and the power and the might of Him who has revealed Himself to His servant Joseph; who has conferred his authority, his Priesthood upon men, authorizing them to act in his name.

[JD 23:246, Joseph E. Taylor, September 3rd, 1882](#)

There is a very singular expression in this book – and I think the Savior who used the expression had an eye to this last dispensation, which reads: "Whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken." Mark it, not perhaps, not maybe, not conditionally. And again: "But on whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder." Thus hath said the Lord God.

[JD 23:246, Joseph E. Taylor, September 3rd, 1882](#)

Now, my brethren and sisters, have you questioned yourselves as to your standing, as to your faith, as to your confidence in yourselves, in your religion and the Priesthood of God that administers to you, and in God the Eternal Father?

[JD 23:246, Joseph E. Taylor, September 3rd, 1882](#)

We are in a dark land. Our minds are beclouded, the heavens are shut, and the veil can only be lifted by the power of faith. Who possesses it? The veil never has been lifted from the day that God hid himself from Adam in the Garden of Eden; it never has been lifted in any age of the world only by the power of the Priesthood and the gift of faith, and then only for a short time. We are compelled now to exercise the principle of faith. Whence comes it? It is a gift of God; but it needs cherishing; it needs cultivation; it needs nourishing, and it will grow within you and me, if we will cherish it to the extent that it is our privilege, until it will become so mighty within us, that we never can be moved not even by death staring us in the face.

[JD 23:246 – p.247 – p.248, Joseph E. Taylor, September 3rd, 1882](#)

The world seem to measure their entire existence by this life, this being, these few paltry years upon this dark, cold and cruel earth. They say – if not in words in acts – give me enjoyment to-day; give me pleasure to-day; give me what I conceive to be happiness to-day." "But," says the man of inspiration, the man of forethought, the man whose mind reaches into the future, "what about eternity?" "Oh," say the world, "never mind eternity, let eternity take care of itself; let us gratify passion; let our ambitions be satisfied and realized here; it is all we ask." And they live like the brute although they have an existence like you and I. It is true they move upon the same earth, are surrounded by the same circumstances, but their minds have never reached out after God, and they are stultified, they are stunted in their growth, in the development of their mind; they know nothing and care to know less of the object of their creation and existence. They never conceived the idea of what dwells in their tabernacles – the power independent of the tabernacle, but necessary to the life of that tabernacle; a fully organized identity that can exist without the tabernacle and possesses all the powers and a great many more than it can make manifest through the tabernacle, an existence separate from the tabernacle that came from God. And yet these men and women, many of them, when you talk to them upon the principles of eternal life, will say, "Will you reason that out to me so that I can understand it in a way to satisfy my natural sense. Can I see what you talk about?" No, you cannot see it with the natural eye. Can I hear it? No, you cannot hear it with the natural ear. Can I handle it with these hands? No, you cannot handle it with the natural hands. Then I shall not listen. I will ignore everything you say upon this subject. Your parents can approach you through your natural senses; they address themselves to the tabernacle. But when we come to the constitution of the spirit that dwells within the tabernacle, and then come to understand that that spirit emanated from God the

Father, to whom will God the Father speak? Will He speak to the tabernacle that is the result of the agency of man and woman in producing it? No, only seldom and then to chosen ones, God the Father speaks to his own; and the angels that minister and speak, address themselves to the mind, as we call it, to this spirit that cannot be seen, that cannot be handled, that cannot be heard by the ears of the natural man. Here is the grand difficulty with the human family to-day. God cannot speak to them for they want to compel Him to come down to the grossness of the earthly tabernacle and reason everything out to the sense of that tabernacle? He will not do it. He did not six thousand years ago; and he will not do it now, nor in all time to come. The very medium through which inspiration comes, the very medium through which knowledge comes that benefits the human family, no matter whether it be scientific, philosophical or otherwise, there is not a truth extant upon the earth to-day that has been utilized, or many truths combined together that have been utilized but have been the result of divine inspiration directly to the spirit of man, to the mind of man which is sometimes incorrectly called the soul of Man. God will talk with His own creation, and if that spirit in man will place itself in a position to listen to the voice of God, what will he say to that spirit, "Control that tabernacle, I gave it to you for a greater exaltation; I gave it to you that after it shall have passed away, it may be resurrected from the grave, and if you subdue its passions, its unholy desires, if you sanctify that tabernacle before Me, then I am bound to bring that tabernacle from the grave and to bring it to the enjoyment of the fullness of My glory, which was the destiny of the spirit when it was first created." And, by the way, let me here say that there are a great many Latter-day Saints, good men and some few good women, who seem to be possessed of a skeptical turn of mind, they want everything reasoned out; if they receive any knowledge at all they want it to come through the gross, cold reasoning of humanity. In this connection there comes to my mind a little circumstance that is recorded here in this Testament. The disciples of Jesus, who had listened when together many times no doubt to His explanations of His own resurrection from the grave, found Thomas, and told him that the Savior had arisen. Said he: "I will not believe it. Unless I get more positive proof through these natural senses of mine that such is the fact, I will not believe it though you say it, and I have no reason to doubt your word." Undoubtedly they had been truthful with each other; they had been taught to be truthful by their Lord and Master. The Savior after a while appeared to his disciples. Thomas was there. The Savior understanding Thomas's thoughts said: "Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing." Whereupon Thomas exclaimed, "My Lord and my God." What did Jesus say? Did he reproach Thomas? Did he use harsh, cruel and severe words, because of Thomas's unbelief, as one of the chosen? No. He said, "Blessed art thou, Thomas, because thou hast believed" – upon any condition; if you have received a testimony now, you are blessed; but more blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. I think again of the beloved disciple John upon the isle of Patmos, who had the visions of the future opened to him for many ages to come, even unto the winding-up scene; he saw this earth eventually celestialized and made like unto a Urim and Thummim – a sea of glass, everything pertaining to it redeemed, and the earth clothed in the presence of God. When the angel commenced to unfold that beautiful vision to John, suppose John had questioned and queried and asked to have his natural senses gratified before he would receive that revelation, do you think we should have been in possession to-day of this beautiful vision showing the grand winding-up scene of all things? I think not. I can say to this congregation – I want to be understood clearly upon this point – wherever it exists in truthfulness, intuition – proper, correct and legitimate intuition is the safest rule and guide for the people, and Latter-day Saints should seek to become possessed of the spirit of intuition that comes by virtue of the possession of the Holy Ghost.

[JD 23:248 – p.249, Joseph E. Taylor, September 3rd, 1882](#)

But to return now, my brethren and sisters, where do we stand? What is our faith? How much is our confidence? Have we lost any of it? If so, let us regain it. There is a time yet for repentance; there is a time yet left for us to manifest our humility before God; there are opportunities for us to retrace our steps if we have traveled in the wrong direction. The time will come, as far as this earthly existence is concerned, when these opportunities and advantages will cease. Can you be baptized here in the flesh for the remission of your sins? Yes. Can you yourself attend to that ordinance when your tabernacle is laid away in the grave? No you cannot; that ordinance was revealed especially for this time. Can you have hands laid upon you for the reception of the Holy Ghost in this life? Yes. Can you enjoy this privilege when your body is laid away in the

grave? No; and to prove that this ordinance, as well as others pertains to this life, this time, I need only say that when we undertake to extend the principles of salvation to those that are dead, somebody in the flesh must represent the person for whom the ordinances are intended who may have neglected or have had no opportunity to attend to these ordinances themselves while in the flesh. When we get to the other side of the veil, we shall find another state of things existing there; we shall find other conditions, other surroundings, other laws, pertaining to that peculiar existence of spirit; we shall find already existing there other organizations. Our bodies will have been left in the grave with all their weaknesses, with all their imperfections. Our spirits will not go down into the grave. They live in the presence of God; they will be held responsible for that tabernacle, for its acts, for its development; they will be held responsible before God, before the heavens, for the faith they have exercised, or for the wrongs that they have allowed themselves to be guilty of in the flesh; for I say right here; I repeat it again, that it is the business of the spirit to preside over, to be master of and to control this fleshy tabernacle to all intents and purposes and to hold it subject to all the laws of God. But, says one, there are weaknesses that pertain to the flesh, are they all sins? No. What about those weaknesses? The man who has been pure in his spirit, pure in his heart, pure in his intentions and desires before God, when he lays that body down in the grave there will be found in the very elements with which his body will mingle, a power to cleanse and purify all weaknesses as pertaining to the flesh which cannot be regarded as sins before God. Yes, give mother earth time and she will so effectually purify the tabernacle that she will get it ready for the resurrection from the grave to be re-united with the spirit. Then after a while we shall become acquainted with the higher laws, with principles altogether different to those taught to us in the flesh and which also pertain to eternal lives. And then again, when we come to be resurrected from the grave we shall find other conditions in advance of those; we shall find God's Priesthood there, his law there, his power there, his influence there, as there will be teachings and instructions to be given even then; and thus shall we keep going on from condition to condition of perfection and glory until we become possessed of the glory that belongs to God. Is it worth living for? Is it worth enduring a few threats for? Is it worth being quiet when you are menaced, and as passive as the Lord wants you to be? Yes. Is it worth making any sacrifice for? Is it worth leaving home, father, mother, sister, brother? It is. And why? The day will come, perchance, even in the spirit world, when that father and mother, sister and brother, who despised you, will be seeking after salvation and will want to have conferred upon them the powers of eternal life. And you will have placed yourself in the position to act for them though your body may be in the grave, for your spirit still lives and you can preach and even become a minister of salvation to those of your own house. Amen.

George G. Bywater, August 27, 1882

DISCOURSE BY ELDER GEO. G. BYWATER,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, August 27, 1882.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST OR ANCIENT CHRISTIANITY – ITS GROWTH AND PROGRESS

DESPITE OF OPPOSITION – CHRIST'S SERMON ON THE MOUNT – SIMILARITY OF ANCIENT,

TO MODERN OPPOSITION TO THE TRUTH – THE EARLY APOSTACY AND THE GOSPEL'S
LATTER-DAY RESTORATION – THE OBJECT OF ANTI-"MORMON" LEGISLATION NOT THE
SUPPRESSION OF IMMORALITY – THE SAINTS WILLING TO ABIDE THE ISSUE.

JD 23:250 – p.251 – p.252, George G. Bywater, August 27, 1882

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." These words were uttered by the Apostle Paul, who, prior to his acceptance of the Christian religion was a vehement persecutor of the new cause that had sprung up in Galilee, and in the regions round about, but who upon being divinely inspired in a miraculous manner became convinced of the power of this Gospel of which he speaks in the language I have just quoted. It will be remembered that at the period of the world's history when these words were enunciated by the inspired Apostle the Christian religion was not then as it is now, the professed religion of a large portion of the inhabitants of the earth. It was then a new cause; it was then considered a sect which was everywhere spoken against. The doctrines and principles of this new faith appear, from the history of its incipient development, to have aroused very bitter feelings in the hearts of the professors of the popular creeds and philosophies of that age. The history of the rise and progress of Christianity presents to the intelligent student a history of many of the most important principles and lessons connected with the unfoldment of civilization and the purification of the moral ethics of that age and through the succeeding ages, I may add, even down to modern times. The readers of sacred history, as well as the students of universal history, know full well that there has been in the history of the struggle of our common humanity, rising upward from the lower strata of society or masses of the human family who could not well be denominated societies in the sense in which the term is employed to-day; they, I repeat, know full well the struggles which have been made by mankind to emancipate themselves and to be emancipated through the instrumentality of the light and intelligence that surrounded them and the revelations of God to man – what mighty struggles those have been! They know, furthermore, that there never has been in all past history any marked strides made in the growth and progress of men's intellectual and moral nature, but that growth has been attended with a series, I will not say uninterrupted, but with a series of persistent oppositions, a series of impeding obstacles thrown in the way, and the most intense hate has been manifested by the maintainers or supporters of orthodox systems of popular creeds and time-honored institutions. We can look back through the ages that have gone by, we can take a retrospective glance into the ages that have rolled into eternity, and there see the things that have marked distinctively those ages, and which are the landmarks of human history, and there we can discover, my brethren, sisters and friends, the effects to which I am now alluding, that there never has been any great improvement made, nor marked advancement effected, no growth attained, but it has met with opposition, which has been the child of ignorance and of superstition, and has been succored by that spirit and power which we denominate, in the language of the Scripture, the spirit and power of evil, the power of the devil. To-day Christianity is accepted professedly, by every enlightened nation on the face of this globe. There is not a nation speaking the spoken languages of the world but what recognizes the cardinal principles of the Christian religion as possessing vitality and power that has emanated from a source divine, and that which is best adapted to the amelioration of the condition of our common humanity. When we compare, when we draw lines of comparison between those grand and immutable principles that possess within themselves a potency, and that carry in their very nature the sanctity and purity of the source from whence they have come, bearing upon themselves the seal of divinity, and remembering the opposition which those principles met with by the learned doctors of the law, by the expounders of the writings of Moses and the Prophets, by those who were living in expectancy of the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah, in the coming of Shiloh, and then to discover, as the ages and centuries have gone by, the growth and strength that these fundamental doctrines have acquired; and although generations have come and generations have gone, melted away and become absorbed as the dew before the morning sun, yet the result of the labors of these generations have been witnessed in their accumulating forces, in their beneficent and redeeming influences almost imperceptibly advancing over the minds and seating themselves in the hearts and affections of the good and the great that have lived in every age, where those principles have been proclaimed in the ears of man. When we reflect

upon these things and then take a careful review of what it has cost in life and its energies, the potency of its powers that have been employed and apparently consumed, the places thereof being supplied by new stores unfolded in the rising generations, from generation to generation, until, towering up high and perceptibly above the dogmas and traditions of the heathen world, those down-trodden principles, those doctrines that have been everywhere spoken against, have been accepted, professedly, by the Christian world as the Balm of Gilead, as the power by which the nations were to be healed of their moral maladies, by which they were to be enlightened from their heathen darkness, and by which they were to be elevated to an intellectual and moral plane that should bring them up to the high destiny which their Creator had ordained for them, and to bring to pass that perfection which was augured, not only in the religion of Jesus, but also plainly indicated in the constitution of man. To-day we have a nominal acceptance of Christianity as a revealed religion. There are but few people living who are so obtuse in their minds, or who are so morally degraded in their nature, or so far lost to every sense of personal respect and Christian propriety, as to deny the goodness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, of which the Apostle Paul avowed himself as not ashamed – very few indeed. The 5th, 6th and 7th chapters of Matthew containing the sermon on the Mount are an embodiment of divinity, are a compilation of principles, are an association of ideas, that are unparalleled and are inimitable in the writings and learning of the world. They contain the principles that constitute the groundwork upon which correct nature is to be established. Now then, my friends, if this be true in the light of modern science, of modern philosophy, in the light of the civilization of the nineteenth century, these principles appear as brilliant, undimmed and as transcendent in lustre as any of the axiomatic principles, proverbs, and sayings of the learned and the wise of all the ages that are gone by. Zoroaster never chronicled their equal; Matthew never penned a compilation of such principles as are to be found there; Confucius never left on the record of his time principles that reach down into the innermost depth of human nature, and there bring up into man's destiny the design of his creator as has been revealed in those principles. And yet, my friends, these were the doctrines and principles that were opposed, mark me, and the propagandists of those principles were the men that were followed up with the most untiring opposition, that were persecuted with the most relentless hand; the men who represented these world-redeeming doctrines, the purifying, elevating institutions of Christianity were the men that suffered martyrdom, the men that lost their lives that they might find them, even lives eternal, and they lost them, too, at the hands of men who were considered the representative men of the time, the learned expounders of prophecy, the expounders of law, the teachers of the principles of civil and criminal jurisprudence, men who were deeply versed in the lore of the time, familiar with every branch of the literature of their age, and yet these were the most cruel and uncharitable elements which Christianity had to cope with in its growing influence in the day when the Apostle Paul averred that he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it was the power of God unto salvation to all who would believe.

JD 23:252 – p.253 – p.254 – p.255, George G. Bywater, August 27, 1882

To-day we have the principles of this same Christianity presented to the world in the same attitude, presented with the same conditions – avowed with the same sincerity, and its doctrines inculcated with the same assiduity and zeal that marked the Apostles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ over 1800 years ago. And does it meet with any opposition to-day? Need I ask this question? Scarcely. The people called Latter-day Saints have for a number of years proclaimed the Gospel of Christ in its primitive integrity, in its primitive organization, and in all its evangelical details, to the inhabitants of this nineteenth century, – which by some people is denominated the full blaze of civilization, almost approaching the same, the highest pinnacle, the last possibly attainable point of elevation in the growth of moral worth and intellectuality and power – and if it meets with the opposition which we know it has met with, we are confronted in our own minds with the inquiry – who are the men, what are the character and denomination of the people who raise their voices against the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in its apostolical purity in this the dispensation of the fullness of times? Is it the infidel? Is it the atheist, the man who believes that there is no God nor any controlling power but that which exists in the forms of matter we behold? Is it the man who ignores the Supreme Being, the ruler of the universe? Is it that class of people who live without God, and without hope and without faith in the world to come? Not exactly that class; but it meets with opposition from precisely a corresponding class of men that this cause met with in the early days of Christianity, namely, from Christian ministers, from the propounders of the doctrines of Christianity, from commentators, from men who profess to have studied the

law of God, and the revealed religion of Jesus Christ – these are the men who to-day, in our midst, here in Salt Lake City, in our cities and villages throughout this Territory and elsewhere, claim to be the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified, the Redeemer, as the Savior of the whole world, of all mankind, the men who tell you he came into this world and that he endured persecution and every form of ignominy, every form of calumny and reproach in order to introduce the glorious principles of Christianity, to introduce the doctrine of faith in God as the Supreme Creator of the universe, faith in his Son Jesus Christ as the world's Redeemer, faith in the Holy Spirit as the only guide of mankind unto all truth, the spirit of truth which was promised by Jesus that should come and make the ministry of his Apostles effective, and reveal unto them things past, things present, and show them things to come. Men who teach these principles are the men who oppose the teachings of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ which was preached by the Apostle Paul, which was preached by Peter, which was preached by all the Apostles, and above all, which was illustrated, not only in the teachings, but in the entire life and ministry of Christ, and of his immediate followers. Well, is this not very strange. Has it never occurred to some of our people that there must be some cause for this? Why was it that the Jewish Rabbis and teachers of the law, those men who looked so contemptuously upon the poor despised Nazarene and his equally contemptible followers, the fishermen, whom he had gathered together as his disciples from the sea coast of Galilee; men who had studied the prophecies, men who claimed to have Abraham for their father, men who claimed to be well-disposed towards every agency which tended to bring to pass the fulfillment of prophecy and execute the terms thereof – why was it that they of all other men should be the men from whom the Savior and his disciples met the severest opposition? Has it ever occurred to us that this is a strange inconsistency? If this position had been developed among a people and had been exerted by a class of men and women who were unbelievers in revelation, who were professedly infidel to the doctrines of prophets, to the teachings of patriarchs, to the spirit and revelations of Evangelists and of Apostles, we would not be surprised; but we find that the most powerful agencies that had been brought to bear for the suppression of Christianity, for the overthrow of its doctrines, for the retardation of its success throughout the land, were fostered by men who, from their professed adherence to the scriptures of divine truth, to the writings of Moses and the Prophets which they claimed to be in possession of, should have been its warmest friends; it should have received from them the most effective support; but on the contrary, it received from them the most heartless and unprincipled opposition. And it appears that there was but one solution to the problem, and that solution in their minds was this: This man is a promoter of sedition, we must have him taken out of the way, and so clamorous become the demand for the surrender of the great teacher and founder of Christianity, Jesus of Nazareth, that the populace cried, "away with him, away with him, crucify him, crucify him;" and when the judges of the land, after investigating the charge brought against him, had discovered there was no cause for death in that man, and, moreover, as it was announced "in this just man;" while they did not choose to impugn the judgment of the judge as to his purity, or call in question his reading of the law, yet they nevertheless cried out "his blood be upon our heads; never mind if it is not right, never mind if it is not legal, we do not care for that, away with him; release unto us Barrabas; give us a robber, give us a thief, give us any kind of individual and release him in this jubilee of release to criminals; give any one a chance but Jesus of Nazareth." This was the state of affairs. And why did they want to get rid of him? Why did they wish to dispose of him in this way? What had he done to them? What doctrines had he taught that were in opposition even to the law or to good morality? None whatever. He was acquitted before the highest tribunal of his land, and one of our ablest jurists, Alexander Innis, in reviewing the trial of Jesus of Nazareth, concluded that in the light of the nineteenth century, in the advanced state of the science of jurisprudence, the crucifixion of Jesus Christ was a judicial murder. He went about continually doing good. He berated men for their sins, to be sure. He chastised them for their iniquity. He did call them hypocrites, he did call them some uncomplimentary names, but they richly deserved it, and any man who is acquainted with the history of the times, with the morality of that age, with the depths of degradation to which men and women had sunken, and the almost extinction of the first conception of morality, knows full well that his accusations were only too just, that there was no other cause for their ire being raised against him other than it was true, and they could not endure it. There are a great many people in this world of ours, in this age, as there were in the age of which I am speaking, who cannot endure sound doctrine. They prefer having men who will teach them plausible and flattering theories, who will pander to their power, who will cringe before the influence of wealth, who will bow down at the shrine of

the almighty dollar, and who dare not let Jesus and his Apostles lift up their voices and proclaim against the crying evils of the land. As Latter-day Saints we are teaching the same principles, the same doctrines; and I need not say here, that there are no Christian ministers to-day that attempt from their pulpits to take up the subject of our religion, to take up any of the leading doctrines and principles of our faith, and with the word of God in their hand and with sound reason brought to bear upon the doctrines taught by the Latter-day Saints and by those taught in ancient times, to show that our doctrines are anti-scriptural, that they are unbiblical; but they will say that they are unchristian, that it is not in accord with the popular sympathies and popular sentiments of the times; that it is not in accord with men's ideas of morality, of respectability and of cultivation. Yet show me where there are any doctrines or principles taught by the Latter-day Saints that are not in the strictest accord, in the most perfect harmony, in the closest union with the teachings and doctrines taught centuries ago? There are not any to be found; and yet we hear the cry of immorality; we hear the cry of barbarism, of infidelity, of names that I hardly like to repeat, applied to the Latter-day Saints just as they were applied to Jesus and the Apostles, 1800 years ago.

JD 23:255 – p.256, George G. Bywater, August 27, 1882

My friends, if the popular prejudices of the first or second century of the Christian era had continued to be the dominant influence of the world and had suppressed the promulgation of the principles of Christianity and the maintenance of their claim upon men and women, where would your boasted Christianity be to-day? where would your enlightenment be to-day if the revelations of Jesus Christ had been swept out of existence, if the world had been deprived of them entirely, what would be our state at the present time? It is true we have had a long reign of apostacy; it is true that from 1,400 to 1,500 years have passed away without any semblance of the Church of Christ upon the earth. We have had apostate churches, we have had churches built up according to the doctrines of men; we have had sects and parties multiplied by the hundreds; but we have never had a Christian Church. When the Church of Christ of Former-day Saints, with its Prophets, Apostles, and inspired men; with its miracles, gifts and powers disappeared from the earth, and the great "Mother of harlots" that sitteth upon many waters, established a church, and she begat children in her own likeness, until the whole world has been filled, comparatively speaking, with the effects of the degraded system that has grown out of an apostate Christianity – I say, that from the time the Church of Christ disappeared from the earth until it was restored and built upon the foundation of living Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, and the living powers of the Holy Ghost, there was no Christian church upon the earth. And this has all taken place, not for the purpose of giving any class of men an opportunity of lifting themselves up in the pride and vanity of their hearts, because they have become instruments in the hands of God in bringing to pass the restoration of those things which were predicted by the ancient Prophets, and were to be fulfilled in the last days, but it has been brought to pass in the fulfillment of measured prophecy, of explicit and well-defined terms of revelation with no ambiguity or uncertainty about them; the terms are as explicit, the conditions are as comprehensive, as clear and as conspicuous as the terms of any contract that was ever made between any two intelligent beings.

JD 23:256, George G. Bywater, August 27, 1882

I must, however, bring my remarks to a close. I am thankful for the opportunity of announcing my feelings; of announcing our views as a people with regard to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We offer to the world the same Gospel that was proclaimed anciently – faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; repentance of sin; baptism for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost. And how is it that we meet with opposition? We have the same opposition that the enemies of Christianity waged against the Former-day Saints. Some people are finding fault with the treatment that we are receiving to-day at the hands of our government. I think many of us are laboring under a mistake. Some people are astonished at the partiality that is manifested in the law, and in the conditions in which the law is to be applied to one class of the citizens of this Territory and not against another. We are laboring under a mistake. The government is not seeking to legislate against immorality; and if we think they are doing so we are deceiving ourselves. I consider myself that there is more consistency to be accorded to those who are administrators of the laws of our nation and the makers of those laws than some of us are inclined to credit them with; but if we expect that the recent law which has been enacted to apply to the people of Utah – to "polygamists and bigamists" – is intended to

suppress the social evil, it is a mistake; it is not to touch anything outside "the marriage relation;" there is no infringement on the liberties of abandoned people; they can do as they please. The object of the law is to restrict marriage; is to restrict the legitimate and divine associations of the sexes; and if we suppose that it is intended for anything else we are laboring under a mistake. Let us be consistent, my friends, and wait. If our government wishes to deal with this question first, it has the right to do so; if it wishes to do it, it has the right to do it in the sense that the age regards might greater than right; but we are in the hands of the All-wise and Supreme Ruler of the universe. We are in the hands of Him who setteth up kings and who dethroneth kings; who buildeth up empires and casteth down thrones at His will and pleasure. We are willing to abide the issue. It is God and the rulers of our land for it. We cannot measure arms with them only with our principles, but they will not fight us on that ground; they slink back out of sight, they will not touch us with the divine records in their hands; they dare not come to the front and challenge a comparison of the principles of Christianity with the record upon which they profess to found their faith. Excuse the freedom I have taken to express these thoughts; but I am a little astonished at the apparent inconsistency manifest in the legislative discriminations enacted against the Latter-day Saints, and would say, Oh consistency, thou art a jewel rarely to be found.

JD 23:256 – p.257, George G. Bywater, August 27, 1882

May God sustain this people; may He fill their hearts with faith and hope and confidence. We will seek to live our religion, and to pray to the God of Daniel, the God of Moses, to the God of our forefathers, to the God of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, to the God of the universe, the Father of all; that He will direct and guide us in this great contest – I mean the contest that is being waged between pure Christianity and the errors of the world, until this earth shall be filled with the knowledge of God as the waters cover the mighty deep. This is my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

John Taylor, October 8, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Afternoon, October 8, 1882.

Reported by John Irvine.

THE MIGHTY MISSION OF THE SAINTS – GOD'S DEALINGS WITH THE WORLD IN ANCIENT
AND MODERN TIMES – GOD'S AUTHORSHIP OF CREATION AND RIGHT TO RULE – MAN'S
AGENCY, THE GOSPEL AND THE GATHERING – ITS ATTEMPTED SUPPRESSION, CONTRASTED
STATESMANSHIP – THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND HER DAUGHTERS – THE POLITICAL
SITUATION IN UTAH – THE RIGHTS OF MAN, THE SUPPORTERS AND SUBVERTERS OF LAW
AND ORDER – RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE AND POLITICAL INJUSTICE – THE LATTER-DAY

SAINTS THE FUTURE SAVIORS OF AMERICA – THE EDMUNDS ACT AND ITS UNJUST
OPERATION – REVEREND FALSIFIERS AND THEIR DUPES – EXHORTATION TO THE
PRIESTHOOD AND THE PEOPLE.

[JD 23:257 – p.258, John Taylor, October 8, 1882](#)

We have had a very interesting Conference, and a great many thoughts, ideas and reflections have been presented to the people in a clear and pointed manner, and I have been pleased to see the unanimity and harmony that have existed in our midst. And while I attempt to speak to you I shall ask an interest in your prayers that I may be strengthened to perform the labor. It is difficult for a people to understand and to retain everything that may be said in a Conference like this, where there are so many subjects dwelt upon and so many principles enunciated; but it is a great blessing for us that we are situated as we are, and that we possess the intelligence which has been communicated from time to time. Many great and precious principles having been revealed unto us, it becomes necessary for us to try to comprehend them, that we may understand the position we occupy before God, before the world in which we live, and before the intelligences that exist behind the veil in the eternal worlds. We have a great and important mission committed unto us, and it is for us to seek to comprehend that mission and fulfill the various duties and responsibilities devolving upon us. The Lord has given unto us a form of government, an organization, priesthood and authority to enable us to perform these several duties, and he has certain plans, purposes and designs to accomplish pertaining to us, pertaining to this nation, to other nations, and to the world in which we live, – pertaining to those who have lived and are now in another state of existence, and also pertaining to those who shall yet live.

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The time in which we live is denominated in Scripture "the dispensation of the fullness of times," wherein it is said God will gather together all things in one, whether they be things in the earth or things in the heavens. This dispensation embraces all other dispensations, all principles and powers, rights, privileges, immunities and developments that have existed among men in the various ages that are past. This globe did not originate with man, nor was it constructed, designed or manipulated by him, nor were any of its organisms, sentient or inanimate; for we are told that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and all that in them is: nor did this dispensation with which we are associated, nor have any of the dispensations associated with the works, plans or designs of the Almighty originated with man. After man had fallen, and it became necessary that he be driven from the garden, it needed the interposition of the Almighty, for as is said in the Book of Job, it was necessary to "deliver his soul from the pit; I have found a ransom." That ransom was the Only Begotten Son of God who offered himself in the beginning to meet the demands of justice, to carry out the purposes of the Almighty, and to be a Savior and Redeemer to man. Adam was perfectly helpless in this respect, and it needed the direct interposition of the Almighty for the accomplishment of this object. In the patriarchal, or antediluvian age, when men were put in possession of any hope, any intelligence, any knowledge, or any revelation pertaining to God, these things did not originate with man, they came from the Lord and were given by inspiration; and when on account of the wickedness and corruption of mankind the old world had to be destroyed, a way was provided for a small remnant to be spared, By whom? By man? No. God dictated it. The Prophets prophesied about it. They taught the antediluvians as the people of this day are being taught, they warned them of the impending ruin that would overwhelm them, of the prison house to which they would go, and of the wrath and indignation of Heaven which would be poured out upon the peoples of the earth. It came to pass as they had declared. But God provided a way for the perpetuation of the human family. It was foretold to Methuselah that his seed should be preserved to perpetuate the human family upon the earth, and it was so, Noah, who was one of his descendants, fulfilled that decree.

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Again, in later ages when the children of Israel were in bondage in Egypt, they did not originate the method of their own deliverance, or point out the way for its accomplishment. They were in a state of bondage and vassalage. God raised them up a Moses, revealed His will to him, set him apart for this mission, told him what to do, and after some little difficulties arising from human weakness were removed, Moses was accepted, and the Lord became his instructor, and pointed out in all instances the course that he should pursue, and in what manner the children of Israel were to be delivered, and He, the Holy One of Israel, gave them His law and ordinances, and revealed unto them His will, and stood by and sustained, guided and directed them. This salvation did not come from the people, it did not originate with them, they owed it all to God, the source of all truth, all light, all intelligence, all power and blessings. The time at length arrived that the Son of God was to come. Neither the Scribes and Pharisees, the High Priests and Saducees, nor any of the sects and parties of the day comprehended the things that were about to transpire, and had nothing to do with bringing them to pass. His advent was announced to His mother by an angel, and His birth was heralded to shepherds by an angelic host, and the wise men of the East were led by his star to Bethlehem of Judea, where they found the infant Savior, whom they recognized as the Messiah, and to whom they brought presents of gold, frankincense and myrrh; and whom they worshipped.

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It is said in speaking of the Son of God, that he did not come to do His own will, nor to carry out His own purposes, nor to fulfill any particular plan of his own, but he came to do the will of his Father who sent him. Jesus in selecting his disciples, took one man here and another there – a tax gatherer, a fisherman, and others who it was thought were the most unlikely of any men to carry out the purposes of God. He left the great men out of the question, that is the High Priests and the popular and pious of all classes, and he selected his own laborers to perform his own work; and he subsequently told them, You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and set you apart unto this mission. When a message had to be proclaimed to the world in these last days the agents were chosen on the same principle. There was any amount of teachers of divinity, any amount of professors of theology, any amount of reverend, and right reverend fathers and all classes of religious men and religious teachers; but God did not recognize them. He chose a young uneducated man and inspired him with the spirit of revelation, and placed upon him a mission and required him to perform it; and he was obedient to that requirement. I speak of this to show that we none of us had anything to do with the introduction of this work, but that, as in all other dispensations in the various ages of the world, God was the originator of everything that tended to develop a knowledge of Himself and of his plans and purposes; to unfold the past, to develop the present, and to make manifest the future.

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To whom are we indebted for this book, called the Bible. We are told that holy men of old spake as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost. And from whence did they receive that Holy Ghost? Not of man, nor by man, but by the revelations of God, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We sometimes feel to exalt ourselves a little in the position that we occupy pertaining to the Priesthood, pertaining to our organization, and pertaining to ordinances, etc. What have we to glory in? Nothing. None of us knew anything until it was revealed. None of us could comprehend any of these principles only as they have been made manifest. But by obedience to the Gospel we have received the Holy Ghost, and that Spirit takes of the things of God, and shows them to us. We have received this and hence have been baptized into one baptism, and all partaken of the self-same Spirit, as Paul expressed it, "dividing to every man severally as he will." The question arises, What is the object of this? It is that the world should be visited from time to time and communications made to the human family. Because light cleaves to light, truth cleaves to truth, intelligence cleaves to intelligence; and as we are all made in the image of God, and as God is the God and Father of the spirits of all flesh, it is His right, it is His prerogative to communicate with the human family. We are told that there is a spirit in man and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth it understanding. God having made the earth, made the people to inhabit it, and made all things that exist therein, has a right to dictate, has a right to make known His will, has a right to communicate with whom he will and control matters as he sees proper: it belongs to him by right; and he has seen proper in these last days to restore His Gospel to the earth, and, as I said before, intelligence

cleaves to intelligence. We read in the Scriptures concerning man being a son of God. We read in the Scriptures about men becoming the adopted sons of God through obedience to the Gospel. Hence it is said: "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." By what means? Through the atonement of Jesus Christ and by the medium of the Gospel, which has been introduced in different ages for that purpose. God having felt disposed to reveal the Gospel in these last days, has given the same principles and powers, the same light, revelation and intelligence that he did in former ages, for the accomplishment of the same work, and for the fulfillment of his purposes relating to the human family who are his children. Hence we occupy a very peculiar position in relation to God, in relation to the earth in which we live and the people thereof – in relation to both – to the living and to the dead.

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It is proper for us to comprehend the position that we occupy. We sometimes arrive at curious conclusions pertaining to the wickedness of the world, and a variety of other things associated therewith. And permit me to say here, that we had no more to do with the peoples of the world, or the placing of them in the position they occupy, than we had in restoring the Gospel. We find ourselves a few people mixed up with the world. We find too that when the word of God is made manifest and the revelations of God are developed, that many things as they exist amongst mankind are out of order. There is a great amount of priestcraft, idolatry, corruption, oppression, tyranny, murder, bloodshed, covetousness, licentiousness, and every kind of iniquity that can be conceived of; and that is more clearly made manifest to us because the Lord has been teaching us through the Prophets, and inspiring us with other feelings, and given unto us to comprehend things more clearly than others do. But what have we to do with the people of the world? We complain sometimes that they do not treat us exactly right. Well, they do not in all respects, and I do not think this is very difficult to understand. But there is nothing new about that, God has revealed unto us His law, and they do not comprehend it, neither do they want to; nor did the antediluvians. They were very wicked, very corrupt and very depraved, very immoral and very dishonest; but that was a matter between them and the Lord, and he dealt with them; and it is his business to deal with the nations of the earth at the present time and not ours further than we are directed by him. What is the mission that we have to perform to this nation? It is to preach the Gospel. That is one thing. That was the mission given to the disciples of Jesus in his day: Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned. This mission is being carried out in the fact of our sending representatives of this latter-day work to all the civilized nations that will receive our missionaries. But we are not placed here to control people; we are not placed here to use any improper influence over the minds or consciences of men. It is not for us to attempt to do what Mahomet did – to say that there was but one God, and Mahomet was his prophet, and by force compel all others to acknowledge it. To attempt to do that would be to attempt to interfere with the agency of man; and anything of that kind is altogether foreign to the character and spirit of our mission. We preach the Gospel to the people, and it is for them to receive or reject as they may choose. We have done this to a great extent. Many of you Elders who are before and around me – and there are some thousands – have been engaged preaching this Gospel, but none of you ever used coercion, none of you ever attempted to force any man to obey the message you had to declare. If you did, you did not understand your calling. And when you have been among the different nations preaching this Gospel, have you sought to interfere with their governments or with their laws, or endeavored to stir up commotion or rebellion or trouble of any kind? No. I am at the defiance of the world to prove any such statement. That does not belong to our faith. When the Elders are sent forth, they go as servants of God with a message from the Lord, to unfold the Scriptures, and to bear testimony of the things that they themselves are witnesses of; and to administer the ordinances of the Gospel to all those who believe on their words. This is the position that we occupy in these matters. And what else do we do? We gather the people together; and they no sooner receive this Gospel than they are anxious to gather with the people of God. Why? Because the Scriptures say that they would? Because the Scriptures say, "gather my people, those that have made covenant with me by sacrifice?" No, but because they have obeyed the Gospel and received the Holy Ghost, and that Holy Ghost has instructed them pertaining to these matters, as it instructed the prophets in former times that such an event would transpire. The people have gathered together, and you could not keep them back if you were to try to. They have been trying. You know that Mr.

Evarts wrote communications to the European ministers requesting them to use their influence by way of putting a stop to the "Mormon" emigration. It is rather a sorry comment upon the government of this nation, that boasts of being "the land of the free, the home of the brave, and the asylum for the oppressed," and that a little over a hundred years ago the chief complaint against the nation from whence the colonists came, was the lack of religious toleration; to think that they should so far forget their original condition as to call upon what they term the effete monarchies of Europe to assist them in suppressing religious liberty and controlling human freedom. And when this subject was brought before Mr. Gladstone, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, a short time ago by some pragmatist zealot in the British Parliament, calling his attention to the request of the American Secretary, he very distinctly told him that "he was unable to interfere with the operations of the Mormons in England, as he presumed their converts went with them willingly." Thus while the American government is trying to exert force and to interfere with religious matters and bind the consciences of men, the British government pleads for and guarantees to its subjects religious and social liberty. I am told that Mr. Evarts is a great-grandson of Roger Sherman, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. I should not have thought that that gentleman would have so soon forgotten the position occupied by his ancestor. But it seems that such is the fact, nevertheless.

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I repeat, our mission is to preach the Gospel, and then to gather the people who embrace it. And why? That there might be a nucleus formed, a people gathered who would be under the inspiration of the Almighty, and who would be willing to listen to the voice of God, a people who would receive and obey His word when it was made known to them. And this people in their gathered condition are called Zion, or the pure in heart. I wish we were pure in heart; that is, I wish we were more so than we are. And this is something that we all need to reflect upon, to consider the pit from whence we were dug, and the rock from whence we were hewn. I have heard people say, they were born in sin, and cradled in iniquity. It is probably very true. Many of us have been rocked in these cradles, and we have been nurtured amidst infamies, and we have been surrounded by and enveloped in evils of all kinds. We talk sometimes about Babylon – "Come out of her O my people, that ye partake not of her sins, nor receive of her plagues." We need not say too much about those people, for we came out from them ourselves; and it would not be becoming on our part to speak badly about our former status. That reminds me of a conversation I had some years ago with some Protestants who were abusing the Catholics. I reminded them of the fact that they descended from them. They were calling the Catholic Church the Mother of Harlots. Well, said I, if that be true, she has brought forth a scurvy offspring. History certainly informs us that the Protestants came out from the Catholics, and therefore, if the Catholic Church is the mother, they certainly must be the daughters, and one would think there should be some affinity between them. It is not considered proper for persons to rail against their mother.

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It is well for us to comprehend our position with regard to the nation. Being gathered together, as a people, we have assumed a political status, for we not only brought our religion and our spirits with us, but our bodies also; and by thus being gathered in this land we become naturally an integral part of the United States. We have received by the act of the government of the United States a territorial form of government, in which we are authorized to perform certain functions of a political nature, and to enjoy, as do all other Territories, the free and full rights of American citizens therein, and thus have become a part of the body politic of these United States, with all the rights, privileges and immunities pertaining thereto, as exercised and enjoyed by all American citizens throughout this broad land; and these are guaranteed unto us in the Constitution of the United States and by the Congress of the United States, in an instrument denominated the Organic Act. And I will say this much for the United States; with all her faults and infirmities, I do not believe there is a nation upon the face of the earth to-day, where we could have as much liberty as we here enjoy, and that is precious little, God knows. We are told sometimes that we live under popular government, and that the voice of the people rules. It used to, but who rules now? Well, no matter, we have got to make the best we can of it. We have a territorial form of government, with a governor appointed by the administration. I was going to say, God save the mark. We have judges and other officers; and we have a nominal legislature that makes our

laws, but those laws can be vetoed by one man. There is a great deal of absolutism about it. But these are the circumstances in which we are placed; and I suppose it is thought by a great many that we ought to consider it a great privilege to be allowed to live. We do think so, but we are not indebted to any officials for it; they did not give us our life, neither did this government. There are certain principles that are inherent in man, that belong to man, and that were enunciated in an early day, before the United States government was formed, and they are principles that rightfully belong to all men everywhere. They are described in the Declaration of Independence as inalienable rights, one of which is that men have a right to live; another is that they have a right to pursue happiness; and another is that they have a right to be free and no man has authority to deprive them of those God-given rights, and none but tyrants would do it. These principles I say, are inalienable in man; they belong to him; they existed before any constitutions were framed or any laws made. Men have in various ages striven to strip their fellow-men of these rights, and dispossess them of them. And hence the wars, the bloodshed and carnage that have spread over the earth. We therefore are not indebted to the United States for these rights; we were free as men born into the world, having the right to do as we please, to act as we please, as long as we do not transgress constitutional law nor violate the rights of others.

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Being organized, then, into a government such as it is – that is, the name of a government, the name of a legislature, the name of a free people – being organized as we are, what next? We are necessarily obliged to look after our affairs as men, our political affairs. Our mission to the world is a mission of peace, the Gospel proclaims peace on earth and good will to man. Then, being organized in a governmental capacity, we have certain rights. They profess to give them to us, but they don't. They try to deprive us of them while professing to impart them. I might enter into a long line of argument here; no matter, I am merely speaking upon some general principles. What then is our duty here, say as a people – leaving religion out of the question altogether? As men and as American citizens, we have the right to all the privileges, and immunities, protection and rights of every kind that any men in these United States have, and no honorable man or men would seek to deprive us of them. When we talk about rights, these are the rights, as I understand them, that we possess in this nation. Is it proper, therefore, for us, as men and as citizens of the United States to look after our rights? I think it is. Do we want to violate law? No, we do not, although we know many of these laws are wrong, corrupt and unconstitutional. We have no right to find fault with others about their religion. We preach the Gospel; they receive or reject it as they please. If we have found the benefit of embracing it, let us be thankful; but we will not interfere with them in their religion. Are they Methodists? They can worship as they please – Presbyterians, Catholics, Baptists, or any other "ists" can worship as they please, that is none of our business, that is a matter between them and their God. But when they interfere with our rights as citizens of the United States, it becomes our business to look after our liberties.

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As religionists we call upon them, as a duty committed to us, as we aver, by the Almighty. Our mission is to call upon this nation and all nations to repent of their sins, of their lasciviousness, adulteries, fornications, murders, blasphemies and of all dishonest and corrupt practices. But in this we use no force; having laid these matters before them, they have their free will to receive or reject. As religionists they may proclaim us bigamists or polygamists or what they please, that is their business, and they must answer for their own acts; as politicians or statesmen they must at least give us the benefit of the Constitution and laws; these, as a portion of the body politic, we contend for as part of our political rights. We do not claim, nor profess, nor desire to interfere with any man's religion or conscience. We have nothing to do with their religion, nor they with ours. Religious faith or belief is not a political factor. The Constitution has debarred its introduction into the arena of politics; and every officer of the United States has pledged himself under a solemn oath to abide by and sustain that Instrument, and not one of them can interfere with it without a violation of his oath.

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What have we done in defense of our liberties? I have heard several people say that we are inclined to be aggressive. I think we are not aggressive, but some of the laws are very aggressive. We have a grand jury organized of some fifteen men. How many of them are Latter-day Saints? Two, I think. So I suppose there is one-tenth of the citizens of this Territory loyal, patriotic and honorable, and the rest are considered to be unpatriotic, disloyal, etc. But we ought at least to be tried before we are condemned; that is the law as I understand it. Now this one-tenth of loyal, good and virtuous people get thirteen men empaneled, and the nine-tenths get but two to represent them. But unfortunately for these loyal and patriotic people carefully prepared statistics show that this ten percent of population supplies eighty percent of the criminals. How is it in other things? There is considerable said about offices and officers. Where is there a man appointed from among the people to hold any office in the gift of the national government? To use the words of a thoughtful non-"Mormon" observer, though the 'Gentiles' constitute only ten percent of the population, yet from this small minority are taken the incumbents of nearly every position of influence and emolument. They have the governor, with absolute veto power, secretary, judges, marshals, prosecuting attorney, land register, recorder, surveyor-general, clerks of the courts, commissioners, principal post-office mail contractors, postal agents, revenue assessors and collectors, superintendent of Indian affairs, Indian agencies, Indian supplies, army contractors, etc."

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According to the common usages of men, we have at least a reasonable right to our proper proportion, but it is evident we do not have it. And then our educational interests are interfered with by these very men who state how ignorant we are. For instance, the Legislature of Utah appropriated the means of the people to help build a university. Who was to furnish the means? The people of this territory. Who said they should not do it? The Governor, and through his action the appropriation was vetoed. These are some of the things we have to contend with. On the other hand, laws are enacted inimical to the interests of this people. And then His Excellency goes to work and appoints a set of officers contrary to the law of the land; goes beyond the act of Congress and appoints officers to fill nearly every office in the Territory, vacant or not, as the case may be. I am not going to enter into the details of it, but we have generally found that there were people in those offices; that they had a right there, and that the law provided that they should hold over until their successors were elected and qualified. I believe the law so reads; indeed, I am told that the law not only reads so, but that the Governor's commissions to many of these officers also reads so, and hence his present action is violative of his own commission.

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These are some of the things we have to contend with. – Do we wish to fight the government of the United States? No. What shall we do? Stand up for the rights granted to us by the laws and constitution of the United States as American citizens. We have ex post facto laws, religious inquisitorial laws, we have laws which smack strongly of bills of attainder, and we have test oaths presented, all of which and many others are unconstitutional and are violative of our constitutional rights. I have the opinion of some of the best jurists of the nation to the effect that all these things are a violation of law, and that men have no business to be subjected to such infamies, nor become their own accusers. An eminent jurist speaking of this queried how this kind of thing would apply in Washington, where miscegenation has prevailed to so great an extent. Suppose some of those who practised this thing were placed under such a law, how would it operate with them? Why several members of Congress have said that if the Edmunds law had been made applicable to adulterers, and men had to become their own accusers, it would unseat three-fourths of the members of Congress. Ex post facto laws, have been passed, which are clearly unconstitutional, and it is for us to test them in the courts, and we mean to do it; for although as religionists we go as messengers of peace to the nations, yet as American citizens we mean to contend for our rights, inch by inch, legally and constitutionally, God being our helper.

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Another thing God expects us to do, and that is to maintain the principle of human rights. I have felt sorrowful in watching the action of Congress towards us – sorrowful, not only on our own account, but on theirs. We fear no evil arising from those things, for we are anxiously performing our duty before God. But we owe it to ourselves as men, we owe it to our families, our children, and to posterity; we owe it to the lovers of freedom in this land, of which there are thousands, yea, millions, who despise acts of oppression and tyranny; we owe it to all liberty-loving men, to stand up for human rights and protect human freedom, and in the name of God we will do it, and let all the congregation say Amen. (The immense congregation responded, Amen.)

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Joseph, the despised of his father's house became their deliverer. Moses, the foundling and outcast of Egypt, became the deliverer and lawgiver of Israel. Jesus, the despised Nazarene, introduced principles that revolutionized the moral ideas and ethics of the world. And it may not be among the improbabilities, that the prophecies of Joseph Smith may be fulfilled and that the calumniated and despised Mormons may yet become the protectors of the Constitution and the guardians of religious liberty and human freedom in these United States.

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Now these are some of my feelings upon some of these points. And I will proceed a little further and say that I do not blame many men for entertaining the sentiments which they do towards us. There is a feeling and desire to see fair play and honesty deep down in the hearts of millions of the people of these United States, who ardently desire to see justice equally and honorably administered to all people within the nation. That was manifested very clearly during the passage of the Edmunds bill, and while many of those venerable Senators and honorable members of the House could not conscientiously with their limited information and the false statements made by our enemies sustain Polygamy, yet, to their honor be it spoken, they endeavored to maintain human rights, free toleration and religious liberty, and the rights of man without distinction of party throughout the realm. We honor, appreciate and respect such men as honorable representatives of the founders of this nation, and of the thousands who to-day embrace similar opinions. It is the debauched, the corrupt, the violators of principles and law and desecrators of the sacred principles of liberty, it is their pernicious practices which are striking at the foundation of the institutions of this country and which are demoralizing and destroying the nation, and there are thousands of highminded and honorable men to-day who, on account of trickery, hypocrisy, dishonesty and crime stand aloof from the filthy pool of politics. They have seen honor, truth, integrity and virtue trampled under foot, they have seen corruption and crime like a repulsive octopus pushing its Briarean arms into every department of State; they have seen corruption and crime like a deadly simoom permeating every department of the body politic, and debauching and corrupting the nation, and they have shrunk from the disgusting contact; how far they can reconcile this with their ideas of patriotism it is for these aggressors to say. It is not the honorable and upright, the men of virtue and integrity that we would proclaim against; it is the vicious, the untruthful, the calumniators, the corrupt and debauched, the stirrers up of sedition and strife, and the enemies of law, order, virtue, righteousness, justice, human liberty and the rights of man to whom our remarks would apply.

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Again, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Catholics, and all classes have come among us, and who has interfered with them? Has anybody interfered with their worship? No. Has any violence of any kind been offered them? No, you cannot find it. We are at their defiance to show any such thing here. What have we done? We have fostered them, as has been referred to; we have treated them courteously and kindly and gentlemanly as honorable people ought to do. What have they done? Combined together to publish some of the most abominable falsehoods that were ever circulated with regard to any community. Now, this becomes rather a serious matter. Talk about love for these people! I would do them good. If they were hungry I would feed them; if they were naked I would clothe them; if they were sick I would administer to them; but if they lied about me and about this people I would tell them they were liars and defamers; I do not care how pious

they are, or how much religion they have got, I would tell them the naked truth in relation to these matters.

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They are the avowed advocates of moral reform, profess to be shocked at our moral obliquity and complain of us as being licentious and corrupt. Even every prominent Christian minister in this city joined in a protest against customs inculcated in the Scriptures by the Almighty, and practised by Abraham, Jacob, David, and hosts of the most venerated and honorable men that ever lived, practices which they aver are lascivious and corrupt; and these same ministers issued a circular calling upon their fellow-ministers and brother Christians throughout the United States to petition Congress for legislation which should stop, as they claim, the "foul system of polygamy," and hypocritically inserted, to blind the eyes of those not familiar with Utah matters, a request for legislation for the suppression of "adultery, seduction, lewd and lascivious cohabitation and kindred offences," that they might "be punishable as in the States and other Territories of the Union;" and political demagogues joined with them in the crusade.

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Predicated upon these solicitations scores of petitions were forwarded to Congress to this effect. They obtained their legislation and in their frantic Christian zeal to stamp out polygamy, a Bible institution, Congress, under this priestly influence so far forgot the inalienable rights of man, constitutional guarantees and forms of jurisprudence, as to disfranchise nine-tenths of this community for the alleged crime of the one-tenth, and that too, without trial; thus making the innocent suffer for the alleged acts of the guilty. And to-day an infamous, expurgatory test oath is introduced, at variance with all precedents in this nation, which as stated by Judge Black, is altogether "odious, unjust and unconstitutional," which "reverses those rules of evidence which lie at the foundation of civil liberty," and is a flagrant, violent and direct attack upon the inherent rights of man. Thus in their intemperate, religious zeal making a direct onslaught upon the bulwarks of republican institutions, jeopardizing the safety of the state, and thoughtlessly, recklessly and inconsiderately ignoring every just principle; assailing the fundamental doctrines of political and religious freedom; and exerting all their energies in attacking a phantom to tear down the pillars of state and to destroy the Temple of Liberty, though they themselves, as a Samson, perish in the ruins.

[JD 23:268, John Taylor, October 8, 1882](#)

What is the moral effect? This same test-oath, while it assails a scriptural usage practised by the most renowned, revered and honorable men of antiquity, who are denominated men of righteousness and the friends of God, protects and sustains the degraded, corrupt and licentious who are supposed to be good Christians and not polygamists.

[JD 23:268, John Taylor, October 8, 1882](#)

A very honorable, upright and virtuous gentleman, whom no one will accuse of immorality or vice – the respected ex-mayor of this city, who has filled that office with dignity and honor for the last six years, has a son who was appointed registrar for the Fifth Precinct in this city; this son had the painful and humiliating duty to perform of refusing to register his father's name, because many years ago he had had more than one wife, but who, through death, was for some time without a wife at all, and has lately married one wife; and yet this young man had to perform the disgusting task, according to the provisions of said test-oath, of registering a notorious keeper of a bagnio, and many of her harlot associates. Another circumstance occurred of a gentleman who came to be registered, but thought it would be impracticable for him to take the test-oath. More honorable than many of his pious associates, he suggested that he did not know that he could take the prescribed oath, for he not only had a wife, but kept a mistress, but on examination he found the oath exempted all those who might engage in illicit intercourse, provided the association was not, as expressed in the oath, "in the marriage relation." On discovering this, he observed, "I can take that oath, for I am only married to one;" and he was accepted. Another young man in this city, whilst having the test oath read to him,

said he could not take it, as he could not swear that he had not cohabited with more than one woman; but when the reading was continued and the words "in the marriage relation" sounded in his ears, he said, "I can go that," and was duly sworn.

[JD 23:268 – p.269, John Taylor, October 8, 1882](#)

Thus these moral and religious reformers and teachers, these professors of high moral ideas, these inveighers against a scriptural practice professedly because it is immoral, have introduced safeguards to protect the libertine, the voluptuary and the harlot, whilst they have made criminals of those who have been observing a law instituted by the Almighty. Perhaps it would be considered too severe to call these "reverend gentlemen" and those "venerable seigneurs" who occupy honorable positions in Congress by the harsh name of hypocrites, yet it is very humiliating to the sensitive and virtuous to contemplate the result of their ill-timed and intemperate acts, for they have thus made themselves, while professing purity, the advocates and abettors of vice, licentiousness, immorality and crime.

[JD 23:269, John Taylor, October 8, 1882](#)

I wish here to apologize a little for the people of the United States, for I think sometimes we carry the thing too far in relation to them. Here are men supposed – would be in any other community – to be honorable men, reverend men that are teachers of religion, combining against us. And because they are considered honorable men, people say, why there is the Reverend Mr. So and So and So and So, they have requested us to send petitions to Congress, to do this and that because of the wickedness and abominations of this people, and their misrepresentations and falsehoods have been circulated in the religious magazines and in the political papers, until the people abroad hardly know what to think. Many of them think we are a very infamous people; they think we are a great deal more corrupt than they are, and that we need not be. And they go to work to legislate to correct our morals. Now, with thousands of papers circulating these falsehoods, and these falsehoods coming from supposed religious and honorable men, is it any wonder that the people should be deceived with regard to us. I read to-day an account of an attempt to drive our Elders from some of their fields of labor? What for? Because they are "Mormons." They are so wicked and so corrupt, and all because the papers and reverend ministers said so and so; and thus thousands of honorable men are deceived; but many of them, when they come to a knowledge of the truth, will rejoice in it. I want, then, to stand in defence of many of the people of the United States who are thus deceived. It is said in the scriptures that the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood. We have certainly had floods of falsehoods, originating, many of them, with these pious people. Do we want much association with these people? I think not. If they circulate falsehoods about us, can we respect them very much? I think not. We cannot hold communion with people who are corrupt, low and degraded. We were down in the sloughs a little while ago ourselves; we have come out from among them and know what they are. We know the infamies which exist there, the licentiousness, the corruption, the social evil, adulteries, fornication, sodomy, child murder, and every kind of infamy. And they come here and want to teach our children these things. We have got to be careful how we guard our homes, our firesides, our wives, our sons and our daughters, from their association. We don't want these practices insidiously introduced among us. We want to preserve our purity, our virtue, our honor, and our integrity.

[JD 23:269 – p.270, John Taylor, October 8, 1882](#)

The time is hastening on, and I shall have to stop. I wish to make some further remarks, and would have liked to have talked some time longer. But what shall we do? I will tell you what I will try to do. I will try and humble myself before the Lord and seek for his blessing, and say as one of old said: "Search me, Oh God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." I have talked with my counselors in the same way, and they are of the same mind. We have talked with the Twelve about these things, and they are of the same mind. Now, we call upon all you Seventies, High Priests and Elders, you Bishops, Priests, Teachers and Deacons individually and your quorum capacity, upon the heads of families, upon the various organizations in the Church, upon all the Saints who profess to revere His name, to humble yourselves before God, to lay aside your covetousness and your evils of

every kind. And when you have done so, you that meet together for prayers in your holy places, call upon God for guidance, direction and deliverance, and he will hear your prayers and deliver you, and your enemies shall have no power over you, for God is on the side of Israel, and he will preserve his people. No power can stay the progress of this work, for it is onward, onward, onward, and will be, until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ, and until every creature in heaven and in the earth and under the earth shall be heard to exclaim, Blessings and glory and honor and power and might and majesty and dominion be ascribed to Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever.

[JD 23:270, John Taylor, October 8, 1882](#)

We will leave the wicked in the hands of God: He will deal with them in his own way. We are told that the wicked shall slay the wicked; and one thing that I am sorry over in this nation is this: that they are striking at the tree of liberty and trying to fetter humanity and bring men into bondage, they are laying the axe at the root of this government, and unless they speedily turn round and repent and follow the principles they have sworn to sustain – the principles contained in the Constitution of the United States – they will be overthrown, they will be split up and divided, be disintegrated and become weak as water; for the Lord will handle them in his own way. I say these things in sorrow; but as sure as God lives unless there is a change of policy these things will most assuredly take place.

[JD 23:270, John Taylor, October 8, 1882](#)

Let us be pure, let us be virtuous, let us be honorable, let us maintain our integrity, let us do good to all men, and tell the truth always, and treat everybody right, no matter their profession or creed, and love our religion and keep the commandments of God, and it shall be well with Zion in time and throughout eternity.

[JD 23:270, John Taylor, October 8, 1882](#)

God bless you. God bless all the Latter-day Saints. God bless all rulers and all men everywhere in responsible situations who seek to do right and to preserve law and justice and equity, and to maintain the rights of all men, and let his wrath and indignation rest upon the perverters of justice and those who seek to bind down the human conscience and enslave their fellow-men. God bless you and lead you in the paths of life, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

George Q. Cannon, October 8, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEORGE Q. CANNON,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Sunday Morning, October 8, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

PERSECUTION FULFILLING PROPHECY – VERMONT, THE BIRTHPLACE OF PROMINENT
"MORMONS" AND THEIR OPPRESSORS – THE FAITH AND INTEGRITY OF THE SAINTS TO BE

TESTED – PEACE AMONG GOD'S PEOPLE A PECULIAR CHARACTERISTIC – IN TIME OF
TROUBLE TRUST IN GOD, "WATCH THE CAPTAIN" – THE ACTS OF THE UTAH
COMMISSIONERS – GOD'S OVERRULING POWER AND WISDOM – A GREAT WORK REQUIRES
GREAT SACRIFICE – NON-PERFORMANCE OF DUTY NO CAUSE FOR
SELF-GRATULATION – MAN'S PENALTIES MORE ENDURABLE THAN GOD'S – THE TRUE
SAVIORS OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS – BETTER TO DISOBEY MAN THAN GOD – THE
DANGER OF DISOBEDIENCE, OF DIVERSE TEMPORAL INTERESTS AND CLASS
DISTINCTIONS – ALL GOD'S GIFTS INTENDED FOR THE GENERAL BENEFIT AND
BLESSING.

[JD 23:271, George Q. Cannon, October 8, 1882](#)

We assemble together in the capacity of a conference for the purpose of being taught concerning our duties as Latter-day Saints, as members of the Church of Christ, and it is of the utmost importance that when we thus meet, that we should have the presence and assistance of the Spirit of God. I should not dare this morning to arise with the intention of speaking to you if I did not hope that I should have the assistance of that spirit. I could not of myself tell that which is best adapted to you and to your circumstances. It requires the all-searching Spirit of our God to reveal unto us, his servants, those items of doctrine, of instruction, of counsel, and if need be, of reproof and warning, which will be of benefit to the Latter-day Saints who are assembled as we are to-day.

[JD 23:271 – p.272, George Q. Cannon, October 8, 1882](#)

We are living in a momentous time. At no period in the history of the children of God in this dispensation have events been of more importance than those which are now taking place in our midst and around about us. I have been exceedingly thankful for one thing. Amid the threats and menaces and all the attempts which have been made against us to curtail our liberties, to embarrass us, and if possible destroy our religion, one feeling has been uppermost in my mind, a feeling of thankfulness that the Lord our God in this manner is permitting us to see the fulfillment of the words he has spoken through his servant the Prophet Joseph Smith, and through others who have also been inspired of him. Among the earliest predictions that were made concerning this work by the servants of God, was one to this effect, that the time would come when we should not only be opposed by a small circle, a few individuals confined to a neighborhood, but as the work should spread and increase, the opposition to it would be in proportion to its growth and its expansion, until it would not be the act of the mob, or the acts of mobs confined to counties or confined to States, but that the time would come that in a national capacity blows would be aimed at us by the nation of which we form a part. To-day, my brethren and sisters, these predictions are being fulfilled in our sight. Not one word that God has spoken concerning this work will fall to the ground unfulfilled, and the very enemies of this work, – those who are most anxious to destroy it, and to prove the falsity of its claims are the very instruments in the providence of our God, used to fulfill his word and accomplish his designs. Do you think for one moment that Senator Edmunds in framing the bill called by his name, or in presenting it to the Senate for its action, had any idea in his mind that he was an instrument in fulfilling the predictions of God, through his servant Joseph? Have you any idea that the House of Representatives in passing that bill, after it had passed the Senate, supposed for one moment that they were helping to establish the claims of Joseph Smith as a prophet of the living God? Or do you imagine that President Arthur, in selecting the five Commissioners to go to Utah Territory to act in accordance with the provisions of this same law, supposed that he was helping in any manner to establish the

claims of what is called "Mormonism" to divinity, or that the Commissioners themselves, in coming here, have once thought that they were playing a part in the great drama of the last days, that they in their sphere were helping, or are helping to establish the truth of this work, the downfall of which is sought to be accomplished? And yet these are the truths connected with this work; these are the facts. The man who framed that bill, the man who introduced it in the Senate, the judiciary committee who passed upon it, the Senate who adopted the report of its committee of judiciary and passed the bill, the House of Representatives who took the bill up and made it law, so far as their action was concerned, and the President of the United States who signed the Act and who appointed the Commissioners under it, and the Commissioners themselves who were thus appointed – all these men in their official capacity have helped, though they thought they were doing the very opposite, to establish the truth of the predictions of the Prophet Joseph, and of President Young and of the Apostles who have been inspired of God from the commencement of this work until this time, and who have predicted that these events would most assuredly take place.

[JD 23:272 – p.273, George Q. Cannon, October 8, 1882](#)

Thus we see that the wrath of man is made to praise God. The acts of men are converted to the glory of God, and fight as they may, contend as they may, resist this work as they may, this work, the foundation of which God has laid, they can do naught against it. On the contrary, everything they do contributes to its establishment; contributes to prove its divine authenticity, to show that there is an overruling power greater than that of man, even the power of the Most High God, and that he causes the nations of the earth and the powers of the earth to praise him, to add to his glory and to the accomplishment of his purposes.

[JD 23:273, George Q. Cannon, October 8, 1882](#)

Before leaving this subject, there is one thing worthy of remark – I have been exceedingly struck with it. The man who introduced the law of 1862 was a native and representative from the State of Vermont. The man who introduced the bill of March 23d, 1882, was a Senator from the State of Vermont – Senator Edmunds. The President who signed that bill was from the State of Vermont. We had another bill passed June 23d, 1874, known as the Poland law, special legislation for Utah Territory. The framer of that bill, its champion, the man who did more than any other single man towards pushing it through the House of Representatives, and having it become law, was a Representative from the State of Vermont. The champions of the Edmunds law in the House of Representatives, some of them were from the State of Vermont, notably Mr. Haskell, Representative from Kansas, a Vermonter by birth. It is a remarkable thing that Vermonters should be the chief instruments in framing, urging and securing the passage of legislation against us. On the other hand the man who, in the name of God, was the chief instrument in laying the foundation of this great work in these last days, the Prophet Joseph Smith, was a native of the State of Vermont, and Hyrum Smith, his brother, whose blood mingled with the Prophet's at Carthage jail, was also a native of Vermont, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Erastus Snow, the Snow family, Albert Carrington, the Farris, the Calls, the Hatches, and numbers of the leading families in this church were born in that State. How remarkable it is, is it not, that we should have received so many blessings through men born in the Green Mountain State, and that our chief enemies, apparently stirred up by the adversary to destroy the work which their fellow-citizens, men born upon the same soil, were the means, in the hands of God, of establishing – that they, Vermonters also, should be stirred up to seek for its destruction.

[JD 23:273, George Q. Cannon, October 8, 1882](#)

We may expect from this time forward the same warfare; no cessation, no letting up, so far as the hatred of the wicked is concerned. A part only of the predictions of the Prophet have been fulfilled concerning this latter-day work. We have been told from the beginning that opposition to this, the work of God, should not be confined to one nation, but that it should extend to other nations, and that they who array themselves against us, as others have done in the past, will continue to do so until the whole earth shall be warned and its inhabitants be left without excuse, and the kingdom of God be established in power and in great glory upon the earth.

A great many of our brethren and sisters have thought, and may still think, that we are likely to see very hard times, as the result of the attacks now being made upon us. The hearts of some may almost fail them in looking forward to the future, anticipating that there will be such intense hatred and such active exertions made against us that it will be very difficult for us to sustain ourselves. No doubt we shall have all we can endure. No doubt the Lord will require us to pass through and endure ordeals that will test our faith to the uttermost, and it will seem at times as though we were about to be overwhelmed. The powers of darkness will gather around us and everything will look so threatening, so black and so impenetrable, that except to those who look at these things with the eye of faith, it will seem almost impossible for us to escape. There will be, doubtless, many such hours and many such times in our history in the future as there have been in the past. But what of that? As the trial may be, so will be the strength to endure it. There is a wise desire of the Lord our God in permitting these tests to our faith, to see whether in the midst of gloomy and threatening surroundings we shall falter, shall shrink and become timid and be overcome, or whether in the midst of this gloom, in the midst of these forbidding appearances, our faith will still be strong in our God, and in the promises, the precious promises, which He has made to us. Now we may calculate upon this just as sure as he has spoken.

JD 23:274 – p.275 – p.276, George Q. Cannon, October 8, 1882

There is this that is most extraordinary connected with us as a people. God in the beginning made a promise to us, which has been oft repeated, that notwithstanding all our enemies should do against us, we should have peace, peace should reign in our hearts and in our habitations, peace should be in our land and brood over us as a people. This is one of the great promises God made to us in the beginning. Read the closing verses of the 45th section of the Doctrine and Covenants and see what God has said concerning Zion, and the promises that are therein embodied respecting us as a people; that when other nations should be at war – when neighbor should rise against neighbor, when every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee to Zion for safety, in Zion there should be peace. Now, as I have said, it is one of the most extraordinary features connected with this work of our God, that when it seemed as though the whole power of the nation was combining from every part of the land, execrations loading the air against the "Mormons" of Utah Territory, petitions coming up by thousands, popular prejudice appealing to popular prejudice and entreating the use of bayonets, of cannon and musketry to destroy us, and when it seemed as though Congress was in such a mood that it was ready to pass any law or to frame any enactment to accomplish those ends; that in the midst of all this unreasoning excitement, in Utah Territory, in the breasts of Latter-day Saints wherever they dwelt in these mountain fastnesses or scattered abroad among the nations of the earth, there was a spirit of unflinching peace, a spirit of quietude, a spirit of serenity, a spirit of calm and undismayed resignation, awaiting quietly and patiently the good providence of our God, knowing that in and of themselves they were helpless to defend themselves against these attacks, but having unshaken confidence in the promises which God had made to his people. O most wonderful! Most wonderful exhibition of calmness! Most wonderful exhibition of consistent faith! Most wonderful exhibition of fortitude, of courage, and of unflinching trust in the almighty power of that God whose existence so many in the world deny. A rare example to the nations of the earth of the willingness of a people to put their trust in their God, even to the very uttermost. Now, my brethren and sisters, if there is any great peculiarity connected with us as a people that is noticeable it is this: You can notice it in yourselves; you can notice it in your brethren and sisters; you can notice it in your children; Presidents of Stakes can notice it; the Bishop can notice it; the Bishops' counselors can notice it; the High Councilors are witnesses of it; the entire body of Priesthood must see the exhibition of these qualities among the people to this wonderful extent. God be praised for it. I feel to praise Him from the bottom of my heart that He has poured out upon His people this spirit of peace. We have laid down in peace, we have slept in peace, we have risen in peace, we have gone out in peace, we have come in in peace, we have prayed in our families in peace, we have gone forth to our labors in peace, we have returned therefrom in peace, we have met together in our assemblies in peace. The peace of heaven, the peace of Almighty God, has descended upon this people, and it has rested upon them in their congregations, in their social associations. God has given unto us this precious blessing. It is beyond price. How thankful we ought to be, that amidst all these

murderous threats that have been made against us, He has given unto us this feeling which has deprived us of all fear. Such a spectacle is unexampled in the history of the earth and of its inhabitants, – that is in our day. Look where you will, travel where you will, mingle with people where you may, you behold nothing like this; and thus, God is bearing witness to the inhabitants of the earth that he is able to fulfill his promises, to protect his people, and to pour out upon them that precious and heavenly gift that is beyond all price, and they dwell in it and they enjoy it – their wives and their children enjoy it; and there is no fear in the hearts of any faithful man, or woman or child within the confines of our land or in any of the adjacent territories where our people dwell. Why, if we had no other blessing than this, it would be worth all the world to us. But we have, in addition to that, other blessings. God is teaching us many lessons. He is teaching us to put our trust in him. He is teaching us that "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." Why should we borrow trouble for to-morrow, as long as we enjoy to-day, as long as we have peace to-day, so long as we have the presence of the Holy Ghost to-day, let the morrow take thought for the things of itself. Let us enjoy this day in peace. Let us lay down this night in peace, putting our trust in God for the morrow. If we thus live day by day – for it is written that the just shall live by faith – if we thus live day by day, I tell you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, there is no power upon the earth or in hell that can disturb the peace, the quietude, the prosperity and success of this people or interrupt the progress of this great and glorious work of our God. I dare prophesy that in the name of Jesus Christ, for I know that it will be justified, every word of it. God has stretched forth his hand to accomplish a work, and that work will roll forth. Men may die, men may be slain, men may fall on the right hand and on the left, but the column will still press forward, it will still march onward gathering in from every land and from every nation the honest, the meek, the lowly, and those who love righteousness and who desire to serve our God. I can truthfully say I do not believe that there ever was a time when threats were made against us, when greater peace and less fear rested down upon the servants of God than at the present time. I look at our President – I always did watch the captain of the ship with peculiar interest, when on the ocean surrounded by icebergs, or when in the midst of great storms, as I have been a few times, I watched his eye and his demeanor, and I fancied, and I think very correctly, that I could form a good idea of our peril by watching him. I have been in storms when everybody on board, excepting the Elders, expected to go down. I did the same thing when a boy, watching the Prophet Joseph, the few opportunities that I had of doing so. I did the same with President Young when he lived. In times of threatening danger and of anxiety I noticed the spirit that moved upon him as well as its operations upon myself. I do the same to-day with President Taylor: I have watched his bearing and have listened to his words; and I have taken notice of his spirit, as I have also of the brethren associated with him: "I have witnessed but one spirit, and felt but one feeling, and have had but one thought impressed upon me by their demeanor; and this spirit and the impression it makes corresponds exactly with my own. I feel that I am in accord with him and with them, and while this is the case I feel that there is no real danger for Zion; that God our heavenly Father, is still watching over us, and is permitting us to pass through these trials for an express purpose. As I have already said, the predictions of the holy Prophets could not be fulfilled unless these things did occur. And why should we shrink from them? Why should we feel sorry about them? Why should we wish it otherwise? I can truthfully say, that I never saw a single moment from the time that I left here to go to Washington until I returned that I felt the least discouraged, or anything approaching a feeling of despair or gloom, or anything of the kind connected with the work of God; although, as you know, I was afflicted and bowed down in sorrow because of domestic affliction; but aside from that (and even that did not discourage me) at no moment when in the midst of the worst contest I ever engaged in, did I have a feeling of discouragement or gloom. I knew very well that all that was taking place was in accordance with the plan of our God, with His purposes and His designs. These things must be, in order to accomplish the work of God, in order that every man may be judged according to his works, and in order that this nation, as a nation, may be held to a strict accountability for its acts, or the acts of its representatives. I have nothing, therefore, to regret about this. My feelings I have expressed in this stand since my return; they were expressed by the brethren that spoke upon these subjects.

[JD 23:276 – p.277, George Q. Cannon, October 8, 1882](#)

Referring to the acts of the Commissioners, I am exceedingly thankful for everything that has been done. I have never desired to see us as a people reduced to the degraded level of wicked men and wicked women; no, not for one moment. What, my sisters who have entered into holy covenants, in sacred places, who have in

their priestly garments been administered to by the Priests of the Most High God in the holiest sanctuaries that are upon the earth, for them to be placed upon the same level with common prostitutes! My soul revolts at the thought. And my brethren who have in like manner gone into holy places and taken upon them sacred covenants, in the name of the Most High God, and have had the honest ordinances that God ever revealed to man, administered unto them by that authority which He has given – for them to be reduced to the level of adulterers and whoremongers! God forbid that such should be the case. From the very moment that I read that oath (the oath prescribed by the Commissioners) I thanked God in my heart for it. I would not have it otherwise. I would not have the rules changed in the least degree, unless, of course, our brethren who represent the political interests of the people could by applying, have them changed: but I did not believe they could accomplish this, and I am thankful, therefore, that the rules were not changed, because they draw a sharp line of distinction between the Latter-day Saints and the wicked. It sustains the claim that we have made all the day long, that it is our religion that is assailed; that it is the solemnization of the holy marriage ordinances that the blow is aimed at, and not the illicit commerce of the sexes. And I am glad too that every man and every woman that ever were open to the charge of having engaged at any time in plural marriage are in the same condition; that the rule has been so rigidly made and so sweeping in its character, as to include all who have lived in plural marriage. It is an honorable distinction to belong to a class whose only offence is that they married women, or married men, instead of living together in violation of God's law. If there are any who think they did not act honorably in thus living, let them ask forgiveness. If they have done something they are ashamed of they can sue for amnesty. While those who have done nothing that they are ashamed of, or that the whole world should not know of, are relieved from the unenviable task of seeking forgiveness.

[JD 23:277, George Q. Cannon, October 8, 1882](#)

God is ordering this matter just right; and if we should fail in any point, he will make it up, He will supplement it by his overruling power and wisdom. He is watching our affairs. He knows exactly our circumstances; and he knows exactly how much we can bear; and when we have to pass through deep waters he will be near us; when we have to pass through the fire, he will be on our right and on our left hand. He will not forsake us in our hour of distress and tribulation, but he will be nearer to us then, if possible, than at any other time in our lives. Therefore, of all people upon the face of the earth, we have the greatest cause to rejoice because of these things.

[JD 23:277 – p.278, George Q. Cannon, October 8, 1882](#)

I was very much struck with some remarks – I did not hear all of his discourse, having been called out to attend to some business that could not be postponed – by Brother Lorenzo Snow; they struck me with a great deal of force. I refer to his allusion to the three Hebrew children and the glory that followed their submission to the will of God, and their resistance to the decree of the pagan, the heathen king. I believe that glory will be added to the name of our God by our fortitude and our endurance, and by our maintaining the right. No great principles, like those to which we are wedded; no great work like that in which we are engaged, can be established in the earth, in the present condition of mankind at least, without great sacrifice on the part of those connected with it. We need not expect anything else than this. The Lord, through the Prophet Joseph Smith, in early revelations, told to the church: You are laying the foundation of a great work; how great you know not. And the same words are just as applicable to us to-day, notwithstanding the growth of the work up to the present time. We with the light we now possess even, cannot conceive of its greatness. It has not entered into our hearts, neither are we capable of conceiving of it. But we are laying its foundation, nevertheless; and God has chosen us for this work. He has inspired us, and he has blessed us thus far in our endeavor to carry it out, and he will continue to do so to the end; and victory and glory will be the result of our faith and our diligence in keeping his commandments.

[JD 23:278, George Q. Cannon, October 8, 1882](#)

There is one thing that I wish to refer to; it is a delicate subject, still I feel to touch upon it. The idea was suggested to me a short time ago, while in conversation with one or two of the brethren who were speaking

about the influence that is now being brought against the Church, how fortunate it was that there were some who had not obeyed the law of God in regard to plural marriage. There was, as I thought, a spirit of self-gratulation among some who have not obeyed that law, because they could now act as they appeared to think, in some sort, as saviors to the people. I hope there never will enter the minds of the Latter-day Saints, a feeling of that kind, or division of feeling upon this point. I believe there are very excellent, very worthy, very true and very faithful Latter-day Saints of both sexes who have not entered into the practice of plural marriage; and it is not for me to cast reflections upon any of my brethren or sisters about not having obeyed that principle, unless there has been positive disobedience. It is not for me to judge the circumstances, the feelings and the motives, and the hearts of men and women, my brethren and sisters in the Church. God will do this; that is his province. But, on the other hand, I hope there never will be a feeling grow up in the midst of the Latter-day Saints to congratulate themselves because of their reluctance, or their refusal, to obey the command of God, and to think that they have done more wisely in refraining from obeying that command, and that their position is a better one because of their lack of obedience; or, because circumstances have been such that they have not obeyed or been required to obey that law. I hope, I say, that no such feeling will ever be known among us – to judge each other and to comment upon each other, and to indulge in self-gratulation because of anything of this kind.

JD 23:278, George Q. Cannon, October 8, 1882

The Lord has said: "Again I say unto you, if ye observe to do whatsoever I command you I, the Lord, will turn away all wrath and indignation from you, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against you."

JD 23:278 – p.279 – p.280, George Q. Cannon, October 8, 1882

Now, I want to say for myself personally, if I had not obeyed that command of God, concerning plural marriage, I believe that I would have been damned. That is my position; but I do not judge any other man. I am so organized that I could have lived, if necessary, and God had commanded it, as a Catholic priest is supposed to live, without knowing woman. I believe that with God's help I could have done that all the days of my life, if it had been necessary for my salvation; but, on the contrary, when I had taken one wife, after I had returned from one of my missions, a spirit rested upon me that I could not resist; I felt that I should be damned if I refused or neglected to obey that law of God. It was not prompted by any improper feeling; it was not prompted by a feeling of lust, or a desire for women; but it was an overpowering anxiety to obey the commandments of God. Since I have passed through the ordeals I have, connected with this principle, I can see the wisdom of it, and acknowledge the hand of God in it. For if I had taken wives without being thus prompted and impressed, there might have been times in my experience when I would have questioned myself and said: Perhaps you were too hasty in embracing this principle. But under the circumstances I could not do that. I have never known the time that I could do that. I knew that God had commanded me, whether He had other men or not; and I did obey it because of this overpowering command, believing, as I have said, that I should be damned if I did not. Whatever may be my fate in regard to this principle – I have been deprived of my seat in Congress because of it; and whatever be my fate hereafter, I have no reflections against myself to indulge in concerning my action in the matter. I have done that which I conscientiously believe to be the will of God; and I believe the majority of my brethren and sisters have done the same, have obeyed the principle in the same way. Do I believe that God will bear those out who have thus embraced that principle; do I believe that He will sustain them? I know that He will sustain those who have obeyed it; I know that He will sustain this people. The Prophet Joseph Smith said, and so taught, when he first communicated this principle, that there had come a time in the history of God's people, when if they did not obey that law, all progress would cease, that the kingdom could go no further. And He commanded the servants of God, His associates, the Apostles, to obey it, under penalty of their ceasing to progress in the work of our God. Now, there was on the one hand condemnation; on the other hand, the fear of the world, the prejudices of the world, the punishment which the world would inflict upon those who should disobey laws already enacted against such practices. What could they do? We are to-day precisely in the same position that other servants of God have been in, who have been required by men's laws to do things which their conscience and all their reason, and the good spirit within them revolted against. That is our position to-day. Whatever men's laws may be we cannot deny

the truth of God, the revelations of God. I cannot do it, I would be damned and go to hell if I were to do it. There is no alternative for me but to suffer all the penalties that man may inflict upon me; and I cannot evade them only as God shall preserve me. That is my position to-day. Whatever man may do, I must be, I hope to be, true to myself, and to my convictions, and to my God. I must endure all things; I cannot evade them. And there are hundreds in the same position, hundreds of men, hundreds of women. And is there any law of man, is there any penalty that man can inflict that compares with the penalty that God will inflict upon those that will disobey His commandments? I must trust my God; I must rely upon His protecting arm; I must throw myself under His protecting care, or I must perish. There is no other course for me; that is the only alternative before me. To be untrue to my God, to be untrue to the revelations of my God; to be untrue to the convictions of my nature; to be untrue to the women – wives – whom I have covenanted for time and all eternity to love, to revere and to protect, and to my children, children borne to me by those women – to be untrue to these, or to endure all the consequences that man may inflict upon me for disobeying laws which are framed against my religion. I am willing to trust to my God. He has never deserted me in the deepest trouble and distress, in the midst of the most fiery ordeals, He has been at my right hand and on my left, as he has been at yours. He has been around about us, and I am still willing to trust Him. He has never failed – His word and promise have always been sure and reliable.

JD 23:280, George Q. Cannon, October 8, 1882

Now, my brethren and sisters, you who have not entered into this covenant, do not imagine, do not let the adversary instill into your hearts that you are now saviors to the Latter-day Saints. Do not do it. Let me warn you against it; it is a dangerous thought. You will find it delusive, for it is not true. If God saves this people, as I firmly believe he will, it will be through those men and through those women whom men have placed under a ban; whom men have said shall have no power because of the laws that are enacted against them. I tell you, the salvation that will come to this people, will be through the faithfulness of the men of God and the women of God who, in the face of an opposing world, contrary to their traditions, to their education, to their pre-conceived notions and to the popular prejudices of the day – who have in the midst of all this stepped forward in the vanguard and obeyed the command of God, and have dared to endure all the consequences, and been willing to endure all the penalties. Mark it, it is true. I believe that which I now say to you as firmly as though an angel of God had spoken it; and you will see it fulfilled, every word of it. Let not the fears of the world, let not the threats of men extinguish the love of God, extinguish the faith of God in your hearts and make you tremble concerning these things. Let no such feeling as this take possession of you. I do not want to be defiant; I never had that feeling; but if I cannot obey, I must suffer. That is the position I have taken. If I cannot obey the law of man, I must suffer the consequences: I prefer to do so rather than suffer the consequences of disobeying the commands of God. It is better for me to do this than to do the other. I do not wish to defy man; I say, if you wish to enforce the law, that is your business.

JD 23:280 – p.281 – p.282, George Q. Cannon, October 8, 1882

Now, brethren and sisters, let us go from this Conference in calmness, pursuing our various occupations, and endeavoring to profit by the teachings that we have had in the past. If this people could only have carried into effect the teachings they have had from the servants of God from the beginning, how different would our position be to-day! Elders have worn themselves out. Presidents, Apostles, and Prophets have worn themselves out and have gone to their graves, laboring with this people, and teaching them words of life and salvation, words that it would have been to their eternal interest to have listened to and to have obeyed. We are like the man who, moved with pity, took the frozen snake and put it into his bosom to restore its life, and in a little while, after the warmth of his bosom revived the frozen reptile, it stung him and killed him. We have nourished in our bosom the viper that is doing us more injury to-day than anything else. If we had listened to counsel, if we had obeyed the commandments of God; if we had been united, if we had not looked so much to our temporal advantage, or that which we thought to be our temporal advantage, how different would our position be to-day! But this people are like children; the servants of God entreat them and talk to them, but how quickly they forget! They imagine that the counsels they receive are prompted by some spirit that is not exactly the Spirit of God. But we will find that we have to come to it. I believe that God will throw us in

circumstances that will compel us to come to the position that He has designed we shall occupy, however reluctant we may be about it. I tell you there is more to be dreaded, there is more to be feared – and you may attach what importance you like to my words, but I know they are true – there is more to be feared to–day in our midst from the growth of wealth in a few hands, in a single class, than there is from all the legislation that can be enacted against us by the Congress of the United States, more to be dreaded by us as a people. That condition is upon us, the growth of wealth in the hands of a few individuals, threatening us with greater danger to–day, than anything that can be done by outsiders; more than the Commissioners can do, more than the registrars can do, more than the judges of election can do, or all that can be done by the Congress of the United States. I know that this is true. God does not design to have a people of this kind. He does not design that there shall be classes among us, one class lifted up above another, one class separated from the rest of the people, with diverse interests; interests that are not strictly in accord with those of the masses of the people. Because when this is the case, there is a lack of union. Men are more disposed to compromise principle who have great monied interests at stake. In fact, it is a characteristic of human nature that, as a class, this class is a compromising class; their temptation is to yield principle, to yield ground; and it cannot be helped from the very nature of things, because of their circumstances. I can see it in myself; I do not preach something to you that I do not preach to myself. I have to guard against it, and my brethren have to do so. It does not belong to any one man or class of men, it belongs to human nature this feeling of which I speak. God designs in the organization of his kingdom on the earth to prevent this. If it is not prevented, then the Zion of God is not established. Is any one injured by its prevention? No. The time must come when the talent of men of business shall be used for the benefit of this whole people, just as the talent of President Taylor, just as the talent of President Joseph F. Smith and that of President Wilford Woodruff, and that of the Twelve Apostles, and that of the leading Elders of this Church; as their talent is used for the benefit of Zion, so must the talent of men who are gifted with business capacity be used in like manner – not for individual benefit alone, not for individual aggrandizement alone, but for the benefit of the whole people, to uplift the masses, to rescue them from their poverty. That is one of the objects in establishing Zion, and anything short of that, as I have said, is not Zion, it is not the Zion that the Prophets have foreseen, it is not that which God has promised. We may as well, therefore, every one of us, shape our thoughts to this end and endeavor to keep it in view, for I tell you God will not permit anything very different to this for any length of time. He will scourge us, and drive us if necessary. He will tear us up by the roots; and as sure as God lives it will be so, if we cannot come to it without violent means of this kind, He will have a people that will do these things, and He will bring us into a position to do it, and any one who thinks differently deludes himself or herself; it is not so written in the book; it is not the design of God. I would feel very sorry if I thought it would do so. I suppose I am as selfish as other men. I would like to benefit my own family. I have to war against this feeling as all have. I do not know that I am any worse than any other people, but I know this feeling has to be warred against. The tendency of human nature is to look after one's own dear self, to look after one's own family, to use one's talent for one's own and their benefit, without bestowing any benefit upon the people of God. Yet I know it is not a right feeling.

[JD 23:282, George Q. Cannon, October 8, 1882](#)

God bless you, my brethren and sisters, and fill you with the Holy Ghost, and inspire those who speak to us by the power of God, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Joseph F. Smith, October 7, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Saturday Afternoon, (in General Conference) October 7, 1882.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

LOVE FOR AND FORGIVENESS OF ENEMIES – SUCH THINGS POSSIBLE WITHOUT
ASSOCIATION AND ASSIMILATION – THE SAINTS EXHORTED AGAINST BARTERING AWAY
THEIR INHERITANCES – THE IDOLATRY OF RICHES – MAN CANNOT BUILD UP ZION, BUT
GOD CAN AND WILL.

[JD 23:282 – p.283, Joseph F. Smith, October 7, 1882](#)

I have been requested to occupy the remaining portion of the time, and I trust in so doing I may enjoy the liberty of the Spirit and the faith and prayers of the Latter-day Saints, that the time I may occupy may be profitably spent, as I have no desire to hold the attention of this vast congregation unprofitably; but I realize that without the aid of the Spirit of the Lord I am not capable of imparting to this congregation the word of life.

[JD 23:283, Joseph F. Smith, October 7, 1882](#)

I am thankful for the opportunity that we enjoy of meeting together under such favorable circumstances. I am pleased to see the vast numbers that are in attendance at this conference, and I trust that we may be amply repaid by the instructions which we receive, for the time and trouble which it has cost to attend. In order, however, that we may receive the blessing which we need, it is necessary, in my judgment, for all to come with the Spirit of the Lord in their hearts, in the spirit of prayer, and the love of truth, having a desire for the upbuilding of the kingdom of God, and for the accomplishment of all the purposes and designs which have been made manifest concerning this great work.

[JD 23:283 – p.284 – p.285, Joseph F. Smith, October 7, 1882](#)

Jesus taught the doctrine that we should pray for those that despitefully use us; that we should love our enemies; that we should do good to them that do evil to us; that we should not return evil for evil, but good for evil. There is no particular credit due to any person who returns good for good. Even the publicans and sinners did this, but it is somewhat difficult to return good for evil. Nevertheless to do so was enjoined by the commandments of the Lord Jesus. We are to love our enemies; do good to them that hate and persecute us; and when we are persecuted, persecute not again; when we are derided, deride not in return; if we are injured, seek not to injure those who injure us; that which is required at our hands is to establish peace on earth and good will to man. Hence, when we forget the object of our calling and step out of the path of duty to return blow for blow, to inflict evil for evil, to persecute because we may be persecuted, we forget the injunction of the Lord and the covenants we have made with God, to keep His commandments. It is a difficult matter, I am aware, for human nature to become subject to these scriptural injunctions. It is difficult for men to curb their passions, to restrain their feelings, and to resist the temptation to rebel and administer measure for measure, but it is enjoined upon us. We have been actually commanded in the revelations given to us in this dispensation to forgive our enemies, without their asking forgiveness. It is laid down that if your enemies come up against you to destroy you, the first time, if the Lord delivers you out of their hands, you shall forgive them; and if they come the second time, you shall forgive them; and if they come the third time against you, the Lord has said they are then in your hands to do with them whatsoever you will; but it will redound to your honor, credit and glory if you forgive them the third time, even if they have not repented and have not asked forgiveness. Now this may seem to be rather a difficult requirement; nevertheless it is so

written and is so required of the Latter-day Saints. But how often shall we forgive them if they repent of their sins and ask forgiveness? Jesus has laid down the law that we should forgive them as often as they will repent and ask forgiveness. I am speaking now of individual trespasses; of people who offend me or you or trespass against us; I am not speaking of those who trespass against the immutable, the righteous and the holy laws of God; they come under another law, and God and His servants will reckon with them. It is for us to obtain the spirit of forgiveness, to feel to love those that are so ignorant as to do evil to their fellow-creatures without a cause; we should feel as Christ felt, when upon the cross. He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." It was urged yesterday by one of the brethren, that we could scarcely claim this for many of those who were engaged in persecuting the Saints to-day, for they do know what they are doing, and they are not ignorant of the course that they are pursuing. They are in a position to learn the truth, if they would, and to comprehend the fact that they are lying about us. Yet how do we feel towards them for this offence? Do we feel that we should retaliate? Do we feel that we should execute vengeance upon them because we know that they are telling falsehoods, and are misrepresenting and slandering the people of this Church? No. For years and years we have sat quietly down and listened to their abuse, insults, slanders, misrepresentations and falsehoods, which they have spread broadcast throughout the land to the utmost of their power, and no man has so much as said, "Why do you so?" They enjoy the utmost liberty to lie and slander and go to the fullest extent of their power to accomplish their wicked and nefarious desires and purposes, and we are willing to risk the judgment of God in these matters in His own due time. We do not propose to keep ourselves eternally in hot water, wrangling, contending and snarling with our enemies; if we did we should soon become as sour, as vicious, as foul, as low and as contemptible as they are themselves. Well, do you love them? Now here is the rub! Do you love these slanderers, these liars, these defamers, these persecutors of the innocent and of the unoffending – do you love them? [several voices, No, no.] I can scarcely blame you. [Laughter.] But that is not according to the law of God. I want to tell you how I feel towards them. I love them so much that if I had it in my power to annihilate them from the earth I would not harm a hair of their heads – not one hair of their heads. I love them so well that if I could possibly make them better men, convert them from the error of their ways I would do it, God being my helper. I love them so much that I would not throw a straw in their way to prosperity and happiness, but so far as possible I would hedge up their headlong and downward course to destruction, and yet I detest and abominate their infamous actions and their wicked course. That is how I feel towards them, and that is how much I love them, and if this is not the love that Jesus desired us to have for our enemies, tell me what kind of love we should have for them? I do not love them so that I would take them into my bosom, or invite them to associate with my family, or that I would give my daughters to their embraces, nor my sons to their counsels. I do not love them so well that I would invite them to the councils of the Priesthood, and the ordinances of the House of God, to scoff and jeer at sacred things which they do not understand, nor would I share with them the inheritance that God, my Father, has given me in Zion; I do not love them well enough for this, and I do not believe that God ever designed that I should; but I love them so much that I would not hurt them, I would do them good, I would tell the truth about them, I would benefit them if it was in my power, and I would keep them to the utmost of my ability from doing harm to themselves and to their neighbors. I love them that much; but I do not love them with that affection with which I love my wife, my brother, my sister or my friend. There is a difference between the love we should bear towards our enemies and that we should bear towards our friends. Do not say that it is hatred of our enemies when we would keep them from hurting themselves and their neighbors, do not call that hatred, that is love for them. If it were possible to find one of this class of people who had been deceived, and who had slandered the Saints of God ignorantly, as Paul did, and we could prevail upon him to repent of his sins, to turn away from wickedness, and to acknowledge God and His laws, then we should love him as a brother, as a friend, and as a neighbor. That would be the difference. But we do not love to associate with our enemies, and I do not think the Lord requires us to do it. If He does He will have to reveal it, for I cannot find it anywhere revealed. I have never read it in any of the books, I have never heard it taught that we are to love our enemies so much as to become like them, or condescend to their vile and contemptible ways, or as to share the inheritance God has given us with them, or as to suppose for a moment that the wicked and the ungodly will ever inherit the kingdom of God, or enter into His presence, or enjoy the society, blessing and award of the faithful; they never will, they cannot, for they are not worthy; they have not obeyed the law and therefore cannot receive the blessing thereof.

We should keep ourselves aloof from the wicked; the dividing line should be distinctly drawn between God and Belial, between Christ and the world, between truth and error, and between right and wrong. We ought to cleave to the right, to the good, to the truth, and forsake the evil. I am going to read a little scripture upon this subject, lest our friends or this congregation should feel that counseling the Latter-day Saints to keep aloof from the wicked and ungodly, to not divide their inheritances with them, etc., is unwarranted by the scriptures. I will read a little scripture on this very point, which will be found in 2nd Corinthians, 6th chap., beginning at the 14th verse: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Now, here is the law of God upon the subject; it is the word of the Lord: "Come out from among them and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing." What affinity can we have for them? Let them alone, let them go their own way. Help them to all the happiness that it is possible for them to obtain in this world; for it will be all that they will ever get, unless they repent of their sins, and forsake their wicked ways.

JD 23:286, Joseph F. Smith, October 7, 1882

In conclusion I desire to say a few words in relation to some remarks that were made by one of the brethren yesterday. It is written in the scriptures that, "The kingdom and dominion and greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the Saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." This passage of Scripture was in part quoted yesterday, by one of the brethren who spoke in the Conference, and then the question was asked, "When will the kingdom be given to the Saints?" The answer was, "When the Saints become wise enough not to turn it right over into the lap of the enemy the moment they obtain possession of it, and not till then." There never was a truer saying than this. It takes several things to make a kingdom. First, there must be a king; second, there must be a people; third, there must be territory or a place for the people to dwell. Then come the laws and the rules of government of the kingdom. Now, the territory or dwelling place is a part of the royalty of that kingdom, is it not? Could you have a kingdom without a place to put it? No. We must have a place to put the kingdom, and it is as necessary to have such a place as it is to have the king and the people. Now, which is worst, to sell out our interest in the king, the people or the territory to the enemy? If you betray the king to the enemy, you are a traitor. Yet there are some people who betray the king; they do not care much about Christ, the King of kings and Lord of Lords, and they sell out their interest in Him, or betray Him with very little compunction of conscience. And there are some people, as I have heard, that sell their neighbors or betray them.

JD 23:286 – p.287, Joseph F. Smith, October 7, 1882

I have heard of some people who had sunken so low that they would sell anything for money; mother or father, or brother or sister, or friend or neighbor would never stand in the way. They would do anything to obtain money; money is their God. Such people would sell out their interest in their king, their people, and their country, for money. We only want to find out who will sell God and the people for filthy lucre and we bring them to trial, and in a very short time we manage to sever connection with them. We say he has departed from the faith, and we cut him off from our fellowship in the Church. But what do we do with those who sell their inheritances to the enemy? Why we pat them on the shoulder, we hug them to our bosoms, we love and cherish them and it is all right; no apostasy there! But suppose we should all sell our inheritance, we should then have to move to some other clime. It may not be considered prudent to thus publicly express our feelings on this subject, as slanderers and vilifiers are apt to wrest the truth and misquote, and misrepresent the facts. Yet I feel as though I would be chargeable with a neglect of duty if I did not say at least this much on this

subject, and I am not afraid nor ashamed to meet this view of the matter. If men will sell out their homes, and their inheritances to the wicked and the ungodly for money, when, I ask, will they be prepared to go and build up the center stake of Zion? Who of this class will be called to do this work? And will they have an inheritance in the New Jerusalem? Why, I suspect they would pull up the paving stones and sell them for money; they would steal the diamonds, pearls and precious stones from the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem, and sell them for the coveted "cash!" I am opposed in my feelings to parting with my inheritance to those that would destroy the people of God from the earth; and God helping me I never will do it. And, furthermore, if I have an inheritance I will see, so far as I have it in my power, that it is placed in such a position that neither I nor my family shall turn it over to the enemy. You can do as you please, I am telling you what I am going to do, what I will do, God being my helper. You can do the same if you want to. It is a free country – that is, it would be if it were not for some things, which the brethren have mentioned here, and I have not time to reiterate them.

JD 23:287, Joseph F. Smith, October 7, 1882

May the Lord bless this congregation and the Saints universally. May He bless all who are assisting to build up Zion and the good of the earth everywhere. Zion will be built up, for God will do it; and no man should deceive himself by entertaining the opinion, the thought or the feeling in his heart that it is he that will build up Zion, for men cannot do it. God has said: "I will do it; it is my work; it is my kingdom; I have cut the stone out of the mountain with mine own hands, and I will roll it forth; I will accomplish my purposes and my designs and my people shall triumph." God hath said it, and He will do it, and man will not do it, for he cannot do it, though he will be the agent in the hands of God in accomplishing much good. God will bestow great power upon His servants and will bless them with light and wisdom, knowledge and understanding, power and authority, and the keys of the Priesthood to accomplish a great and mighty work. But He will have the honor and the glory; for it is he that will give the power to accomplish the work; man has no power in and of himself to do so.

JD 23:287, Joseph F. Smith, October 7, 1882

May God bless us, and give us power to overcome evil with good, is my prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Lorenzo Snow, October 5, 1882

DISCOURSE BY ELDER LORENZO SNOW,

Delivered in the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City,

Thursday Afternoon, (General Conference,) October 5, 1882.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

THE REVELATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT – SACRIFICE BRINGS FORTH SALVATION,

EPISODE OF QUEEN ESTHER – WHERE KNOWLEDGE IS GIVEN OBEDIENCE IS

REQUIRED – NOAH AND THE ANTEDILUVIANS, PENALTY OF DISOBEDIENCE – THE

KNOWLEDGE WHICH COMFORTS THE PEOPLE OF GOD, THE SKEPTICISM OF THE
WORLD – THE TESTIMONY OF THE LATTER–DAY SAINTS – THE INDESTRUCTIBILITY OF
"MORMONISM" – GOD WILL OVERRULE AND DELIVER, IF THE SAINTS WILL DO THEIR
DUTY.

[JD 23:288, Lorenzo Snow, October 5, 1882](#)

It might not be improper for us as Latter–day Saints in assembling together on occasions of this kind to remind ourselves that the information and intelligence that it is our privilege to receive, depend very much upon the assistance we get from the Holy Spirit – that Spirit which the Savior told us would bring all things to our remembrance, and open up unto our understanding all things that might be profitable. Of course we learn a great many things through reflection and by the exercise of the intelligence which we have acquired through the cultivation of the principles of truth; but those things which are of the greatest importance to the Latter–day Saints are derived through the revelations of the Holy Spirit. Many principles of vast importance, principles that will assist greatly through all the scenes of life, may be developed through the revelations of the Holy Spirit on occasions of this kind when we come together to hear the word of the Lord through His servants.

[JD 23:288, Lorenzo Snow, October 5, 1882](#)

I will read a portion of Scripture – not that I intend to confine myself particularly to any text; but there are some things contained in a short history that will be found in the Book of Esther, from which I think we may derive much profit and consolation under the circumstances that surround us at the present time as well as the circumstances that may surround us in the future. In the 4th chapter of the Book of Esther, beginning at the 15th verse, we read:

[JD 23:288, Lorenzo Snow, October 5, 1882](#)

"Then Esther made them return Mordecai this answer:

[JD 23:288, Lorenzo Snow, October 5, 1882](#)

"Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.

[JD 23:288, Lorenzo Snow, October 5, 1882](#)

So Mordecai went his way and did according to all that Esther had commanded him."

[JD 23:288 – p.289 – p.290, Lorenzo Snow, October 5, 1882](#)

Now we find in tracing the history of the Lord's dealings from the beginning to the present time – we find it in our own history, we find it in the histories contained in the Bible, the New Testament, and the Book of Mormon, that where circumstances arose or events transpired of a peculiar nature, it required the action of men and women to accomplish certain duties that were devolving upon them in the interest and the salvation of the people, or for a class of people, or perhaps for certain individuals, we find this in tracing the history of God's dealings with the human family. Now to my mind there is something very singular in the history of a certain people connected with the events related in the Book of Esther. There was a people at this time scattered throughout the provinces of the Medes and Persians, Ahasuerus being then king of Persia and Media.

This people were the people of God, they had been acknowledged of God as his people for several centuries, commencing with Abraham; but in consequence of their dissipation and transgression, and because they sought to worship other Gods, he scattered them throughout those 127 provinces, and they were in captivity. But in consequence of a certain feeling that was gotten up, a feeling of hatred and a determination to destroy this people, they were placed in very imminent jeopardy. A decree had been passed by the king that on a certain day they should all be destroyed, and there was weeping and wailing from one end of the kingdom to the other. But it appears – as it will, and has appeared in our history in the past – that the Lord had concealed his plan for the deliverance of his people. It was for the purpose of destroying Mordecai that the decree was established. Haman, who was the author of the difficulties, had determined in his mind that he would destroy Mordecai, but disdained to execute his vengeance on Mordecai alone, therefore desired to make a sweeping arrangement which would include the destruction of all his people scattered throughout the provinces, and Haman succeeded in influencing the king to accomplish this business. He had informed the king that this was a people who had laws that were different from the laws of any other people, and that they were actually in some instances living in disobedience to his laws, that disobedience consisting in not worshipping the false gods that were worshipped in those days. He succeeded in blinding the mind of the king to that extent that he was given the privilege of accomplishing the destruction of thousands and tens of thousands of this people, the people of God. On account of this, Mordecai, we are told, rent his clothes and put on sackcloth and sat in ashes; and finally he conceived the idea that the salvation of this people was in Queen Esther, his niece. So he sent her word to the effect that it was her business to take a course to accomplish this object. But she sent back word when she received this communication that it was a very difficult matter for her to get an audience with the king, because according to the law it was death for any person to go into the inner court and ask anything of the king uncalled, and if she went in it would be at the risk of her life. The answer to this was that if she felt that under the circumstances she could not risk all she possessed, then should their deliverance arise from another source, but she and her father's house should be destroyed. Esther took all these things into consideration, and finally sent word to Mordecai in the language I have read in those verses. Accordingly after this fasting she went into the king, the desire of her heart was granted and the people were saved.

[JD 23:290, Lorenzo Snow, October 5, 1882](#)

In many instances of a similar nature where the destruction of the people of God seemed imminent, and there appeared no way of escape, suddenly there arose something or another that had been prepared for their salvation to avert the impending destruction. We find this in the case of the Israelites when led by Moses. When they came to the Red Sea and the Egyptian army in their rear threatened their destruction, there seemed no way of escape, but at the very moment when deliverance was required, behold, it appeared and they were delivered. So it has been and so it ever will be with us. Notwithstanding our difficulties may appear very great, yet there will be means provided for our escape if we ourselves perform the duties incumbent upon us as the children of God. But it may become necessary in the future – and this is the point I wish to make – for some of the Saints to act the part of Esther, the queen, and be willing to sacrifice anything and everything that is required at their hands for the purpose of working out the deliverance of the Latter-day Saints.

[JD 23:290, Lorenzo Snow, October 5, 1882](#)

First we should know that we are the people of God. In every dispensation of importance pertaining to the Lord's people, there is an opportunity given whereby persons may receive a knowledge of that which is required of them. Before the destruction of the Antediluvians, there was a medium through which that people could have come to a knowledge of those things that Noah declared. Had it not been so there would have been an apparent inconsistency in the Lord demanding that the people should pursue a certain course contrary to their feelings, contrary to their wishes, contrary to their traditions, and that required a great deal of sacrifice – I say, unless they could be confident within themselves that the course he wished them to pursue was the right one, there would be an apparent inconsistency in demanding it. But when Noah stood up before the people, he preached to them the everlasting Gospel. He preached the same Gospel that Adam preached. He preached the same Gospel that the people of old preached. He preached the same Gospel the Apostles preached. He preached the same Gospel that we preach, through which a knowledge from God could be obtained as to its

truth. All those who would repent of their sins, and be baptized for a remission of them, should have the privilege of receiving the Holy Ghost, which would give them a knowledge of the things of God, and a knowledge of the things required at their hands. And so it is in our day. The Gospel is proclaimed, a channel is opened through which individuals may receive a knowledge of things pertaining to life and salvation, of those things that are required at their hands, and of the course they should pursue as the servants and handmaids of God.

JD 23:290 – p.291 – p.292, Lorenzo Snow, October 5, 1882

The world thinks that the Latter-day Saints will be destroyed; they think that the Latter-day Saints will be scattered; they think that the time will come when the Latter-day Saints will be disunited and become like the sectarian world, and they have foolishly set to work to accomplish this purpose. Well, now, as Brother Woodruff has said, we know better. We understand that this is the kingdom that was spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, that should be set up in the last days, that should be no more thrown down nor given to another people. Now, is this a fact? There are but few people who believe in these matters; there are but few people who profess to understand them. But the faithful Latter-day Saints have attained to a knowledge in these matters that is highly satisfactory: highly comforting; it is something that is of great consequence in the position we find ourselves placed from time to time; it is something that is comforting because of the sacrifices we are required to make, and which we may be required to make of such a nature that no man could be expected to make unless he has a perfect knowledge of what he is about. These principles have been manifested to us, and have established happiness in our hearts, and given us knowledge in reference to the outcome. We understand that the days of our probation here are but short, and that when we leave this stage of action and go into the spirit world, we have the privilege of dwelling in the presence of holy beings; and we understand fully, that as Jesus Christ dwelt here in a body, and that he received that body and now dwells in it glorified, that we are entitled to the same blessing, the same exaltation, and the same glory. The Christian world profess to believe that Jesus rose from the dead, they profess to believe that he lives; but yet the real spirit of that belief does not amount to a very great deal. They do not believe that there are any persons living that have seen individuals that have lived upon the earth and have received their glorified bodies. John upon the Isle of Patmos, had the privilege of beholding and conversing with an individual that had lived upon the earth and had gone back to the spirit world and received a resurrected body. He describes the glory with which that person was covered and says, "His eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters." Does anybody really believe this? There were two persons with whom I was very well acquainted who saw a personage of this description in the Temple in Kirtland, Ohio. We are told that there appeared, standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit of that Temple, our Lord and Savior, the same that the Revelator beheld, and they describe him in about the same manner. Now, I have been in the Kirtland Temple and preached from the pulpit therein several times. This person stood upon the breastwork of that pulpit, and he is described as follows, "His eyes were as a flame of fire, the hair of his head was white like the pure snow, his countenance shown above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying, I am the first and the last, I am He who liveth, I am He who was slain, I am your advocate with the Father. Behold your sins are forgiven you, you are clean before me, therefore lift up your heads and rejoice." I have seen Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery; they were the individuals who saw that person and conversed with him. And they also saw Moses, Elias and Elijah. Now, who believes this? What testimony has the sectarian world in regard to these things, or in regard to the Gospel as preached in former days, or in regard to Jesus Christ? Have they a testimony to declare to their congregations? If so, what is the nature of their testimony? It is this: That this is the dispensation of the fullness of times; that the angel that John the Revelator saw flying through the midst of heaven having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred and tongue and people – that that angel has made his appearance and restored the Gospel to the earth, Joseph Smith being the instrument through which the restoration was effected. Joseph Smith was authorized to open up a channel and lay down a plan through which man could receive a knowledge of these things, so that we might not be left to depend upon the testimony of the Prophets, or the testimony of the ancient Apostles, or to the testimony of the Apostles of the present day, or to the Book of Mormon, or to anything that was done or said in the past, but that we might know for ourselves. It is an individual knowledge. And if

people in ancient times had faith, they had grounds upon which to found their faith, and so have we.

[JD 23:292 – p.293, Lorenzo Snow, October 5, 1882](#)

Well, what have we to fear with regard to persecution and with regard to attempts that are made to destroy the principles of "Mormonism." We know they cannot be destroyed." Our enemies, if permitted, may kill the President of our Church, they may kill his Counselors and the Twelve Apostles, they may destroy the Seventies, and even the whole of the Priesthood, but the principles of "Mormonism" they cannot destroy. The principles of "Mormonism" are eternal; they emanate from the God of heaven, and never can be destroyed. When men have received a knowledge of the truth, they will bear testimony of that truth so long as they are able. Any number of decrees proscribing their actions and belief will not avail. We have an instance of this in the case of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. These men had received knowledge from the eternal world, and they chose to worship the true and the living God, they objected to worshipping the golden image set up by King Nebuchadnezzar. For this act of disloyalty they were brought before the king and were ordered to be cast into the fiery furnace. Even at this they were not dismayed, for said they, "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning furnace and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, let it be known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." They were accordingly thrown into the fiery furnace, and all the people, as it were, said, Amen, let them be destroyed. But there was deliverance the moment deliverance was needed. When Nebuchadnezzar saw four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, unhurt; and the fourth like unto the Son of God – how changed was the scene! Nebuchadnezzar was converted by the power that he saw manifested, and he issued a decree saying, "That every people, nation, and language which spake anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill." In this way was the Lord able to touch the heart of a heathen king, and to turn the heart of a nation. And I will say to the Latter-day Saints – you may call it prophecy if you choose – that if this people will be united and will keep the commandments of God, God will turn the popular sentiment of this nation in our favor; the nation will feel disposed to bestow upon us favor instead of persecution and destruction. But it is our business to step forward as did Esther, and be willing to risk all for the salvation of the people. In undertaking her task, Esther said, "If I perish, I perish." Here is a lesson for our sisters. But the people of God will not perish. There will always be a ram caught in the thicket for their deliverance.

[JD 23:293, Lorenzo Snow, October 5, 1882](#)

Now, I know of the things of which I speak. A little spiritual knowledge is a great deal better than mere opinions and notions and ideas, or even very elaborate arguments; a little spiritual knowledge is very important and of the highest consideration. We have received that knowledge, and we will stand by it, the Lord being our helper. It is now time for the Latter-day Saints to humble themselves before the Almighty, as did the people that were at the point of destruction by the decree of Ahasuerus. It is time now for the Latter-day Saints to find out wherein they have committed themselves; it is time for the Latter-day Saints to repent of their sins and follies and call upon the Almighty, that his aid may be given; that those fetters and chains that are being forged for us may fall to the ground, and that we may have the deliverance that is necessary; that we may go forward and accomplish the great work entrusted to our care.

[JD 23:293, Lorenzo Snow, October 5, 1882](#)

Well, I ask God to bless the Latter-day Saints, to bless His Holy Priesthood; to bless President Taylor, his Counselors, and the Apostles; that we may do that which is right and acceptable before the Lord, and humble ourselves before him, and call upon him in mighty power; that we may do those things required at our hands no matter at what sacrifice. The Lord has said, "I have decreed in my heart, that I will prove you in all things, whether you will abide in my covenant, even unto death, that you may be found worthy; for if ye will not abide in my covenant, ye are not worthy of me." We have something to live for; we have everything to die for. But there is no death in these matters. There is salvation and there is life if the people of God – those that call themselves after the name of the Lord Jesus Christ – will keep his commandments and do that which is

acceptable in his sight. It is not in the economy of the Almighty to permit his people to be destroyed. If we will do right and keep his commandments he will surely deliver us from every difficulty.

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May God bless and pour out His Holy Spirit upon us, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Erastus Snow, October 7, 1882

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE ERASTUS SNOW,

Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City,

Saturday Morning (in General Conference,) October 7, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE "TWIN RELICS," SLAVERY AND POLYGAMY – CONFOUNDING OF POLYGAMY WITH
BIGAMY, "CHRISTIAN" STATESMANSHIP – JOSEPH SMITH'S PROPOSITION FOR THE
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY – THE GREAT REBELLION, CHURCH DIVISION – THE BIBLE AND
POLYGAMY, ORIGIN OF MONOGAMY – THE WORK OF GOD IN THE LATTER DAYS, THE
MISSION OF EPHRAIM – THE TEN TRIBES AND SCATTERED ISRAEL, THE BOOK OF
MORMON – PRESENT PERSECUTION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF THE SAINTS.

[JD 23:294 – p.295, Erastus Snow, October 7, 1882](#)

I believe it was in 1856, that the Republican party was organized; at their first convention held in Philadelphia, they incorporated in their platform the noted plank, "the twin relics of barbarism – slavery and polygamy," and pledged themselves to rid the country of these two evils. For sixteen years they have labored incessantly to this end; but they know not the thoughts of the Lord, nor understand his counsels. Nevertheless, they are his servants to execute his purposes, and they doubtless have a desire to accomplish all that he designs with regard to them. Have they succeeded in strangling the twins? So far as slavery is concerned they have succeeded in abolishing it in the obnoxious forms in which it prevailed in the Southern States; but still it exists and is likely to continue to exist, in a modified form, while wickedness exists upon the earth. Africans and white men are in bondage, not in the same form as that in which the southern slaves were held before the war, for the extreme excesses perpetrated under that system, in many particulars, were very great wrongs to mankind, and very grievous in the sight of heaven and of right-thinking people. And changes were determined in the mind of Jehovah, and have been effected. The authors of this republican plank have taken polygamy as taught by the Latter-day Saints as being synonymous with the polygamy of oriental nations, and the bigamy of the Christian nations; this is clearly shown in the law of 1862, passed by the Congress of the United States, designed for its suppression, the term bigamy being used instead of polygamy. The offence was

made to consist in the marriage rather than in the cohabitation; following the old English statutes of the New England States on the subject of bigamy, classing our system of marriage with that which was made criminal by the English statutes and by the statutes of the Northern States; when in reality there was very little, if any, similarity. The bigamy of England and the American States consists in crime and deception, the betraying and wronging of two innocent and unsuspecting women. While the corrupt, lying, deceiving, unprincipled husband was feigning virtue and integrity, both violating their confidence by lying and deception, and by violating all the duties and obligations of marriage – the duties that the father owes to the wife and children and also to the State. But the fact that our law-makers took this view of our social system when they passed this law, shows how poorly and ill they comprehended the system of marriage as taught by the Latter-day Saints. The republican party had this view of the case, no doubt, when they first announced this noted plank. Further experience and knowledge among the people of the United States has, in some measure, changed their view upon this subject, and they have attempted to shape their legislation accordingly; and in the recent law of Congress, known as the Edmunds law, they have especially, in the amendment they have adopted to the law of 1862, classed polygamy with bigamy and enacted penalties against both. And still further, they made it a continuous offence, by providing penalties for cohabitation as well as for the marriage; for cohabitation, however, the penalties consist of light fines and short imprisonment, but for marriage, heavy fines and long imprisonment. This is the view taken by our Christian Statesmen in relation to the moral aspect of this question.

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Anciently, when God's laws provided a government for ancient Israel, marriage was honorable both plural and single, as all students of the Bible know full well. At the same time adultery was punished by death. From the days that King Abimelech attempted intimacy with Sarah, whom he supposed to be eligible to marry, but afterwards found her to be the wife of Abraham, from the time that the angel of the Lord warned him that he would be a dead man if he persisted, from that time to the coming of the Savior, adultery was punishable by death, while marriage both single and plural was honorable, ordained and appointed of God, and provision was made for the protection and rights of each wife and her offspring. But our Christian statesmen are offering premiums, for licentiousness, and are seeking to make odious the honor and purity of marriage. This is all wrong. They are in error in the view they take of it. If their bishops, priests, potentates and religious teachers would betake themselves to the task of first seeking the light of heaven upon this question, and would then strive to enlighten our statesmen and the people of the United States, pertaining to social ethics and the purposes of heaven in the union of the sexes, and seek to encourage honorable marriage and honorable increase in the earth, instead of encouraging licentiousness and child-murder, they would thereby secure the favor of Heaven and the perpetuity of His blessings upon them as a nation and people.

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The Prophet Joseph Smith, the year before he was slain, testified of these things; and although he taught this social system to the Latter-day Saints, and to the more devout, wise and prudent of the women of Israel, as hundreds can testify, have testified, and are able to testify to-day, yet it was necessary in introducing it and facing the opposition and the prejudices of the age, to proceed wisely in these instructions. And while his name was before the people of the United States as a candidate for the Presidency, and national questions were being discussed pro and con by the Latter-day Saints and throughout the nation by all the political societies of the time, Joseph Smith took occasion to issue a pamphlet containing his views on the powers and policy of the Government of the United States; he also preached some sermons upon the subject in Nauvoo; and in this the Prophet counselled the people of the United States in relation to the manner of disposing of the vexed question of slavery, which he recognized as an evil – that is, the form in which it existed in the United States, which should be abolished; but rather than proceed to its abolishment by waging war against the institution, as the anti-slavery men were trying to do, counselled that this desired change, the modification of this system of labor in the south, be effected on a principle of honor, equity and peace; that a fund should be created, a sinking fund of the nation, for the abolishment of slavery; and to negotiate with the States in behalf of the slave-owners, for the gradual emancipation of the slaves, their owners to be reasonably compensated

for the freedom of their servants, and in process of years to change the status of the negro, make his labor free, and place him in a condition to be educated and elevated; and still maintain the faith of the nation and the faith of the northern states with the southern states. Thus it was that the true policy and counsel of heaven to our nation was manifested and spurned. The extremists of the north, the anti-slavery agitators heeded it not; and neither party approached the subject with any earnest determination to effect an honorable settlement of this question. The few statesmen that made propositions in the Congress of the United States looking to this result, to the accomplishment of the liberation of the slaves, settling this question on the basis proposed by the Prophet Joseph Smith; but whether they were influenced by his advice, or whether the same spirit that moved upon Joseph, moved also upon these statesmen – there were some that made advances looking to the accomplishment of the object in this way – but it was not generally received or favored, or it was deemed impracticable. At all events the sequel proved that the opposing elements warred against each other, culminating in that great fratricidal war which resulted in the shedding of so much blood, and the impoverishing of one-half of the nation.

JD 23:296 – p.297, Erastus Snow, October 7, 1882

Prior to this, however, the union and fraternal feeling that formerly existed had been gradually weakening in the various religious organizations of the nation. All the leading churches of the nation had divided at what was known as the Mason and Dixon line – the line separating the free from the slave states. We had the humiliating spectacle throughout the land, of the Methodist church of the North, and the Methodist church of the South; the Presbyterian church of the north and the Presbyterian church of the South; the Baptist church of the North, and the Baptist church of the South. I believe the only Christian church in America that did not, over the slavery question, split the blanket, divide its property, its franchises and ecclesiastical organization, was the Roman Catholic church, who recognized the necessity of a united body under one grand head. This division of sects prepared the hearts and minds of the people for the deadly conflict that ensued.

JD 23:297 – p.298 – p.299 – p.300, Erastus Snow, October 7, 1882

On the subject of the other twin relic, there appears no such division. Both the North and the South and religious sects of whatever name or belief, are united in the denunciation of the Latter-day Saints, and the system of marriage introduced by the Prophet Joseph Smith. This, as I have already said, is founded partly in their ignorance with regard to the true spirit and nature of the doctrine taught by the Prophet Joseph Smith, and believed in by the Latter-day Saints. As I have already said, they have classed it with the bigamy of England and the American States, and they have classed it with Oriental polygamy. For it is known to all students of history, to all who are familiar with the conditions of the nations at the present time, and the history of nations in past ages, that polygamy has been the rule – I will not say that it has been the rule among the common people of all nations, but polygamy has existed, and has been recognized to a greater or less extent, so far as its practice was consistent with the conditions of the people of the various nations, it has been the rule from time immemorial; and there has never been a time in the history of the world when it has not been common and recognized among the nations of the earth, with the exception of modern Europe. The Christians of our time claim the prevailing system of marriage in modern Europe and in the United States, as the result of Christianity. To this I reply, that neither Christ nor his Apostles ever uttered one word in condemnation of that system of marriage that was in vogue in their days, and that had been recognized and acknowledged in the house of Israel from the days of Abraham until Christ. In fact Christ Himself was the fruit of polygamy, so far as the flesh was concerned. And nowhere is there to be found one word in condemnation of this system, or anything intimating that he intended to change the then existing relations of the sexes; but while he, as well as his Apostles and the ancient Prophets and Patriarchs denounced adultery and fornication they recognized and sustained honorable marriage whether single or plural; and every form of illicit intercourse with the sexes was condemned by the primitive Christians, as well as by the Prophets and Patriarchs of old. The only passage of Scripture that I have ever heard quoted as appearing to limit the early Christians to single marriage was the saying of one of the Apostles, St. Paul to Timothy, in which he said that a Bishop should be the husband of one wife, having faithful children and one who knows how to govern his own house, for, said he, if he knows not how to rule well his own house, how shall he rule the Church of God.

Now this scripture, taken as a whole, evidently shows that his object was not to intimate that a Bishop should have one wife only, but he intended to make this impression, that he must be a man of family, one who has had experience in household affairs, one that understood all those tender relations existing between husband and wife and parent and child, one who had shown himself a wise and discreet father; one who was capable of guiding his own house and of leading his family in the ways of rectitude and of controlling them in the fear of God; for except he is able to govern his own house, how could it be expected that he could govern the Church of God. Now, if in this respect a Bishop had proved himself a wise and discreet father and husband, a man who knew how to rule well his own family, this was a qualification recommending him as a suitable person to be trusted with the office of a Bishop. And how much more suitable would he be for that position if he were perfectly able to govern two or more wives, and to rear their children in the fear of God? The very fact that a Bishop must be the husband of one wife, if we admit the correctness of the views of our Christian friends in this regard (which, however, we do not by any means) the logical inference is, that any other officer or member in the Church but a Bishop was at liberty to have more than one wife. For if he intended it to be a general prohibition, why should he confine it to the Bishop, why did he not make it general? It is sheer sophistry on the part of our sectarian friends and groundless assertion that monogamy, to the exclusion of polygamy was introduced into Europe by the primitive Christians; for that system of marriage was introduced prior to the establishment of Christianity in Europe, by the Roman empire, and became the form of marriage in early times when, as history alleges, men were more numerous in Rome than women. And the earlier settlers of Rome were political refugees, renegades and scape-graces from surrounding nations, and were under the necessity of making raids upon their neighbors to procure wives; and it became a matter of necessity and for mutual protection, to limit the number to one. It was the Roman state that limited the number of a man's wives to one, and not the Christian church; and this being done, it was perpetuated. And history teaches us that under that monogamic system, Rome became the most licentious of all nations. I do not intend to enter into an argument in favor of polygamy; my spirit rather leads me to impress upon the Latter-day Saints the character of this great social question and the duties and responsibilities which rest upon us as a people, principles that have emanated from heaven; obligations that we cannot ignore, and duties that we cannot shirk. For God has set his hand to gather Israel, according to the Prophets; God has set his hand to establish his Zion; God has set his hand to build his kingdom in the earth, according to the prediction of the holy prophets. God is determined to work a work that shall be a marvelous work and a wonder, which he has commenced and will carry on to completion in his own peculiar way. His arm is stretched out, and it will not return void – it will not fail to accomplish the thing that it has commenced to perform. It is to raise up and establish to himself a holy nation, a kingdom of priests, a peculiar people, composed of the blood of Israel. He has declared that in the last days Ephraim shall be his first-born; them he would gather together, and upon them he would place his holy Priesthood, and them he would use as his servants and as his instruments to push the people together from the ends of the earth. For Moses, while blessing the tribe of Joseph before his death, says: "His horns are like the horns of unicorns, and with them shall he push the people together from the ends of the earth; and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim and the thousands of Manasseh." Speaking of the tribe of Judah, Jacob says: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." Now, the motto or insignia of Judah was the lion, while the unicorn was that of the house of Ephraim; and in the days of Rehoboam the kingdom of Israel was divided; and Jeroboam an Ephraimite, reigned in Samaria over the ten tribes, whilst Rehoboam continued to reign over the kingdom of Judah, which included the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and fragments of other tribes that remained with them. After a time the ten tribes so far corrupted their way that the Lord gave them into the hands of the enemy. The king of Assyria who made war against them and carried them captive into his own land; he took the nobility and the more wealthy portions of the people, and planted them in distant portions of his empire far to the eastward, and sent back his own people to marry with the poor that he had left in the land of Israel, and thus grew up that mongrel race that were afterwards known as the Samaritans. But Esdras tells us that Israel after they were led into captivity, planted in the far east of the Assyrian Empire, took counsel among themselves and began to repent, and they said among themselves in council: Let us call upon the Lord and see if he will not lead us into a country where we may dwell together, and keep the commandments and judgments which he gave unto our fathers, which we never kept in our own land. And God heard their prayers, and the Lord led them and they journeyed, a year and a-half's journey to what he called the north country, and God divided the waters before

them, and he planted them in a land by themselves; and the Book of Mormon clearly shows, in that notable parable about the olive tree, that God has planted branches of the house of Israel not only on the American continent, but on other distant portions of the globe, where he nourishes them. And our Savior tells us in one of his graphic parables, that the kingdom of heaven is likened to leaven hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. Now, one of these measures of meal in which the leaven was deposited, was the people of Israel in Palestine; another measure of meal in which the leaven was deposited was upon this American continent; and a third measure of meal in which the leaven was deposited was among the tribes of Israel whom the Father led out of the land into a country yet to be discovered. And this leaven was to work until the whole should be leavened. And this the Savior clearly explained in that saying to the Jews: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." When the Savior showed himself to the Nephites on the American continent, he quoted that saying and said unto the Nephites that they were the other sheep referred to. And he still told them that he had other sheep that were not of that fold either, to whom also he would show himself, and among whom he would minister. And the time will come that they shall be gathered into one, when there shall be one fold and one shepherd. And he commanded the people that they should write the things which he taught them; both those at Jerusalem and those upon this continent were commanded to write what they saw and heard. And he gave the Nephites to understand that when he should show himself to the other tribes of Israel, whom the Father had led away, that they also should write; and the time should come when the Jews would have the writings of the Nephites, and the Nephites would have the words and writings of the Jews; and both the Jews and Nephites would have the writings of the Ten Tribes, and the Ten lost Tribes would also have the writings of the Jews and Nephites; nay, more, that the time would come when all the people of God should be gathered together in one; and the things they write shall also be gathered together in one; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd, and then shall we see the three measures of meal all leavened together. And let me say, there is no power in the United States, neither is there in Europe, nor in the whole world that can hinder the accomplishment of the purposes of the Almighty, which are outlined in the predictions of the Prophets.

JD 23:300 – p.301, Erastus Snow, October 7, 1882

The Book of Mormon contains the fullness of the everlasting Gospel – the record of the ancient Nephites, translated by the Prophet Joseph Smith, by the gift and power of God in him – that we may come to a knowledge of the principles of the Gospel in simplicity and in purity. It makes clear many dark sayings of the Jewish Scriptures, as they have come down to us. It sheds a flood of light over the Bible; it contains the key of knowledge and understanding; and it is more precious than all the works of modern times, and is worth more. And the youth of Israel should read and become familiar with it, and compare it with the Jewish Scriptures; there is more to be learned out of it, my young friends, that is calculated to prove of real worth and blessing to the soul, than can be acquired at all the universities, colleges and schools of science and of modern times. And in saying this, I say nothing prejudicial to science, nor anything in the least degree to discourage the acquisition of science, but the more forcibly to impress upon the minds of the youth of Israel everywhere not to neglect those things which are the weightier matters – the Holy Scriptures, the Book of Mormon and the revelations of God as contained in the Doctrine and Covenants; for the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. And a knowledge of the only true and living God, and of his purposes concerning us and our being upon the earth, the object of our creation, and that which is designed concerning us, both in time and in eternity, is of paramount importance, and of greater value than anything that can be bestowed upon mortal man. The greatest of all the gifts of God is the gift of eternal life; and eternal life is only attainable by a true knowledge of God, through obedience to his laws and commandments. Therefore, study the Scriptures; acquaint yourselves with the Book of Mormon. Read them in your Sunday Schools; read them at your firesides; let them always be found upon your tables, and never permit your families to be without them; and if you are poor sell your coat and buy them; for you are far better without a coat than without the word of God to teach your children. Let our Bishops, and Elders and Teachers attend to it; and enquire whether you are surrounded by those milk-and-water Saints who love fine dress more than the love of God, and who love to furnish their children with musical instruments and toys, and who neglect to furnish them the words of life; if you are, labor with them and teach them in all sincerity the duties of a Latter-day Saint, a Saint of the living God; and God will bless you in your labors, and you will have more joy in doing this than anything else you

could do.

I started to give briefly the views which I entertain with regard to the providences of God that are overruling all things. Our Christian statesmen have mistaken the spirit of Mormonism; they have not understood it. Our Christian persecutors, of the various religious sects, would urge on our American statesmen to persecute this people, but they know not what they are doing. True, as some one said here yesterday, they do know when they insert in the oath which has been specially prepared for our people, that extraordinary clause, "in the marriage relation," that they mean to exclude from the polls honorable men and women who are in every respect justly entitled to take part in the affairs of the government of this land; but to do so they must deny their religion and abandon their wives, or wives their husbands, and they betake themselves to the streets as common prostitutes, and they mean to include at the polls, whoremongers and adulterers. This is well understood, and when this form of oath was adopted by Governor Murray and the Commissioners for special purposes, they knew what they were doing. And so did the Congress of the United States know what they were doing in passing the Edmunds Bill, for when an amendment was introduced making that proposed law binding upon adulterers, it was quickly disposed of; and one gentleman who was sitting near Captain Hooper at the time, remarked, that if that were to carry, it would leave the House of Representatives without a quorum. Such an amendment, of course, did not express the mind of our American statesmen and that of hireling priests; they needed adulterers, whoremongers, and fornicators, to carry out the vote in Utah over the Mormons. I thank God that they have, as a matter of political necessity, been compelled to hoist their true colors and nail them to their mast, so that all honorable men of their party cannot mistake it. They ignore it; they close their eyes to it; they do not want to talk about it; they are self-condemned; and the great party of boasted moral progress is weighed in the balance and found wanting. It is not morality they seek; it is not public purity they wish to maintain. The decision of the heavens is already passed upon them, and they will go down like a mighty millstone cast into the depths of the sea. They cannot hold the reigns of government of this American soil, only to work out their own destruction. God spoke by the mouth of the Prophet Joseph Smith, in a sermon delivered by the Prophet at Nauvoo a short time before his death, on the powers and policy of this government of the United States and the freedom and liberty secured in the American Constitution, that it was broad and ample in its provisions, extending human freedom to every soul of man and protecting them in every natural right; and he classed among others the Jew, the Mohammedan, and the oppressed of every nation who desired to find an asylum under the broad folds of the Constitution. Yes, the Patriarchs, as well as the Mohammedans, and their descendants who may believe in plural marriage, may come with their three or four wives, as the case may be, and enjoy freedom and liberty dear to all. Referring at the same time to those narrow, contracted, bigoted, sectarian laws of some of the States against plural marriage, he said they were not in harmony with the Constitution nor the purposes of heaven; that God had caused our fathers to establish this constitution, to maintain the liberty of all people of every creed, and it will become the duty of all lovers of freedom throughout the land to maintain those principles of human freedom; but, says one, are we not between the upper and nether millstone; shall we not be ground into fine powder? Just wait and see. As for myself, I feel as calm as a summer's morning; I have the utmost assurance in my heart that God reigns; that he overrules in the armies of heaven and of earth; that he overrules presidents, senators and governors, and that they have no power only that which is given of our Father in heaven. He curtails their power when it pleases him; he pulls down and he sets up, and he overrules all things for the good of those who fear him and keep his commandments; and whatever persecution there may be in store for us, whatever trying scenes we may have to pass through, as a people, it will only prove us, and redound to his glory and to the sanctification of his people. It is necessary, peradventure, that the hypocrites in Zion become afraid, and fearfulness surprise them; it is necessary, perhaps, that many that cannot be restrained by the persuasion of Presidents, nor Bishops, but who have crowded themselves forward following the spirit of the world rather than the Spirit of the Almighty, and "who have done despite to the spirit of grace," and lost, peradventure, wives and children, and if they have not they will; it is needful that such should be restrained, and that fear seize hold of them, and all others who are prompted by sordid motives; for the wicked flee when no man pursueth; but the righteous are bold as lions in the fear of their God, and like Daniel will never shirk from duty. But in all this God will overrule the wrath of the wicked to the best good of those who fear and serve him, and the residue of their wrath will he

restrain. God bless the people, in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Daniel H. Wells, October 6, 1882

DISCOURSE BY ELDER DANIEL H. WELLS,

Delivered in the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City,

Friday Morning, (General Conference) October 6, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

"MORMONISM" AS TRUE NOW AS EVER – MANY CALLED BUT FEW CHOSEN – GOD'S PEOPLE
TO BE TRIED AND TESTED – RAPID GROWTH OF HIS KINGDOM – THE BLINDNESS OF THE
WORLD – ANIMOSITY OF SATAN – BLESSINGS CANNOT BE WITHHELD FROM THE
FAITHFUL – EXHORTATION AGAINST COVETOUSNESS AND OTHER EVILS – ORDEALS
ORDAINED FROM THE BEGINNING – THE REWARD OF THE FAITHFUL.

[JD 23:303 – p.304, Daniel H. Wells, October 6, 1882](#)

It is with a degree of pleasure that I stand before you to-day to bear my testimony in regard to the truths that we have heard, the truths of the everlasting Gospel; for I know that "Mormonism" is just as true to-day as it ever was, and that God has not forsaken His people. We live, it is true, in an eventful age when the words of the Prophets are being fulfilled; when the God of Israel is going to establish and build up His kingdom on the earth, establish His government and his laws. I know that this work will be accomplished through the instrumentality of His children; that those who live in this day and age will have the privilege of being the honored instruments in the hands of God of bringing to pass His purposes, of establishing his kingdom never more to be thrown down, if we will let the Lord work with us, if we will only work with Him, if we will be obedient to His laws and work under His direction. We have been reserved from coming forth in the spirit world until that day when the everlasting Gospel should be established, that we might have the privilege of bearing a hand in this great work, this glorious work of the last days. It is not a haphazard matter with the Lord; everything is in perfect order in regard to this matter. He knew when he revealed His Gospel to his servant Joseph, that Joseph would receive it; and he knew there were those spirits upon the earth that would also receive it when it should be presented to them. It was rejected in the days of the Savior; they crucified Him; they drove the Priesthood from the earth. The hearts of the children of men are of the same nature to-day, to a greater or less extent; but there are those that come forth in this day that receive the Gospel when it is presented to them. Whether the people of those ages when the Gospel was not upon the earth would have received it I am not prepared to say. Suffice it to say when it was not revealed, they had not the opportunity of rejecting it; and that, in the economy of God, those who would have received it when the opportunity was not afforded them in the flesh, will receive it when it shall be presented to them in the spirit.

[JD 23:304 – p.305, Daniel H. Wells, October 6, 1882](#)

We have been called, and all people are called to this work. It is said that many are called and few are chosen. But all have been called, and it is their blessed privilege to bear a hand to help bear off this kingdom, if they chose to do so; and if they will be faithful to the call that is made upon them, the time will come when they will be chosen instruments to bear off His kingdom and in maintaining the principles of truth and righteousness as revealed to us through the influence and spirit of the living God. Because it is the privilege of all to hear testimony. Now, a man's judgment will oftentimes be convinced by the weight of testimony, whether he be willing to admit it or not; whether he is willing to acknowledge the Lord publicly, making a public profession of his belief, or not. There are many, I do believe, whose judgment has been convinced by the weight of testimony, who have not been willing to admit the truth of and make a public profession of faith in the Holy Gospel. When a person embraces the everlasting Gospel – which, by the way, seems to be very unpopular now, as in other ages; whether it will continue to be so I do not know – it requires a good deal of moral courage to sacrifice his associations in life, his property, social standing and good name, and everything that pertains to this life that is considered worth having. Still there are those spirits in the flesh that have the courage to do it; those that have the honesty of heart to receive this testimony and to stand up and bear it in the face of every opposing obstacle and every opposing foe. It is a life's labor for the Latter-day Saint to live his religion, to perform his duty, to fill up the measure of his creation with honor to his God and credit to himself. Our religion is not a matter of enthusiasm to work the mind up to a high pitch for an hour, a day, a week, in some protracted meeting or under some peculiar influence, but day by day, week by week, month by month, year by year, as long as life shall last, the Latter-day Saint does not see an hour nor a moment that he can afford to lay off the armor of righteousness, or lay aside his holy religion. It is he that endures to the end that is promised salvation. The word "endure" is there; and we may naturally expect to have to endure some things. God will have a tried people; and all will be put to the test in one way or another. Some things will try some people at one time, and will not try them at another time. Some things will try some people, and they will have no such effect on others. God leads his people through a great variety of changes, that all may be tried; and you may depend upon it that all who come to this point in their travels in the journey of life, will be tested to the heart's core. I have heard some people say, O, I wish I had been in Zion's Camp, and through the persecutions of Missouri; and I wish I had been with the Saints in the days of Illinois, etc.; I can promise every Latter-day Saint that is faithful, that he will have sufficient to try him before he gets through, and the nearer that he lives to his God, the more sore, perhaps, the test that will be made of him; he may rest assured that he will be tried, and tried severely, if he remain faithful. There is and there will be an opportunity for all people to prove their integrity to their God, and their integrity to their brethren, and to the principles of the Gospel that we have espoused. If a person is going to fly the track the moment that difficulty arises, which it is necessary to overcome, what becomes of his integrity, and where is it? It proves to God and to angels and to all good men that he has not integrity, does it not? It is to stand firm and steadfast through every trial, to overcome every obstacle, that brings the prize, allowing nothing to intervene between us and the Lord, or between the Gospel that we have espoused, or between us and the Holy Priesthood who, under God, guides the affairs of His church and kingdom upon the earth; it is to stand up in defence of the truth, and bear off the principles of the Gospel in this wicked and untoward generation. It requires some test, and the Lord will have that kind of people that He can rely on. He could not bestow His kingdom in its power and fullness, in its might and glory upon a people whom He did not know had sufficient integrity to hold sacred that which had been entrusted to them for Him and His cause.

JD 23:305 – p.306, Daniel H. Wells, October 6, 1882

I have often been asked the question, "When will the kingdom be given into the hands of the Saints of the most high God;" and I have always answered it in this way: just so soon as the Lord finds that He has a people upon the earth who will uphold and sustain that kingdom, who shall be found capable of maintaining its interests and of extending its influence upon the earth. When he finds that he has such a people, a people who will stand firm and faithful to him, a people that will not turn it over into the lap of the devil, then, and not until then, will he give "the kingdom" into the hands of the Saints of the most high, in its power and influence when it shall fill the whole earth. The promise is, that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ; and it shall be given to the Saints of the most high, and it shall stand forever. That is when we may expect it, and we could not reasonably expect it any sooner. Therefore, it depends, in a great

measure, upon the people themselves, as to how soon the kingdom spoken of by Daniel shall be given into the hands of the Saints of God. When we shall prove ourselves faithful in every emergency that may arise, and capable to contend and grapple with every difficulty that threatens our peace and welfare, and to overcome every obstacle that may tend to impede the progress of the Church and kingdom of God upon the earth, then our heavenly Father will have confidence in us, and then he will be able to trust us. And it is the Lord's will that it should be so. And if we, as a people, do not hold ourselves on the altar ready to be used, with our means and all that God has bestowed upon us, according to the Master's bidding, for the upbuilding of his kingdom upon the earth, he will pass on and get somebody else; because he will get a people that will do it. I do not mean to say, that he will pass on and leave this people; no, there will come up from the midst of this people that people which has been talked so much about – for the kingdom will not be taken from us and given to another people; it is too late in the day, as it has already commenced to grow, and it is growing and will continue to grow. This kingdom of God has been of rapid growth, although we may think sometimes that it is slow, that the purposes of the Almighty are being slowly developed, but the time will come that this people will look back, say forty years hence, and exclaim how wonderfully, how rapidly has the kingdom progressed, and how powerful has it become in the earth! We can look back to-day from the time that we were located in Missouri, and if any man had predicted the progress that we have made since, he would have been considered somewhat enthusiastic, to say the least of it; and he could not possibly have foretold by his own natural foresight the progress and the prosperity that have attended the labors of the people, and the strength and power that we have attained unto in so short a time. Therefore, we may take courage and press onward, and continue to sustain the holy principles that have been revealed in our day for our reformation and salvation. For these principles tend to reformation, and they will produce the greatest reformation that God has undertaken to bring to pass among the children of men. When we consider the nature of this work and its results among men, it would be quite proper to call it a reformation. It is reformation and it is restitution; it brings us back to first principles; it brings us back to the purity of the most holy faith; it is also reformation from the status of the evil-doer and from the evils that are prevalent in the earth.

JD 23:306 – p.309, Daniel H. Wells, October 6, 1882

The world have forsaken God; they have not the least true conception of the attributes of the Deity; they know no more about the true and living God than those lampposts do. They go blundering along worshipping an imaginary God, a something that they know nothing at all about. Their teachers are blind as to His true character, and the people are blinded by their teachers, and they seem to be satisfied with their condition. They talk about their colleges, their theological seminaries and their institutions of learning; they are simply machines, the body without the spirit; it is not possible for them to furnish a line of Scripture, they never have since the Apostles fell asleep, and they never will down to the end of time. It is not in them; it cannot come out of them. Why they openly denounce all belief in revelation from God – the very life-giving element of all scripture, as nothing but that can produce scripture. The Bible itself was made up by revelations to the servants of God from time to time. Men spoke as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost, and it was written for the benefit of posterity, and became the word of the Lord to us. Ever since the Apostles fell asleep, there has been no further light; the heavens have been closed, and no communication has been made to the "gentlemen of the cloth," nor to anybody else of this generation until the Lord revealed himself and spoke to Joseph Smith. And why did he speak to him? One reason was because he prayed to the Lord in faith, believing that He would hear him. The religions of his time he saw were many, they differed, and each claimed to be the right way of the Lord. He did not know which to join, and yet he wanted to espouse some one among the many that then existed. And he was in this state of mind when reading the writings of the Apostle James, who says: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." He approached the Lord with an honest heart, and the Lord heard his prayer. He Himself, together with His Son, appeared to him, and among other things that he was told on that occasion was to not join any of the sectarian churches, that none of them were right, that they were the systems of men and not the system of God. And Joseph had the temerity to tell it; and of course that was enough to bring upon him the enmity of professing Christianity, and especially of the "gentlemen of the cloth" whose craft was at once in danger; and their animosity to this people has continued from that day to this increasing with our growth; and we expect that it will still continue to manifest itself against us until the kingdom of God shall

triumph in the earth, and God, the righteous Judge, and His people be recognized, and their rights acknowledged. We well understand the reason why this people are a reproach to the world: they are so high above them in morals and in the principles of truth, and the world know that we are their superiors in every respect as far as the fundamental principles of life and intelligence are concerned. The devil knows it, and he puts it into the hearts of the wicked and those who are deceived by his cunning, to hate us for that reason. Their animosity is not enkindled against us because of our iniquity, for they cannot put their finger upon a single line of iniquity chargeable to the Latter-day Saints, as a people. Not but what there is many a one who does wrong for which he needs to repent and do his first works over again, or be severed from the Church; but as for the Church its enemies cannot lay their finger upon the first iniquitous thing brought against it that can be brought against it as true. The fact is we are a reproach to them, and they feel it; their anger is enkindled against us on that account, and hence they seek to destroy the holy Priesthood from off the face of the earth. Who is it that invents the lies that are circulated about this people? They are begotten by and become the weapons of the clergy of the present day, and it certainly is, as it was said it should be, men will believe a lie but reject truth; and this class of persons particularly is engaged in trying to destroy the work of our God, as manifested through His people, and through the authority of the holy Priesthood that is now among men. Satan is anxious to trample it under foot, as he has done before; but that is something which cannot be done, it is too late in the day. It has taken root downward, and it is bearing fruit upward. It is too strong to be trampled out. Though they may bring fifty millions to bear on us, what does it signify? If they bring the whole world, what difference? I have no fears with regard to the success of the work of God in these the last days, for its success is already established as far as we have gone, and there can be no doubt, in my mind, neither can there be in yours, that as the work of God is developed success will attend our labors, even until the Savior shall come in power and glory to rule from the rivers to the ends of the earth. I know this, and so do you, and so does all Israel. The Lord knows it, and the devil knows it; and that's what's the matter with the clergy. This great and marvelous work of the latter-days will be prolonged or hastened according to the faith and good works of the people engaged in it. If we pray, therefore, the Lord to hasten His work; to hasten the time when Zion shall be built up and redeemed; when the great and glorious Temple shall be erected to the name of the Most High God, and when His glory shall rest upon it in the form of a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, let our righteousness conform with our holy desires; let us so live as to call down the blessings of heaven upon us. For if we are faithful in all things, and are united, blessings cannot be withheld from us; the Lord is bound, according to the covenant, to hear the prayers of His faithful children. We have an example in the Book of Mormon of a man exercising such exceeding faith that his vision could not be withheld from penetrating behind the vail, when he saw the person of the Lord, and was there redeemed from the fall. The Lord is perfectly willing to bestow blessings upon His people, and to establish His work upon the earth, just as willing as His people can be to have him, and whenever the time comes that he finds that he has a people upon whom he can bestow these blessings, they will come. We need have no fears with regard to that; and, in fact, they do come now as fast as we can receive them and hold them in righteousness, and I think sometimes, they come too fast for a great many. When I have seen men who have risen to power and influence through wealth in this Church, it seemed as though the Lord could not make men rich but what they would grow fat and kick the traces, and go to the devil. Look at the history of such men from the beginning, and see how they have acted. They have perhaps run fair for a while, especially whilst they were in a somewhat destitute condition as regards this world's goods; but as soon as they have become rich, where are they? All along the line of our history, as a church, we have seen them strewn by the way side, they have gone out of the church; instance after instance I could recite within my own knowledge, and you would know of a great many more than I do. This is not necessarily so. The remedy to all such cases is the same to-day as that which applied to the young man that came to Jesus, namely, "sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and come and follow me; and thou shalt find treasures in heaven." That is the test. If a man is prospered of the Lord, that is no reason why he should let his riches get between him and his God; if he does, he will make shipwreck of his faith. The Lord does not care how wealthy a man becomes, so long as he holds his wealth for the building up of His kingdom, and for the carrying out of His purposes upon the earth. But when he becomes covetous, and allows his means to get between him and his God, his riches become a canker to his soul; he forsakes his God, and soon forgets the reason why they were given to him. Instead of using his means for the purpose intended by the Lord in bestowing them upon him, he aggrandizes to himself, and the spirit of greed and covetousness

takes hold of him, and he is then ready to swap off his religion for filthy lucre. He becomes covetous, and covetousness is idolatry; he serves his selfish purposes instead of serving the Lord. It is a great pity for a man in this Church to get rich, if he cannot hold everything upon the altar, to be used, if necessary, for God and his kingdom. This is the duty of every true Latter-day Saint. The Lord will strip men of everything if need be to prove His servants. Indeed, men have to strip themselves for this work in order to show that all things else are but dross compared with the excellency of Christ and the principles of the holy Gospel that he has revealed to us, saying in his heart, "For one I am determined to know nothing else, except Jesus and Him crucified; I am determined to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." And then other things come in right enough. In fact we are told that if we do seek first the kingdom of heaven, all other things shall be added. This was the promise of the Savior unto His servants; and in one sense it comes with greater assurance to the Latter-day Saints that to those of former days, because this is a different dispensation, it is the dispensation of the fullness of times. When this promise was made it was nevertheless well known to him who made it, that the kingdom would be destroyed out of the earth. But now it is not to be trodden out. They will not be permitted to crucify the Savior of the world when He comes again, because then He will come in power and great glory and not as He did before; and the kingdoms of this world will be given into the hands of the Saints of the Most High God, and they will then become the wealthiest of all people, in fact, the only really wealthy people there will be; but then it will be because they hold the kingdom for God, because they and all they have are upon the altar ready to be used to bring about the purposes of the Lord and not because they seek to gratify their own selfish desires, and to bring about their own purposes, and to build themselves up in this world. And there is more true speculation that promises a rich reward in that than in anything else that I can think of after all. We cannot afford to swap off our eternal welfare for the things of this world – "things that perish with the handling," as some one has said. This would be poor speculation, indeed.

JD 23:309 – p.310, Daniel H. Wells, October 6, 1882

One of the purposes for which we were placed upon this earth was, that we might pass the ordeals and prove to God our faithfulness to the principles of life and salvation. To pass the ordeals? Yes. All through life, from the cradle to the grave, we have trials and difficulties to encounter. We suffer affliction that is permitted to come upon us, which is incident to this life – the loss of parents, the loss of children, the loss of husband and the loss of wife; besides the pain and affliction of the body, and the many ills that flesh is heir to; and all this to test our faith and integrity to our God. Some have endured manfully all that the devil and wicked men have been able to bring upon them, even to the test of their lives. And if we will not be willing to give our lives to the Lord for the advancement of His cause and kingdom in the earth, we would not be worthy of Him, neither would He acknowledge us as His. It is true, He may not put us to that test, but he will test us sufficiently to know whether we would be equal to the occasion or not. It is, I say, to pass these ordeals that we came here; to prove our integrity and worthiness to come back into his presence to inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, powers and dominions that are prepared for the righteous. This is not a thing of a moment; it was in the programme before we came here. We are called to-day, the time of choosing will come by and by, when Christ shall make up his jewels. If we are faithful over a few things, He will make us ruler over many. You see it is upon the principle of faithfulness, and upon the principle of endurance. I have no fears in regard to the Latter-day Saints, as a people, passing these ordeals and remaining faithful to the trust reposed in them; although many will drop out by the way-side and be lost, for a time at least, in the gulf that will receive them. You take those that do not live their religion, those who swear a little, and who do a great many naughty things, who never think of uttering a prayer; and let the enemy come against us in formidable array, and even that class would be found ready with their guns to protect the lives and liberties of their friends, this people; they would not flinch either. Yes, these wild boys would be ready to walk up to the cannon's mouth in defence of the Latter-day Saints. I have seen it in times past, and I have no doubt they, if called upon and it were necessary, would do it again. But does that excuse them for not living their religion? No. They should quit their evil practices that they might be useful in building up the kingdom of God upon the earth, and receive a greater reward, and be saved in the world to come, and receive glory and exaltation which they might otherwise not have. Because a man may clip his own glory and exaltation by taking an unwise course; in fact, he would be sure to do it. Blessed is that man who grows up without sin from the purity of his youth, who lives and dies a fit temple for the abode of the Holy Spirit. A man may in an hour, in an unguarded moment

say and do things that would affect him throughout the never-ending ages of eternity. We should, therefore, be the more careful of our course and conduct in life, and hold fast to that which is given unto us, and progress and go on from perfection to perfection, and try to become as godly in our lives as it is possible for us to be in this probation. Be pure then in your sphere as God is pure in His. And purity does not consist in going around with a long-drawn face mourning over the sins of the world, which is something that you cannot particularly help; but with purity of mien, with a joyful countenance going forth performing your duties, and keeping yourself pure and unspotted from the world, from their wicked and abominable practices. God will have a pure people, for the Zion of God must be pure in heart. There is plenty of material to carry on this great and glorious work, and God will find it through the instrumentality of His servants, and if we wish to have part in it, we should be pure ourselves, working the works of righteousness, proving day by day our faithfulness and our integrity to Him. And that we may stand firm and faithful to the end, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882

DISCOURSE BY ELDER F. D. RICHARDS,

Delivered at Logan, on Saturday Afternoon, November 6, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

TITHES AND OFFERINGS – CONSECRATIONS AND STEWARDSHIPS – THE LAW OF THE LORD
TO THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS – THE MEANING OF "SURPLUS PROPERTY" – TITHES AND
OFFERINGS IN ANCIENT TIMES – THE YEAR OF JUBILEE OR RELEASE – THE IMPORTANCE
OF PAYING TITHING – GOD THE GIVER OF EVERY GOOD GIFT – TITHES AND OFFERINGS
HIS DUE.

[JD 23:311, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

My dear brethren and sisters and friends, I am much edified by the remarks which have been made here to-day. I believe that your president is looking after his work throughout this Stake over which he presides, and I hope you will take into careful consideration the subjects he has presented to you, as they are matters of practical importance. We feel that we are numbered with God's people, and that it is very well with us in a general way, but there is a time coming when we shall each and every one of us be brought to a solemn, serious and faithful understanding of our true relationship to God and to each other, as well as to the work in which we are now called to labor. We all have our free agency to do good or evil. Every faithful Saint will have a desire to find the blessing that legitimately belongs to each particular ordinance and labor in the Church, for there is a blessing belonging to each office and calling, to each labor and duty, and to each particular ministration and work required of us.

[JD 23:311 – p.312, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

The Elders who spoke this morning made allusions to the subject of tithing, which particularly pleased me; some may think this a hackneyed subject and wish we would talk about something else, believing that they know all that has been spoken or written about it; but I think there are a few things pertaining to this matter which we may not have considered. If there is any brother here who feels that to-day his tithing is onerous or that this tithing is a tax upon him, and that he has got so much he cannot afford to pay tithing on it, or that he has so little that he cannot spare a tenth of it, such a brother does not realize and sense the blessing that flows from paying an honest tithing, for if he did he would deem it just as necessary to obey that law of God to us, in order to obtain the special blessing thereof, as he would of going to his meals in order to derive the temporal blessing of health and strength from partaking of food. If we could take home to our hearts and understandings the sayings of Bishop Hunter here last Conference, namely, "pay your tithing and be blessed," the subject of tithing would appear of greater moment to us. I recollect, not long ago, being told that a certain person worth his thousands of dollars paid one dollar and fifty cents; perhaps in order to be able to say at the end of the year that he paid tithing. Now, this kind of compromise with one's conscience is not the thing for Saints – hypocrites may indulge in it.

JD 23:312, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882

Will you engage with me a few minutes, and consider the subject of tithing as the Lord has given it to us, and see if we can get to understand it, see if, peradventure, there is something in it worthy to be sought after. Does he give us a requirement that is not fraught with blessing and consolation to us. Not at all. Every requirement lived up to brings consolation and blessing. If I can have the liberty of the spirit to dwell on this subject, I would like us to look at it, and see if there is not something in it which we have not found out and which is both desirable and profitable.

JD 23:312, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882

I will read from the Doctrine and Covenants a short but very comprehensive Revelation upon this subject; but before doing so let me say that wherever tithing is spoken about, the word offerings is frequently connected with it. For instance, The Lord by His prophet Malachi, charged Israel with having robbed him of His tithes and offerings. These are words which although not strictly synonymous, are so nearly alike that they are frequently used together, and sometimes one for the other. But as used in the ancient scriptures tithes are not offerings, and offerings are not tithes. It should be kept in mind that this Church was organized more than eight years before the Lord gave to his people in this great and last dispensation a law on the subject of tithing. Let this be borne in mind as we proceed. The beginning of this work was founded in offerings and in consecrations, by the people giving themselves and all they possessed to the work of God when they embraced it. In the building of the Temple at Kirtland, the law of tithing was not known, but every man went to work on that House after the manner of bees returning to their hive, and each bringing in the necessary material to enable them to carry on the work.

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When the first Bishop, Edward Partridge, was appointed to the high position of Bishop of the Church in Zion, his duty, as given by revelation, was not to deal with tithing. Indeed tithing was not even mentioned in the whole revelation, but he was required to receive the consecrations of the Saints, and to set off to them their inheritances. No revelation had yet been given upon the subject of tithing. When the Saints had gone up from Kirtland to Jackson County in Missouri, and had been driven to Clay County, and from Clay to Caldwell County, and when Brothers Joseph and Hyrum, David and Oliver, and the leading authorities of the priesthood at that time were congregated in Far West, the then gathering place of Israel, and where a Temple was appointed to be built, it was on the 8th of July, 1838, that the Lord gave for the first time to this people, through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the law on the subject of tithing, and we should understand this in order to approach the subject in a correct and proper manner.

JD 23:312 – p.313, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882

Up to this time you will recollect that the Saints had gone to Missouri to receive inheritances according to the order of stewardships, consecrating all they had to the Bishop in Zion; and in turn he delivered to every man his stewardship and gave to him a written deed and covenant, in the name of the Lord, and in the authority of his holy ministerial calling which could not be broken; and as you well know who are familiar with the history, the Saints were during the following winter of 1838–9, driven out from Missouri altogether.

[JD 23:313, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

We will now look at this short revelation given through Joseph, the Prophet, at Far West, Missouri, July 8th, 1838, in answer to a question, "O Lord, show unto thy servants how much thou requirest of the properties of the people for a tithing."

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1. "Verily, thus saith the Lord, I require all their surplus property, to be put into the hands of the Bishop of my Church of Zion.

[JD 23:313, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

2. "For the building of mine house, and for the laying of the foundation of Zion and for the Priesthood, and for the debts of the Presidency of my Church.

[JD 23:313, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

3. "And this shall be the beginning of the tithing of my people.

[JD 23:313, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

4. "And after that, those who have thus been tithed, shall pay one–tenth of all their interest annually; and this shall be a standing law unto them for ever, for my holy Priesthood, saith the Lord.

[JD 23:313, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

5. "Verily I say unto you, it shall come to pass, that all those who gather unto the land of Zion shall be tithed of their surplus properties, and shall observe this law, or they shall not be found worthy to abide among you.

[JD 23:313, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

6. "And I say unto you, if my people observe not this law; to keep it holy, and by this law sanctify the land of Zion unto me, that my statutes and my judgments may be kept thereon, that it may be most holy, behold, verily I say unto you, it shall not be a land of Zion unto you.

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7. "And this shall be an ensample unto all the Stakes of Zion. Even so. Amen."

[JD 23:313, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

Before going further I want to stop and consider the question asked by some, what He means where the Lord requires the surplus property of His people as the beginning of their tithing. Let us consider for a moment this word "surplus." What does it mean when applied to a man and his property? Surplus cannot mean that which is indispensably necessary for any given purpose, but what remains after supplying what is needed for that purpose. Is not the first and most necessary use of a man's property that he feed, clothe and provide a home for himself and family? This appears to be the great leading objects for which we labor to acquire means, and as,

until the time that this revelation was given, all public works and raising of all public funds had been by consecration, was not "surplus property," that which was over and above a comfortable and necessary subsistence? In the light of what had transpired and of subsequent events, what else could it mean? Can we take any other view of it when we consider the circumstances under which it was given in Far West in July, 1838?

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I have been unable in studying this subject to find any other definition of the term surplus, as used in this revelation, than the one I have just given. I find that it was so understood and recorded by the Bishops and people in those days, as well as by the Prophet Joseph himself, who was unquestionably the ablest and best exponent of this revelation.

[JD 23:313 – p.314, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

Immediately following the persecutions of the Saints in the expulsion from the State of Missouri, the Prophet Joseph, in 1839, found the sickly town of Commerce so nearly depopulated, by disease, that its remaining inhabitants were glad to sell out to him their sickly place, which afterwards became the delightful Nauvoo – for God blessed it and made the place healthy as well as beautiful. Soon a site was selected on which to build a Temple, as says the Lord, "which my people are always commanded to build unto my name." The corner stones were laid and the gathered saints were diligently at work on the building.

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How did they build it? Here for the first time in this dispensation the principle of tithing was practiced by the Saints in the labor of building a Temple. Few, if any, in those days, who came to Nauvoo, had any surplus, and many had not a comfortable subsistence, consequently the tithing of the people on that Temple was mostly in labor as I well recollect – for I worked in the quarry every tenth day when I was not absent on missionary service. I remember very well that every man who was dependent on his daily labor went in good faith and performed the work assigned him, and it was considered and credited to him as his tithing. When brethren who had property gathered there they were tithed of their surplus property, and then after that of their increase of the residue from that time on. So abundant was the spirit of consecration among the Saints in those days, they voted rather than have the Temple fail of completion by the appointed time, they would appropriate time, they would appropriate their homes and the lots on which they stood for its accomplishment. After paying such surplus as the beginning of their tithing, "those who have thus been tithed shall pay one-tenth of all their interest annually; and this shall be a standing law unto them forever, for my holy Priesthood, saith the Lord." Again, "Verily I say unto you, it shall come to pass, that all those who gather to the land of Zion shall be tithed of their surplus property, and shall observe this law, or they shall not be found worthy to abide among you." This is a command; it does not say it may or may not be, but they shall not be worthy to abide among you. "And I say unto you, if my people observe not this law, to keep it holy, and by this law sanctify the land of Zion unto me, that my statutes and my judgments may be kept therein, that it may be most holy, behold, verily, I say unto you, it shall not be a land of Zion unto you." This language is plain and free from ambiguity. "And this shall be an ensample unto all the Stakes of Zion."

[JD 23:314, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

I call your attention to this that we may look at it and come to know what it really means to pay tithing. For I do believe that the majority of the brethren want to understand what is the mind of the Lord on this subject, because our blessings all depend upon our understanding what is his mind and will and then carrying it out to the best of our ability. Some who pay their tithing think they ought not to be called upon for any offerings to the Temple or poor, and say, "If I have to make donations I cannot pay tithing;" and they act accordingly.

[JD 23:314 – p.315, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

I might go on to speak about a great variety of views which are taken of this subject, but suppose we take a look at what the Lord said and did about these things anciently. First, a word concerning offerings. People carry something to the poor because they feel it to be a requirement; but do they do it in the way that they may receive the blessings of the Lord that pertain to the giving of those offerings? There is a great deal more belonging to this, than I shall attempt to explain now. The first manifestation of God's favor and of his disfavor to man over the matter of offerings was towards two of the sons of Adam – Abel and Cain; Abel brought the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof, such an offering was acceptable to the Lord, and because of this the favor and blessing of God was upon him. Cain, his own brother, child of the same parents, brought his offering to the Lord, but his offering the Lord could not accept, it was displeasing in his sight. The Bible does not give us the particular reasons for the acceptance of Abel's and the rejection of Cain's offering; but the Talmud, an ancient Jewish record, informs us that "while Abel selected the finest and best-conditioned animals of his flock, Cain offered fruit of an inferior quality, the poorest which the earth afforded. Therefore, Cain's offering was unheeded, while the fire of acceptance fell from heaven, consuming the gracious gift which his brother had presented to his Maker."

[JD 23:315, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

Cain's offering did not represent that gratitude and acknowledgement which was witnessed in his brother Abel's. And while God could pour out his blessing and spirit upon Abel, accepting of his offering, He could not do so to Cain. We may take this down to the times of Israel in the land of Canaan. The Lord, when he gave them the law of tithing, gave also the particular item of offerings. They had to bring peace offerings and different kinds of offerings before the Lord, that by complying with these the favor of God might rest upon them. But to give a more striking and significant instance, let me refer you to the case of Solomon, who wanting a certain peculiar blessing from the Lord, offered a sacrifice unto the Lord of 3,000 bullocks, and said he, "O, Lord, if thou wilt accept of my offering, I desire not the riches nor the wealth, nor the honor of the world, but I desire wisdom, that I may be able to lead the people in the right way of the Lord." What effect did this offering produce? The Lord granted the desire of his heart. Here was a standard given. Solomon did not want a blessing worth a certain amount, he wanted one that should reach his people through him; the blessing that he might be enabled to rule over them in wisdom. He sought such a blessing, and not the blessing of earthly goods; and God granted it to him, and he made the wisest of men and the best ruler that ever led that people; although his heart was led astray, after idols, as the Lord told him it would be if he took wives from other nations which were idolatrous. When we make offerings unto God, they should be of the best and the choicest that we have, and when this is the case we can with more freedom and faith ask our Father for some of the best of His blessings. But if we give the poorest of our property as some do, will it be acceptable to the Lord, and shall we obtain the blessing we desire?

[JD 23:315 – p.316, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

If you were going to make an offering to the nobles of the earth, you would never think of presenting anything but the best and choicest of the kind of gift you were going to make. I do not want to speak lengthily upon this matter of offerings, but to merely remind you that when we make offerings we should do so in sincerity, imparting the best we have, as did Abel, and never presenting anything that our better nature would intimate to us would not be acceptable to God or His servants, that we may not share the lot of Cain.

[JD 23:316, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

Let us now return more particularly to the subject of tithing. The Lord gave to His people anciently the law of tithing. It is recorded in the 14th chapter of Genesis, that Abraham, when he went out with 318 trained men, in the power of God, slew certain wicked kings, thereby winning the admiration of God's High Priest Melchizedek, who we are told, went out to meet him when he was returning home, and blessed him. Abraham turned over one-tenth of the spoils that he had taken to this man of God; he did not even take them home, so regardful was he to conform to this law, which he respected and honored, and the observance of which brought such great blessings upon his own head and upon the heads of his generations after him, who also

observed this law. Paul, hundreds of years afterwards, quoted it as an example for those of his day.

[JD 23:316, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

The Bible informs us that Jacob, while serving for his wives, recognized this law, and said to the Lord: "Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." The Lord blessed him with the desires of his heart and prospered him exceedingly. He paid his tithing.

[JD 23:316 – p.317, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

So also the Prophet Joseph and other leading Elders of the Church in our own day have covenanted with the Lord and paid their tithing with most careful consideration. When Israel was being brought up from the land of Egypt, and the Lord established his law among them to make them his people, he gave them the following commandment in regard to tithing. Leviticus 27, 30, 34: "All the tithes of the land, or of the fruit of the tree is the Lord's; it is holy unto the Lord. And if a man will at all redeem aught of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof. And concerning the tithes of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord." "Whatsoever passeth under the rod." Do you know what that means? I will relate the history as it has come down to us. When they came to pay their tithing the Lord told them it should not be the poorest neither would he ask the best; therefore they put their flock or herd in a pen having an outlet just large enough for one to pass out at a time, and as the animals passed in single-file, the owner stood by with a rod in his hand that had been dipped in some sort of coloring material, counting them as they came out, and touching every tenth animal with his colored rod. He would not go in among them and pick them lest his judgment might not be right, but the flock passed out according to their own inclination, and as they passed, the owner stood with the coloring rod and marked on the back of every tenth animal, and after all had passed out to an adjoining fold, those that were marked were then picked out from the flock. "He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it; and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed." They were to take it as it came, not to pick the good nor the bad; this was the requirement, that they should give to the Lord tithes of all: Leviticus, 27, 30 and 33. There is another feature in this which is worthy of notice, while all Israel paid these offerings and tithes of their seed and grain, flocks and herds, to the ones appointed to receive it – to the Levites; that tribe of Israel was forbidden to have any other property, but they had to live on the tithing thus presented. Still they were required to pay a tithe of what they received the same as the rest of the people. The Scriptures say about this in the 18th chapter of Numbers: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, when ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave offering of it for the Lord, even a tenth part of the tithe. And this your heave offering shall be reckoned unto you, as though it were the corn of the threshing floor, and as the fullness of the winepress." Thus we see that the Levites had to pay tithing of all they received.

[JD 23:317, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

Again, the Lord called upon Israel to hold at certain seasons what they called feasts. He told them that they should bring their supplies, provisions, etc., at the times of these feasts, and that on the first day they should not do any manner of work, but should come together on the day of the feast of Pentecost and the passover, and should remember how the Lord passed by them in the land of Egypt; and the first day and the last day of the feast they were required to keep without working. And the people were commanded to eat before the Lord with clean hearts and with rejoicings, and were particularly requested to invite the Levite who was without part or inheritance among them. The Lord pointed out things definitely for His people, and as long as they obeyed strictly the requirements made of them they flourished and prospered in the land. And it was wonderful how that little land of Canaan was made to support the millions of Israel, with all their flocks and herds. It was truly a land flowing with milk and honey. And it was because of the blessing of God that was upon it.

[JD 23:317, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

The Lord our God wants us to sanctify this land unto him by paying our tithing and offerings, that He may bless it unto us and make it a blessed land upon the face of the earth, not only to us but to our generations after us. He has gone so far as to say that kings should not rule over it, and that if the people who live upon it should become wicked, when the cup of their iniquity became full they should be cut off. These are great promises made unto us if we carry out the requirements of the Gospel. And yet, how little do we know of the great blessings that follow obedience to the law of tithing? Some seem to forget that if they do not pay tithing, they are not even entitled to a recommend from their Bishop to partake of the general blessings of the Lord's house. They do not seem to realize this. The day is coming when you will want to go into the Temple of the Lord which is now being erected in your city, and receive your ordinances there, the records will be searched to see if you have paid your tithing. And then you will have occasion for sorrow, and regret if you have not been faithful to this requirement in times of prosperity, and while you could have paid as well as not.

[JD 23:317 – p.318, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

There are some features of this subject which seem like a crowning climax of the text. After the Lord revealed to Israel the law of tithing, and after telling them how to keep the feast of the Passover, etc., he tells them another peculiar thing, to which I wish to call your attention, as it is connected with the subject – in Deuteronomy, xxvi, 12, 13.

[JD 23:318, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

"When thou hast made an end of tithing, all the tithes of thine increase the third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled.

[JD 23:318, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

"Then thou shalt say before the Lord thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, and to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me: I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them; I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I taken away aught thereof for any unclean use, nor given aught thereof for the dead; but I have hearkened to the voice of the Lord my God, and have done according to all that thou hast commanded me."

[JD 23:318, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

Here is a curious saying: When thou hast made an end of this tithing, and eaten within thy gates, then thou shalt say before the Lord: "I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have I given these unto the Levite, and the stranger, to the fatherless and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me; I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them." Now, supposing there was an ordinance of that kind instituted among us that at the close of each annual settlement, it was required of each man to say, I have paid my tithing, the tenth of all the Lord has given unto me; I have delivered it to my Bishop or to the storehouse of the Lord, as the Lord has required. And then to say, I have done all things according to the commandments of the Lord my God, and have not failed in any of these things. How many of us could lift up our hands and say that we have done all that God has required? There was the point – God brought it home to the people, and when a man could say this his neighbors knew he was living the law of God. This was something that created confidence and fellowship between man and man. When they could thus testify that they had done all that was required of them, they could also, with good grace and faith, ask the blessings of God upon them and their land as written in the 15th verse of the chapter just quoted: "Look down upon thy holy habitation from heaven and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us, as thou swarest unto our fathers, a land that floweth with milk and honey." As the Lord has in like manner said unto us.

"And I say unto you, if my people observe not this law, to keep it holy, and by this law sanctify the land of Zion unto me, that my statutes and my judgments may be kept thereon, that it may be most holy, behold, verily I say unto you, it shall not be a land of Zion unto you."

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There is one other thing in connection with this wherein the Lord gave to the people a requirement which it would seem was intended to reach home to their hearts and to prevent greed and covetousness. Every seventh year was a year of jubilee or release when the poor, the unfortunate, the bondmen and the debtor were set free.

JD 23:319, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882

If a man borrowed of his neighbor during the early part of the six years, he had more time which gave a better prospect of being able to pay before the seventh year arrived. If another wished to borrow during the sixth year, not having so much time to earn or make the pay, persons having money to lend would naturally feel that it was doubtful if they would get their money back.

JD 23:319, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882

Upon this peculiar feature of financial policy the Lord says, "if there be among you a poor man or one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother. But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him and shalt surely lend unto him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, 'the seventh year, the year of release is at hand,' and thy eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee. Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto." – Deut. xv., 7–11.

JD 23:319, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882

How wonderfully the Lord in all his teachings seeks and works to do away with covetousness, that sin which is idolatry, from the midst of his people. If thy brother come to thee on the sixth year thou shalt not close thine hand against him, but thou shalt open wide thine hand unto him. Thou shalt not let thy wicked heart say, that the seventh year, the year of release is at hand and I perhaps will lose it all.

JD 23:319, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882

Brethren, since so exalted sentiments of charitable benevolence were given to the ancients, under the law, shall we to whom the fullness of the Gospel has come, let these precepts pass by unheeded without treasuring them up in good and honest hearts?

JD 23:319, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882

I have but just begun to open the door, just commenced to enter into some details that environ this great and vastly important subject. I have only aimed at the importance and general bearing of this law upon the Saints, as touching all that the Lord gives unto us, not dealing in the least with the administration of His law.

JD 23:319, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882

Let us consider – who is it that causes the grain to increase when we put it into the earth? Who makes our flocks and herds to increase? Who gives us the vitalizing air we breathe – the liberty we enjoy with all the hopes and promises of eternal life and glory through obedience to the Everlasting Gospel? God the giver of

every good gift.

[JD 23:319, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

From the foregoing we learn that the law of tithing is a strict commandment, a law which if obeyed faithfully by God's people will bring blessing, plenty and sanctification of the land occupied by them unto God and His purposes, but if disobeyed the disobedient "shall not be found worthy to abide among the Saints, and this land shall not be a land of Zion unto them."

[JD 23:319, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

That the difference between tithing and offering is that tithing is designated, meaning one-tenth, neither more nor less; while offerings are also required, the amount is left optional with the giver – the measure he metes will be measured to him again.

[JD 23:319 – p.320, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

That the tithing of all that the Lord gives unto us belongs unto Him, and it is our first duty to the Church to pay it, and after that the sacred precepts, teach offerings and a generous benevolence to the poor and needy, whether in gifts or loans – discouraging greed or covetousness of this world's goods, which is idolatry.

[JD 23:320, Franklin D. Richards, November 6, 1882](#)

I earnestly pray that the Spirit of God may enable us to master this and all other principles of the Gospel, until we shall possess the riches of eternal life, the greatest gift of God to man. Amen.

John Taylor, November 23rd, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered in Payson, Thursday Evening, November 23rd, 1882.

Reported by John Irvine.

MAN'S NATURAL SPIRIT AND THE SPIRIT OF GOD – OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM – HIS
DEALINGS IN THE LATTER DAYS – WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THE SAINTS – THEIR POSITION
AND LABORS AMONG THE NATIONS – CHRIST THE EXAMPLE TO ALL HIS
FOLLOWERS – WORDS OF COUNSEL TO PRIESTHOOD AND PEOPLE.

[JD 23:320, John Taylor, November 23rd, 1882](#)

We are living, as Brother Cannon has remarked, in a most important day and age of the world. The times are pregnant with greater events than any we have any knowledge of in the history of God's dealings with His people among the nations of the earth in the different ages. The very fact of our gathering together as we do is

a very peculiar thing. It differs from the way of any other people. It is a part of the Gospel, and inspired by the spirit of revelation, even the gift of the Holy Ghost which comes through obedience to the Gospel. There is and always has been a spirit abroad in the world which is really a portion of the Spirit of God, which leads mankind, in many instances, to discriminate between good and evil, and between right and wrong. They have a conscience that accuses or excuses them for their acts; and although the world of mankind is very wicked and very corrupt, yet it will be found that almost all men, though they may not do good themselves, appreciate good actions in others.

JD 23:320 – p.323, John Taylor, November 23rd, 1882

The scriptures say that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though he be not far from every one of us." The Scripture further says, He has given unto them a portion of his spirit to profit withal. But there is quite a distinction between the position that these people occupy and the one which we occupy. We have something more than that portion of the Spirit of God which is given to every man, and it is called the gift of the Holy Ghost, which is received through obedience to the first principles of the Gospel of Christ, by the laying on of hands of the servants of God. Hence, when the Gospel was preached in former times among the people they were told to repent of their sins; to be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of their sins, and then to have hands laid upon them for the reception of the Holy Ghost. They were told, moreover, what this Holy Ghost would do; that it would take of the things of God and shew them unto them; that it would cause their old men to dream dreams and their young men to see visions; and that it would rest upon the servants and handmaids of God, and they should prophesy. These are the operations of that Spirit which dwells with God, the Father, and God, the Son, namely the Holy Ghost. It is this Spirit that brings us into relationship with God, and it differs very materially from the portion of spirit that is given to all men to profit withal. The special gift of the Holy Ghost is obtained, as I have said, through obedience to the first principles of the Gospel. Its province is to lead us into all truth, and to bring to our remembrance things past, present and to come. It contemplates the future and unfolds things we had not thought of heretofore, and these things are very distinctly described in the Bible, in the Book of Mormon, and in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. Herein lies the difference between us and others, and it was so in former times. One of the ancient Apostles in speaking of our relationship to God, says: "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Again it is said: "And if children, then heirs, heirs of God," that is, rightful inheritors of the things of God, "and joint heirs of Jesus Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." It is the Gospel of the kingdom that has brought us into this relationship with God. We enjoy the same spirit that the Saints enjoyed anciently in the days of Jesus, in the days of Moses, in the days of Enoch, in the days of Seth, back to the days of Adam. The Gospel which we have received is the everlasting Gospel, which, through the atonement of Jesus Christ, brings men into close relationship to God, their heavenly Father, and makes them heirs of all the promises that God has made unto His people. Hence we occupy this position – God is really and truly our Father and we are His children. He is "the God of the spirits of all flesh," and he has told us to draw near unto Him. He has taught us how to pray, and in what manner to approach Him and to ask for such things as we need. This is the position we occupy if we can comprehend it, and we are called upon by the Almighty to do a great work. He has taken very great pains in introducing the principles of the Gospel. In the first place He has Himself spoken to us from the heavens, as also has His Son Jesus Christ. He has restored the everlasting Priesthood. All those men who had it in their possession heretofore – that is those who held the keys of it upon the earth – have appeared and restored the authority of the Holy Priesthood which they held. Thus John the Baptist appeared, and laying his hands upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, ordained them to the Aaronic Priesthood, using the following words: "Upon you, my fellow-servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the Gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; and this shall never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness." Peter, James and John afterwards conferred upon Joseph Smith the Melchizedek Priesthood, which holds the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. By this Priesthood the mind and will of

God is made known unto man; by it man can walk according to the light and intelligence which God imparts. Men have been ordained to this Holy Priesthood, and they have gone forth to preach the Gospel to the nations of the earth. In this labor they have been sustained, blessed and upheld by the Lord, for although the world has generally been opposed to them in their ministrations, yet He has given unto them power, wisdom and intelligence, whereby they have been able to sustain and maintain the principles which God has revealed. And then the sheep of God – that is, the thousands that have been gathered together from among the nations – have been led to see and believe in and obey the Gospel as it has been presented to them. Jesus said that His sheep would know his voice, and a stranger they would not follow. Through the medium of the Gospel we have been gathered together in these valleys of the mountains to-day. Why did the Lord call upon us? That He might have a people who would obey His law; for the world generally will not listen to the voice of God; the nations of the earth, the kings of the earth, the princes of the earth, the presidents of the earth, the legislators of the earth, and the powers of the earth, will not listen to the voice of God, and He has called us together, as He said He would do, "one of a city and two of a family." He has gathered us together that we may be taught of Him. It is written in the Prophets that the people "shall be all taught of God;" and we want to progress in this intelligence and in the principles which God has revealed until men shall not say one to another, "Know ye the Lord, for all shall know Him, from the least to the greatest." This is the position that we are expected to occupy. Having obtained this knowledge of God, we are to teach it to others, so that the eternal principles he has revealed may be disseminated among the nations of the earth, until the honest in heart shall be gathered out, until all that love truth and are desirous to know the will of God and do it, will be under the direction and guidance of the Lord. And then, when the will of God is done among the saints of God upon the earth as it is done in heaven, a part of that which Jesus prayed for will be accomplished. Jesus taught his disciples to pray that the will of God might be done upon the earth as it is done in heaven. At the present time it is not done in all the earth, but it may be done among us if we will subject ourselves to the law of God, the word of God, the will of God, and the principles of eternal truth, and follow the teachings of the Spirit of God; for as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God, and if sons then are they heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Now, it is the rule of God which is desired to be introduced upon the earth, and this is the reason why the Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith, why John the Baptist conferred the Aaronic Priesthood, why Peter, James and John conferred the Melchizedek Priesthood, why Moses came to bestow the dispensation of the gathering, and why other manifestations have been given unto us as a people, His elect, whom He has chosen from among the nations. This is an honorable position for us to occupy. We are called to fill various duties that God requires at our hands. And our position is not a nominal thing; it is a reality. It is true that God appeared to Joseph Smith, and that His Son Jesus did; it is true that John the Baptist appeared; it is true that Peter, James and John appeared; and conferred upon him the Holy Priesthood; it is true that Moses and Elias appeared unto him and that these all conferred upon him the keys of their various dispensations; it is true that this Priesthood has been conferred upon us; it is true that the Gospel has been preached by the Elders of Israel to the nations, so far as they have yet gone; it is true that those who have obeyed this Gospel have received the Holy Ghost and have been placed in communication with God our Heavenly Father. These things are all true. It is also true that Elijah has appeared that the hearts of the fathers might be turned to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers – that is Adam, Seth, Methuselah, Noah, Abraham, and the men of God in different ages – that a general interest might be manifested towards the works of God and the people of God as they have existed upon the earth, that we may stand as saviors upon Mount Zion, and build up temples to the Lord, and then go and administer in those temples for the living and for the dead, that there may be, as the Prophet Joseph has said, a welding link that will cement and bind other peoples with us and we with them, and that there may be a bond of union, also, between the people on earth and those in heaven, that we may operate together, they in the heavens and we on the earth, for the accomplishment of the purposes of God pertaining to the peoples that have lived, that now live and that will live.

[JD 23:323 – p.324 – p.325 – p.326, John Taylor, November 23rd, 1882](#)

These are some of the objects of our existence, and this is the reason we are gathered together in these valleys of the mountains. It is a curious thing when you reflect that when you were baptized into this Church nobody could keep you from gathering here. To do so, many wives have had to leave their husbands, many husbands have had to leave their wives, children have had to leave their parents, and parents have had to leave their

children. But we are gathered together that we might learn the laws of life and the word of God, and that we might comprehend the duties and responsibilities that devolve upon us – that we might learn how to save ourselves and how to save our wives and children, our fathers and mothers, our uncles and aunts, our grandfathers and great grandfathers, who did not have the privilege which we enjoy. This is the position we occupy, that is, if we are living our religion, keeping the commandments of God and obeying those eternal principles which He has revealed to us. There are no people living upon the face of the earth to-day, who enjoy the privileges that this people enjoy, nor that have the light, the truth, or the intelligence which we have. The world does not understand us, nor the principles we have received, and consequently we are persecuted, opposed, and abused on all hands. It makes no difference, however. We are here to do the will of God, to build up the kingdom of God, and to establish the Zion of God. And we have been, many of us, to the ends of the earth, I was going to say, but we have not been quite to the ends, in fact I do not know where the ends are; but we have been up and down the earth a great deal, and then there are a great many places we have not yet visited. It is true the world has not treated us very well, and I sometimes think that we entertain too much of the same spirit that the world exhibits towards us. We are inclined to return evil for evil. We ought not to do that. We should return good for evil. "Bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you," said the Savior. We have had the Gospel committed to us. For what? That we might be the messengers of life and salvation to others, not of death, damnation and destruction, but the messengers of life and salvation. How was it with Jesus when he was upon the earth? "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved." He came to be a Savior to the world. He has not set us apart to condemn the world but to preach the Gospel of life and salvation to the world. It is not for us to feel in our hearts a principle of destruction, but a principle of salvation, and to seek to benefit, to bless, and to exalt the human family, as many as will come under the influence of the Son of God, and that those that won't, why we will leave them in the hands of God; it is for Him in His own way and in His own time, to do with them as He may see fit. It is for us to carry out His designs; it is for the Twelve, the Seventies and others to preach the Gospel to the world and gather out the honest in heart; it is for us to give the inhabitants of the earth fair warning, that they may comprehend the true state of things and have the principles of life presented to them. "But," says one, "they act very mean towards us." Well, so they do. But, then they don't know any better. Don't know any better? No, they don't. They don't comprehend things as we comprehend them. We profess to be acquainted with the Spirit of God, as I before said, and with the light of revelation, they don't. And furthermore, "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Well, but don't God say He will come out in judgment against the wicked? Yes; but that is His business and not ours, unless He calls on us to help Him, and we must continue to bless them that curse us, and pray for them that despitefully use us. It is our business to preach the Gospel, and gather together God's elect from the four quarters of the earth. It is for us to act right – that is the First Presidency, myself and Counselors. We are poor, frail, weak creatures, just as you are, and you are just as much as we are; there is nothing to boast about in any of us. Any blessings we have received are the free gifts of God to us. And He expects us to magnify our Priesthood and calling and to honor Him. What else shall we do? We will preach the Gospel; we will try and gather the people when we have preached; we will build Temples as we are doing, and we will administer in them when they are finished, in accordance with the pattern God has shown us, and we could not do so unless He had shown us. Those men that prate so much about our affairs and ignorance, we might build Temples for them, but would they know how to administer in them? No; they would not; and there is not a man living in the world outside of this Church who could perform the first ceremony in a Temple of the Lord of Hosts, and we would not ourselves have been in possession of that knowledge had God not revealed it to us. But having this knowledge we can enter into these Temples and administer for the living and for the dead. But we must humble ourselves before the Lord, we must put ourselves right, we must teach our families the principles of life, we must do right by our neighbors and by everybody, we must magnify the Lord and observe His law, purge ourselves from everything that is wrong, and say, "O God, try me and prove me. Give unto me Thy Holy Spirit that shall light up the candle of intelligence in my soul, that I may be enabled to see myself as Thou seest me, and if there is anything wrong in me show it unto me and give me power to put it away, that I may have the truth and be full of the Holy Ghost, the light of revelation, and the power of God." We want to put ourselves and our families in order. And then let us learn to acknowledge the hand of God in all things and obey His law and keep His commandments in everything; not in one thing only, but in everything, that the Spirit and blessing of God and

the power of God may be with us, that we may be the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation; that we may be full of joy, peace and thanksgiving to God our Heavenly Father, that we may be true to our devotions at the family altar, and every morning and every evening bow before the Lord with our family and all that pertains to us. And then let the quorums seek the spirit and power of the Priesthood that belongs to them, whether High Counselors, Presidents of Stakes, High Priests, Bishops, or whatever they may be, that all may magnify their calling and be full of the Holy Ghost and the power of God, laying aside our follies, our covetousness and our evils, and wherein we have done any wrong make restitution for that wrong. Now, this is the word of the Lord to you if you can receive it. Let us try and obey the word and will of God, and keep His commandments, and then call upon the Lord and He will hear our prayers. His eyes are over His people, and His ears are open to their cries. God will stand by His Israel and he will deliver His people if they will only serve Him. No man, no power, no nation can harm you if you are followers of that which is good, for God will sustain His people. Zion is onward, onward and onward. The kingdom of God will be established. No power upon the earth can stay the hand of the Almighty. Let us, then, be humble and faithful, and fear God and keep His commandments, that the Holy Ghost may dwell in us, that the peace of God may abide in our habitations. Let us dedicate ourselves and our families and all that pertains to us to the Lord, and we will feel that we are blessed of Him. The work we are engaged in is not a phantom. We are going to build up the Zion of God; and the kingdom of God will continue to grow and increase until "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever." If we will be faithful, God will bless us and prosper us, and all things spoken in the Prophets will be fulfilled.

[JD 23:326, John Taylor, November 23rd, 1882](#)

God bless you and lead you in the paths of life in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Wilford Woodruff, December 10th, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT WILFORD WOODRUFF,

In the Meeting House, Kaysville, Davis County,

Sunday Morning, December 10th, 1882.

(Reported by John Irvine.)

HARDSHIP THE HERITAGE OF THE SAINTS – THE NECESSITY OF TRIAL FORGIVENESS OF ENEMIES – INSPIRED DREAMS, "GET THE SPIRIT OF GOD" – THE GREAT WORK EXPECTED OF THE SAINTS – LABORS AMONG THE LAMANITES.

[JD 23:326, Wilford Woodruff, December 10th, 1882](#)

We have met again this morning to hear and receive instruction and worship the Lord and honor Him upon this holy Sabbath day.

[JD 23:326, Wilford Woodruff, December 10th, 1882](#)

The heavens are full of knowledge, full of instruction, full of revelation and of principle and decree, and I may say of judgment, all to be made use of in their day and time, and we have a right to all the knowledge, all the revelation, all the principles of truth, that we can claim by faith and diligence in serving the Lord and in the performance of our duty.

JD 23:326 – p.327 – p.328, Wilford Woodruff, December 10th, 1882

I look upon the Latter-day Saints as occupying a position, I may say equal, at least, to that occupied by the people of any other dispensation that God has ever given to man. We are a blessed people; we are favored of heaven and have received at the hands of our heavenly Father a great many blessings both of the heavens and of the earth, and we, as a people, should be grateful to the Lord our God for the many kindnesses He has bestowed upon us. We live, in fact, in the dispensation of the fullness of times, the last dispensation in which the Lord will reveal his mind and will to the inhabitants of the earth, the last time in which the Lord will prune his vineyard, the last time in which he will set up his kingdom upon the earth, establish His Church, and build up His Zion, to prepare for the coming of the Son of Man. And while we sometimes feel and have felt in days that are past and gone, to complain because we meet with oppression, persecution and affliction, yet I wish to say to my brethren and sisters that these things are the heritage of the Saints of God. Any people whom God calls will meet with opposition from those who will not receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This has been the legacy of the Saints of God in every age from Father Adam down to our own day. Those that live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. I believe myself, from the reading of the revelations of God, that it is necessary for a people who are destined to inherit the celestial kingdom to be a tried people. I have never read of the people of God in any dispensation passing through life, as the sectarian world would say, on flowery beds of ease, without opposition of any kind. I have always looked upon the life of our Savior – who descended beneath all things that He might rise above all things – as an example for His followers. And yet it has always, in one sense of the word, seemed strange to me that the Son of God, the First Begotten in the eternal worlds of the Father, and the Only Begotten in the flesh, should have to descend to the earth and pass through what He did – born in a stable, cradled in a manger, persecuted, afflicted, scorned, a hiss and bye-word to almost all the world, and especially to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judea. There was apparently nothing that the Savior could do that was acceptable in the eyes of the world; anything and almost everything he did was imputed to an unholy influence. When He cast out devils the people said he did it through the power of Beelzebub, the prince of devils; when he opened the eyes of the blind, the Pharisees and priests of the day told the man to "give God the glory; we know this man is a sinner." And so all his life through, to the day of his death upon the cross. There is something about all this that appears sorrowful; but it seemed necessary for the Savior to descend below all things that he might ascend above all things. So it has been with other men. When I look at the history of Joseph Smith, I sometimes think that he came as near following the footsteps of the Savior – (although no more so than his disciples) – as any one possibly could. Joseph Smith was called to lay down his life; he sealed his testimony with his blood, and passed through some serious trials and afflictions. In section 122 of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants – the word of the Lord given to the Prophet while in Liberty jail – the Lord showed him his condition and position. He refers there to the trials and troubles he was called to pass through, and then compares them with what He Himself (the Savior) had to endure. He says: "And if thou shouldst be cast into the pit, or into the hands of murderers, and the sentence of death passed upon thee; if thou be cast into the deep; if the billowing surge conspire against thee; if fierce winds become thine enemy; if the heavens gather blackness, and all the elements combine to hedge up the way; and above all, if the very jaws of hell shall gape, open the mouth wide after thee, know thou, my Son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good. The Son of man hath descended below them all; art thou greater than He? Therefore, hold on thy way, and the Priesthood shall remain with thee, for their bounds are set, they cannot pass. Thy days are known, and thy years shall not be numbered less; therefore, fear not what man can do, for God shall be with you for ever and ever." The Lord showed him in this revelation that these afflictions were necessary. We have been called to pass through trials many times, and I do not think we should complain, because if we had no trials we should hardly feel at home in the other world in the company of the Prophets and Apostles who were sawn asunder, crucified, etc., for the word of God and testimony of Jesus Christ.

How should we feel towards our enemies? President Taylor of late has called upon us, to exercise towards them the same spirit that was manifested by our Savior upon the cross: "Father forgive them they know not what they do." We should endeavor to exercise that spirit. Our persecutors, those who would seek to destroy us, do not know what they do. They do not comprehend us at all. Why, bless your souls, if the veil was lifted from off the eyes of the President of the United States, from off the eyes of the members of the Congress of the United States, and from off the eyes of our enemies, if this veil were lifted they would bow before the Lord and plead for these "Mormons;" they would do this if their eyes were open to see the future consequences of taking a stand against this Church and kingdom. But there is a veil over their eyes, because of their works of evil; and the day will come when all peoples will mourn who take a stand against the kingdom of God, the Zion of God, the Church of God, and the Lord's anointed; unless they repent they will, when they pass into the other world, go into outer darkness, where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. It is impossible, however, for the Saints of God to inherit a celestial kingdom without their being tried as to whether they will abide in the covenants of the Lord or not.

JD 23:328, Wilford Woodruff, December 10th, 1882

Well, I feel we are a blessed people. We have prospered. The Lord is fighting our battles. The Lord holds the destiny of this nation and all other nations in His hands. Our enemies can go no further than He permits them.

JD 23:328, Wilford Woodruff, December 10th, 1882

We live in a day and time when the Lord has decreed to set up his kingdom for the last time upon the earth. That is the reason we have the privilege of building these Temples and these meeting-houses in the mountains of Israel. The Lord has set his hand to establish his kingdom according to his former promises, and it is going to prevail upon the earth. He has told us to fear not our enemies; that though earth and hell combine against us, they shall not prevail, if we are built upon the rock of Christ.

JD 23:328 – p.329, Wilford Woodruff, December 10th, 1882

We have come to this earth upon a mission; and we have been gathered to the valleys of these mountains that we may be taught and instructed in the things of God; that we may magnify our calling before the Lord; that we may become saviors upon Mount Zion; that we may have power to go forth and warn the nations of the earth. I look upon the mission of the Latter-day Saints as being as important as that of any people that ever lived in any age of the world. I have often expressed my views with regard to this. As Elders of Israel, very few of us fully comprehend our position, our calling, or relationship to God, our responsibility, or work the Lord requires at our hands. The Lord has given unto us the Priesthood. This is conferred upon us that we may administer in the ordinances of life and salvation. But to enable us to perform our duties acceptably, there is one thing we need, one and all of us, and that is the Holy Spirit. While in Winter Quarters, President Young had a dream in which the Prophet Joseph Smith appeared to him and said: "Brother Young, you exhort this people to obtain the Holy Spirit; with it they can do anything that is necessary; without it they cannot build up the kingdom of God." In one of my dreams while in Arizona, I had the same admonition from President Young. I thought he was attending one of our conferences. I said to him: "Can you speak to us?" "No," he replied, "I have done bearing my testimony in the flesh; I have merely come to see the people, to see you, to see what you are doing. But I want you to teach the Latter-day Saints to labor to obtain the Holy Spirit. It is one of the most important gifts that the Saints of the living God can possess. You all need this," he said, "in order to build up Zion. If you have not this Spirit – the Spirit of the Holy Ghost, the testimony of Jesus, the testimony of the Father and Son – you cannot get along. But if you are in possession of this Spirit, your minds will be open to comprehend the things of God." This is true. There is not a man in this Church and kingdom to-day, who, if he is in possession of this spirit, will set his heart upon the things of this world. Any man that loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. We have received something better than the love of gold, silver, houses and lands; we have received the promise of eternal life. We have had conferred upon us the

eternal Priesthood by which our heavenly Father has created all worlds and redeemed all worlds and has performed all his works from eternity to eternity.

[JD 23:329, Wilford Woodruff, December 10th, 1882](#)

Then, we should labor to obtain this Spirit while we are upon the earth that we may overcome every evil. We have a mighty warfare on hand. We have to contend against the world, the flesh and the devil. There are temptations that surround every man and woman, that is, if they attempt to keep the commandments of God, and no man or woman can inherit eternal life without passing through this warfare in the flesh. Other generations have had their turn. As a people it is our turn to-day. The old patriarchs and prophets have gone, their missions are ended, so far as their testimony in the flesh is concerned; but they were valiant in the testimony of Jesus Christ; they kept the law, and they will inherit a celestial glory.

[JD 23:329 – p.330, Wilford Woodruff, December 10th, 1882](#)

I often reflect upon the promises made concerning the Priesthood. The Lord, in a revelation upon this subject, says, Doctrine and Covenants, 33rd to 41st verses: "Whosoever is faithful unto obtaining these two Priesthoods of which I have spoken, and the magnifying their calling, are sanctified by the spirit unto the renewing of their bodies. * * * All that my Father hath shall be given unto him. Therefore, all those who receive the Priesthood, receive this oath and covenant of my Father, which he cannot break, neither can it be moved." Now, I sometimes ask myself the question, Do we comprehend these things? Do we comprehend that if we abide the laws of the Priesthood we shall become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ? I realize that our eyes have not seen, our ears have not heard, neither hath it entered into our hearts to conceive the glory that is in store for the faithful. We are placed in a position to be proven and tried; we must be, we have been, we shall be, until we get through with our labors in the flesh. The Lord told Joseph Smith that he would prove us in all things, whether we will abide in his covenant, even unto death, that we may be found worthy: "for if we will not abide in his covenant, we are not worthy of him." Jesus Christ abode in the covenant; he kept all the commandments while he was upon the earth. He even was baptized by the hands of John, although it was not for the remission of sin, but to fulfill all righteousness. There was no part of the Gospel that Christ did not fulfill, and he called upon Joseph Smith to fulfill the same. This he did. He laid down his life. He went to the spirit world, and he is there watching over this people. He has power there, and so have our brethren who have gone to the other side of the veil. They are laboring for us. They are watching to see how we perform the work left to our charge.

[JD 23:330, Wilford Woodruff, December 10th, 1882](#)

I hope we live our religion. I hope we strive to keep the commandments of God. We occupy a very important position in the world. There are very few of the inhabitants of the earth who are laboring to build up Zion. There are very few, apparently, who are able to abide the law of God. There are very few who are willing to sacrifice anything for eternal life and salvation, and thousands will have to inherit a kingdom other than the celestial.

[JD 23:330, Wilford Woodruff, December 10th, 1882](#)

Nevertheless, my brethren and sisters, we are laboring and progressing in this work. Zion is advancing; the kingdom of God is rolling on. The progress of this kingdom has never stopped from the day of its organization; it never will until it has accomplished all for which it has been organized and established on the earth to accomplish. We have a great work to do. We are commanded to preach the Gospel to the nations of the earth. The Elders of Israel have been doing this for the last fifty years. We are still doing it, in the United States and other parts of the world. We shall continue to labor among the Gentiles just as long as the Lord says we must do so. But at the same time we have now been commanded to turn to a branch of the house of Israel. Here are the Lamanites, thousands and thousands of them surround us. They look to us for the Gospel of Christ. It is our duty to go to them and organize them, and preach to them the words of life and salvation.

Then, again, we have temples to build in our day and time, that we may go into them and do a work both for the living and for the dead. Our mission is more extended and extensive than we realize. There have been no Prophets, no Apostles, upon the earth for the last 1,800 years, that we are much acquainted with, except Nephi, who dwelt upon this continent several hundred years after the death of Christ. There has been no one upon the earth with authority to preach the Gospel to the nations of the earth. Many generations have passed away. Many thousands of millions have passed into the spirit world. We are now at the end of the sixth thousand years. We are bordering upon the millennium. We are living in the great and last dispensation, in the which the God of Israel expects us, his servants, his sons and daughters, to perform the work which has been left to our charge. It is our duty to build these temples. It is our duty to enter into them and redeem our dead. Joseph Smith is preaching to the spirits in prison; so are all the Elders who have died in the faith. There are millions of them there, and they must have the Gospel offered to them. Joseph Smith and others cannot baptize the spirits in water, it is not the law; but their posterity, their sons and daughters who are living in the last dispensation, are expected to go into these temples and there redeem their dead. This is a good work, and it is a great blessing for men and women to have this privilege. We have one of these temples finished, and we are doing a great work in that temple. A hundred and sixty-two thousand persons have been baptized for the dead, and nearly seventy thousand endowments have been given in that temple. We have only just begun this work. We want the Logan temple finished, as also the temple at Manti, that the people may go forth and redeem their dead. Our forefathers are looking to us to attend to this work. They are watching over us with great anxiety, and are desirous that we should finish these temples and attend to certain ordinances for them, so that in the morning of the resurrection they can come forth and enjoy the same blessings that we enjoy. We are living in the flesh and have the privilege of receiving the Gospel of Christ for ourselves. Our forefathers had not this privilege; and as their posterity when we meet them in the spirit world we shall have the joy and satisfaction of knowing that we did our duty by them while here upon the earth. We occupy a position in this capacity towards them the same as we do to this generation. We occupy the position of Saviors upon Mount Zion.

JD 23:331, Wilford Woodruff, December 10th, 1882

There are a great many things I might mention that are of interest to the Latter-day Saints. We should humble ourselves before the Lord. We have been called to set our houses in order, that we should seek to obtain the Spirit of the Lord that it may enable us to magnify our callings in the Priesthood. We are under great responsibility. It won't pay to apostatize; "there is no money in it." Any man who receives this Priesthood and tastes of the word of God, and of the powers of the world to come – any man that turns away from these things, apostatizes, and turns away from the Church of God, shall not, in accordance with the revelations of the Lord to Joseph Smith, "have forgiveness of sins in this world nor in the world to come."

JD 23:331 – p.332, Wilford Woodruff, December 10th, 1882

The Lord is laboring for his kingdom. In his hands he holds the destiny of this people and of this generation, and if we will do our duty he will sustain and uphold us and Zion will not be moved out of her place. I am anxious to see the Latter-day Saints rise up and magnify their calling. We (the Twelve Apostles, Seventies and others) are called to go forth to preach the Gospel to the Lamanites and organize them. I am glad of it. I have felt for a long time that we should turn our attention to them. They are the literal descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the Lord is working in their midst. The vision of their minds is beginning to be opened, and they are to be taught the things of the kingdom of God. I have thought sometimes that they have more faith than the Latter-day Saints. I traveled among them for one year in Arizona and New Mexico. I visited those that dwell in the walled cities. They have some seven villages on the top of a mountain from 500 to 1,500 feet high. One thing struck me very forcibly while there. Although a good many of these people are superstitious, some of them sun-worshippers and so forth, yet they seem to be impressed with the idea that there is going to be a famine. They have enough grain and dried squash laid up to last them for years, and they think the day is not far off when they will need that which they have stored up. Don't we believe that a famine

will come? I know some of our sisters are laying up wheat, I hope the Relief Societies will continue to do so, and the brethren should help them. I believe that the Latter-day Saints ought to store up grain against a day of want. The Bible tells us that prior to the coming of the Son of Man there shall be wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilence, and earthquakes. All these things will come to pass.

[JD 23:332, Wilford Woodruff, December 10th, 1882](#)

It is a good time with us. The Lord has blessed us. He has blessed the earth for our use; and we ought to dedicate our families, our fields, our crops, our herds, to God. We should pay our tithing according to the law of God. We should attend to all the duties required at our hands. We should not neglect our prayers. Men should seek to enjoy the spirit of God, and the fellowship of His Holy Spirit. We should seek to do all the good we can, so that we may feel satisfied when we get through.

[JD 23:332, Wilford Woodruff, December 10th, 1882](#)

I pray God to bless you with His Holy Spirit; I pray that he will give us power to fulfill our calling in the Priesthood, power to build up Zion, power to finish these temples in which we may redeem our dead. This is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

John Taylor, October 29th, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered at Grantsville, Sunday Evening, October 29th, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

MEN POWERLESS EXCEPT AS GOD PERMITS – ORDEALS NECESSARY

TO PURIFY – ZION WILL TRIUMPH.

[JD 23:333, John Taylor, October 29th, 1882](#)

I am pleased to have the opportunity of again meeting with the people of Grantsville.

[JD 23:333 – p.334, John Taylor, October 29th, 1882](#)

In regard to the remarks which we have just heard pertaining to the desires and intentions of the wicked they are true and correct; but at the same time I do not feel any trembling in my knees, do you? It has been said, the wicked rage, and the people imagine a vain thing; and the Lord will have them in derision. Again, the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. There are other remarkable and significant sayings in relation to these things; and whatever the opinions and ideas of men may be, it will be found at last that the Lord rules, manipulates and manages the affairs of men, of nations and of the world, and therefore, neither this nation nor any other nation can do anything more than God permits. He sets up one nation, and puts down another, according to the counsels of his own will. And he has done this from the beginning, whether men believe it or not. And as regards what are called the mighty ones – the kings of the earth – one of the prophets in speaking of them says that he saw them gathered together in a pit; and

that after many days they should be visited. All men are but human; their breath is in their nostrils, and they have no power but that which God gives them. Anything beyond this they are powerless to do; and why, then, should His people fear? We certainly have a work to perform on the earth, and God our Father has selected us for that purpose, He raised up Joseph Smith and other men, and conferred the holy Priesthood upon them and to-day they are found organized as Elders, High Priests, Seventies, the Twelve, etc., by whom the Lord expects to lift up a standard to the nations, and an ensign to the people. And notwithstanding the calculations and plans of the world, we are told that when this standard is lifted up, the Gentiles shall seek unto it, "and his rest shall be glorious." That is the way I read my Bible: I expect you will find it in yours. We are not going to war. We did not originate this work any more than men originated any work in which God called them to labor, at any former time. God has been the chief mover and manipulator of men in the different ages of the world from the time of their first existence upon the earth to the present. He has given men their own agency, and they have the privilege of receiving or rejecting it, but he holds them responsible for their acts. He does not hold us responsible for the acts of other men, nor for the acts of the nations.

[JD 23:334, John Taylor, October 29th, 1882](#)

He has given unto us a mission to preach the Gospel to every creature; and he that believes shall be saved, and he that believes not shall be damned. He has given unto us authority and has commanded us to preach this Gospel to the nations of the earth; and we have been doing it now for some fifty years, and are constantly sending out missionaries by way of fulfilling this duty. We have done this and are still doing it, not because the world love us very much; if they did, it would be a marvel, for Jesus in his day said: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." And there has been a spirit of opposition and antagonism to the Church and kingdom of God in all the various ages of the world. Paul speaks of men who had to wander about in sheep skins and goat skins, secreting themselves in deserts, in dens and caves of the earth; of whom the world was not worthy. Said he, these men showed plainly by their acts that they desired a better country; "wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared for them a city" which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the heavens for them. Such men had a knowledge of these things, and they did not seem to care very much about the consequences of their obedience to the laws of God.

[JD 23:334, John Taylor, October 29th, 1882](#)

The three Hebrew children exemplified their faith in God when they were told to do a certain thing; but, said they, we cannot do it. "But if you do not we will put you into a fiery furnace." All right; it is not a very pleasant ordeal to go through, but one thing we know, we will not bow down to your image, nor worship the god which you have set up. And that is a fact in regard to us. We do not know what God will permit men to do or what he will not; but one thing we do know, that is, we will not worship their god nor bow down to their image; and we feel quite easy about the result – at least, that is the way I feel. It was considered criminal for Daniel to pray to his God, but he prayed nevertheless; and the Lord was merciful to him and took care of him. The king felt a little better towards him than some of our pious people feel towards us. He was called a heathen king; but he was a man that had the fear of God in his heart, and he had respect for his fellow-men. And when Daniel was cast into the lions' den, in the morning early the king repaired to the place, and with a lamentable voice cried, saying, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God whom thou servest continually able to deliver thee from the lions?" Daniel answered: "O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouth, that they have not hurt me." I do not know, but I am inclined to think that if some of you Latter-day Saints had the same ordeal to pass through, that few, if any of the authorities of the land would feel as much interested in you as the heathen king did in Daniel.

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It is necessary that we pass through certain ordeals in order that we may be purified. People sometimes do not comprehend these things; they think it would be very nice to do as the Methodists sing about sometimes – sit

and sing themselves away to everlasting bliss. And where is that? Somewhere they say beyond the bounds of time and space. I have never come across a person that was able to locate that place; and it is one of those things I never could comprehend. But they did not all do this in former times. When no other power operated against them Satan himself undertook to interfere; and I sometimes think that he has done that very thing in our day. Job, for instance, was a curious sort of a character. It is said that on a certain occasion the sons of God met together, and that Satan also presented himself before them – rather a strange personage to meet with the sons of God. I think sometimes that we have exhibitions of that here. And on that occasion, as usual, he was full of accusations; you know he always has represented the saints of God as the meanest set of people that ever lived, and he is up to his old tricks to-day; but then, we are told that he was a liar from the beginning. When he went before the Lord – I suppose he had been complaining to Him of the people down below, for he is called the accuser of the brethren – said the Lord to him: Lucifer, hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil? And Satan answered the Lord: Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast not thou put a hedge about him, and increased his substance, and blessed the work of his hands – as much as to say: "I, too, would serve the Lord, if he would treat me as well as Job has been treated; but let me have a rap at him and I will show you then what he will do." And the Lord gave him permission to afflict Job, but charged him that he was not to take his life; and the devil did afflict him, as you all know. But in all that he did he found that Job was true to his God, and that the confidence he reposed in him was not misplaced. Not discouraged, however, the devil appeared again before the sons of God, and the Lord took occasion to remind him that Job "holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movest me against him, to destroy him without cause." And Satan answered the Lord, and said, "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face." The Lord then permitted the devil to afflict his body, which he did; and on the back of that he got Job's friends to come and visit him, and comfort him – you have heard of "Job's comforters" – and they did "comfort" him? they would have him believe that all his misfortunes and sufferings were because of his wickedness, and the judgments of God were overtaking him, and then to crown the climax his wife comes along and says, Job, I would not stand it any longer; I would curse God and die like a man. But, says Job, thou speakest like one of the foolish women. What, shall we receive good at the hands of the Lord, and not evil. And notwithstanding all that was brought upon him, he said, Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him, for I know that my Redeemer liveth; and that He will stand in the latter day upon the earth, and that although worms may wallow in my flesh, and revel in my brain, yet, in my flesh shall I see God, these eyes shall behold him, and I shall see him for myself and not for another. Job had faith in his God, and he delivered him; and in his latter days he gave him more children and more property than he had ever possessed before.

[JD 23:336, John Taylor, October 29th, 1882](#)

Again, we read of certain people, described in the visions of John, who were clothed in white raiment, singing a song that no man knew or could sing excepting those that were acquainted with the principles that they were. And who were they? They were those that had come up through much tribulation, who had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. And are we not told that we must be made perfect through suffering? Are we not told, that "it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering?" I think that is the doctrine that we have read in our Bible; and that is the doctrine that I have always believed in. There are many of our good Latter-day Saints who are grasping and covetous and who take advantage of one another, and who frequently act dishonorably and who say things that are improper and wrong, and that are contrary to the principles of justice and equity; and sometimes it is necessary that men should be shook up a little. God in His wisdom has handled us from time to time. I can see men around me to-night whom I have seen and known for forty years – do you remember, brethren, when we had to leave the State of Missouri, "all hands and the cook?" And did we cry about it? I think not. I felt as happy then as I do now, and I feel quite comfortable to-night. I feel that all is well in Zion. As long as people have within them the principles of eternal life; as long as they have within them the hope that blooms with immortality and eternal life, what do they care about what is happening or going to happen; what do they care what this nation can do or is going to do. They can only do what God permits them.

We have learned many things through suffering, we call it suffering; I call it a school of experience. I never did bother my head much about these things; I do not to-day. What are these things for? Why is it that good men should be tried? Why is it, in fact, that we should have a devil? Why did not the Lord kill him long ago? Because he could not do without him. He needed the devil and a great many of those who do his bidding just to keep men straight, that we may learn to place our dependence upon God, and trust in Him, and to observe his laws and keep his commandments. When he destroyed the inhabitants of the antediluvian world, he suffered a descendant of Cain to come through the flood in order that he might be properly represented upon the earth. And Satan keeps busy all the time, and he will until he is bound; and I expect they will then have good times until he is loose again. The time will be when he will be cast into the bottomless pit, and he will not be able to deceive the nations any more until the thousand years have expired. I have never looked at these things in any other light than trials for the purpose of purifying the Saints of God, that they may be, as the Scriptures say, as gold that has been seven times purified by the fire.

JD 23:336 – p.337, John Taylor, October 29th, 1882

The Lord has gathered us from the nations of the earth and has given to us His Holy Spirit. He has organized His Church, and He has conferred upon us all the rights and privileges of the Holy Gospel. He has taught us how to save ourselves, and how to save our wives and children, and how to save the living and how to save the dead. He has taught us how to be saviors upon Mount Zion, and he has taught us that the kingdom is the Lord's; He has taught us that we are operating for him and his kingdom in the interests of humanity; for he is desirous to gather out from the nations all the pure, the virtuous and the noble, men and women who will observe his laws and keep his commandments.

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Again, he has given unto us eternal covenants, as referred to this evening, which also are true and have emanated from Him. Can we violate the principles of eternal life? No, never. We have got to put our trust in God, let the consequences be as they may. And as long as we do this, and as long as we keep the holy covenants we have entered into with him and with one another, Zion will triumph; and the wicked will waste away until there will be no place found for them; and the man or the nation that lifts up his hand against Zion will wither before Almighty God. I will prophecy that in the name of Jesus Christ, and I will meet the consequences of what I say. But I will tell you what we have to do, my brethren and sisters, we must fear God in our hearts; we must lay aside our covetousness and our waywardness, our self-will and foolishness of every kind. As brethren, we must humble ourselves before the Lord, repenting of our sins, and henceforth preserve our bodies and spirits pure, that we may be fit receptacles for the Spirit of the living God, and be guided by him in all our labors both for the living and the dead. Our desires must be for God and his righteousness, until we shall exclaim with one of old: O God, search me, and try me, and if there be any way of wickedness in me, bid it depart. It is for us, as fathers and mothers, to go before the Lord in all humility and call upon him that his peace may be in our hearts; and wherein we may have done wrong, confess that wrong and repair it as far as we possibly can; and in this way let every man and woman in Israel begin to set their houses in order, and forever cultivate the spirit of peace, the spirit of union and love. And if the families of Israel do this throughout all the land of Zion, all fearing God and working righteousness, cherishing the spirit of humility and meekness, and putting our trust in him, there is no power in existence that can injure us; for God will stand by and sustain his people, and he will deliver them out of the hands of their enemies. And as for the world I will say again, and as I have said on other occasions, I care not what they may say or what they may do; the wicked, whether men or nations can do no more than our Father in heaven permits them to do, and so long as we are doing that which is right before him, why should we fear – are we not in his hands, and is not the whole world in his hands, and can he not do with us and with them as seemeth him good.

JD 23:337, John Taylor, October 29th, 1882

Brethren and sisters, God bless you, and may his peace continue with you, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Lorenzo Snow, November 4, 1882

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE LORENZO SNOW,

Delivered at Logan, on Saturday Afternoon, November 4, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE LORD INTERESTED IN THE SALVATION OF THE WHOLE HUMAN FAMILY – HIS PLANS,
PURPOSES AND DEALINGS ALL TO THAT END – NECESSITY OF CHARITY, LOVE, UNION,
ETC., IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST – THE LOGAN TEMPLE AND A PROPHETIC GLIMPSE AT
ITS FUTURE.

[JD 23:338, Lorenzo Snow, November 4, 1882](#)

The speaker commenced by reading the 19th, 20th and 21st verses of the 17th chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, and then said:

[JD 23:338, Lorenzo Snow, November 4, 1882](#)

It is a question in my mind when reflecting upon the subject herein contained whether we take into proper consideration the great purposes that God has in view with regard to the human family, and the manner in which he proceeds to accomplish them. When the Lord calls an individual or a class of individuals out from the world, it is not always with an object to benefit that particular individual or individuals. The Lord has not in view merely the salvation of a few people called Latter-day Saints, who have been or who may be gathered into these valleys, but the salvation of all men, the living and the dead. When the Lord called Abraham he made him certain promises concerning the glory that should come upon him and his posterity, and in these promises we find this remarkable saying: that in him and in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Paul in offering an explanation to this, says, in speaking of seed, it did not have reference "to seeds as of many, but one which was Christ Jesus;" that is, in Abraham and in Christ Jesus, his seed, all the families of the earth should be blessed; showing that in calling Abraham and in making this promise, the design of the Lord was to bless not only him and his posterity, but all the families of the earth.

[JD 23:338 – p.339, Lorenzo Snow, November 4, 1882](#)

In the dealings of God with man, we find that he often called upon the heathen nations with a view to the accomplishment of certain purposes. The Ninevites, for instance, received a communication from the Lord through the Prophet Jonah, telling them that in forty days their city should be destroyed. This people was worthy to receive warning by a revelation from God, as they manifested afterward in their repentance. And Jonah fled from the presence of the Lord, for he knew that the Almighty had respect for not only one nation and people, but for all nations and peoples that feared Him, and lived according to the light which they possessed; and he believed that the Lord would forgive that people; and therefore that he, as a Prophet, would

fail in his prediction, and would suffer in his character as a Prophet. However, we find that Jonah turned up at last in Nineveh, a wiser, if not a better man. And he went to work in earnest, performing the mission to which he had been called, and delivered the message to the people. The king heard of it, and he had that faith in and that knowledge of the character of the Almighty that he believed and humbled himself, and used his influence with his nobles and people that they should do likewise, that the wrath of God might be turned and he had his people preserved. So he came down off his throne and called upon his nobles to put on sackcloth, and commanded that the beasts of the field should be covered with sackcloth, and the people repented and humbled themselves before God in the hope that he would turn away his wrath from them. And they so fully complied with the requirements that his judgment was reversed, and the great city preserved.

[JD 23:339 – p.340, Lorenzo Snow, November 4, 1882](#)

And when the Lord called upon the Prophet Jeremiah, he told him that his purposes were not confined to the people of Israel, but that he was interested in the welfare and salvation of all nations. On a certain occasion he was commanded to make yokes and to place them upon his neck; and when the messengers from the various nations should come to visit Israel, he was to send those yokes to their masters, their kings, and tell them what his mind and will were concerning them. The yokes were sent to six different nations, with a message requiring of those several kings certain duties. Those nations did not profess to believe in God; they worshipped idols, but God had respect to them notwithstanding. And it would not be a matter of astonishment to know that those people stood upon a far higher plane of morality and faith in God than the people of our boasted nineteenth century. Now, the Lord told them that it was his intention to make a certain person king over all the nations including theirs, and he required them to submit to this change in their governmental affairs, as he had appointed Nebuchadnezzar to hold dominion over all nations and peoples, and over the beasts of the field. "All these things are mine (says the Lord) and have I not the right to do with them as I please? Now you nations, if you do not wish to be uprooted, listen to the voice of my servant Jeremiah, and bow your necks to the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar." Even His own people Israel whom He had called and proposed to lift up in the eyes of the nations, Jeremiah was commanded to tell them to submit to Nebuchadnezzar, and thus permit themselves to go into captivity; which if they did not they should be overthrown, and Jerusalem destroyed. But they would not listen. They worshipped false gods, and they obeyed not the voice of the Almighty; but were guilty of all kinds of abominations, and were so full of wickedness that the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and he permitted him, whom he called his servant, Nebuchadnezzar, to destroy their Temple, break down their altars, and scatter them throughout his kingdom. On a certain occasion the Lord inspired King Nebuchadnezzar to issue an edict in which His people Israel were much interested, as they were in captivity. Nebuchadnezzar had discovered the true and living God, and he felt to honor Him; and in order to fully satisfy his feelings in this respect he passed an edict to the effect that whosoever would not respect the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego should be cut to pieces and a dunghill be made of their houses. In this way the people in Jerusalem and in the country round about while in captivity were compelled to have regard to the true God, according to the edict of the heathen king. This is the way God worked in those days.

[JD 23:340, Lorenzo Snow, November 4, 1882](#)

Finally when Jesus came, he came as a sacrifice not simply in the interest of Israel, or the posterity of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but in the interest of the whole human family, that in Him all men might be blessed, that in Him all men might be saved; and His mission was to make provision by which the whole human family might receive the benefits of the everlasting Gospel, not, as I say, Israel alone, but the whole human race; and not alone those dwelling upon the earth, but those also in the spirit world. The Apostles at first did not comprehend the universality of the purpose of the Lord, and it took the Lord some time to convince them. There was Peter, he had the idea that the Gospel was to be confined to the Jews; and in order to show him to the contrary the Lord sent a special manifestation, in the form of a sheet let down from heaven containing all manner of beasts, and then commanded him to arise, slay and eat. But Peter demurred, giving as a reason, that nothing unclean had entered his mouth. But he was told that what the Lord had made clean no man should call unclean. And after he had received this heavenly vision, he was waited on by messengers sent

by a distinguished personage. It appears that the Lord had found a Gentile who honored Him, who gave much alms to the poor, and who prayed honestly and fervently unto Him. When Peter was conducted by the messenger to the place he learned that it was Cornelius, a Gentile, who had sent for him; who had assembled with his friends to hear what the Lord had to communicate. When Peter discovered himself in the company of Gentiles he considered it highly improper for one who was a Jew to be seen associating with that class of people. And then Cornelius explained how that an angel had appeared to him instructing him to send to Joppa to the house of one Simon, a tanner, etc. On hearing this Peter commenced preaching to him and his Gentile friends. And while he was speaking the Holy Ghost fell upon them, and they spake in tongues and prophesied. His eyes were now opened, and his views became changed from those narrow conceptions that he had entertained in regard to the dispensation of the blessings of the Lord being confined to a few. But when he saw that the Holy Ghost was upon them as it had fallen upon his own people, he asked, Who can forbid water that they should not be baptized? And he commanded that they be baptized. Peter learned that the Gospel of the kingdom was to go to all nations, that all might receive the benefits of the same, according to the promise made to Abraham, that in him and in Christ, his seed, all the nations of the earth should be blessed.

[JD 23:340, Lorenzo Snow, November 4, 1882](#)

It was equally difficult to convince the other Apostles in regard to this matter, for when they found what Peter had done they chided him for so doing; so he explained to them how this departure occurred; how that the Lord had convinced him as to the propriety of allowing the Gentiles to be baptized.

[JD 23:341 – p.342, Lorenzo Snow, November 4, 1882](#)

I have thought sometimes that we take too narrow a view of the character and purposes of God. When the Lord introduces a dispensation to His servants, as a general thing it becomes necessary for them to operate in the interests of many. There is one thing, however, that should not escape our notice. From the verses which I have read the importance and the necessity of the Apostles being united, was shown, in order that the purposes of the Lord might be effective in the world. For unless the Apostles and those that believed on them were united, the world could not believe in the mission and purposes of the Savior. Therefore Jesus prayed to the Father that all those whom the Father had given Him might be one as He and the Father were one, that the world might believe that the Father had sent Him. In fact this is what the Lord designed to effect through Israel in bringing them out from Egyptian bondage; He wished to make of them a united people, a peculiar nation, a nation of people whom God could honor and respect in order that the world might believe, and that they might receive the blessings which He wished to bestow upon them, inasmuch as the human race are all the offspring of God; and if Israel had carried out His requirements, the world, no doubt would have been greatly benefited thereby, and the purposes of God more fully effected. The Lord wished to show His character, and the character of the heavens, and wished to extend his love and blessings through Israel to the whole human family; but Israel was disobedient and would not hearken to His voice. And as to the Apostles, so far as their fulfilling the wishes of the Savior concerning their being one, we are told by the revelations of the Lord through the Prophet Joseph, that his disciples in days of old had feelings one against another, and forgave not one another in their hearts, and for this reason they were chastened, yes, they were sorely chastened. The Apostles were persecuted, and with one exception perhaps, were finally martyred. And the churches they established never came to that union which the Savior prayed for, and consequently they failed to stand the tide of opposition. The Latter-day Saints are trying to do the work that Israel failed to do; and that the former Saints did not accomplish, and we can only do it by becoming one even as the Father and the Son are one, and this in order that the world may believe that we are sent of God. We have got to be perfect, and come to the measure of the stature of Christ Jesus, in order that the world may know that Jesus has sent and commissioned His Apostles, and restored the holy Priesthood. If we have division in our midst; if we be divided either spiritually or temporally, we never can be the people that God designs us to become, nor can we ever become instruments in His hands of making the world believe that the holy Priesthood has been restored, and that we have the everlasting Gospel. In order for us to effect the purposes of God, we shall have to do as Jesus did – conform our individual will to the will of God, not only in one thing, but in all things, and to live so that the will of God shall be in us. We have the same Priesthood that Jesus had, and we have got to do as

He did, to make sacrifice of our own desires and feelings as He did, perhaps not to die martyrs as He did, but we have got to make sacrifices in order to carry out the purposes of God, or we shall not be worthy of this holy Priesthood, and be saviors of the world. God intends to make us saviors not only of many that now dwell on the earth, but of many in the spirit world: He will not only place us in a position to save ourselves, but He will make us competent to assist in the redemption of many of the offspring of the Almighty. And that we may assist in the salvation of other people we are building the Temple on yonder plateau; and all Latter-day Saints in this Temple district are called upon to aid in accomplishing this work.

[JD 23:342, Lorenzo Snow, November 4, 1882](#)

I have come now to what I wish to say about the business of this Temple, in reference to which I desire to speak a few minutes. I suspect that many of the Saints are anticipating the completion of this Temple next spring. As to when it will be finished I am not able to say; I think, however, it will depend upon the efforts we make to that end.

[JD 23:342, Lorenzo Snow, November 4, 1882](#)

The speaker then went on to speak of the work that was necessary to be done, and proposed a way to accomplish the same; and then said:

[JD 23:342, Lorenzo Snow, November 4, 1882](#)

I would not be afraid to prophesy, if I were in the habit of prophesying, that the people of this Temple district will be found ready and willing to do all that may be required by way of completing this building. And I have not the least doubt in the world – I believe it full, that angels will minister to the people, and the power of the Almighty will be made manifest to a greater extent than at any other time, or in any other house, since the days of Jesus. You know how it was in that Kirtland Temple, Jesus the Son of God, appeared in His glory standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, His eyes like a flaming fire, and His hair as white as the driven snow, while His countenance shown like the sun in his brightness. And those who saw Him testify to this fact, and they describe His voice as the sound of rushing waters, as He said: I am He that was slain; I am He that lives; I am your advocate with the Father. Your sins are forgiven you. And He then blessed those who had assisted in building the Temple to His name, and He accepted it at their hands. And this people will be entitled to those blessings that Jesus in His glory pronounced upon those who aided in building the Kirtland Temple, inasmuch as they contribute in the future as liberally as they have in the past.

Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY ELDER CHAS. W. PENROSE,

Delivered in the Assembly Hall, Sunday, January 14th, 1883.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

REVEALED RELIGION AND MAN-MADE METHODS OF WORSHIP – ONLY ONE TRUE AND
ACCEPTABLE WAY TO WORSHIP GOD – ANCIENT AND MODERN REVELATIONS
CORROBORATE

EACH OTHER – GOD'S SPIRIT THE LIGHT AND LIFE OF THE WHOLE WORLD – MEN
GENERALLY CHOOSE DARKNESS RATHER THAN LIGHT – THE COMING FORTH OF THE LIGHT
IN THE LATTER DAYS – JOSEPH SMITH AND HIS DOCTRINES – THE SPEAKER'S PERSONAL
EXPERIENCE – THE OPERATIONS OF THE SPIRIT – THE WAY TO OBTAIN KNOWLEDGE FROM
GOD – THE NECESSITY OF PRIESTHOOD AND CHURCH GOVERNMENT – THE HEAD OF THE
CHURCH GOD'S MOUTHPIECE TO THE CHURCH – THE PERFECTION, BEAUTY, AND HARMONY
OF THE LORD'S WORK.

[JD 23:343, Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883](#)

I feel thankful, my brethren and sisters, that I have the privilege, with you, of assembling in this place to worship God; and I feel very thankful that we are able to meet and worship God in the way that He has appointed; and that the religion that we have embraced is no cunningly–devised fable of man, but is the very truth of the eternal God, and has been sent down from heaven in these latter times for our benefit, for our guidance, and for our salvation, if we will hearken to and obey it.

[JD 23:343, Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883](#)

The God whom we worship is not a God of our own invention, but a God who has revealed Himself to us, to a certain degree, and who has pointed out to us the way in which we should walk. There is a prevalent idea in the world that all the God there is, is such as men have framed and fashioned in their own minds. It is true that the people of the earth in different ages have imagined a great many things in regard to Deity. They have set up Gods of their own, worshipping them according to their own notions. But this is not the case with the people called Latter–day Saints. They have not framed and fashioned a being to fall down before and worship; but they have received communication from a Divine Being with instructions how they should act, and those instructions form their religion. The leaders of this Church have not invented the system; but every principle connected therewith has been revealed from on high.

[JD 23:343 – p.344, Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883](#)

The God whom the "Christians" worship is a being of their own creation – if, indeed, there can be such a being as they describe him to be; they have formed certain notions concerning deity, and then they have formulated those notions into articles of faith or religion. So with the heathen nations, so–called. They have formed idols of wood and stone; others have chosen the heavenly bodies, such as the sun, which represent to them certain qualities which they think deity should possess. Not that the heathen nations really and truly worship the wood or the stone, as such; but the images which they set up, or the objects which they adore merely draw their attention to something behind and above and greater than those objects. So with the Roman Catholic. When he bows down before the image of the Virgin Mary, or before the image of the Savior upon the cross, he does not profess to worship the picture or the image; these are merely methods to lead the mind to something beyond what the natural eye sees. But then, these various deities which people worship are, after all, the emanation of their own minds; they are gods of their own invention. Herein lies the great difference between the sects of Christendom and of heathendom, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter–day Saints. The people of this peculiar Church worship a Being who has to some extent manifested himself to them, and who has told them what they know concerning Him. And the revelations He has made to us of Himself, and of the Gospel of salvation that we have received have been given in this our day and time through men whom He Himself has chosen for this purpose. So with regard to the different ordinances and doctrines of the Church to which we belong; and so with our mode of worship, and everything belonging to our religion. It has all been

revealed to us, and we accept it as having come from a higher source.

JD 23:344 – p.345, Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883

Our religion consists of that which God reveals to us, not of that which we make ourselves and then offer to Him. Some people seem to have the idea that God ought to receive their worship, no matter in what way it is made; that He ought to accept the ordinances which they administer or receive, no matter what they may be; that all the worship which they offer ought to be accepted by Deity, no matter in what shape or form it may be devised. This is because the inhabitants of the earth do not understand the true and living God and His ways. The Lord will not accept that which He Himself has not appointed; He will not acknowledge that which He Himself has not revealed. The inhabitants of the earth are, of course, at liberty to devise modes of worship, and they may frame their own religious tenets and doctrines, but these are not acceptable to the Lord, neither is it reasonable that He should be expected to accept them. When God manifests Himself to the inhabitants of the earth and reveals to them truth, and makes known to them ordinances, then the people are under obligations to receive that which God has manifested; but God Almighty is not under obligation to accept that which man has invented. It is true that the doctrines which God has revealed in these latter days are not new, that they are not revealed for the first time, because we are living in the latter days. In previous ages of the world God manifested himself and revealed to the inhabitants of the earth His ways and called upon them to walk in his path; and, therefore, a great many things which God has revealed to us may be found in the ancient Scriptures. Holy men of old, called in the same way as men are in these days, have left on record some things which God manifested to them; and they are written in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, and in records that have been lost, but which will be brought forth in this great and last dispensation of God's mercy to man. So we may take up the book called the Bible, and read a great many principles which have been made manifest to us in our day; but we do not take them from the Bible or any of these records. We receive them because God has revealed them to us; and when we open the Bible or any of the books written by inspiration, and find written therein many things which correspond to that which He has revealed to us, they serve to corroborate the living word of God, which has come down to us out of heaven.

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The different sects in Christendom profess to take the Bible, the Old and New Testament, as their guide to salvation; and they say, whatsoever is not found therein and cannot be proved thereby is not to be received as an article of faith. That, in general terms, is one of the principles which runs through the various "Christian" sects. They found their faith, or profess to, upon the Bible. While we do not take that position, while our faith is not founded upon the Bible or on any written book, when we compare the Bible with what we do believe, what God has revealed to us, we find it corresponds; we find that God is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. This Book says that, and that his works are one eternal round. Truth is not new; it may be revealed anew, and it may be new to the people to whom it is revealed. But there is only one plan of salvation, one true and everlasting Gospel. That Gospel God revealed in the beginning; that Gospel God has revealed at different times; and in these latter days he has revealed the same old Gospel again in great plainness, and prepared the way so that all people who desire the truth may come to the knowledge of it, without being left to depend upon books that were written hundreds of years ago, He having poured out upon man again the same spirit to guide and direct them and to enable them to understand God and His purposes, that men had who wrote the things contained in the Bible or in any other inspired book left on record. And herein is another great difference between the religion of the Latter-day Saints and all other religions in the world. We have a living faith, a living God, and the living word of God to guide and direct us every day of our lives. When we read the letter of the word of the Lord, given ages ago, and that has been handed down from generation to generation, we have the satisfaction of knowing that the things which God has revealed to us were revealed to the ancients, and that by receiving these things they came to know God, whom to know is life eternal; and we are thereby encouraged to imitate their examples, and also to avoid the errors which they fell into.

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Now although we do not base our faith upon the Bible or any other written work, yet at the same time there are no people upon the face of the earth who believe so much in the sacred scriptures left on record and handed down to us, as do the Latter-day Saints. Though we are not dependent upon books for our religion – for our religion would exist if there were no books in existence, at the same time we manifest by our works that we have more faith in the Bible than the people who profess to base their faith upon it.

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At the beginning of our religion, if I may use that term – but really there is no beginning, for it is true, and truth is eternal without beginning and without end; every principle of truth always had an existence, and when, therefore, I say beginning of our religion, I mean the beginning of the revelation to the people in the day in which we live – when our religion was first revealed the world was in ignorance concerning God and his ways. It is true there was a glimmering of light concerning him which was obtained through reading the Bible, and other works containing the writings of men who in former times were to some extent inspired. For the inspiration of God in olden times was not confined to the men who wrote the Jewish Scriptures. The Jewish prophets revealed the word of God; the holy men of God who moved among the people in that nation were inspired from on high; but God has permitted His Spirit, which is the light of truth, and which manifests truth, to be poured out upon all the inhabitants of the earth to some extent; for in that they live and move and have their being, and all people of any age, race or country who seek unto God with an honest heart in fervent prayer, desiring truth and to be taught of God, will be enlightened by Him. There have been inspired bards and sages and poets, who have uttered words of truth, words of inspiration concerning things of which they had been enlightened of God. And many things that such men wrote have been recorded and handed down, and scraps of them may be found among all nations and peoples. As the Apostle Paul says, "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us. For in him we live, and move and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, "For we are also his offspring." His Spirit has enlightened mankind in all ages to a certain extent; for the spirit of the Lord, which gives light to the human understanding is the spirit by which we live; it is the spirit of light; it is the spirit of life. And as the light that proceeds forth from that glorious luminary, the sun, gives light to the earth, and also light to vegetation, and to man and beast, so the spirit of Him who created us has been poured out upon all people, and upon all animated things; indeed, we are told in the revelations of God, that the light which lights our eyes is through Him that enlighteneth our understandings, and is the same light that proceeds from the bosom of God, and fills the immensity of space; that it is the same light that lightens every man that cometh into the world – the Jew, the Gentile, the bond and the free. We are told, that "there is a spirit in man and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." This is that spirit. It is the light of Christ; it is the light of God. It is the life of our bodies, and it is also the light of our minds. This spirit is not confined to one race of people, or to one country, or to one age or generation, but it is universal; it is of Him in whom we live and move and have our being. It is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. And if all men would be guided by that natural light, that natural inspiration which gives them understanding, and by which they exist, they would be guided directly to Him who is the fountain of all light; they would then be in a condition to be communicated with by Him who is their Maker and Creator. But the inhabitants of the earth have been from the beginning prone to walk in the ways of darkness rather than in the light, because, as Jesus explained it, "their deeds are evil." This is the reason why there is so much ignorance in the world concerning God and His ways.

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When the Lord, at different times, has raised up men who sought Him, who learned of Him, and who put themselves in such a condition that He could communicate with them, and through them to the rest of mankind, generally speaking, those men have been despised and rejected by the multitude. The great masses of the people have gone downward in error and darkness; it has been hard for them to walk in that straight and narrow path which leads upward to light, to intelligence, to purity, to the presence of Him who is the author of truth; and, therefore, the vast majority of the servants of God, who have been called to be special witnesses of

the Almighty to a fallen world, have met with cruel and inhuman treatment from those to whom they were sent. They have generally been persecuted; they have been put to death in many instances in the most ignominious manner; they have been beheaded; they have been torn asunder; they have been cast into furnaces and into dens of wild beasts, and in order to escape maltreatment they have roamed hills and mountains, concealing themselves in dens and caves of the earth; men bearing a heavenly message, a message fraught with peace and good will to all men, a message too, involving their eternal welfare and happiness. This is the reason why there has been so much ignorance in the world concerning God; and it is in consequence of their disobedience, in consequence of their wickedness, in consequence of their love for darkness rather than light, in consequence of their choosing the things that come from beneath in preference to things that come from above. For there are two opposing spirits or influences upon the earth, just as there are light and darkness. They cannot dwell together; they always were and always will be at war one with another, but one flees away at the approach of the other, as when the light of the morning beams forth over the hill-tops, darkness flees away.

[JD 23:347 – p.348, Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883](#)

The inhabitants of the earth have been willing to be led by the influence of darkness; for there is a spirit of darkness upon the earth as well as the spirit of light, which leads to death as surely and certainly as the spirit of light leads to life. In the beginning God gave to man his agency, leaving him to choose either light or darkness, truth or error, as he might please. When men choose to receive the light of truth, the spirit of truth prompts them to do good, but it does not force them to do so; it is gentle and kind, and will enlighten and bless if people are willing to receive and act upon its promptings; but if men choose to walk in their own ways, they are at liberty to do so without let or hindrance, so far as the spirit of light forcing itself upon them to compel them to walk in the way of the Lord, is concerned. The inhabitants of the earth generally have chosen to walk in the paths which lead to death; they have chosen that which is evil and loved it, rather than that which is good; therefore, they have not been led upward to the Source of Light, or been able to communicate with Him.

[JD 23:348, Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883](#)

When our Heavenly Father commenced this work with which you and I are identified, the world was in darkness and without knowledge concerning God. There was a little glimmering of light among them concerning some things pertaining to God which men had read about in the Bible; and there were some individuals in other generations who, searching after truth, obtained some comprehension of the principles of truth, but they knew not God nor the ways of God. There was no definite knowledge in this age concerning Deity until God manifested himself to the Prophet Joseph Smith in His own person and by His Son. Joseph saw the Lord, and heard the heavenly voice saying, "This is my Beloved Son, hear ye Him:" and he was instructed by the ministration of personages direct from the presence of Deity, in regard to the things of God. So that when he came to lay the foundation of this work, he did not attempt to lay it according to his own notions and ideas, or according to that which he had read in books, or that which he had pondered over, or that which he or other men had invented; but he made known to others what God had revealed to him. And when he bore testimony that God lived, that Jesus who died on Calvary was the Son of God, he testified of that which he knew, because these Divine beings had manifested themselves to him.

[JD 23:348 – p.349, Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883](#)

Joseph Smith was given to understand of the existence of a certain record written by men who, in former times, in like manner had received the word of God upon this continent. The place of its existence was also shown to him, and he was inspired of God to translate that record into the English language. Now, Joseph Smith in performing that great work received, continually, evidence of the divine origin of what he wrote or caused others to write. It was not the emanation of his own brain, or something that he had concocted, but was the work of the Lord as written by the servants of God in ancient times, revealed to him by the power of the Lord God that he might translate it into our language. So in regard to the revelations given to this Church, and

concerning every doctrine and principle pertaining to our faith. They did not spring from his thoughts, they were not the product of his mind; but they were revealed to him by the ministration of holy angels, and by the inspiration of that Spirit which gives light to the understanding. For he received blessings to a greater degree than are poured out commonly upon the children of men, as was the case with other men anciently who were called to perform a special work; his mind was enlightened far beyond the condition of his fellow-men, for God bestowed upon him at the proper time the gift of the Holy Ghost, by which he, as well as men anciently, understood and spoke and wrote the mind and will of God. And Joseph Smith learned how to obtain that glorious and heavenly gift not only for himself but for others, and he was enabled to instruct the inhabitants of the earth how they could obtain it, how they could come to a knowledge of the truth for themselves, and commune with God for themselves; how they could obtain a knowledge of His existence through this heavenly gift, so that they might be guided in his ways and know that they were walking in his paths. Joseph could not find this out in and of himself; it was revealed to him from on high; and so with every doctrine and principle, every ordinance and commandment that is in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

[JD 23:349, Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883](#)

Now although this religion is divine, coming from God direct, it is not a mysterious religion as some suppose. It is very plain, very simple and very easy to be understood. All the people upon the face of the earth may comprehend it; it may be brought down to the understanding of the weakest of all races; all may learn and comprehend those simple principles by which they may come to a knowledge of God and be taught of him, and by which they may take that course which is right in his sight.

[JD 23:349 – p.350, Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883](#)

The first principle of true religion is faith. Jesus Christ says, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." This is verily so. All people must be "born again" to be able to see the kingdom of God, or to be able to comprehend the ways of the Lord. Is this a mystery? No, it is plain and easily understood when we get the spirit and light of God upon it. Jesus said also, "Except a man be born of the water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." A change must take place in the human heart. Men must first be born of the word of God, which lives and abides for ever. As the Apostle Peter says, "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." The Apostle James says, "Of his own will begat He us with the word of truth." And again we read, "Faith cometh by hearing the word of God." God's way is this: "He calls men who are fitted for His work, and inspires them, and endows them with authority to represent Him, and sends them forth to preach the word of God. When they bear their testimony to people who are honest in their hearts, who desire the truth and who wish to know of God, the Holy Spirit that is in the servants of God, the Spirit accompanying the word spoken by authority, enters the hearts of such people, and they are born of the word of God, so that they can see and comprehend the truth. A change is wrought upon them by the power and influence of divine truth, by which they are able to see the truth as the speaker sees it; the word spoken by the gift and power of God carries conviction to the heart, and they at once begin to recognize the authority of Him who imparts the words of life to them. They are born of the word and are able to see and understand to a certain degree, their faith and their ideas having been quickened by the power of God. The light and influence of the Holy Ghost radiating and proceeding from the inspired speaker, accompanies his word. As his testimony is borne under the influence of the Holy Ghost and by authority from on high, conviction seizes hold of the people, and if they are honest in their hearts and desires, it bears record in their souls. "Light cleaveth unto light and intelligence." We know this by experience. When the servants of God first bore testimony to us, a different impression was produced upon us to any that we had experienced when listening to the preachers of the different sects; it was the effect of truth preached by the power of the living God; it bore testimony to our spirits, and we felt that it was true. We could not explain why; we could not, perhaps, comprehend the change, but we knew that something had come to us different from anything we had ever before received; we felt that it was true; the spirit of God bore record in our souls that it was true; we were born of the word, and we could see that this was the work of God, and therefore could yield willing obedience to the ordinance of baptism for remission of sins by one having authority from God. After we had been baptized we were anxious to have hands laid upon our heads that we

might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. In using that term, the "gift of the Holy Ghost," we do not mean some particular gift of the Spirit, but the gift of the Spirit itself – the Holy Ghost given unto us as a gift from God. We will find that term, "gift of the Holy Ghost," used in the old Scriptures, and in the latter day Scriptures. It is the Holy Ghost itself given unto us as a gift from the Almighty. "Then laid they their hands upon them and they received the Holy Ghost." The promise is to those who will repent and be baptized for the remission of sins; they shall receive "the gift of the Holy Ghost." What is it? It is a greater and higher endowment of the same spirit which enlightens every man that comes into the world; a greater power given unto us as an abiding witness, to be a light to our feet and a lamp to our path; as a restraint against sin, to guide us into all truth, to open up the vision of the mind, to bring things past to our remembrance, and to make manifest things to come. It is the spirit of truth that reveals the things of the Father and the Son, proceeding from the presence of the Almighty and the very glory in which He is enrobed, which makes him like unto a consuming fire. If we receive that heavenly gift all are brought into communion with Him; we can understand something concerning Him, that we may pattern after Him until we become like Him; for if we are continually guided by that spirit, eventually we will come back to His presence and be able to enjoy the fullness of His glory. And while we remain in the flesh He will not be a stranger to us; we will not walk in the dark like the majority of mankind, but we will be the children of the light, comprehending the truth as it is in Him, and seeing the path in which we should walk.

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We, then, heard the word and believed it; faith sprang up in our hearts, and we went forth in faith and were baptized; and when the servants of God who had received their missions from the Almighty, who had been ordained under the hands of Joseph Smith or others whom he had ordained, laid their hands upon our heads we received the gift of the Holy Ghost. What was the nature of the influence that was brought to bear upon us? some physical exhibition of power? No. Could anybody perceive that there was a change in us? No, I think not. I know how I felt, I can bear testimony in regard to my own experience, and I think that my experience in this respect is that of others.

JD 23:350 – p.351 – p.352, Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883

When I heard the word I believed it, and rejoiced in it, and I prayed to God fervently – I was but a boy at the time – in the name of His Son Jesus, that He would manifest to me whether this was true or not, that I might not be deceived by any cunningly–devised fable; that I might not be led astray; that no impostor might have any power over me; but that I might be guided in the steps I was about to take, by the light of God. I prayed earnestly and fervently to my Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus, time and time again. Being fully convinced in my heart that this work was true, I applied for baptism; and when I was baptized I received the assurance that my sins were remitted, that I was washed and made spiritually clean and that I came from the water spotless. I could say with the ancient Apostle, "Old things have passed away, behold all things have become new." I was a new creature; I was born again. A change had been wrought upon me; and my desires were to serve God with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my strength. And when hands were laid upon me by the servants of God, and I received the gift of the Holy Ghost, I felt no physical manifestation. I must say, I felt a little disappointed at first, for I had expected some such manifestation, but I did not receive any at that time. What did I experience? I found that my mind was opened, that I had greater light; that something had come upon me by which I could see clearly the things of God; and when I read the scriptures new light dawned upon them. I was brought up to believe in the Bible. I had read it when a child, and committed a great deal of it to memory; and when I received this gift from the Almighty through the laying on of hands, it brought those things that were past to my remembrance; they stood up clearly and in bold relief before me, and I could comprehend something concerning God. I could feel that I was in communion with Him. When I prayed I could realize that my words were heard, that God hearkened and answered. When I prayed for knowledge and understanding concerning the things of God, they were manifested to me. It brought to me that which is called in the Scriptures, "the peace of God that passeth all understanding." The joy, the peace, the satisfaction that it brought to me could not be described in words. I knew that my Redeemer lived; I knew that I was born again; I knew the Holy Spirit was working in my heart. Truths were

manifested to me that I had never heard of or read of, but which I afterwards heard preached by the servants of the Lord; all this was testimony to me that I had received the truth. I make mention of this because I know this to be the experience of others. When I saw the gifts and blessings of the Gospel manifested, it was a renewed testimony to me. When I saw the sick healed, heard people speak in tongues, and then heard others give the interpretation, and afterwards saw the same fulfilled, many times in a wonderful and marvelous manner, all these things were additional testimonies of the divinity of this work. When I was only a boy I was called to leave my home and friends – none of whom had received the Gospel – to go out into the world among strangers, turning my back upon home, and leaving everything to go and preach the Gospel without purse or scrip, I received further evidence of the truth of this work, for a great many things were made manifest to me during my missionary experience. When I baptized people and laid my hands upon them, confirming them members of this Church, they bore testimony that the Holy Ghost came upon them, which bore record to them that God lived, and that this was His work. And when I laid my hands upon the sick they were healed. All these things were additional testimonies to me, and to those who received the word through me.

JD 23:352, Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883

I refer to this also because this is the experience of so many of the Elders of this Church; and you have the testimony in your hearts that what I say is true. Wherever the servants of God have gone bearing this message, and the people have received it and obeyed the requirements of the Gospel, they have received the Holy Ghost as a gift from on high; and if they have been led by its light it has increased in them day by day, and they are still going on, their light growing brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. They know that God lives; they know that His existence is not a myth; they know that He is a veritable Being, that He is their Father and their God, ever ready to hear the cry of His children when they are willing to hearken to His counsels; and they know that they are framed and fashioned after His likeness, and that all the functions and attributes of Deity are duplicated in them, that through years of faithfulness and progress in the scale of being and enlightenment, they may develop into the full majesty of His perfections and become like Him.

JD 23:352 – p.353, Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883

The Holy Ghost, this greater endowment of that spirit which naturally enlighteneth every man that comes into the world, is conferred upon us through a simple process, the way that God has ordained; and it can come in no other way. If there should be any in this congregation this afternoon who desire to know God, or if they desire to know themselves, they must take this one course – they can do as they please about it, either to receive or reject it, but if they want the blessing of it, they must seek for it in His way. They cannot get it through man-made systems; God has His own way. He acknowledges not, neither does he recognize the ways of men; but if people will hearken to Him and walk in his ways he will be nigh unto them, and will bear testimony to them in language that they, by the power and gift of His spirit can understand. But they must believe; they must also repent; and that repentance that is necessary does not consist in weeping and mourning over sin, but in turning away from it. No man can make God his friend by continuing in sin, neither can any woman. In order to come near unto God and to be taught of Him, they must be humble and child-like, they must be willing to receive instruction, being determined in their hearts to turn away from wrong-doing of every kind, and to cleave unto that which is right. This is a lesson for Latter-day Saints as well as latter-day sinners. If we want to learn more of the things and ways of God, if we want to draw near to Him, we must be humble and child-like, tractable in our nature, making ourselves acquainted with that which God has revealed, and walking in the way which he has pointed out. If the inhabitants of the earth will walk according to the light that God has given to them, whether by the spirit that came to them naturally in their birth, or by that higher endowment called the gift of the Holy Ghost, they will receive a still greater degree of power and light, and their pathway will become brighter and brighter even to the perfect day. If there be any darkness in them, it is because they walk in the ways of darkness, because they do the deeds of evil. No man can come unto God unless he has put away his sins and his follies and is willing to be taught of God. If he thinks that God will come to his terms and accept his whims and notions, he will make a failure of it. If he is willing to hearken, is child-like, willing to be taught, saying in his soul, "O God, manifest thy ways to me, and with thy help I will walk therein," the Lord will hear and answer him and he will learn of God, and the more he walks

in the ways of the Lord the closer he will get to God. But only by faith, repentance, baptism, and by the laying on of hands of those whom God has authorized, can the inhabitants of the earth receive the gift of the Holy Ghost by which they may fully learn and comprehend divine things.

JD 23:353, Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883

People marvel at the condition of the Latter-day Saints, at their tractability, at the mode of their worship, at the manner in which they sustain the authorities of the Church; and they conclude that we are a people led by the craftiness of men, that we are under men who are desirous to exert authority and power, and be looked up to as superior to their fellows. They reason in that way because they do not understand us; because they do not comprehend our ways, nor the way of the Lord. The reason why the Latter-day Saints are as united as they are, as tractable, as willing to be obedient, is because they have learned for themselves the truth of the Gospel they have espoused. They know there is a God; they know that he lives; they know Jesus is the Son of God; they know by experience that if they hearken to the voice of the Lord – the word of the Lord given to them through His servants – that they are happy, that they have that peace of which I have spoken; and on the contrary, if they disobey the counsels of heaven, they have not that peace, they are not satisfied with themselves, and they are in the dark. The reason why the Latter-day Saints are so tractable, so united, and so devoted to the Gospel of this Church is, because they know something about it for themselves; they know it is true, for God has borne witness to them, they have been brought into communion with him, and this is the secret of it.

JD 23:353 – p.354 – p.355 – p.356, Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883

Now, my brethren and sisters, you know that what I am talking about is true; you know it in your own experience. The Holy Ghost has borne record to you that what I am telling you is not fiction, but is a living fact. And we need not take up the Bible to read the books contained therein to find out the truth of our religion; we know it is true without that. Yet, when we read the contents of this book we find that it corresponds with that which God has revealed to us. We do not depend upon the man who baptized us, or him who laid his hands upon us to impart the Holy Ghost, for a knowledge of this work, we depend upon the inspiration of the Lord – the only source of knowledge of divine things. Every man and every woman in this Church, and every boy and girl who has received the Gospel in sincerity and has verily been born again, has obtained a testimony concerning this work and knows of its divinity for himself or herself. But God has set in the Church for our guidance and direction, Apostles and Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers and Bishops, and other authorities, that the Church with all its branches may be taught in the ways of the Lord, that there may be order in the Church, and that all things may be governed according to the will of God. And we know that when we hearken to the voice of those men we are blessed of God, and when they speak to us under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the same Spirit in our hearts bears witness to us that what they say is true. Some one may inquire, if all the people have the Holy Ghost, if all the people are brought to the condition that they may learn of God for themselves and be gradually led into the presence of the Father, what need of Apostles, what need of Prophets, etc.? There is great need of them. They are absolutely necessary to the government of the Church and kingdom of God. Without them there could be no proper church government, and, indeed, without them we could not receive the blessings that come from the ordinances. God's plan is to call certain men and endow them with authority, and place upon them the authority to act for Him. This is called the Holy Priesthood, and in that right and authority they preach and administer the ordinances of His Church. It is through the authority of this Holy Priesthood that people are inducted into the Church – through that channel they receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, without which it could not be conferred. The Holy Spirit is poured out universally, as I have before remarked, so that all people receive it; but the gift of the Holy Ghost is a higher endowment by which man may be brought into communion with the Lord after having received the ordinances, which must be administered by men holding the Holy Priesthood, and authorized to officiate therein. That is God's way. When people receive this divine blessing they become members of His Church, an organization ordained for the benefit and blessing of God's people; an organization which in all respects is after the ancient pattern. In becoming members of the Church we subscribe to the rules thereof. No undue influence is used to induce people to join our Church, or to retain their membership after they have joined it; if

they do not wish to subscribe to the rules of the Church, they are at liberty to sever their connection with it; but if they do retain their standing in it, they are expected to subscribe to its rules. At the head of this Church are three men who are united in all things as to its government, representing the Holy Trinity who also are one; not one in personality, but one in spirit, one in faith, one in action, one in desire, one in object. We have a President and two Counselors, who stand at the head of the Church. The President stands at the head of that quorum. God calls him to be His mouthpiece to the whole body. If the Lord has any revelations for the Church, as an organized body, He communicates them through the head. In the rise of this Church He warned and forewarned the Latter-day Saints as an organized community, not to receive revelations through any one save the head of the Church. The Lord said, "And this ye shall know assuredly that there is none other appointed unto you to receive the commandments until he be taken, if he abide in me * * * for if it be taken from him he shall not have power except to appoint another in his stead; and this shall be a law unto you, that you receive not the teachings of any that shall come before you as revelations or commandments. And this I give you that you may not be deceived, that you may know they are not of me." This is the order. While, therefore, every man and woman can receive the Holy Ghost and know that God lives, can ask and receive, seek and find, knock and have the door opened to him; while everyone can have divine light and comprehend the truth for himself, while it is the privilege of every man to so live that his soul shall be full of the light of heaven, by which he may comprehend the purposes of God as they shall affect men and nations, yet, as a member of the Church he must hearken to the voice of Him who stands at the head, for that is the order. "My house is a house of order, saith the Lord, and not a house of confusion." If He has anything for the Church, as an organized body, He will speak through the head; and if we are enlightened by the Holy Spirit we will see the safety of it, we will see that without this order we would be liable to be led astray. God will not speak to His Church, through the foot, but through the head. And if the body is of the same spirit as the head, it will respond, just as the members of the human body, if in a healthy condition, respond to the will of the head, in anything that the individual attempts to do. The man standing at the head holds the keys of revelation to the Church; but each individual may receive revelation for himself, if he has the gift of the Holy Ghost. And the Spirit by which God reveals through the head, is the same spirit by which He reveals to the individual for his own benefit. The Church of Christ is a united body; it is not divided against itself, because it is true, and truth is indivisible, it is eternal and cannot be destroyed, neither does it bear testimony against itself. Herein is the unity of the Saints. When the President of the Church speaks, the whole body responds, and when he brings forth anything for our guidance, we say in our hearts, under the same influence by which he is inspired, that is the word of God, and we rejoice in it and hearken to it. Thereby are the faith and obedience of the Latter-day Saints made manifest. And they do this not to man, but to God. Through the head of the Church the voice of God comes to the people, and when they obey it, it is not to man they bow, for the Latter-day Saints are not man-worshippers. They have come out from the midst of priestcraft, they have thrown off the yoke of bondage, and put on the liberty of the everlasting Gospel; and when they yield to the authority of the Holy Priesthood, they bow to God Almighty, their Father, who is represented in His servants upon earth, and not to man. "Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm." We worship God our heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and that which we obey we receive as coming from him and not from man. That is the order, if we have eyes to see, and hearts to comprehend it. And it is the same with all the different authorities of the Church, each one in his place and calling; one not interfering with another, every part and portion of the holy Priesthood being adapted to every other part, as each part of the human system is adapted and essential to the well-being of the other parts. The head cannot say to the feet, I have no need of thee; neither can the foot say to the head, I have no need of thee, but each part has need of the other. And there is unison in it; there is beauty in it. No one officer or member of the priesthood can encroach upon the privileges of another; but each one has his duties defined, and all are necessary for the order and government of the Church, for the preaching of the Gospel, for the gathering of the Saints, for the instruction of the people that all might be led in the path of life, until they come to the fullness of the knowledge of the Son of God, and be like a perfect man in Christ Jesus. Apostles are necessary in their place; Seventies in theirs; High Priests in theirs; Elders, Priests, Teachers and Deacons in theirs; Bishops and Presidents of Stakes, etc., in theirs, all having been appointed and ordained of God. This organization is unique in its character; there is nothing like it among the institutions of men, there is nothing like it in the world. There is nothing of an earthly character to be compared with it. It is beautiful, it is

glorious, it is harmonious, it is perfect, because it is the work of God. And if we would carry it out fully and perfectly, what a splendid organization we would have! What a mighty people we would be! a people whose God is the Lord, all moving along in perfect harmony each one accomplishing his part in this great and mighty work. But we are like the rest of mankind to some extent – we are prone to do evil, we are prone to follow our own ways, to take our own course, to be stiff-necked and willful.

[JD 23:356, Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883](#)

Now, my brethren and sisters, we have come out from the world, we have come measurably to a knowledge of the truth, to a knowledge of God; we know that He lives, and we know that by taking the course pointed out to us by the servants of God who have been appointed to lead us, in due time we shall return to our Father and God, and we shall see him as he is, and be like him, and inherit the fullness of his glory.

[JD 23:356, Charles W. Penrose, January 14th, 1883](#)

That we may be able to take this course is my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

George Q. Cannon, October 29th, 1882

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT GEO. Q. CANNON,

Delivered at Tooele, on Sunday Afternoon, October 29th, 1882.

(Reported by Geo. F. Gibbs.)

THE POWER AND AUTHORITY OF THE PRIESTHOOD CONTINUOUS – PSEUDO-PROPHETS AND
THEIR REVELATIONS – ORDINATION PREREQUISITE TO ACTION IN ANY OFFICE – JOSEPH
SMITH THE HEAD OF THIS DISPENSATION – THE TWELVE ORDAINED BY HIM TO BEAR OFF
THE KINGDOM – JOSEPH'S LEGAL SUCCESSOR AND BRIGHAM'S – THE PRIESTHOOD, AS IT
NOW EXISTS, THE RIGHTFUL AUTHORITY OF GOD ON EARTH.

[JD 23:357, George Q. Cannon, October 29th, 1882](#)

Our position, as Latter-day Saints, is such that unless we have the guidance of the Lord our God, we are very likely to become involved in a series of difficulties and troubles. This work cannot be built up by man. Man's power, man's wisdom, man's skill, are all insufficient to establish and to carry on the work of our God in the earth connected with the building up of Zion. It is a glorious reflection that from the time this work was founded in these, the last days, up to present time, there has never been a moment when this people have been destitute of the guidance of the Lord, and of the revelations and counsel necessary to enable them to carry out the mind and will of the Lord. At no time have we been left to ourselves. At no time have the Latter-day Saints been at a loss to learn and to find out the mind and will and counsel of God concerning them, either as individuals or as a people.

There have been some ideas afloat among our brethren concerning the authority and the power of those who have been in charge of the work of God upon the earth. I have not heard so much of it myself of late, perhaps, for the reason that my position has been such that I have not had the opportunity of mingling with the people, and learning from them their ideas and feelings respecting this matter. But at the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and probably for many years subsequent to his death, some people seemed to have the feeling that when he died, there died with him some power and some authority and some knowledge that could not be regained very readily, and was out of the possession of those who presided over the Church. This feeling may prevail to some extent at the present time – the feeling that some great one has to arise in our midst in order to revive the old power and restore it to the Church, and to perform the mighty works that God has promised shall be performed in connection with His Zion of the last days. I do not believe that all the Latter-day Saints understand as they should – I speak now in general terms – the authority, the gifts and qualifications which God bestowed upon His servant Brigham; and there were many who, after the Prophet's death, were not disposed to accord to President Young the same rights, the same authority, the same gifts, that they were willing to accord to the Prophet Joseph. The Rigdonites – the followers of Sidney Rigdon – originated the idea that the prophetic gift did not rest upon President Young, that he did not possess it. The Strangites – the followers of J. J. Strang – labored to the same end. Strang set up a claim that he had been designated by Joseph to preside over the Church, and in fact, showed a letter with the post-mark of Nauvoo upon the envelope, in which he claimed that he was thus authorized to preside. Others set up the same claim, and circulated the same idea. William Smith wished it understood that the prophetic office belonged to the Smith family, that it should be some member of that family that should preside over the Church. He entertained the same idea, and circulated it to some extent, that has been entertained and circulated by the son of Joseph – young Joseph, as he is called. And all these influences combined together have had the effect, to a greater or less extent, to create in many minds the impression of which I speak – that there was some withholding of power; that there were some gifts and manifestations of power that ought to be, but were not in the Church; that the prophetic gifts did not follow to the same extent that God designed they should; that although President Young and his Counselors and the Twelve were Apostles, the apostleship did not embody in itself the same gifts, the same powers that were exercised by the Prophet Joseph.

JD 23:358, George Q. Cannon, October 29th, 1882

I remember, when on one of my early missions, meeting with an old member of the Church in California, a man of some prominence at one time, and of considerable experience in the Church, who contended that President Young was not entitled to be called Prophet, Seer and Revelator, or to be put to the General Conference as such. His idea seemed to be that when the Prophet Joseph died, the office of Prophet, Seer and Revelator died with him, and, therefore, this claim by the leaders of the Church was a piece of assumption on their parts.

JD 23:358, George Q. Cannon, October 29th, 1882

Now, how far these ideas have prevailed and are held I cannot say, because, as I have remarked, my opportunities of mingling with the people, as I did in former years, have not been such as to enable me to speak from personal knowledge, and perhaps if I were to do so they would not talk so freely with me about such things as they once did. But I wish to say that those who look for some increased manifestation of power to come in some form outside of that which we recognize as the governing authority of the Church, are in danger of being deluded and of being led astray. Such persons, if there be any, and I am inclined to believe there are, are in just the condition that the adversary would like people to be in, that he may have influence with them.

JD 23:358 – p.359, George Q. Cannon, October 29th, 1882

Since my return from Washington, in the middle of August last, I have heard more of new prophets and revelators, and their revelations, than I have heard for several years. I do not know how many prophets I have heard of who have arisen; I do not know how many revelations I have heard of that have been given; but there have been quite a number. Many revelations have been sent to me by persons who claim the right to preside over the Church and to be the Prophet of the Church. President Taylor has been the recipient of a number of similar communications, each one setting forth his claim to the presidency of the Church, and to the prophetic office; and some of them requiring us to accept the author as the person whom God has designated to be the revelator to and the President of the Church. Where there is a feeling to look for some authority outside of our present organization of the holy Priesthood, you can readily see how the adversary could take advantage of it, and puff vain, weak men up with the idea that they are to be some great ones. No greater mistake can be indulged in than for any person to suppose that there is not that authority in the Church at the present time that is necessary for the establishment, for the government and guidance, and for the building up and complete control of the Church and kingdom of our God upon the earth, according to the pattern which He has given.

[JD 23:359 – p.360, George Q. Cannon, October 29th, 1882](#)

God revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith the necessity of the Priesthood, and until the Priesthood was bestowed, though he had the gifts which constitute a Prophet, Revelator and Seer prior to receiving it, having had the gift of prophecy, and revelations from God, and having exercised the Seer's gift by looking through the Urim and Thummim – he never attempted to act in any capacity beyond that in which God authorized him to act. Although he possessed the gifts that I have referred to, he never attempted to act in any ordinance of the house of God, or that belongs to the Church of God, until he received authority to do so. And that authority was not conferred upon him when he first saw angels and had some of the gifts of which I have spoken. It required the laying on of the hands of some personage or personages who had the authority of the holy Priesthood. No, Joseph never ran until he was sent. He exhibited in this the qualities of the man that he was; because there are few men, as we well know, who, if they had obtained the gifts that he possessed, would not have overstepped the limit of their calling and authority, and done something beyond their province. But Joseph did not err in this way; he had been too well taught of the Lord, and therefore he waited. He never attempted to preach the Gospel, or to baptize for the remission of sins. But when he found that it was necessary for him to receive the Priesthood, he called upon the Lord, and the Lord heard his prayer, and in answer to his call and that of Oliver Cowdery, sent to them John the Baptist, a literal descendant of Aaron who, by virtue of his descent, held the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood, he being the last man upon the earth that held these keys. John had been ordained by the angel of the Lord at the time he was eight days old unto this power, and to overthrow the kingdom of the Jews, and to prepare the way of the Lord. Having been thus ordained by the angel of the Lord, and having been baptized while he was yet in his childhood, and holding the authority and the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood, he was a fit personage to come and bestow the keys upon Joseph, who had been chosen to stand at the head of this dispensation. He came, and he laid his hands upon Joseph, and upon Oliver, and conferred upon them the Aaronic Priesthood, which authorized them to administer the ordinance of baptism for the remission of sins. When Joseph received that authority he administered the ordinance of baptism unto Oliver, and then Oliver unto him.

[JD 23:360, George Q. Cannon, October 29th, 1882](#)

They afterwards received the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood, under the hands of those who last held the keys of that Priesthood upon the earth. When Jesus, you will remember, took His three disciples into the mount, He was transfigured before them, and Moses and Elias administered unto them; and at that time Peter was ordained to hold the keys of that dispensation. He held the keys in conjunction with his brethren, James and John. They came and unitedly laid their hands upon the heads of Joseph and Oliver, and ordained them to the authority that they themselves held, namely, that of the Apostleship. In this way they received the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and could administer in the ordinances that belong to that Priesthood; one of which is the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. Until that time they had not received that ordinance. Some might think it strange that a man like Joseph, so gifted of the Lord, should deem it necessary to be administered to by a man or men holding the holy Priesthood, in order to receive the

Holy Ghost. But it is upon the same principle that the Son of God had to be baptized in order to fulfill all righteousness; and yet He was a pure and holy being. And when John said to him, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" Jesus said to him, "Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness:" and John then administered the ordinance of baptism to the Son of God, pure and holy as He was. Our Savior could not, and did not, refuse to comply with any of the ordinances which are placed in the Church for the salvation of God's children; on the contrary, He set the example by going down into the water and being baptized by John, even as the most humble of his followers did. In like manner it was as necessary that Joseph should be baptized, and have hands laid upon him for the reception of the Holy Ghost – for there is no doubt in my mind that Joseph Smith was called just as the Son of God, our Lord and Redeemer was called, before the foundation of the earth, as Jeremiah in his record says he was – and was ordained to be a Prophet, Seer and Revelator, and to stand at the head of this last dispensation. Although this was the case, it was still necessary that he should be baptized and have hands laid upon him for the reception of the Holy Ghost, and also be ordained to the Priesthood of Aaron and Melchizedek. You remember reading in the Book of Mormon that the Twelve on this continent, whom the Savior chose after His resurrection, are to be judged by the Twelve Apostles that were at Jerusalem. It was with Peter, who was the senior Apostle there, that the keys rested. He was at the head of that dispensation; therefore, those that received the Apostleship on this land were to be judged by the Twelve at Jerusalem. There the keys were; and it was right and proper that Peter, with James and John, should come and bestow them upon him who was to be the head of this dispensation, namely, Joseph Smith.

[JD 23:360 – p.361, George Q. Cannon, October 29th, 1882](#)

In addition to this the Prophet Joseph informs us in his letter, addressed to the Saints when he fled away from Nauvoo to escape the hands of his enemies, that "It is necessary in the ushering in of the dispensation of the fullness of times, which dispensation is now beginning to usher in, that a whole and complete and perfect union, and welding together of dispensations, and keys, and powers, and glories should take place, and be revealed from the days of Adam even to the present time." He, therefore, received the ministration of divers angels – heads of dispensations – from Michael or Adam down to the present time; every man in his time and season coming to him, and all declaring their dispensation, their rights, their keys, their honors, their majesty and glory, and the power of their Priesthood. So that Joseph, the head of this dispensation, Prophet, Seer and Revelator, whom God raised up, received from all these different sources, according to the mind and will of God, and according to the design of God concerning him; he received from all these different sources all the power and all the authority and all keys that were necessary for the building up of the work of God in the last days, and for the accomplishment of His purposes connected with this dispensation. He stands at the head. He is a unique character, differing from every other man in this respect, and excelling every other man. Because he was the head God chose him, and while he was faithful no man could take his place and position. He was faithful, and died faithful. He stands therefore at the head of this dispensation, and will throughout all eternity, and no man can take that power away from him. If any man holds these keys, he holds them subordinate to him. You never heard President Young teach any other doctrine; he always said that Joseph stood at the head of this dispensation; that Joseph holds the keys; and although Joseph had gone behind the veil he stood at the head of this dispensation, and that he himself held the keys subordinate to him. President Taylor teaches the same doctrine, and you will never hear any other doctrine from any of the faithful Apostles or servants of God, who understand the order of the Holy Priesthood. If we get our salvation we shall have to pass by him; if we enter into our glory it will be through the authority that he has received. We cannot get around him; we cannot get around President Young; we cannot get around President Taylor; we cannot get around the Twelve Apostles. If we ever attain to that eternal glory that God has promised to the faithful we shall have to pass by them. If we enter into our exaltation, it will be because they, as the servants of God, permit us to pass by, just as the revelation says, "pass by the angels and the Gods, which are set there," to our exaltation.

[JD 23:361 – p.362, George Q. Cannon, October 29th, 1882](#)

You know that Jesus said to His Apostles in ancient days, that they should "sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." And Paul says, "The Saints shall judge the world." This is true. Joseph, then,

stands at the head; and then every man in his place after him until you come down to the Elder, the most humble Elder of the Church who has proclaimed the Gospel of the Son of God to the inhabitants of the earth. He will sit as a judge to judge those who have received or those who have rejected his testimony. He will stand as a swift witness before the judgment seat of God against this generation. He will lift up his voice testifying as to that which he has done, and men will be condemned, and men will be justified and women will be justified according to the testimony of the faithful servants of God, each one in his place and station; but Joseph, holding the keys, and presiding over all, subordinate, however, to him from whom he received the keys, as he (Peter) will be subordinate to the Son of God who placed them upon him; each one in his dispensation; each one in his place; each exercising the authority of his Priesthood; each man honoring God according to his faithfulness and diligence in magnifying that Priesthood and calling that God has placed upon him; and each woman in her place receiving her share of glory and honor according to her faithfulness in keeping the commandments of God, and honoring the Priesthood.

JD 23:362, George Q. Cannon, October 29th, 1882

I present this matter before you that you may see that when Joseph died he had embodied in him all the keys and all the authority, all the powers and all the qualifications necessary for the head of a dispensation, to stand at the head of this great last dispensation. They had been bestowed upon him through the providences of God, and through the command of God to his faithful servants who lived in ancient days. There was no end scarcely, in many respects, to the knowledge that he received. He was visited constantly by angels; and the Son of God Himself condescended to come and minister unto him, the Father having also shown Himself unto him; and these various angels, the heads of dispensations, having also ministered unto him. Moroni, in the beginning, as you know, to prepare him for his mission, came and ministered and talked to him from time to time, and he had vision after vision in order that his mind might be fully saturated with a knowledge of the things of God, and that he might comprehend the great and holy calling that God has bestowed upon him. In this respect he stands unique. There is no man in this dispensation can occupy the station that he, Joseph did, God having reserved him and ordained him for that position, and bestowed upon him the necessary power. Think of what he passed through! Think of his afflictions, and think of his dauntless character! Did any one ever see him falter? Did any one ever see him flinch? Did any one ever see any lack in him of the power necessary to enable him to stand with dignity in the midst of his enemies, or lacking in dignity in the performance of his duties as a servant of the living God? God gave him peculiar power in this respect. He was filled with integrity to God; with such integrity as was not known among men. He was like an angel of God among them. Notwithstanding all that he had to endure, and the peculiar circumstances in which he was so often placed, and the great responsibility that weighed constantly upon him, he never faltered; the feeling of fear or trembling never crossed him – at least he never exhibited it in his feelings or actions. God sustained him to the very last, and was with him, and bore him off triumphant even in his death.

JD 23:362 – p.363, George Q. Cannon, October 29th, 1882

While he was in possession of all his faculties, and likely to live for many years to lead the Church – in fact the people believed that he would live to redeem Zion – when he was thus situated, impressed by the Spirit and power of God, he called together our leading men, and he bestowed upon the Twelve Apostles all the keys and authority and power that he himself possessed and that he had received from the Lord. He gave unto them every endowment, every washing, every anointing, and administered unto them the sealing ordinances and taught them the character of those ordinances, and revealed unto them the doctrine of celestial marriage, and impressed upon them the importance of their obedience to the same, and made it obligatory upon them that they should obey it and carry it out in their lives, and teach it to others. He taught these brethren that unless they did this the kingdom would stop, it could not make further progress. And filled with the power of God, he blessed them and placed those keys and this authority upon them, and told them that he had thus ordained them to bear off the kingdom. There was no key that he held, there was no authority that he exercised that he did not bestow upon the Twelve Apostles at that time. Of course, in doing this he did not divest himself of the keys; but he bestowed upon them these keys and this authority and power, so that they held them in their fullness as he did, differing only in this respect, that they exercised them subordinate to him

as the head of the dispensation. He ordained them to all this authority, without withholding a single power or key or ordinance that he himself had received.

[JD 23:363, George Q. Cannon, October 29th, 1882](#)

Thus you see these men whom God chose to hold the Apostleship received all this authority from Him. Hence he told the people before he was taken, "I roll this kingdom off on to the shoulders of the Twelve." Probably there are some in this room who heard him talk in this manner. I was but a boy at the time, but I remember it very distinctly. He evidently wanted his brother Hyrum also to be preserved, and for some time before his martyrdom talked about him as the Prophet. But Hyrum, as you know, was not desirous to live away from Joseph; if he was to be exposed to death, he was resolved to be with him. Our revered President, who is present with you to-day, was with the Prophet and his brother, the Patriarch, at the time of their martyrdom, and was himself shot down, and his life almost despaired of. But God in his providence reserved him for something else, and his enemies did not have power to take his life.

[JD 23:363 – p.364, George Q. Cannon, October 29th, 1882](#)

After the martyrdom of the Prophet the Twelve soon returned to Nauvoo, and learned of the aspirations of Sidney Rigdon. He had claimed that the Church needed a guardian, and that he was that guardian. He had appointed the day for the guardian to be selected, and of course was present at the meeting, which was held in the open air. The wind was blowing toward the stand so strongly at the time that an improvised stand was made out of a wagon, which was drawn up at the back part of the congregation, and which he, William Marks, and some others occupied. He attempted to speak, but was much embarrassed. He had been the orator of the Church; but, on this occasion his oratory failed him, and his talk fell very flat. In the meantime President Young and some of his brethren came and entered the stand. The wind by this time had ceased to blow. After Sidney Rigdon had spoken, President Young arose and addressed the congregation, which faced around to see and hear him, turning their backs towards the wagon occupied by Sidney. Now it is probable that there are some here to-day who were present on that occasion, and they, I doubt not, could, if necessary, bear witness that the power of God was manifested at that time, to the joy and satisfaction of the Saints. It was necessary that there should be some manifestation of the power of God, because the people were divided. There was considerable of doubt as to who should lead the Church. People had supposed that Joseph would live to redeem Zion. They felt very much as the disciples did after the crucifixion: "We trusted," said they to the Savior, whom they knew not, while speaking of their Lord, "that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." They were saddened in their hearts. So the Saints were when the Prophet Joseph was taken from them. Some even went so far as to think that perhaps God would resurrect him, they had such an idea about his continued earthly connection with this work. But no sooner did President Young arise than the power of God rested down upon him in the face of the people. It did not appear to be Brigham Young; it appeared to be Joseph Smith that spoke to the people – Joseph in his looks, in his manner, and in his voice; even his figure was transformed so that it looked like that of Joseph, and everybody present, who had the Spirit of God, saw that he was the man whom God had chosen to hold the keys now that the Prophet Joseph had gone behind the veil, and that he had given him power to exercise them. And from that time forward, notwithstanding the claims of Sidney Rigdon; notwithstanding the claims of Strang, notwithstanding the claims of William Smith, John E. Page and others who drew off from the Church in the days of Nauvoo; and notwithstanding the claims of other men who have since drawn off from the Church and made great pretensions, God has borne testimony to the acts and teachings of His servant Brigham, and those of his servants, the Apostles, who received the keys in connection with him. God sustained him and upheld him, and he blessed all those that listened to his counsel. No man that ever obeyed all his counsels and teachings was ever cursed, but was always blessed of God; while those who disobeyed his counsel did not prosper. We have all seen this. He led the people by the power of God into this wilderness, taking upon himself such responsibility as no other man dare take, which, of course, he was inspired of God to do. In various ways God sustained him to the time of his death. All the authority, all the power, all the keys, and all the blessings that were necessary for the guidance of this people he held. He held them as his fellow-servants, the Apostles, held them; only he, being the senior, had the right to preside, and did preside, God sustaining him in so doing. Then when he died there was no need for any

peculiar or overpowering manifestation, such as was witnessed when the Prophet Joseph died, because the authority of the Priesthood was recognized, and among the Twelve there was no dissent. We all knew the man whose right it was to preside, there being no doubt upon this matter. We knew he had the authority. We knew that there was only one man at a time upon the earth that could hold the keys of the kingdom of God, and that man was the presiding Apostle.

JD 23:364 – p.365, George Q. Cannon, October 29th, 1882

Other names had at one time preceded President John Taylor in the order of the Twelve. There were various reasons for this. Two of the Apostles had lost their standing, and upon deep and heartfelt repentance had been again ordained to the Apostleship. In both instances this had occurred after the ordination of President Taylor to that calling. Still, for many years their names were allowed to stand in their old places and preceded his in the published list of the Twelve. The revelation designating Presidents Taylor, Woodruff and Willard Richards to be ordained Apostles was given July 8th, 1838; John E. Page was called to the same office in the same revelation. He and President Taylor were ordained at Far West before the Saints were driven from there. Brother Woodruff being on a mission at the Fox Islands, was afterwards ordained on the corner stone of the Temple, April 26th, 1839. Brother Willard Richards, when he was called, was on a mission in England, and was ordained in that land after the Twelve went there on their mission. In this way Brothers Richards and Woodruff, though the seniors of President Taylor in years, were his juniors in the Apostleship; he had assisted in ordaining them Apostles. For some years attention was not called to the proper arrangement of the names of the Twelve; but some time before President Young's death they were arranged by him in their proper order. Not long before his death a number of the Twelve and leading Elders were in Sanpete when, in the presence of the congregation in the meeting-house, he turned to President Taylor, and said, "Here is the man whose right it is to preside over the council in my absence, he being the senior Apostle."

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Therefore, as I have said, when President Young died there was no doubt in the minds of those who understood principle as to who was the man – it was the then senior Apostle. He was the man who had the right to preside, he holding the keys by virtue of his seniority, by virtue of his position in the Quorum; and he became the President of the Twelve Apostles; and became President of the Church.

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Now, let me ask you, is it necessary that somebody should rise up outside of this Priesthood to be a Prophet, Seer and Revelator to the Church? Is it not consistent with the wisdom and government of God to acknowledge His servants who have been faithful all their lives, who have proved their integrity before Him, who have never swerved to the right or the left, and whose knees have never trembled, and whose hands have never shaken – is it not within his power and his wisdom to endow them with all the gifts and qualifications necessary for the guidance of His Church? Certainly it is. There has never been a moment, as I have said, since this Church was organized, since the 6th day of April, 1830, when God has been without ministering servants through whom he has revealed his mind and will to the people. President Young might have received and given revelations to the people in the same manner as the Prophet Joseph did. He had the authority, and he did give his revelations to the people; he gave his counsel. President Taylor has done the same. The Twelve in their labors have done the same. They have taught the people the word of God. The Twelve have the right, every Apostle has the right, to teach the people by the spirit of revelation, by the spirit of prophecy and the power of God. This people, as I have said, have been led by that power and spirit; and it was in this way that ancient Israel was led when Moses stood at their head. He had the authority, he held the keys, and he received revelation from God concerning all the people. It has been so in our day. We have had revelations; and we have revelations still. Our brethren, Brothers George Teasdale, Heber J. Grant and Seymour B. Young have been lately called by written revelation, to hold the positions to which they have been assigned. But is it always necessary to write revelation? Sometimes it is necessary; sometimes it is not necessary, just as God willeth. When the word of God is given through His servants, as for instance, this morning through President

Taylor making a certain promise; that promise is just as binding as if written. If we live for it, it will be fulfilled, just as much as if it were written. God has bestowed the spirit of revelation upon His servants. In fact, no man, no matter what his office may be, whether it be Deacon, Teacher, Priest or Elder, Seventy or High Priest, or Apostle, has the right to teach the people unless he does it by the light of the Holy Ghost, by the power of God. He should not attempt to teach the people that which he may have framed in his own heart to say to them. On the contrary, he should treasure up, as God has said, continually the words of life, and it shall be given unto him what to say, even that which shall be suited to the circumstances of the people and of each individual. God has made that promise to the Elders of this Church, unto those who go out to preach the Gospel, and to every man who seeks to teach as he should do – by the spirit of revelation. It is then carried to the hearts of the people, and they are, and will be, judged by it, and will be held accountable before God according to the spirit and knowledge they may have received.

JD 23:366 – p.367, George Q. Cannon, October 29th, 1882

I have presented this matter before you, because I am led to think there is not that disposition to look to and recognize the authority that exists in the Church as it should be recognized. There is at the present time a contest going on in our midst and the tendency to tear away from the moorings of the Priesthood, from the authority and influence of the Priesthood, receives every encouragement. The threats that are being made by our enemies at the present time are for the purpose of destroying the faith, the confidence, and the spirit that are begotten in the hearts of the people towards the Priesthood of the Son of God. If they could get you to repudiate your Bishops, the President of the Stake; if they could get you to repudiate the Apostles and the First Presidency, they would be satisfied; because they would know then that they had struck a deadly blow at the kingdom of God, so far as you are concerned at least. That is their aim all the time. While, on the other hand, it is the aim of the Elders of Israel to bind the people together, and to build up the authority and influence of the holy Priesthood, because we know that in doing so we are acting according to the mind and will of God, and not because we want to exercise authority over you. You know very well that authority has never been exercised over you improperly by any faithful servant of God; that you never have had reason to complain because of anything of this kind coming from the First Presidency, of from the Apostles, or any good man; but on the contrary, the servants of God, of whom our enemies complain, have worn themselves out in your midst, teaching you the doctrines of salvation. They have traveled under all circumstances, visiting the people and teaching them the principles of eternal life, and have worn themselves out at this labor. They have not spared their bodies, nor refrained from neglecting all their earthly affairs when necessary for the good of this people. It has been characteristic of the Apostles and leading men of this Church; and if we had not that spirit, it would be soon seen by the people, and our influence would be correspondingly weakened. It is the aim of the Priesthood at the present time to bind the people together, on the same principle that you adopt, you that are shepherds, when the wolves are around. You get your sheep together in as compact a manner as you can, that no wolves can get access to your sheep. You feel it to be your duty to take care of the flock that may be your own, or that may be entrusted to your care, that not even a lamb may be torn to pieces, or be carried off by either dog or wolf. It is the same with the servants of God. The burden of this people rests upon them. It is upon President Taylor night and day, I know. Every thought and desire of his heart is for the salvation of this people, and to establish and build up the Zion of our God. His feelings are to be a faithful watchman upon the walls of Zion, a faithful shepherd of the flock of Christ; so that when he goes hence, as Brigham has gone, he can report to Joseph and those of his co-laborers that have joined him, that he did his duty faithfully while in the flesh, in caring for and feeding the flock of Christ. I know this is the feeling; and I know it is the feeling of his co-laborers, his fellow-servants. And it is because of their intense love for this people, and for the salvation of the children of men that they are impelled to do as they do. They would have you listen to the voice of wisdom, to the voice of revelation, to the voice of the Holy Spirit that is poured out upon us, which bears testimony in your hearts that it is through His power that we have been sustained, and which convinces you that we are His servants. You know when you hear the servants of God, by the power of God that accompanies their words, and by the testimony of Jesus that He gives unto you, that they are His servants. This is your witness, and you are our witnesses as to the truth of our claims and the divinity of the authority which we exercise in your midst. We want to save you. We want to teach you the plan of salvation. We want to point out to you the way in which you should go. We do not ask anything of you of an earthly

character. We desire not to aggrandize ourselves. All we ask, and we ask it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, is that you will be entreated of God, that you will listen to His voice, and walk in the strait and narrow path that leads to lives eternal. And we promise you that if you will do so, we will lead you into the celestial kingdom of God, not of ourselves, but through the power that God has given unto us, and that He will give unto us.

JD 23:367, George Q. Cannon, October 29th, 1882

I pray God to bless you, my brethren and sisters, and fill you with His Holy Spirit, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

John Taylor, February 11th, 1883

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR,

Delivered in the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake City,

Sunday, February 11th, 1883.

WHY THE SAINTS MEET TOGETHER – THEIR PRETENSIONS – WHAT THEIR PROFESSION IMPLIES – NO RIGHT TO SIT IN JUDGMENT ON THE WORLD – ALL CHILDREN OF A COMMON FATHER – MANY GOOD MEN INSPIRED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD WHO DID NOT POSSESS THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST – HOW JOSEPH SMITH OBTAINED KNOWLEDGE – THE GOSPEL – WHAT THE SAVIOR REQUIRED – OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY GHOST – WHAT IS REQUIRED OF THE SAINTS – THEIR FEELINGS – DUTY OF MISSIONARIES – NATIONAL FEELINGS BURIED IN EMBRACING THE GOSPEL – RELATIONSHIP TO GOD – DESTINY OF THE FAITHFUL – WHAT HAVE RELIGIONISTS OF THE WORLD TO OFFER? – CHARACTER OF THE WOULD-BE REFORMERS – RIGHTS TO BE CONTENDED FOR – CORRUPT PRACTICES CONDEMNED.

JD 23:368, John Taylor, February 11th, 1883

We meet together from time to time, to speak and to hear, to meditate and reflect, to sing and to pray, to attend to our Sacraments, and to seek to obtain a knowledge of the duties and responsibilities which devolve upon us to attend to. And then we are desirous to worship the Lord our God and conform to his laws; to seek an acquaintance with him and with his purposes, and to understand the position we occupy in relation to our Heavenly Father and the world in which we live. These are some of the ideas and thoughts that flow more or

less through the minds of the Latter-day Saints; and we are desirous generally to know the mind and will of God, and then to do it; at least, these are the pretensions of the Latter-day Saints. We do not always come up to that standard, however; but the great majority of the people, I am happy to say, are seeking to conform to the mind, and will, and word, and law of God.

JD 23:368 – p.369, John Taylor, February 11th, 1883

It has given me great pleasure lately, in traveling among the Saints to witness a spirit and feeling of this kind, which has been abundantly developed in the different parts of the Territory that we have had the pleasure of visiting. And it is a matter of considerable importance to us, as a people, that we comprehend the position that we occupy in the world, and the various duties and responsibilities that devolve upon us. There are various theories, notions, and ideas abroad in the world pertaining to the future. We, ourselves, have been gathered from the nations of the earth under the influence of the new and everlasting Gospel, and under the guidance and dictation of God, our heavenly Father; and we call this Zion, and we call ourselves the people of Zion, or in other words, the Saints of the Most High God. We really make very great pretensions. To be a Saint signifies to be holy, to be pure, to be upright, to be virtuous. The German language is very significant on this point, and they calling us according to our name, denominate us as *Der Heligen der Leitzentage*, or as the holy of the last days. This is the profession which we assume. We say that we have come here to learn the laws of God, and to be taught in His ways, and that in us is fulfilled many of the ancient prophesies pertaining to these matters, one of which is: "I will take them one of a city and two of a family, and bring them to Zion; and I will give them pastors after mine own heart, that shall feed them with knowledge and understanding." There is something very peculiar in the position that we occupy, and in the manner in which we have been brought together, which is not generally understood by the world of mankind.

JD 23:369, John Taylor, February 11th, 1883

We profess again to be the Church of God, and to be the kingdom of God; in fact we have any amount of profession; but the question with me sometimes is, how near we live up to our professions, and adhere to the principles that we profess to believe in, and to be governed by. For we are told in the Scriptures, that it is "not every one that sayeth unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." And again Jesus said, "Many will say to me in that day (that is speaking of the day of judgment) Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?" But He says, He will say unto them, "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Again we are told that he that doeth righteousness is righteous. And further, as a test that is given for the guidance and direction of His people, a strict command is given unto them pertaining to their entertaining an undue attachment to the world. John says: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." No matter what their professions may be, no matter what their position may be; it applies to all. "Love not the world nor the things that are in the world." We are indeed called here to this land of Zion to perform a peculiar work, which the Lord has placed upon us, associated with what is termed the dispensation of the fullness of times, wherein God will gather together, it is said, all things in one, whether they be things in the heavens or things on the earth. It is a dispensation in which is embraced everything that is connected with any and every other dispensation that has ever existed since the world rolled into existence, or the morning stars sang together for joy; and embraces all these dispensations; it is proper that we should strive to comprehend the various duties and responsibilities devolving upon us. We differ from the world in many respects; and I will try to point out some of these things wherein this difference exists.

JD 23:369 – p.370, John Taylor, February 11th, 1883

We are apt sometimes to be too censorious of the world. We think that they act very wickedly and badly, and that is true; but then, at the present at least, we are not their judges; it is not any part of our duty to sit in judgment upon them. Who are we? The children of our Heavenly Father. Who are the world, as we sometimes denominate those that are not of our Church? The children of our Heavenly Father. For God has "made of one

blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth," we are told, "and hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find Him, though he be not far from every one of us."

[JD 23:370, John Taylor, February 11th, 1883](#)

Now outside the Gospel, outside of revelation, outside of any special communication from the Lord, all men, more or less, everywhere have certain claims upon their Heavenly Father, who is said to be the God and Father of the spirits of all flesh. Then we are told, when Jesus spake to his disciples, they asked him how they were to pray. He said, Say, Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Who? Our Father – the God and the Father of the spirits of all flesh. When you approach Him, say, our Father who art in heaven. Then, they belong to our Father, as well as we. In regard to the operation of the Spirit upon man, let me draw your attention to a fact that is generally understood by all reflecting men, and that is, no matter how wicked a man may be, how far he may have departed from the right, such a man will generally admire and respect a good man, an honorable man, and a virtuous man; and such a man will frequently say; "I wish I could do as that man does, but I cannot: I wish I could pursue a correct course, but I am overcome of evil." They cannot help but respect the good and the honorable, although they may not be governed by principles of honor and virtue themselves. This same spirit which is given to every man outside of the Gospel has been manifested in the different ages of the world. When I say outside of it, the Latter-day Saints will understand me. When I speak of the Gospel I speak of the Gospel revealed by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and which has existed at times through the different ages, and which, wherever it did exist brought men into close communion with the Lord; hence the Gospel is called the everlasting Gospel. The Scriptures unequivocally state that our Savior "brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel," and wherever a knowledge of life and immortality existed it was through the Gospel; and whenever and wherever there was no knowledge of life and immortality there was no Gospel. But outside of that there have been many good influences abroad in the world. Many men in the different ages, who, in the midst of wickedness and corruption, have tried to stop the current of evil, have placed themselves in the catalogue of reformers. Some of those have been what are called heathen, others what are termed Christian, and others have been scientific and philanthropic – lovers and benefactors of the human race. The many reformers that existed in former ages have been men many of whom have been sincerely desirous to do the will of God, and to carry out His purposes, so far as they knew them. And then there are thousands and tens of thousands of honorable men living to-day in this nation, and other nations, who are honest and upright and virtuous, and who esteem correct principles and seek to be governed by them, so far as they know them.

[JD 23:370 – p.371, John Taylor, February 11th, 1883](#)

But there is a very great difference between this spirit and feeling that leads men to do right, which is emphatically denominated a portion of the Spirit of God, which is given to every man to profit withal, and what is termed in the Scriptures the gift of the Holy Ghost. Men may be desirous to do right; they may be good, honorable and conscientious; and then when we come to the judgment pertaining to these things we are told that all men will be judged according to the deeds done in the body, and according to the light and intelligence which they possessed.

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I will take, for instance, the position of the reformers, going no further back than Luther and Melancthon; and then you may come to Calvin, Knox, Whitfield, Wesley, Fletcher, and many others; men who have been desirous in their day to benefit their fellow-men; who have proclaimed against vice, and advocated the practice of virtue, uprightness and the fear of God. But we all, who have contemplated these subjects, know that those men never did restore the Gospel as it was taught by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; neither did they see or comprehend alike in biblical matters; they groped, as it were, in the dark, with a portion of the Spirit of God. They sought to benefit their fellow-man; but not having that union with God that the Gospel imparts, they were unable to arrive at just conclusions pertaining to those matters. Hence one introduced and

taught one principle, and another introduced and taught another; and they were split up and divided, and the spirit of antagonism was found at times among them; and with all their desires to do good, they did not, and could not restore the Gospel of the Son of God, and none among them were able to say, Thus saith the Lord. And that is the condition of the religious world to-day; it is Babylon or confusion; confusion in ideas, confusion in regard to doctrine, confusion in regard to ordinances, etc. And what shall we say of such men? Shall we say that they were wicked? No. It is lawful to do good always, and anyone who seeks to promote the welfare of the human family is a benefactor of mankind, and ought to be sustained. But now comes another principle which is different to that. We find in reading the Scriptures, that at the time Jesus made His appearance upon the earth, there was a variety of sects and religious parties; there were the Sadducees, the Pharisees, the Essenes, and others. But these people were told that there was but one Lord, not many; one faith, not many; one baptism, not many; and one God who is above all and through all and in you all.

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Now that was one thing that troubled Joseph Smith in his youthful days, and a recital of his experience in these matters I have had myself from his own lips. There was, in his young days, a religious revival in the region where he dwelt. The people that took part in it were no doubt sincere. I look at such things differently from a great many men. We cannot reasonably suppose that all men are hypocrites about such matters. Finally they, to use their own term, "converted" some, and then there began to be a scramble as to which church the converts should belong. This perplexed Joseph Smith. And having one day while reading in the Bible, come across that passage in the epistle of James, where it says, "If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not and it shall be given him," he went and asked God concerning the matter. And the Lord revealed Himself to him, and among other things that He told him at the time was that none of the sects were right, that all had gone out of the way, and commanded him not to join any of them.

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I need not now enter into the details of his history, as these things are well known; but I will proceed. The Gospel that was restored to him was the same Gospel that Jesus introduced and taught; the same Gospel that was taught in part by Abraham, and by Moses – for we read that the children of Israel had the Gospel preached to them in the wilderness, "but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those that heard it." Therefore the law was added because of transgression. Added to what? To the Gospel. What difference is there between the Gospel and the beliefs of other sects and creeds? The Gospel always did and always will "bring life and immortality to light." That is the difference. While others are groping in the dark, though their intentions in many instances are to do good and work righteousness, so far as they know, yet they cannot come to a knowledge of God, nor become acquainted with eternal things without the Gospel; without the gift of the Holy Ghost, the spirit of revelation which proceeds from God. And who are to have this? All who obey. "But I thought," say some, "that that was confined to some one or two, or to half a dozen or a dozen, as the case may be, and that the whole people had nothing to do with it." This is a very great mistake, and I will now show you the difference between that and the things as they exist in the world; between the position that we occupy and the position that the world occupy.

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The world, as I have told you, unaided by the gift of the Holy Ghost, unaided by the Gospel and the light of revelation, are left to grope a good deal in the dark. But not so with the Saints of God; no matter in what age of the world they may have lived, they have been placed under other circumstances; they have had the light of truth to guide them, and revelation direct from the Lord. And here is the difference between one and the other. When Nicodemus came to Jesus he went to him by night; he was much like some men are in this our day, with respect to their private feelings for the "Mormons;" they respect the "Mormons," they cannot help doing so, but they do not want it known; for the Latter-day Saints, like the former-day Saints, are not popular; in fact, we are considered by many as they were, to be of disreputable character, a people with whom it would

not be considered proper to associate. This was the character that the Savior bore among the self-righteous but hypocritical religionists of His day. Yet we call Him the Son of God. And we find Nicodemus, a prominent man, a man of discernment and ability, creeping around the back door, not wishing it to be known that he had called upon the "Mormons" – oh, no! – Jesus of Nazareth; yet he wished to find out something respecting Him, for he believed that no man could do the things that He did except God were with him. Jesus in explaining the Gospel to him, told him that he, in order to understand His teachings and His works, would have to be born again. Nicodemus could not appreciate this saying, he knew not what the Savior meant, thinking the saying referred to a man's natural birth. The Savior then told him, that unless a man was born of the water and of the Spirit, he could not enter the kingdom of God; that he could not comprehend it; that he could not even see it; that he could not understand the relationship that existed between God and man without the gift of the Holy Ghost. The question would naturally arise, how could man become possessed of this heavenly gift? There was a young man, for instance, a highminded, honorable young man, who went to Jesus, and addressing Him, said, Good Master, what good thing can I do to inherit eternal life? Jesus said, Thou knowest the commandments, "Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not commit adultery, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honor thy father and mother, and love God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself." And the young man said that these things he had done from his youth up. Jesus then told him to go and sell all that he had and give to the poor, and to come and follow Him; promising him that he should have treasures in heaven, or in other words he should have eternal life, and should drink of the streams whereof make glad the city of our God. But the young man went away sorrowful, for he had much possessions.

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In regard to the Holy Ghost of which we have spoken, we are told that the disciples were instructed to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endowed with power from on high. They did so, and when they were assembled together in one place with one accord, making prayer and supplication unto the Lord, the spirit of God descended upon them as a mighty rushing wind and rested upon them. And they began to speak in tongues as the Spirit of God gave them utterance. There were people there from different nations, and they heard them speak in their own tongues the wonderful works of God. Some who were present said they were drunk. "These men are drunk with new wine," said they. "Why, no," said Peter, "it is only the third hour of the day" – that is about nine o'clock in the morning. People do not generally get drunk as early as that. What did this all mean? Peter said unto them: "This is that which was spoken of by the Prophet Joel, and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit; and they shall prophesy." In other words, it shall bring them into relationship with God; it shall open the visions of their minds; it shall inspire them with the spirit of revelation; they shall have a hope that enters within the veil, whither Christ our forerunner hath gone: and being led and directed under the inspiration of God, they shall have one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, and be guided in the ways of all truth. Well, when the people asked what they were to do to be saved, they were not told as the Pharisees would tell them, or as the Essenes, or as the Sadducees, or any of the other parties; but they were told to repent and be baptized every one of them in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and they were promised that they should receive the Holy Ghost. In other words, they would be born of water and of the Spirit, and be made new creatures in Christ Jesus. What, then, would the Holy Ghost do for them, and wherein was the difference and the distinction between that and the other spirit – that is, the spirit which the people of the world had; for they had a conscience accusing or excusing them, and many of them felt a desire to do right. But the gift of the Holy Ghost was to place them in a position whereby they could know and comprehend for themselves. What was the command of Jesus to His disciples? "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow those that believe." What signs? Why, the sick were to be healed, the lame were to be made to walk, the blind to see, and the deaf to hear, and the poor were to have the Gospel preached to them. Now, what did Jesus tell His disciples the Holy Ghost should do when it came? He promised – "It shall lead you into all truth?" What shall it do? Lead you into all truth – not into a diversity of sentiments, not into differences of doctrine, not into a variety of ordinances, but you shall see alike, comprehend alike and understand alike. "It shall lead you into all truth." What else shall it do?

It shall bring things past to your remembrance, so that you will be able to comprehend the things of God as they have existed in the different ages on the earth and with the Gods in the eternal worlds, and you shall see eye to eye. And the Scriptures say that when the Lord shall bring again Zion her watchmen shall see eye to eye. They shall see alike, they shall comprehend alike, they shall be under the same influence. What else shall it do? It shall show you of things to come. You shall be enabled to look through the dark vista of the unborn future, to draw aside the veil of the invisible world, and comprehend the things of God; to know your destiny and the destiny of the human family, and the events that will transpire in coming ages and times. That is what the Holy Ghost, will do, and therein is the difference between that Spirit and the little portion of that spirit which is given to every man to profit withal. In other words, men are inducted into the family of God and the household of faith, and they become heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Did the disciples promise these things in their day? Yes, they did. Did the people who obeyed the Gospel receive them? Yes, they did, and so evident was it in many instances that Simon Magus, who, when he saw that the disciples by laying on of hands conferred the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the people spake with tongues and prophesied under its influence, offered the Apostles money, with the expectation that they would confer it upon him for his money, so that he might possess this great power. But he was answered immediately: "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money." These men in that day possessed a hope that bloomed with immortality and eternal life – a hope which it was said entered within the veil whither Christ our forerunner hath gone. And then there were a great many of the same class of people to whom Paul alludes when he says: "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, afflicted, tormented," &c. And, says Paul, "For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country * * * Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." They have obtained a hope that others have not. They have received intelligence which others do not possess. Now, what is the promise that is made to the world to day when the Elders of the Latter-day Saints preach the Gospel to them? What have I proclaimed to them? What have hundreds of Elders that are here to-day proclaimed to them? They have told them to repent of their sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus, for the remission of sins, and they should receive the Holy Ghost. What Holy Ghost? The same as men had in former times, possessing the same certainty, the same intelligence, the same knowledge and faith, and the same relationship to God. And we in our day are taught as they were in their day to add to our faith virtue, to virtue brotherly kindness, to brotherly kindness charity, etc., that if these things dwell in us and abound we shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ – not in the "guess so," not in the opinions, not in the notions, not in the ideas, not in the theories of man, but in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is the position which the Saints in these times are called to occupy; this is the thing that has been promised to the Latter-day Saints; this is the principle which they themselves have received, and you Latter-day Saints are witnesses of these things of which I speak. I speak of things that I know; I testify of things that I have seen and that you comprehend, and it is by that very principle that you have been gathered together here into these valleys of the mountains. Here is the difference between uncertainty and doubt, and truth, certainty and intelligence. The Spirit of God bears witness with our spirits – if we are living our religion and keeping the commandments of God – that we are the children of God, as it did to the former-day Saints, and there is no guessing and no uncertainty about the matter. We know in whom we have believed; and if the Latter-day Saints have not this Spirit it is because they are not living their religion and keeping the commandments of God. Very well, this being the difference, what next? Why we are told in this day to proclaim the Gospel to the world as they did in former days. What has been told to the Elders of Israel in these days? "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." Just the same as it was in former days. And have we done it, and are we doing it? Yes. I myself have traveled hundreds of thousands of miles to proclaim this Gospel, without purse or scrip, trusting in the God of Israel; and I would rather go forth trusting in God for my subsistence, backed up by the Lord God of Hosts and by the Spirit of God, and under the promise of God, than under the promise of any earthly potentate that could be found in any part of the world. Why? Because God is always true to His word and sustains those who put their trust in Him. And hence we say it is a certainty. What is the feeling to-day amongst our Elders? Why here are hundreds of them going on missions, and they keep going. And what is their feeling? I receive numerous letters something like the following: "I have been called to go upon a mission. I esteem it an honor to be engaged in the service of God, and to be a messenger of salvation to my fellow-men, and I will try to be ready at the time appointed and

fulfill the duties required of me." These and similar letters keep flowing in; and the Elders go forth in the name of Israel's God bearing precious seeds, the seeds of eternal life, as messengers to the nations of the earth, the legates of the skies, commissioned by the Great Jehovah to proclaim the words of life to the world, and they return again rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them. This is one work we have to do. Sometimes I think that some of our Elders scarcely understand this matter as fully as they might, and I will here make a remark in relation to it. They say that people pay very little attention to them in some parts; in others a great many are baptized, etc. Now, the Elders are not responsible for the actions of other men. It is their business to go and preach the Gospel and to use all diligence and faithfulness and be earnest and emphatic, and to seek for the guidance and direction of the Lord in the proclamation of his word; but they have nothing to do with the people receiving or rejecting their message. If they receive it, it is for their benefit; if they reject it, it is to their condemnation. But the Elder is not responsible whether they receive it or not. If he fulfills his duties he does just as much in that respect as if thousands were to receive it. But, thousands are receiving it, and we are doing our work and performing our duties, and sending forth the Gospel. And then when we have done that, what else? Why, that is all we can do. Preach these things to the world; deliver the testimony that God has given to us. And what then? Are we to persecute them because they do not believe as we do? I think not. Shall we try to crowd them, and tell them they have not right government and right laws, and that they are wrong in every particular in regard to these matters? I do not know that that is any part of our business. Our business is to preach the Gospel, and if they do not receive it, leave them, that is all. In some particular cases, when the disciples in former days went and preached the Gospel, and the people would not receive it – Jesus told them to go and wash their feet as a testimony before Him in regard to that matter, and he would deal with such people Himself. We have to leave those things in the hands of God, for the nations as well as ourselves are all in the hands of God. It is true that it is said of the Twelve Apostles that hereafter they shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, but it is also true that John the Revelator says, "I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works." It is said again that the Saints shall judge the world, but that is not yet; our business now is simply to preach the Gospel and deliver our testimony, to gather together the elect from among the nations, and having faithfully performed our duty to leave the events pertaining to others in the hands of God.

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We have gathered to these valleys of the mountains. What duties now devolve upon us? To build up a Zion unto our God. And who is...

[to be continued in volume 24]