

## ZION AND HER REDEMPTION.

*A lecture delivered by Bishop O. F. Whitney, in the Eighteenth Ward Chapel, Sunday evening, September 22d, 1889, and subsequently in other Wards of the city and towns of the Territory.*

[REPORTED BY F. HANNERMAN.]

THERE is but one thing that mars my peace this evening, and that is to see so many who have done me the honor to come here tonight, obliged to stand. Our hearts are large enough for you all, brethren and sisters, but the seating capacity of our house is limited. I trust, however, that you will not get tired of the "good standing"—as Brother Nicholson aptly expresses it—in which you find yourselves, and that all may be refreshed spiritually and temporally by what the Lord shall see fit to bring forth for our interest and edification. I, therefore, place myself in His hands, and throw myself upon your faith and prayers, and crave your kind attention while I proceed to express some thoughts which I have had heretofore, and others with which the Lord may inspire me at this time, on the subject of Zion and her Redemption.

We are all familiar with the terms "Zion" and "Redemption." Many of us have heard them from our childhood, lisped at our mother's knee, and from the pulpit, by the Priesthood of God, we have been taught to look forward to the day of Zion's redemption; and many of you who have gathered from the nations of the earth have had a still more intelligent idea of the subject, for when you heard the Gospel in foreign lands, preached by the Elders of Israel, among the first things they taught you were that they had come from the land of Zion, and that you were expected to gather to Zion. Many of you have left native land, forsaken father, mother, wife, husband, children and friends; forsaken all, like the Apostles in days of old, and followed the footsteps of your Savior. You have done this for the purpose of gathering to Zion, in order that you might help build up Zion; for this was the object of your coming here. You turned your backs upon Babylon, upon the world with all its interests and allurements, with all that it could afford, with all it could give you of pleasure or of temporal profit. You placed these things upon the altar of sacrifice, and came to this land to learn more fully of the ways of the Lord and to do your little, your best, towards the

building up of His Zion. But how many of those who are here tonight actually comprehend, away down in the depths of their souls, what is meant by Zion, and what is meant by the redemption of Zion? It will be my pleasant task, as I am aided by the Spirit, to throw a few rays of light, if I may, upon this subject, to remind some of you, perchance, of things which may have become dim in your memories, and to instruct others—particularly the young—concerning a subject which is second to none in the interests, the hopes, and the anticipations of the people of God in these days.

Let us first ask the question, What is meant by "Zion?" In the Hebrew, from which language this holy book, the Bible, was translated, Zion means "a hill." One of the hills in the city of Jerusalem was named Mount Zion; and it was here, after King David had captured the city, that he built his royal palace and reigned over the kingdom of Israel gloriously. The Prophet Joseph Smith has given another definition of the term. It will be found in the body of this book, the Doctrine and Covenants, containing the revelations of God through his prophet in these days, just as the Bible contains the revelations of His will, and the history of His people, in ancient days. The Prophet Joseph Smith impressed a great lesson upon the minds of his people, when he voiced that terse and simple utterance: "This is Zion—the pure in heart."

Now one is a physical, or literal, definition of the term—"Zion, a mountain," and the other is a spiritual definition: "Zion, the pure in heart." Yet it is none the less significant: for as the mountain towers above the plain, as the great peaks of these ranges lift their heads above the valleys where we dwell, so must the Zion of God, the pure in heart, be lifted up, not in pride and vanity, but by their purity and righteousness above the level of the rest of mankind. Therefore, Zion, in its temporal and in its spiritual significance, means something high and lifted up, and it is in this sense that the prophets of old used it when speaking of Mount Zion, meaning not only that little hill in the city of Jerusalem, but in its grander and broader significance, the people of God, the pure in heart, who were to rise above and become superior to the rest of mankind.

Latter-day Saints, it was for this purpose that you gathered to Zion. Young men and young women of this people, it was for this purpose that you were born upon this favored

land, the land upon which God intends to build the city of Zion, to erect His holy Temple, upon which the glory of God will rest, and reflect from the towers of the city, from the spires of the Temple, from the hearts and minds of the pure, the noble and the righteous, to give joy to all the world. Then will be fulfilled the words of the Prophet Isaiah, who spake concerning Zion:

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee; for behold darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee; and the Gentiles shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

This is no dream, brethren and sisters. It is no whim or fancy of men. It is an inspired utterance, the heaven-born thought of a holy man of God, who spake as he was moved upon by the Holy Ghost. And this is a portion of the destiny of this people—to build up such a Zion; and not only to build a city—that I conceive to be a comparatively insignificant portion of the great mission devolving upon us—but to prepare a people, the pure in heart, for the coming of the Lord Jesus to reign in His glory.

This is the dispensation of the fulness of times. In this dispensation the Almighty intends to fulfil and complete all works that He has begun in every other age of the world, that were not completed in themselves. Other dispensations flow into this one as the rivers empty into the ocean. All past ages are tributary to this. All that the Prophets have spoken in former times will have a complete and glorious fulfilment in this the dispensation of the fulness of times. The Lord has decreed and has already set His hand to gather in one, all things in Christ, both in heaven and on earth.

Now it has been a portion of the Lord's plan from the beginning to foreshadow the coming of great events. From the earliest times the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was slain as a Lamb from the foundation of the world, was typified, all down the ages, by the sacrifice of lambs, and of other animals that were slain and offered upon altars for the purpose of keeping alive and perpetuating in the hearts of the children of God this great event towards which His people have ever looked as to the beacon of their salvation, the anchor of their hope; even to the time when the Son of God, the Savior, would descend from heaven and take upon Him flesh and lay down His life that this world might be redeemed.