

long a period (for our emigration from Europe commenced in 1840, and it has been continuous from that time to the present), and yet nothing serious happened them. But there has been and is a protecting care over this people, because the Elders who have had charge of companies have generally been men of God, who have sought to know the mind of the Lord, and who have been led by revelation from Him.

In this manner this whole work has been carried on from the beginning. The servants of God have sought to know the mind and will of God, and they have obtained that knowledge, whereby they have been enabled to lead the people. These valleys have been settled in this way and by this spirit. We, therefore, are living witnesses of the truth that God lives, and that He bestows His gifts, as in ancient days, upon His servants. We profess, as the ancients did, to have the gifts of the Spirit of God. We teach the people to seek for these gifts. We say that God is the same today that He was yesterday; that in Him there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. But men want to know why if this be the case, there is not more knowledge, more revelation, more of these gifts from Him. The absence of these gifts is due to unbelief. Men do not seek for these things, because they do not believe in them; and they have cast out every man that professed to believe in these principles and in this power. They have been prompted by Satan, who would have destroyed this whole Church long ago if God had permitted it; but He has restrained Satan, because this is the dispensation of the fullness of times, and the promise has gone forth that this Gospel shall not be taken from the earth again and the Church will not be destroyed. But this spirit of Satan that you see manifested is the spirit that crucified the Son of God, and that slew His Apostles, and that has slain the Prophets in our day. It is the spirit that drove this Church out from the midst of civilization, and compelled us to take refuge among the Indians in this far distant region. It is the same spirit that has annihilated every principle of faith in men. It has been a constant warfare to maintain the principles of the Gospel and to declare them to the people. Men who have gone forth to preach this Gospel have been exposed to violence in every form. Not only have their characters been maligned, and their names cast out as evil, but bodily violence has been extended to them. It is only the power of God that has kept this Church in existence up to the present time. But it is in existence, God has revealed the Gospel. He has restored the ordinances and the gifts, and He has communicated His mind and will to men once more; and there are men on the earth who know these things.

Now, our young men and all who have been engaged in the work of God as missionaries should not allow themselves to be diverted from these labors and to have another spirit take possession of them. I can bear testimony to all—there ought to be no necessity for it, however, because the men that have gone forth to preach the Gospel ought to know for themselves how much happiness they have had in that labor—but I do bear testimony that through my life, notwithstanding the trials and vicissitudes, I have had to pass through, I have been happy in the principles of the Gospel. I have thanked God, and do every time I think of it, that I am a Latter-day Saint, because the knowledge of the truth and the Spirit of God have gladdened my entire existence. And I rejoice in it as much today, I am thankful to say, as I ever did in my life. I know, therefore, that there is no path that we can pursue, there are no labors that we can

perform, that will be so replete with happiness and bring such peace and joy as keeping the commandments of God and being zealous and faithful in His work. This is my testimony; and I have had abundant opportunities in my life to prove it. My life has not run in one channel; it has not been surrounded by one set of circumstances; but it has been greatly varied, and in this variety of circumstances I have proved it. And in saying this I know I only give voice to the testimony of hundreds of others in this congregation who have had similar experience. There is, therefore, every incentive for us to be faithful to the cause of God, and get all the benefit and blessing and all the gifts that can be obtained.

I am very desirous that the Latter-day Saints should keep their second estate. Every one who is present before me kept his and her first estate. The Lord has revealed to us that before we came here we had an existence. Our Savior existed before He came in the flesh. So did all of us. Our spirits existed with Him. The evidence that we kept our first estate is found in the fact that we are here, possessing tabernacles. Before man was placed on earth there was a rebellion in heaven. Not only has that fact been revealed to us, but it is to be found in the Bible also. The Lord has revealed to us, however, some other things connected with our pre-existence. He has told us that the plan of salvation was discussed in the councils of heaven. Lucifer, a son of the morning—not the Son—thought he had a better plan than that which the Father and the Lord Jesus were in favor of. He told the Father that he would save all mankind, by taking away from us our agency, and all he asked was that God would give him the honor. But the Savior was willing to come and do as the Father wished. This made Lucifer angry, and it is written that he led away after him one-third of the hosts of heaven. No doubt, he was a personage of great influence, and of great sophistry; for he succeeded in convincing one-third of the entire family of God that his plan was the better plan. He rebelled, and was thrust out; and the punishment was that he and his followers should not have tabernacles. And from that day to this they have striven continually to get possession of human tabernacles. We read of legion of devils being in a person, and when the Savior was about to cast them out, they begged that they might enter into the swine. Therefore, I say, the evidence that we kept our first estate is to be found in the fact that we are here today with tabernacles. There may have been, and doubtless were, differences of degree in our faith and our zeal. Some, no doubt, at that great crisis, were more valiant and steadfast than others. But that we all kept our first estate is evidenced by the fact that we are here.

We have been sent here with our agency, for the express purpose of being tested and proved. We have had this second estate granted unto us that it may be ascertained whether we shall keep it or not. A veil has been drawn between us and our Father in heaven. That which pertains to our pre-existent life is concealed from us, though there is scarcely a person of mature years perhaps who has not had some access to his mind a shadow of something that has occurred at some previous time which he could not recall; but our pre-existent state has been concealed from us, and wisely so, no doubt; for if it had not been, we should become so tired of this existence and its trials that we could not be contented here. We are left to exercise our agency, just as we did in our first estate at the time of our trial, to see whether we will be faithful to God in this second estate. We are shut out, as I

have said, but God points out to us the way in which we should walk. He tells us what to do, and entreats us to be obedient to Him. He asks us to cultivate His Spirit, to seek to Him for light and guidance; and He promises us that if we will do this and be faithful to Him in this earthly existence, He will crown us with glory and will give unto us eternal happiness. We are the children of God. God is our Father. He wants us to be like Him. He wants us to enter upon a career that will lead us to as great heights as He has attained to. Therefore, it is well that we should be tested—tested even unto death, if necessary; because He intends to make us His heirs and to bestow upon us the glory that He possesses, leading us along in the path of progress till we will be in our sphere as He is in His sphere. But Satan has determined to destroy this plan. He has determined to lead away as many of the children of men as he possibly can.

Do you doubt the existence of a devil and of evil spirits? Need I ask the Latter-day Saints this? Have you not seen his spirit manifested? You have seen men and women in this Church who once were faithful and devoted to the work of God; but they fell into sin, and another spirit took possession of them. Men as high as members of the First Presidency have done this. I remember very well William Law, a counselor to the Prophet Joseph, a friend of the Prophet, a friend of God apparently, a staunch man in the Church; but he committed sin, and that man, who had occupied that high and exalted station, compassed the death of the Prophet. He was one of the chief conspirators in arranging plans for his destruction, and took an active part in urging on his martyrdom. Members of the Council of the Twelve Apostles also partook of the same spirit. It is the spirit that Satan possesses; for Jesus said of him that he was a liar and a murderer from the beginning. He is seeking constantly to destroy the work of God, filling men with his spirit, and urging them forward to acts of deadly hate, even to kill and to destroy. That is the spirit of Satan, and we see it manifested in men.

Brethren and sisters, God has sent us here. He has selected us from all nations where the Gospel has been preached, that we might be His instruments in laying the foundation of this work. A new era is dawning—a new epoch. There are a thousand years of peace ahead of us. The day is not far distant when Satan will be bound, when he shall not have power to tempt the nations, and when the reign of righteousness to which all the Prophets have looked forward will be ushered in. The Lord has gathered us from the ends of the earth for this purpose. The Latter-day Saints have heard the voice of the Shepherd, which filled them with joy, and they have come trooping to this land, imbued with peculiar feelings. A newly-begotten love has entered into their hearts, which has bound them together, and drawn them to each other; and they are now throughout these valleys, striving to lay the foundation deep and strong of the glorious work with which they have become identified, and working for righteousness.

It is for us to keep our second estate. We should think of this continually. The Elders who return from missions should think of it. "I want to keep my second estate, and to maintain my integrity as I did in my first. I want to be true to my Father, as I was true before I came into this earthly existence. I want to listen to Him. I do not want to listen to Satan, nor to be led by him. I want to say, 'Get thee behind me, Satan.' I have chosen my Father as my guide, and I will be led by Him all my days on the earth; I will not