

what was He when upon earth? He was a poor despised Nazarene—one who had not a place whereon to lay His head. But today He is the one—and rightly too—that is exalted above all the human family in the thoughts of the Christian people of the world. So it is going to be with the Prophet Joseph Smith. In his lifetime he was not appreciated; his virtues were not recognized; his goodness was not seen, except by a few who lived most closely to him, and who were filled with the same spirit that inspired his heart and moved him to the great works which he performed for the salvation of the children of men. But the further we go away from the period of his life the higher do we raise him in our estimation, the more glorious does his life appear to us, and the more exalted his character. And it is not to be doubted that a few centuries hence people will speak of Joseph Smith as one of the greatest men born of women—a prophet, second only to the Savior himself in the grandeur and the magnitude of the work which he was the instrument in the hands of God of accomplishing.

So it is in all the affairs of life. We look back upon the past and we draw from it our heroes and our idols. This is right, so far as those heroes and idols are of the right character. We look abroad upon the earth and our sympathy goes out to the afflicted of other nations. Yet, how do we treat the poor, the afflicted, and the suffering, whose cries are not heard through the newspapers of the land, but who are none the less sufferers though they may conceal their trials? Do we feel for those next door to us, who are within touch of us? Do we feel sympathy for their sufferings, and do our hearts yearn to extend help to them? I hope that we do, but I fear that we do not. It is so in the day in which we live concerning the men of God. Who among the people appreciate as they will do in future years the life, the example and the character of President Wilford Woodruff? Who is there today, excepting perhaps a very few, who can grasp the extent of his greatness? So it is in all our associations. We rub daily against great men and women. We jostle them in the battle of life. Some of the choicest spirits that God has ever deigned to bless the earth with are here upon the earth, and yet they are not recognized; they are unappreciated because they live today. Take it in the case of parents. Who of us, having lost children, do not think of them as the dearest and best children that God has given us? And filled with this spirit, how often do we not neglect the living ones, whose spirits are just as pure and whose virtues are just as numerous as those upon whom the hand of death has been laid? We worship those that are dead and forget our duty to the living. We are all more or less in the condition of those spoken of in the days of the Savior. We build monuments to the dead, we worship the memories of the past, and we forget the opportunities and blessings of the present and the spirits with whom we mingle every day of our lives. I do not wish for a moment to remove any desire from the hearts of the people to follow the glorious examples left by men of old. Rather would I elevate them and portray, if I had the language and power, the excellence of the work they did while they lived. But I do not want to see the people today get into a

condition where they do not appreciate the present, but will sigh with regret that they do not live in the days of old, when these worthy men walked upon God's footstool. I want to impress myself with the fact—and I would like to see it felt by all the people—that everything is here today that is needful for the benefit and the blessing of the children of men. You know how it is with you who have passed through childhood and youth; you look back with regret upon the moments that are lost, the hours in which you played truant from school, and the opportunities that you neglected. And sometimes we waste our lives in vain regrets of this kind, forgetting that today we are showing equal folly in wasting precious hours and days in regretting that which cannot be recalled. The thing for us to do today is, while filled with sorrow for past sins and follies, to improve the present, and not allow the days and the years to go by without a thought upon our parts as to the use to which they shall be put.

The spirit of the Gospel, I say, is diffused to a greater or lesser extent among this people. They feel that the world is their field; that men and women of every color and race need their attention. We do not know what is the cause of these different conditions in the affairs of men. Why is it that one man is black, another white, and another is yellow? One is bond and one is free? We say it is nature. But do you not suppose that there is some cause for this? There certainly is. Do you not suppose, my brethren and sisters, that your life here will have its effect upon your future? If not, what is the use of our struggles? If we are to be unrewarded for our good deeds, or unpunished for our bad deeds, what is the use of any effort or toil on our part? As we believe the Gospel to be true, we expect that what we do here will have an influence upon our future state. And as it will be in the future so it has been in the past, our conditions here are the result of what is behind us. We cannot remember what has occurred? We do not remember being at the laying of the foundations of this earth. God has thrown over our minds a veil through which the human eye cannot pierce. True, sometimes the Spirit of the Lord rests upon us and we see the past life almost as the present and realize how these things have occurred. We have a record of one great man to whom God made known some of the causes for existing conditions. He told Abraham that he was a choice spirit; that he was chosen before he came here for the work which he performed. Jesus, as we read in the scriptures, was the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. So it is with every man and woman who has taken part in the affairs of this world. They have been pre-ordained to the work which they have done. Not that men are predestined to destruction, or to follow iniquity and become corrupt; but we are pre-ordained to come through certain lineage and to do certain works. If we neglect the opportunities that are thrown in our way and forget the lineage through which we come, we may fail in the mission that God has assigned us upon this earth. So it is with the peoples who occupy this earth. Through some action that occurred in a former state, they have been placed in the various conditions in which they find themselves to-

day. But because men are born in ignorance, because they are blinded, because they are heathens, or because they are bondmen and cannot control their own actions, shall it be said that these men are to be condemned to eternal punishment? Not by any means. The plan of God is so broad and so permeated with mercy and justice that men and women, whatever their condition in life, will be judged according to the way they fulfil their mission. If a man is placed in a position where he never hears the name of Jesus, through whose name and none other the whole human family will be saved, is he to be condemned to hell and to suffer the torments of the damned? No, no. Human reason and all our nature cries out against such a punishment for the man who, through no fault of his own in this life, is prevented from hearing the name of Jesus, or receiving the Gospel. He will be judged according to the light which he has received; and if he is one of the uncivilized races of Africa who never associated with people of what we are pleased to call our intelligence, he will not be condemned to the punishment which the man will receive who, blessed with intelligence and light, yet turns his heart against the light and shuts out the intelligence which God would willingly bestow upon him. What is required of men here is that they should live up to their privileges which they enjoy, fill the measure of their own creation in usefulness, and show that they are filled with the thought, which should be even present with every child of God, that we are gods in embryo, and that we must ascend from one step to another until we reach a place similar to that which our elder brother Jesus occupies, and which the great Father himself has enjoyed and does enjoy. Is it blasphemy that the son should aspire to be like his father? Is it blasphemy to say that we are brothers of and joint heirs with Jesus Christ? And to say that we will some day be as our Heavenly Father is, creating and controlling worlds; that our posterity shall be, like the promise which was given to Abraham, as numerous as the sand upon the sea shore, or as the stars of Heaven? No, it is not blasphemy. It is the aspiration that should fill every soul and that should prompt us to walk steadily forward in the way that God has marked out. And in doing so, we do not rob our Father of His glory, nor of His power and majesty. We do not detract from His greatness, any more than the son does who seeks to follow the footsteps of his father. Such a son only adds to the glory and honor of his parents. So it is in our relationship to our Eternal Father. All the good that we can do, all the glory that we can attain, all the exaltation we can acquire, will only add to the greatness, the majesty and power of the great God who rules the universe and whose children we are. Therefore, it is our duty as people of God, professing to have the Gospel, to seek to spread abroad these principles and to make every man and woman in the world with whom we come in contact feel that instead of being their enemy we are their friends. Jesus said, when a certain lawyer asked Him which was the greatest commandment in the law,

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all