

us in our weakness. He will pardon our sins if we repent of them. Oh! sinners, if there are sinners here today—and we all are sinners; but if there are any who feel that they are almost lost, I say to you that God is ready to forgive your sins. He is ready to blot out your transgressions, if you will repent of them. Repentance is what He asks—true and heartfelt repentance of sin; then He will forgive your sins, and He will help you to overcome your weaknesses. He has not chosen any of you to be damned. If you are damned, it will be because you yourself have chosen to take the road that leads to damnation, and not because of any wish on His part or any predestination that He has ordained that such should be the case.

We find in the writings of the Apostles mention frequently made of the "elect" and of the "chosen." Well, we could do the same thing, writing in our day. How strange it is, and how it gives rise to this view, the experience that we have in the world in preaching the Gospel! We go into a neighborhood, and we gather in a few. The great masses of the people pay no attention to the message of salvation that we declare. Now, who are these that listen? Why, we might call them very truthfully the "elect," the "chosen," according to the grace of God, as the Apostles so frequently did. Yes, we are chosen, but it is not because the others are not chosen. It is because we, in the providence and mercy of God, have had our hearts softened, so that we have believed the truth when we heard it; we have received it and rejoiced in it. Therefore, we can be rightfully called the elect. But it is not because others are debarred from these privileges; but because we have chosen to accept the message of salvation. In this way the Lord inspired His servants in ancient days to speak and write as they did. They spoke about foreordination, about the elect and the chosen. But Paul, in this chapter that I have read, tells us who they are plainly; that "they are not all Israel which are of Israel." There are a great many that inherit the blessings of the covenant, who are of the seed of Abraham, who do not prove themselves worthy of it, and therefore they are not all Israel. If they had obeyed the commandments of God they would have been; they would have received all the promises made to the fathers. For be it known unto you that God makes covenants with men, and He blesses men, and He will bless their posterity. This ought to be an incentive to every man to live as he should do, not only for his own sake, but for the sake of his posterity. But are there not good men that have wicked children? Certainly. Nevertheless, God makes promises to His faithful children. He did to Abraham; yet Abraham had descendants who were wicked, and who did not live to inherit the blessings that God had promised to their great ancestor. But others received these promises; and all the families of the earth are blessed through

faithful Abraham, so we are told, and they are adopted into his family. God called Abraham His friend. What a great distinction! He called himself the God of Abraham. Then when Abraham had a son, He called Himself the God of Abraham and Isaac; and when Isaac had a son He called Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—three distinguished men, upon whom He sealed blessings, and to whom He gave great promises. He gave unto Abraham a promise that, if it were not considered disrespectful or irreverent, I would say was the promise that he should be as a God. He took him out and showed him the stars of heaven, and said that as the stars of heaven were innumerable for multitude, and as the sand on the sea shore was countless, so the seed of Abraham should be. His seed should people the earth, and in him all the nations of the earth should be blessed. He was counted so faithful that the Savior of mankind, the Lord Jesus Himself, came through his lineage.

So in our day, God blesses His faithful children. He gives unto them promises; and it is for this purpose that we rear temples, in which the servants of God can go and receive promises and have them sealed upon them, that their posterity and others will receive the benefit of in years and in ages to come. Men can have sealed upon them, by the authority of God, all those blessings that pertain to eternity, and that the Lord has made such frequent allusions to in the Bible. We should treasure these promises up in our hearts. They are not idle words, nor idle promises. When we are told that we shall come forth in the morning of the first resurrection, clothed with glory, immortality and eternal lives, and that blessing is pronounced upon us by the authority which God has restored to the earth, depend upon it, my brethren and sisters, that promise will be fulfilled. When the man of God says, I seal upon you thrones, and principalities, and powers, and dominions, and exaltations, with the blessings of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, rest assured that will be fulfilled, if you live for it, and not one word will fail. Years may elapse; no matter how many; but if the soul who receives this promise is faithful, every word of it will be fulfilled, because God cannot break His promise. He has made covenant with His children, and He is bound by His promise. It is that which makes Him God. He is a God of truth. He could not tell a lie. He could not deceive. He could not give a promise to a man without fulfilling it.

God knows everything connected with this work, from the beginning to the end. The troubles that we are now going through are all known to the Lord. He knew them before they took place. He knew the position we would be in. He knew how we would act. He knew it by His foreknowledge, which is infinite. He knows how these persecutions will terminate. He knows that salvation will come. He knows

that Zion has been founded, never to be overthrown. He has told us this will be the case. The gates of hell will never prevail against the Zion of God. No matter what we may go through, no matter what we may have to endure, this is the infallible promise of the Lord Eternal which is made to us. Though we may go through the deep waters, though we may pass through the fiery furnace, though we may endure severe trials, God knows them all, and He has prepared for them all by His wonderful providence. He will overrule them for His glory and for the salvation of His people. All that is necessary for us is to do our duty; put our trust in Him, under all circumstances; not let our faith fail, but rely implicitly and continually upon His promises, and He will bring us off triumphant in the end. God grant it unto all of us, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

CHURCH SCHOOL CONVENTION.

The Second Annual Convention of Church School Boards and faculties was held in the Social Hall, Tuesday, June 3, 1890, commencing at 10 a.m., President Wilford Woodruff presiding.

The meeting was opened with singing "We thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet," and prayer was offered by Dr. J. E. Talmage.

President Woodruff stated the object of the meeting to be the advancement of the Church School system. He spoke of the many difficulties in the way of this advancement, and the assistance which will accompany the laborers in this branch of the work of Zion. He blessed the labors being performed, and expressed his gratification at what had been accomplished in the past.

General Superintendent K. G. Maeser followed, expressing his realization of the importance of this gathering. The speaker proceeded with the relation of his observations in the schools of Zion, and the sense he felt of the responsibility and blessings of those who have taken an interest in this movement. What has been done in the past is the work of God, who, by His Spirit has enabled the laborer to be performed acceptably.

The circulars issued to the various boards by the General Board, and especially Circular No. 5, point out the path that is to be pursued, and the requirements of that circular will not be fully complied with for some years to come. But God has accepted our simple means and efforts and has multiplied them in the minds of our students to an astonishing degree. This is the result of the influence of God's Spirit, and to Him must thanks and glory be given. This is said for our mutual understanding, and this expresses the whole sense of the church school work.

The speaker laid several points before the convention. It has been decided that for the first year each of the teachers labor under an annual license, and after that time