

How is that? The company has a journey of four months before them, through a country swarming with people whose business is robbery. They are well supplied with gold and silver so as to attract the attention of robbers. And yet no soldiers! Why did the king not send with them a few hundred armed men to see them safely through the wilderness? It will never do. And not even an experienced dragoman to guide them the shortest way! Why, this company will never come through alive! Not one soul of them will reach Jerusalem. Such a thing was never heard of before as penetrating the vast deserts without guide and guards. We must see Ezra about that.

Let us fancy ourselves in the presence of the venerable leader.

"Sir, if you will excuse us for the question, how is it that we find neither guide nor guard in your company of Saints? Surely, you cannot have forgotten a matter of so great importance?"

"O, no; it is not forgetfulness. I assure you, gentlemen, it has cost me a hard struggle to resolve upon this journey without an armed guard and without a guide. It has been the great trial of my life."

"Was not the king willing to send some soldiers with you?"

"Certainly. He has stated expressly that I should get everything I wanted for this journey, and he was most anxious that I should come safe through."

"Then, we do not understand."

"Well, gentlemen, you see I have so often told the king that our God was with us for good, that I was ashamed to ask for soldiers and guides from him. I have resolved to trust in God alone, that He will show us our way and save us from the enemy. This is my reason, gentlemen." (See Ezra viii: 21-23.)

Brave, noble Ezra! We understand you. You had so often spoke about your God as a mighty God, that you would not contradict yourself by asking a poor mortal king to rescue both you and your God from the hands of a few robbers. What an instance of practical faith is this! Faith indeed!

EZRA'S ARRANGEMENTS.

Human understanding, reckoning without a personal God superintending earthly affairs, may sneer at the childlike faith of Ezra and call his journey a mad undertaking. But the whole narrative shows that this servant of God knew well what he was doing. He did not go unguarded, although human eye could discover no soldiers, no lances. On the contrary, for three days he fasted and prayed, and we may well conclude, did not move until he was assured in his own heart that he really stood under divine protection. Having this assurance, how much greater was his security than if he had had a whole regiment of Babylonians guarding him. Is it madness to trust in God, who made the heavens and the earth and ourselves? Or, must God be trusted only when the danger is not so great?

Ezra did not take this view. He

needed God's help, and he sought it in earnest prayer—the means which God has appointed for the reception of blessings. Having done this, he simply trusted in God and went, and was justified by the issue. For we read: "And our God's hand was over us, and He saved us from the hand of the enemy on the way, and we came to Jerusalem." Not one was missing; not a dollar had been lost on the way; all was safely brought to the house of God.

Here we see the triumph of faith. Ezra acted as a true Saint of God.

EZRA'S FAITH STILL NEEDED.

One reflection or two: Human wisdom would undoubtedly have suggested and insisted on another course altogether. She would have preached about the necessity of exercising one's judgment in such matters, of taking all the precautions available, and trusting in God for the rest. She would have told us that we must not "try" or "tempt" God, but take the king's soldiers as a help from God, and by such sophisms she might have succeeded in appeasing a less pure conscience than Ezra's.

We are willing to admit that there is such a thing as "tempting" God, but we do not believe that anybody can do this with too much real, genuine faith. On the contrary, the greatest danger of our sleeping time is too little faith. Where are the men who disdain to wait at the steps of worldly powers and humbly beg those to help them in carrying out the purposes of God? Where are those noble enthusiasts who dare not only to profess that God is with them but also to prove it by trusting God alone when there is danger and the world is willing to help? Such men God needs in these times, when His great purposes are about to be accomplished. For only through such can the honor be His. Had Ezra asked the king to help him, the honor would have been the king's. As it was, it was God's.

Through such faith Moses led the children into Canaan; through such faith Jesus became the Savior of the world; through such faith the Apostles overturned the heathen idols; through such faith Joseph Smith became great in this generation; and through such faith the millennial reign will be ushered in.

J. M. S.

HAIFA, April 27th, 1889.

HOME FROM A MISSION.

On June 1 we had a pleasant call from Elders Edwin Udall, of Nephi, Junb County, and Ammon Hunt, of Moure, Sevier County. Both brethren left this city May 2, 1887, on a mission to the Northwestern States, from which they returned on Wednesday evening.

Elder Udall was assigned to the Iowa Conference, where he labored six months. He was then sent to Nebraska for six months, when he returned to Iowa, spending the summer of 1888 in that State. His next field was in Missouri, and the closing months of his mission were

spent in Kansas. In Iowa the people pay no attention to missionaries; in fact they give little heed to religious matters. The Elders were not molested, though they were frequently threatened with violence and even death.

When in Nebraska, Elder Udall was better treated, some of the people being very kind. On one occasion, after holding a meeting, a man got up and denounced the Prophet Joseph. He went on with a tirade of abuse, which the Elders did not make an effort to interrupt. Finally a number of young men who had attended the meeting grew tired of his harangue and asked him to stop. A fight followed, in which the disturber was thrown out of the house. On the outside another fight ensued, which was engaged in by parties who had come to the meeting with the intention of ill-using the Elders, but were turned from their purpose by the course affairs had taken.

At another time, in Atchison County, Missouri, Elder Udall had held a meeting one Sabbath afternoon, there being a good attendance. He announced another meeting for the evening. The services had just commenced when the house was broken into by a mob, and the leader of the attacking party said, "Mormonism has gone far enough in this State. Go for them!" The latter remark was addressed to his companions, but for some reason they did not obey. Some of them began talking to the Elders, who replied. Finally the younger men of the party began to realize the impropriety of the course they had taken, and announced that they would give the Elders fair play. This had the effect of precipitating a quarrel among the mob, and a free fight followed. As there was no use for the Elders there at such a time, they took their leave.

There were many other occasions when Elder Udall was threatened, but on no occasion was he injured. It was usually the case that the young men would take his part, and then a quarrel would arise in the ranks of those who wished to injure him.

While he was in Missouri, Elder Udall visited Jackson County. When he was there a lawsuit was going on concerning the Temple property, which was claimed by both Josephites and Hedrickites. The former are erecting quite a large edifice on the Temple lot.

Elder Udall had good health except during a portion of the time he was in Kansas, when he was stricken down with malarial fever. For two weeks he was confined to his bed. He was then at St. Johns, Kansas, where he was carefully nursed and attended to by the Saints, who showed him every kindness in their power.

Elder Hunt spent the first eighteen months of his mission in Iowa, traveling in various parts. The people in that State are bitterly prejudiced against the "Mormons;" very few will ever listen to them, and then only through curiosity. With very few exceptions, they are not even hospitable, and conse-