

existed and have been practiced from the days of the Apostles of Jesus up to the present. It was only by assimilating itself to the pagan practices and adopting heathen customs and ceremonies that any form of Christianity was able to prevail or to maintain itself, apparently. Every man that professed to have revelation from God was killed, until all those who had the pure authority from God disappeared from among men, and corruptions of an indescribable character have existed from that day until the present time. God withdrew the Priesthood from among men. The men who bore it were slain and taken back to heaven, and the Priesthood remained there until the Lord condescended to send messengers from the eternal world to restore it once more to the children of men upon the earth. The authority to administer the ordinance of baptism, the authority to lay on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost, the authority to organize the Church of Christ, to guide it and to receive revelations for the Church—that authority had to be restored, and we testify that it has been restored in our day and is once more upon the earth, and the ordinances of life and salvation are administered with an authority recognized of God.

Hence the change that has taken place in the last sixty years. A new thing is seen in the earth. An organization exists that is similar in every respect to the organization in the days of the Apostles of Jesus—an organization possessing the same officers, claiming the same authority, teaching the same doctrine, administering the same ordinances, and, that which is most glorious to contemplate, having the same blessings and gifts following the administration of the ordinances; men and women by the thousands receiving a testimony from God that their sins are remitted by the ordinance of baptism as administered unto them, and testifying also that they have received the gift of the Holy Ghost under the administration of these men who are the servants of God. We have this before us today. It is not a chimera; it is not something that is fanciful; it is tangible—before our eyes—that we can see and examine and test for ourselves, and it is not a cunningly devised fable. Those who become members of the Church are witnesses for God, testifying that this is true, and that they have received these blessings as they have been promised, and as they read of them in the scriptures.

But let me ask again, Is the plan of salvation confined to these ordinances and principles to which I have referred? No. If we could understand it as it is, the plan of salvation embraces everything that belongs to men in the flesh on the earth. In the mind of our God there is no distinction between that which is spiritual and that which is temporal. He uses this phrase in revelations to us because He adapts Himself to our condition and to our mode of looking at affairs; but with Him there is no distinction between temporal and spiritual things. There is no distinction between spiritual salvation—of course, with some qualification—and temporal salvation. Our bodies are as dear in the sight of God as our spirits. Our spirits cannot be separated from our bodies, to have us perfect. The body and the spirit are the soul of man; not the spirit alone, not the body alone, but the body and the spirit. And God gives reve-

lations for the temporal salvation of His children—that is, for the salvation of their bodies—and they are as important in their place as His revelations concerning their spirits. Hence it is that the Latter-day Saints are a practical people. We have offended the religious world because we deal so much in temporal things and speak so much about them, as though they were a part of salvation. Well, we view them as being a part of salvation. But it gives offense to many, and they think that it is improper for men who are ministers of religion to meddle with such things. We have had that to contend with from the beginning, especially since we gathered together. It has been necessary that there should be care bestowed upon the temporal salvation of the people, and the leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have been animated by the Spirit of God to do this, and to provide, by counseling in the greatest wisdom that they could obtain, for the deliverance of the people from evils which threatened them. In early days in these valleys this was recognized more than it is at the present time. Various causes have operated to produce changes in this respect, some of which I think very unhappy. There was a time when it was absolutely necessary that the people should be counseled upon many points which affected their temporal salvation. As I have said, everything that belongs to man's existence on the earth and to his existence hereafter is a part of the Gospel. There is no truth that does not belong to the plan of salvation. You cannot get outside of that plan and think, "Well, this is something that does not pertain to the Gospel." If it be a truth pertaining to the starry heavens; if it be a truth concerning chemistry; if it be a truth in relation to the formation of the earth, or what we are pleased to term geology; if it be a truth in physics, in mechanics, or a truth of any kind, it belongs to God the Eternal Father and to the system of salvation that He has revealed. It was a truth, and a most important truth, that men in the days of Noah should be warned that there was a flood coming. It had been predicted, according to revelation, years and years—centuries it may be said—before it came. Enoch knew of it. In his record he has left a knowledge of it, which God gave to him. It was revealed to him that the flood was coming upon the earth, and that man would be destroyed because of his wickedness, and that it was reserved for one of his descendants to start, as it were, a new creation. That was an important truth. If the inhabitants of the earth at that time had received it, it would have saved them. It was a part of the plan of salvation at that time, and was revealed for the purpose of saving the inhabitants of the earth, if they would accept it. It was a truth connected with salvation that the Israelites should flee out of Egypt. We are not told how many there were that did not obey that cry. In fact, many suppose that all did. I do not think so. Knowing human nature as I think I do, and having seen illustrations in our experience concerning these things, I would not be surprised if we should yet learn that hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Israelites refused to obey the command of the Lord through Moses, and remained with the fleshpots in Egypt. But whether this is so or not makes no particular difference to us now. It certainly

was a part of the plan of salvation that they should leave Egypt at that time and be delivered from the thralldom in which they were and lay the foundation of a new order of things in the holy land, as it has since been called. So it has been from that time until the present. God has revealed various matters to His servants and counseled them to do certain things, and prophets have been raised up who have counseled kings and rulers, and who have told them what to do and how to do in order to escape threatened evils. In their battles, in their famines, and in various events, righteous men have stood up in the land who, enlightened by the spirit and revelations of God, have been enabled to counsel these ruling men, and this counsel has proved salvation to those who accepted it. So it has been in our day. It is a part of salvation today.

The Lord has revealed the gathering. In one sense, it is not an ordinance of the Gospel; but it is a command of God which, when obeyed, results in salvation. God commanded His servants to teach this doctrine to the inhabitants of the earth, and to inspire them with a disposition to gather together; and confirmatory of the teachings of His servants He poured out upon those who received the Gospel the spirit of gathering. This spirit filled them and they had the testimony concerning gathering, just as they had regarding the other requirements of the Gospel. How many thousands there are who can recall how this spirit of gathering burned in their bones and in their hearts; how they felt concerning it; their yearning desire to gather with the saints of God; and everything that had been dear to them before in connection with their surroundings lost its attraction, and their eyes were turned to Zion. They wanted to go where the servants of God were; to listen to their voices, to be in their presence, to receive of their teachings, and to rejoice in the spirit of the Gospel in the place which God had appointed. I say how many thousands are there throughout these valleys who had that feeling, and who can recall it, and in times when the Spirit of God rests upon them and their hearts are softened, weep with tears of joy, because God in His infinite goodness and mercy gave them that spirit and then provided the means by which they were enabled to carry out the desires of their hearts.

It is a part of the plan of salvation to us that we should gather together. We should not scatter. The spirit of scattering, I want to say to you Latter-day Saints, is not the spirit of the Gospel of the Son of God. There seems to be a growing disposition among us to scatter. We hear of some good valley, or some good region afar off, that we think we could live easier in. The climate is better perhaps; the facilities for living are better; the inducement of one kind and another are more attractive, and we want to draw off and go there. The First Presidency of the Church has this to meet occasionally. Letters are written to us, in which the great advantages of such and such places are set forth. Now, I want to say to you that this is not right. The spirit of the Gospel is a spirit of gathering, causing those who possess it to gather and to cling together, that they may build up Zion. What is Zion? We are told that it is the pure in heart. God wants to have a pure