

REMARKS

MADE BY

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[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

The remarks of Brother Orson Smith are of great interest to the people and are timely in their character. With him, I believe that the time is ripe for the accomplishment of the purposes of the Lord, and during his remarks a few paragraphs in one of the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants came to my mind, which I will read. When reading some of the first Elders out to preach the Gospel, the Lord said to them:

Behold, I send you out to reprove the world of all their unrighteous deeds, and to teach them of a judgment which is to come.

And whose receiveth you there will I be also, for I will go before your face: I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to hear you up.

Whoso receiveth you receiveth me, and the same will feed you, and clothe you, and give you money.

And he who feedeth you, or clothes you, or gives you money, shall in no wise lose his reward:

And he that doeth not these things is not my disciple; by this you may know my disciples.

He that receiveth you not, go away from him alone by yourselves, and cleanse your feet even with water, pure water, whether in heat or in cold, and bear testimony of it unto your Father which is in heaven, and return not again unto that man.

And in whatsoever village or city ye enter, do likewise.

Nevertheless, search diligently and spare not; and woe unto that house, or that village or city that rejecteth you, or your words, or your testimony concerning me:

Wo, I say again, unto that house, or that village or city that rejecteth you, or your words, or your testimony of me;

For I, the Almighty, have laid my hands upon the nations to scourge them for their wickedness:

And plagues shall go forth, and they shall not be taken from the earth until I have completed my work, which shall be cut short in righteousness.

Until all shall know me, who remain, even from the least unto the greatest, and shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord.

And again it is written:

And the Bishop, Newel K. Whitney, also, should travel round about and among all the churches, searching after the poor to administer to their wants by humbling the rich and the proud;

He should also employ an agent to take charge and to do his secular business as he shall direct;

Nevertheless, let the Bishop go unto the city of New York, also to the city of Albany, and also to the city of Boston, and warn the people of those cities with the sound of the Gospel, with a loud voice, of the desolation and utter abolishment which await them if they do reject these things;

For if they do reject these things the hour of their judgment is nigh, and their house shall be left unto them desolate.

On another occasion the Lord said to his servants:

Behold, I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor.

Therefore, they are left without excuse, and their sins are upon their own heads.

He that seeketh me early shall find me, and shall not be forsaken.

Abide ye in the liberty wherewith ye are made free; entangle not yourselves in sin, but let your hands be clean, until the Lord come;

For not many days hence and the earth shall tremble and reel to and fro as a drunken man, and the sun shall hide his face, and shall refuse to give light, and the moon shall be bathed in blood, and the stars shall become exceeding angry, and shall cast themselves down as a fig that falleth from off a fig tree.

And after your testimony cometh wrath and indignation upon the people;

For after your testimony cometh the testimony of earthquakes that shall cause groanings in the midst of her, and men shall fall upon the ground, and shall not be able to stand.

And also cometh the testimony of the voice of thunders, and the voice of lightnings, and the voice of tempests, and the voice of the waves of the sea, heaving themselves beyond their bounds.

And all things shall be in commotion; and surely men's hearts shall fail them; for fear shall come upon all people;

And angels shall fly through the midst of heaven, crying with a loud voice, sounding the trump of God, saying, Prepare ye, prepare ye, O inhabitants of the earth; for the judgment of our God is come: behold, and lo! the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.

It is well to remember, when reading these words, that we are not reading black letter in some ancient work about some ancient people; but we are reading the words of God as they have been revealed through the inspired prophet Joseph Smith, and they apply directly to the generation in which we live. It is the decree of the Lord that these judgments shall go through the earth. What for? To gratify and please the Latter-day Saint? No. To gratify any revengeful feeling that exists in the breast of God? No. Such a thing as that would be unworthy of the Father of the human race. It would not be worthy of or like God. When a wise parent corrects a child with corporeal punishment, is it to gratify revengeful feelings in the breast of the parent? That would be a very brutish idea of parentage. I believe that punishment should never be inflicted by a parent except for the correction and the reclaiming of the child. And I have always looked upon the judgments decreed of God and that have been predicted, both by ancient and modern prophets, as events which shall prove corrective of the evils that exist, and not to gratify revengeful feelings in the breasts of the Saints of God, who may have suffered at the hands of the wicked, much less to gratify any revengeful feelings in the heart of our Father in heaven. Suffering is the fruit of the transgression of law; and these predicted calamities which we call the judgments of God will be but the consequences of sin.

In the works of infidel writers the flood is referred to as an exhibition of cruelty on the part of Deity; and their descriptions of it have been drawn out in such a manner as to cast reproach

upon the justice and mercy of God. And at the first glance it seems difficult to justify such a great calamity as we regard the flood to be, by which the whole race of men was well nigh swept out of existence. The people of that generation, however, had corrupted themselves almost past our comprehension. It is written that the thoughts of their hearts were evil continually, and they were cursing their posterity with that inclination to evil which they had contracted by their wickedness. They would have stamped all succeeding generations with their own weaknesses and proneness to wrong doing; and those pure spirits that existed in the presence of God that had not yet tabernacle in the flesh would have had to come through that sin-cursed lineage and would have been placed at a great disadvantage in their probation, because parentage had a wonderful influence upon the formation of character. God knew this, and He knew that if that generation of men were permitted to continue propagating their species the result would be that a curse and not a blessing would be brought upon His children who lived with Him in heaven. In justice, then, to the untold millions of spirits that were to come to the earth, the Lord destroyed that generation of men that lived in the days of Noah. I see in that act an act of mercy rather than cruelty. The people in the days of Noah were cut off from the earth that their wickedness might not be perpetuated in their children, and a more righteous branch of the human family was preserved, that the spirits that had to tabernacle in the flesh might have a better parentage than the wicked antediluvians, and consequently a better prospect of successfully accomplishing their mission in this probation than they would by coming through a wicked parentage.

So in this generation the Lord has His purposes to accomplish, and we shall find that though there be apparent harshness in the carrying out of these purposes, mercy and justice will be properly balanced in the accomplishment of God's designs.

But here is what I would impress upon you: We have the decree of the Lord that after the testimony of His servants to this generation the calamities depicted in these revelations shall stalk abroad in the earth, and there shall be the testimony of cyclones, of tempests, of the sea heaving itself beyond its bounds, and of earthquakes, the hearts of men failing them for fear of the things that are coming upon mankind. Look upon our present condition. There is a lack of confidence existing everywhere, especially in regard to financial matters, and the hearts of men are failing them, and everybody is wondering and speculating about how and when we shall get rid of our present financial troubles. Well, for my own part I think perhaps we may from time to time bridge over little difficulties such as those that now confront us. But will they stay settled, and will the millennium of peace and prosperity come upon the inhabitants of the earth? I do not expect it until the judgments of God have accomplished their purpose. One of the ancient