

go forth and bear a true and faithful testimony to the nations of the earth and the isles of the sea and have preached unto them the gospel of Christ, and what has been the consequence?—The words of the Lord have been fulfilled to the very letter, for wherever this gospel has been preached there have been hypocrites, the wicked and ungodly, and there also have been the honest and the meek of the earth, and whoever have received this testimony, been baptized for the remission of sins, received the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost—have had their minds enlightened, and they have looked forward with an eye of faith to see the fulfillment of what God has promised.

Have we as a Church been disappointed in anything? No, we have not, but the Lord has fulfilled his promises in relation to the things of his kingdom.

The Lord has chosen men like Joseph and Hyrum, the Smith family and the Twelve Apostles, and they have been humble men in this church and kingdom, and almost all the officers have been called from the laboring class, from the plow, from the hammer and the anvil, and from nearly every occupation, and their words have pierced the honest in heart, for they have had all the power, blessings and knowledge which the Lord has given unto them, and they have given the honor and glory to God. I will venture to say there is no people upon the earth who have been picked up as we have been, for we have been gathered from all religions and sects.

The Elders have gone forth teaching and baptizing the people; they have laid their hands upon the sick and healed them, cast out devils, and had power to do all those things which the Lord has promised unto believers. Wherever the people have received the truth the signs have followed—the lame have been made to walk, the deaf to hear, the blind to see; fevers have been rebuked and the elements have been subject to the Elders of Israel. Where is there a man who has gone out to preach the gospel who has not been constrained by the Spirit to warn the people, as messengers of salvation, of the judgments that are coming upon the earth?

We have been called upon to warn all who came in our way, including kings, rulers, the rich and learned, as well as the poor and humble. It is true that the Lord might have enlightened the minds of the rulers, the rich and learned and chosen them to have performed his work in the establishment of his church upon the earth, but he never has seen fit to work through that channel, but he has ever chosen the poor and humble as his messengers upon the earth.

There is another thing which I desire to allude to, and that is the very excellent discourse we have heard to-day, and the testimony of the servants of God in relation to our present position. The opposition that we have had and the persecutions we have passed through have been alluded to by br. Taylor, and all those matters are in fulfillment of what the angel told br. Joseph, and as long as Satan rules in the world this spirit of mobocracy will manifest itself, even until the scenery shall be wound up, and until he who holds the keys of the bottomless pit shall bind him with a chain, cast him into the pit and shut him up, and put a seal upon him.

We expect this, it is what we are looking for, and yet we above all people have reason to rejoice; we have reason to rejoice in him who stands at the helm, and who has nourished and sustained this kingdom from the beginning. The God of heaven has never forsaken this work, but he has ever backed up his servants and opened their way before them.

How the soul of the Prophet rejoiced when he beheld the work of God spreading abroad in the earth, the truth received by the children of men, and the promises of God verified to the letter, in the gathering of the Saints and a way prepared for the establishment of Zion upon the earth.

We have had the holy Priesthood conferred upon us, and the power of God has surrounded us, so that we have been preserved thus far from the hands of our enemies in the midst of the many circumstances in which we have been placed. Those things should increase our faith before the Lord and give us confidence in his promises, and it should inspire our hearts to diligence in the fulfillment of every duty required of us.

The Lord says in the revelations contained in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants that this gospel shall be preached in all the world, and he commands his servants to call upon all nations to repent and obey the voice of God, to receive the gospel and the words of eternal life. He says:

“Lift up your voices and spare not. Call upon the nations to repent, both old and young, both bond and free; saying—Prepare yourselves for the great day of the Lord: for if I, who am a man, do lift up my voice and call upon you to repent, and ye hate me, what will ye say when the day cometh when the thunders shall utter their voices from the ends of the earth, speaking to the ears of all that live, saying: Repent and prepare for the great day of the Lord! yea, and again, when the lightnings shall streak forth from the east unto the west, and shall utter forth their voices unto all that live, and make the ears of all tingle, that hear, saying these words: Repent ye, for the great day of the Lord is com!”

6 And again, the Lord shall utter his voice out of heaven, saying: Hearken, O ye nations of the earth, and hear the word of that God who made you. O, ye nations of the earth, how often would I have gathered you together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not! How oft have I called you by the mouth of my servants, and by the ministering of angels, and by mine own voice, and by the voice of thunders, and by the voice of lightnings, and by the voice of tempests, and by the voice of earthquakes, and great hailstorms, and by the voice of famines and pestilences of every kind, and by the great sound of a trumpet, and by the voice of judgment, and by the voice of mercy all the day long, and by the voice of glory and honor,

and the riches of eternal life, and would have saved you with an everlasting salvation, but ye would not! Behold the day has come, when the cup of the wrath of mine indignation is full.

7 Behold, verily I say unto you, that these are the words of the Lord your God: wherefore, labor ye, labor ye in my vineyard for the last time; for the last time call upon the inhabitants of the earth, for in my own due time will I come upon the earth in judgment; and my people shall be redeemed and shall reign with me on earth; for the great millennial, which I have spoken by the mouth of my servants, shall come; for Satan shall be bound; and when he is loosed again, he shall only reign for a little season, and then cometh the end of the earth; and he that liveth in righteousness, shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye; and the earth shall pass away so as by fire; and the wicked shall go away into unquenchable fire, and their end no man knoweth on earth, nor ever shall know, until they come before me in judgment.—[Doc. and Coven., sec. xiv, page 177.]

I look upon these things; I reflect upon our government in the manner which has been referred to to-day; I look at the liberal laws and Constitution that exist in our land upon which our government is founded, and yet in the midst of all this we have not had the privilege of enjoying our rights, or worshipping God or enjoying our religion without persecution and oppression. The Lord has frequently given us revelations upon these things, and he has spoken concerning our government and Constitution, and he has said ye are justified in maintaining the Constitution and laws of the land for they make you free and the gospel maketh you free, and you shall seek to subvert good and wise men for rulers, and what so ever is more or less than this cometh of evil? Do you blame the Latter Day Saints? Can the Lord, can angels, or can anybody blame the Latter Day Saints for rejecting such cursed, corrupt scoundrels as we have had here? The laws of heaven command us not to uphold and sustain men except they are good men, who will sustain the Constitution of our country, and we are fulfilling the revelations in this respect as in many others, and we are carrying out the requirements of the Constitution of the United States.

We have fulfilled the law of God, and we have always been willing to receive and respect all good and wise men in carrying out the laws and Constitution of our country.

We have plead with the government, we have plead with the President and we have plead with the Senate of the United States to send us good men; br. Taylor has told us they will not do it, and why? Because they are not good themselves; they are not virtuous, they are not holy, and they will not acknowledge the hand of God at all, but seek to overthrow the blessings and spirit of that rich legacy bequeathed to us through the blood of our fathers—the Constitution. Here is where I consider that our nation, and the whole people of the United States, are under condemnation; it is because they have a constitution and laws of government, which the people control, for they elect their own officers, for all citizens have the right to vote for their governors, presidents and officers in general, and hence they come under condemnation. [Blessed the sacramental cup.]

The whole people have a vote in the selection of their officers and if they appoint wicked men for their governors and for their rulers, and then those rulers go to work and rule unrighteously, tyrannize over the poor and humble, and sacrifice human life to satisfy their wicked ambition, at whose hands will the Lord require the blood of the innocent? He will require it of those who elected the officers, for the responsibility does not rest alone upon the presidents, or governors, or judges, but it rests in a great measure with the people who placed them in power, when a nation becomes corrupt and appoint corrupt and wicked rulers and sustain them in their wickedness.

When Joseph and Hyrum Smith were murdered the greater part of the people rejoiced in it, and would remark that it was a pity the Smiths had died in the way they had, but it was a good thing they were out of the way. Governor Ford said, when speaking to the brethren in Nauvoo, that almost every man he talked with would say it was a pity the Smiths should die under the pledged protection of the Governor of the State, but yet they were glad they were dead. Will not God require an atonement at the hands of such men?

In as much as we have trusted in the Lord, and have found him true to his word, why should we not trust him now? If the harvest was ripe twenty or thirty years ago surely it is ripe now, for the Elders of Israel have gone forth to the nations, and the people have rejected their testimony.

The more I look at the words which the Lord has spoken concerning our enemies, and especially those of this nation, the more I become satisfied they will not escape the judgments of the Almighty any more than the Nephites of old did, or any of the other nations who have rejected the message sent unto them by the God of Heaven.—This nation are ripe in iniquity, and the destroying Angels are at their doors, and I am as sure that the scourges will follow, as I am that the servants of God have borne a true and faithful testimony unto them. I know what the consequence will be of the world rejecting the truth, for I have the testimony of Jesus and the Spirit of God within me, and therefore I say let us look well to our ways, remember our covenants, our duties and our prayers and I do hope and pray that the Elders in Great Salt Lake City, will not in the midst of their recreations neglect their prayers on their duties before the Lord, nor permit any thing to stand between them and the building up the kingdom of God.

Mormonism is just as good as it was a year ago. The gospel of Jesus Christ is as good as it was a year ago, or as it was in Kirtland or Nauvoo, and it is our privilege to continue to increase in blessings, glory, power and virtue from this time henceforth and for ever, and therefore I say brethren

and sisters let us lay these things to heart, and let us look at them as they exist before us. Let us read the revelations of God and give heed to the teachings of the living Oracles and have faith in their promises, that we may thereby have the Spirit of God to enlighten us and to guide us through this probation.

The Presidency of this Church are good men, they are filled with the Spirit of the Lord continually, with the spirit of teaching, of counsel, which if we follow will lead us on to eternal life, therefore we are blest, and saved when we obey their teaching.

We have our leading men, and our Governor, all of whom are proceeded out of the midst of us; our judges, our wise men, and our rulers, are those that have come out of the house of Israel, and this is a blessing and a privilege that Israel have not enjoyed for many generations. We see that the Elders have gone forth and labored for the upbuilding of the Kingdom of God, and for carrying out the purposes of our heavenly Father and for the accomplishment of the great work of the latter days.

We have the greatest reason to be thankful of any people upon the earth, and we should realize that as we have been preserved heretofore so we shall be hereafter, and though the United States, and though all Europe and hell may make war upon us yet if we listen to the counsel that has been given, the blow will be warded off, and whatever we may be called to pass through will be for our salvation, exaltation and glory.

I pray the Lord my heavenly Father to grant us his Spirit that we may prize our blessings, keep our covenants, and continually have his favor, and continue humble and faithful, and that he will pour out those judgments upon the wicked, proud and rebellious which they desire to inflict upon the people of God, which may the Lord grant for Christ's sake.—Amen.

REMARKS

By Elder George A. Smith, Tabernacle, Jan. 10, 1858.

[REPORTED BY G. D. WATT.]

The Lord says, ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways.’

The address we have listened to this afternoon is directly calculated to inspire our minds with a full fruition of the truth of these sentiments. If the religious nations of the world had been consulted in establishing a new religion with the intention of superseding all other sects and denominations, they would have selected a grave council of the wisest, most learned and pious men they could find—learned in theology, in philosophy, in law and in every department of science. Yet we are told that the Savior, when he visited the earth, selected, as his ministers and messengers, fishermen and other individuals from the lower orders of the people, men with but little learning, and less reputation, to proclaim the gospel, testify of the truth and be witnesses of his advent into the world, of his miracles and resurrection from the dead. So it was in the present generation.

When the Lord commenced his work, he neglected to call upon Campbell, Scott, Clarke, Doddridge, or any other celebrated divine. He passed over his holiness, the Pope, and the Bishops that were presiding with so much dignity, splendor and authority over the different portions of the christian church. He passed over the learned institutions of the day and went into a field and laid his hand on the head of Joseph Smith, a plow boy, upon one who cultivated the earth and had scarcely education enough to read his Bible, whom he inspired, appointing him to translate the Book of Mormon and authorizing him to proclaim the gospel and administer the plan of salvation.

Ere long, this young man became the scoff, the by-word and hiss of all the learned christians on the earth; but the Lord said ‘my ways are not as your ways nor my thoughts as your thoughts’.

When the early Elders of this church began to preach the first principles of the gospel, how oft have we heard the question asked, why did not the Lord call upon some learned man—upon the presidents of theological Seminaries or upon some of our learned Missionaries?

Why, if this work be true, did he call upon a person so low, so uneducated, so foolish? This inquiry was made in every direction by hundreds and by thousands; and was laid down by them as a sufficient reason for rejecting the Book of Mormon and the testimony of the servants of God.

In a very short time a literary war commenced. The newspapers announced to the world that an impostor had arisen, that an impostor had been palmed upon them, a false religion had been proclaimed, and that an ignorant, stupid, lazy, good-for-nothing set of fellows were pretending to preach a new religion. Thurlow Weed was the first to commence the literary war through the press, under the head of ‘blasphemy’.

This proclamation has been often reiterated up to the present time. Pulpit orators announced to their congregations, that three weeks would be sufficient to dispel the whole delusion. Three weeks passed away and the word of God was still preached. Then pulpit preachers announced that a year would terminate the delusion.

Editors published their false statements, one of which, no doubt, will be remembered—a pretended miracle of walking on the water. It was said the Prophet placed planks two or three inches under the surface of the water and walked on them, to convince the multitude of the truth of his doctrine; but just as all were convinced and the Prophet was about to step on shore, some rogues pulled out the plank and he fell into the water and was drowned.

What next? ‘This printing lies about Mormonism, this blackguarding, and preaching falsehoods about it, don’t stop it; we must apply something that will!’ They applied a suit of tar and feathers

to the Prophet, and other abuses, but with no better success than attended their former efforts to stop the progress of ‘Mormonism’; in fact the Prophet had not more than got the tar fairly washed off him, before he had to go into the water to baptize.

There is a class of personages who have acted a conspicuous part in opposition to the progress of the work of the Lord in the last days who are never to be forgotten. The first members of the church, it will be recollected, came from almost every religious denomination, and if they had never belonged to any religious sect, they had more or less of their prejudices.

I recollect when I first began to discern the operation of the spirit of apostasy. A small company of us started for Zion. One of the company (Norman A. Brown) lost a horse. This man had been baptised for the remission of sins, rejoiced in the light of truth and started to gather with the Saints, but his horse died. ‘Now,’ said he, ‘is it possible that this is the work of God? If this had been the work of God, my horse would not have died when I was going to Zion.’ He apostatised, fought against the work of God and died a miserable, lingering and unhappy death, and all because so great a trial as the loss of a horse.

Joseph H. Wakefield, who baptised me, after having apostatised from the church, announced to the astonished world the fact that, while he was a guest in the house of Joseph Smith, he had absolutely seen the Prophet come down from the room where he was engaged in translating the word of God and actually go to playing with the children! This convinced him that the Prophet was not a man of God and that the work was false, which, to me and hundreds of others, he had testified that he knew came from God. He afterwards headed a mob meeting, and took the lead in bringing about a persecution against the Saints in Kirtland and the regions round about.

One of the first apostates that published against this work was Ezra Booth. He published nine letters in the Ohio Star, published at Ravenna, Portage county, in which he used all the arguments and made all the false statements he could, and it was generally believed by our enemies, at the time, that the apostasy and revelations of Ezra Booth would put an utter end to Mormonism. But the wheel rolled along unabated in its progress.

Ezra Booth had been a Methodist preacher, but on a visit to Joseph Smith, he had become convinced of the truth of the work of the Lord by witnessing a miracle. Mrs. Johnson, an aged lady, had for several years been afflicted with rheumatism and for more than a year had not been able to raise her arm at all. She was healed by the administration of the laying on of hands by the Prophet, and was enabled immediately to raise her hand to her head, comb her hair or do anything she wished. This convinced him it was the power of God. He went to preaching the truth, but found, instead of living on the fat of the land, as he did among his Methodist brethren, that he had to labor and toil for the good of Zion, trusting in God, and in the great day of accounts receive his reward, so he apostatised.

The next publication which made a prominent show in the world was a book entitled ‘Mormonism Unveiled,’ written by Doctor P. Hurlburt. In consequence of improper conduct among females, he was expelled from the church. He confessed his wickedness to the council. I was present and heard him. He promised, before God, angels and men, that he would, from that time forth, live his religion and preserve his integrity, if they would only forgive him. He wept like a child and prayed and begged to be forgiven. The council forgave him, but Joseph told him, ‘you are not honest in this confession.’

A few days afterwards he published his renunciation of the work; assigning, as a reason, that he deceived that council and made them believe his was an honest confession, when he only confessed to see whether the council had power to discern his spirit. Joseph, however, told him at the time, that he was not honest in his confession.

He went to work and got up the ‘Spaulding Story,’ that famous yarn about the ‘Manuscript Found.’ When about to publish this lying fabrication, in several of his exciting speeches having threatened the life of Joseph Smith, he was required to give bonds, by the authorities of Ohio, to keep the peace. In consequence of this, the name of E. D. Howe was substituted as the author, who published it.

Hurlburt was cracked up in the world as a scientific man, as an M. D., but he happened to be the seventh son and was called Doctor by his parents; it was his given name, not the title of his profession.

The public press heralded forth many encomiums on the book. Mr. Howe agreed to give Hurlburt four hundred copies for the manuscript.

Hurlburt took his subscription list and went from house to house for names, until he had got subscribers for the four hundred copies, which were to be delivered as soon as they were printed and bound, at one dollar per copy.

Howe refused to deliver Hurlburt the four hundred copies until he managed to get his eye on Hurlburt’s subscription list, which he copied, delivered the books, took the money and then gave Hurlburt his four hundred copies. He thereby swindled Hurlburt out of his manuscript, and he had to sell his books at from ten to twenty cents each, or anything he could get, and great numbers were never sold.

There is one thing in relation to publications against ‘Mormonism,’ no apostate has ever made his fortune by them, for, if he would tell the truth, that would be no mystery, and when they tell falsehoods, the spirit of lying makes them tell such big lies, and so many of them, that their work goes into discredit.

I think the first church attempted to be established in opposition to ‘Mormonism’ was that established by Wycam Clark, in Kirtland. He was baptised about the same time as Sidney Rigdon.