

immortality and eternal lives, etc. George Miller felt so rejoiced over these promises and so sure that he would get every blessing that had been promised to him by the authority of the Priesthood, that he made a remark to Brother Brigham Young to the effect that he was safe now even if he should commit sin. He did commit sin; he sinned with women, and he lost the Spirit of God and his Priesthood, and became an apostate from the Church.

I have sometimes thought that ideas like this have taken possession of some of our brethren, judging by their conduct. When you hear of men who call themselves members of the Church indulging in drunkenness, in stealing, in blaspheming, in dishonesty, and perhaps in whoredoms, what conclusion can you come to? Only that they have either lost the faith or are blinded by Satan into the belief that no matter what their lives may be God will redeem them if they do not commit the unpardonable sin. Satan flatters men with that idea, and they commit these abominable sins in the midst of the people. What justification is there in the word of God for men doing such things as this? What is the object in living a pure life if impurity is going to be saved, if wickedness is going to be accepted, if men committing abominable sins are going to be lifted bodily into the rest of God? What is the use of living a holy life; what is the use of making sacrifices for the work of God; what is the use of our denying ourselves and controlling our passions, and striving continually to live pure as angels, and suffer persecution, and everything else—I say what is the use of all this if men can commit sin, if men can steal, if men can get drunk, if men can commit whoredom, if men can lie, if men can commit other abominations and be saved? I tell you that doctrine or idea is from hell. It is Satan that is trying to deceive the people and lead them down to destruction. I say to you today that no man, no matter who he is, can commit sin without offending God and losing His spirit. The spirit of God will not dwell in unholiness. God has said it, and it is true. If we are to be saved, we must be saved by being pure. We must be a pure people—pure not only in word and act, but pure in thought; for the Lord has said, "he that looketh upon a woman to lust after her, or if any shall commit adultery in their hearts, they shall not have the Spirit, but shall deny the faith." And if that will produce a loss of the Spirit of God and a loss of faith, unless there is thorough and heartfelt repentance, shall we flatter ourselves with the idea that we can commit the sins I have mentioned and still escape? Assuredly not. The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ requires purity of life. We must be like Him, and strive continually to overcome the weaknesses of our natures. God has placed us here for this purpose—to conquer our evil inclinations, to bring our passions and appetites and all our will into subjection to the will of Christ, so that every thought will be pure, every word will be pure; and if they are not pure at any time, that we will repent of them with all our hearts and put them away far from us. He wants us all to remain members of His Church and to be saved in His celestial kingdom. He has not predestined any to damnation. No one need lose his standing in the Church

of Christ, unless he does something to drive the Spirit of the Lord from him. It is His design to save us, and He has given unto us His Holy Spirit for that purpose. Now, what a terrible thing it is, after receiving the truth and being admitted into the Church of Christ, after having the gifts and blessings of the Gospel bestowed upon us, and such wonderful promises made to us, to cause all these things to be withdrawn from us and we left to ourselves! Yet prophets, apostles, mighty men have fallen! Ought not this to be a warning to all of us? How I ought to stand warned by the fate of men who have occupied as prominent a position as I do in the Church of Christ and whose gifts were so great! What assurance have I that I shall stand? I have none, except I keep the commandments of God. The Lord has warned every man in this Church that he cannot stand unless he lives a pure life and acts in conformity with His requirements. We see the fate of these men; we see the ruin they have brought upon themselves; we see the loss of standing in the Church that has followed their misconduct; we see today that they nor their posterity are numbered among the Saints, and perhaps the Millennium will dawn and they will have no descendant living upon the earth to represent them throughout the thousand years of peace.

The Lord is weeding out His Church continually. The work of selection is going on. "Many are called," the Lord has said, "but few are chosen." The Lord is choosing the people now. The Lord is pulling up—in fact, they are pulling themselves up—the unfaithful, the transgressor. The work of cleansing the Church is going on perpetually, and it will continue until Christ comes. What an impressive lesson this ought to be to us! Do we desire to live and to be connected with the work of God? Do we desire our children to be numbered with the people of God? The great desire of some of the prophets and mighty men of old was that the Lord would build them a sure house. David, with all his sin, desired with an exceeding desire that the Lord would build him a sure house, and the Lord promised him that he should have it; and the seed of David will be found among all generations. In the days of Jeremiah the family of Jonadab the son of Rechab had been commanded of their father not to drink wine, and Jeremiah, by command of God, brought that family forward to test them, and by that test to give an example to Israel, so that the faithfulness of the house of Rechab to the teachings of their father might be contrasted with the unfaithfulness of the house of Israel to the teachings of the Lord. Jeremiah gathered the Rechabites together and placed pots of wine before them, and said, "Drink ye wine." They said, "We will drink no wine; for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons forever." God then inspired Jeremiah to say unto the house of the Rechabites:

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father; and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you; therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not

want a man to stand before me forever."

One of the greatest promises that was ever made to man was given to that family because of their obedience; and I do not doubt that when the Lord Jesus shall come in the clouds of heaven there will be found descendants of that illustrious family among the people of God. The greatest promise that God gave to Abraham was when He told him that as the stars of heaven were countless for multitude and as the sands upon the sea shore were innumerable, so his posterity should be. It was the desire of every faithful man that his posterity should be remembered; and God made covenant with His faithful servants that in the last days, in the days of trouble, he would remember their seed. We who are in this house are living fulfillments of that promise. It is through the promise that God made to our fathers that we are here today, and that we have received the Gospel. The fathers and mothers of many who are here received it; their hearts were touched; God poured His Spirit upon them, and they came, "one of a city and two of a family," to Zion, while the rest of the kindred rejected the Gospel. It is because of the promises that God made to our fathers that we have received the truth; and if we are faithful we can obtain the same blessings for our posterity. When my boys go out on a mission, I say to them, Boys, God is your father's friend; He has always been his friend; you can trust Him and can call upon Him with confidence; for I tell you that while I live and keep His commandments, God will watch over my children and will preserve and bless them. And He has done it. So it will be with every faithful man and woman; God will remember them, and their seed after them; and He will see that they will have representatives in His Church at the very last, when Jesus shall come.

Therefore, my brethren and sisters, what inducements there are for us to be faithful to God! What inducements there are for us to deny ourselves and refrain from sin! God has promised us everything He could, it seems to me, to stir us up to faithfulness and diligence in keeping His commandments. Not only so, but He blesses us and gives an abundant reward as we go along; He fills us with peace and joy and happiness from morning till night. But this is not all. There is before us the glorious future of exaltation and eternal glory in the presence of God and the Lamb. How faithful then we should be! Warned by the fate of mighty men and mighty women who have fallen, we should be faithful, humble, and seek continually to serve God with all our hearts, and never do anything to grieve His Holy Spirit. When we get up in the morning, let us examine ourselves, to see whether the Spirit of God is with us; and so at night, before we commit ourselves to slumber, review the acts and words of the day, and ask God to show unto us wherein we have come short, that we may repent; thus repenting every day, and having the forgiveness of our sins every day, that there will be no account recorded in heaven against us to be expiated after this life. If we indulge in an improper thought, ask God to forgive us, and not rest satisfied until we are forgiven. Let us live the lives of Latter-day Saints, so that every one of us will exemplify in our