

failed in making apparent to the people and convincing them of this, is very clear at the present time. We have utterly failed. We have carried this to such an extent that the Lord himself has signified His acceptance of the sacrifices and offerings of the Latter-day Saints. He has said to us, "It is enough now. You having done your duty, this matter must rest with Me;" and we have, in consequence, sustained the issuance of that manifesto, undertaking to comply with the law—that we will do our best to carry it out, having done all in our power up to the present to vindicate our rights. But the day will come—and I am not afraid to risk my reputation, if I have one, as a prophet—when that which we have done will be recorded with admiration and praise. When a people can make a sacrifice such as we have, when by the mere expression of a few words we could have saved ourselves ignominy and pain of imprisonment and the sad consequences involved to the wives and children of those called upon to suffer, it will be written in history that what was offered to us we declined, preferring to endure all these things to vindicate our rights.

Now the question arises, "What is going to be done?" It has seemed to me that a magnanimous Government like ours might cease its operations against those who are involved conscientiously, who believed that they were acting according to the command of God. I have hoped for this. I hoped at one time that our persecutions, and the manner in which the courts were proceeding against us, would have the effect of calling the attention of the nation to those wrongs under which we were suffering. But it is a lesson of history, repeated in our case, that persecutions only increase by the addition of victims. Every victim adds more to the flame of persecution. This is the history of the past; it is illustrated and confirmed in our own history. Every fresh victim, instead of arresting or lightening the persecution, only serves to intensify the feeling of determination that this must be crushed out at all cost and hazard. Every man that went to prison only seemed to be an evidence of our obduracy and our determination to defy the law, and to strengthen the opinion that we must be subdued and broken down.

Well, now, a serious question presents itself before us respecting the present condition of things. Here are women—very many of them—and children placed in a sad position. These women are bound to their husbands by ties that have been considered the most sacred, and among us they have been honored quite as much as though they occupied the position of legal wives. What shall be done in reference to them? It is a serious question—one that comes to us constantly. It is one that I hope will be answered by the action of the Government. When it becomes convinced of our sincerity in issuing this manifesto declaring that plural marriages should cease, let us hope that some favorable action will be taken in regard to existing relations.

I am not certain yet that we shall be disappointed in this. I believe we have already seen, in effect, a great softening of feeling upon these points, and

the people must understand—they should understand—that what we do shall be done in good faith; that we do not deal in deception. Each one must seek to accommodate himself to affairs so that we shall not create a feeling that will be a continuation of the antipathy manifested through this doctrine. So far as our sincerity is concerned,

I think it is of the utmost importance that the world should know that when we make a promise of this kind we mean exactly what we say—that we are not dealing falsely, that we are treating this matter in good faith, leaving the result with God our Eternal Father; and that we will to the best of our ability accommodate ourselves to the changed condition of affairs. I have no doubt if we do this that, in the end, the result will be all we can desire.

None of us doubt that God is controlling this work to suit His own purposes and to fulfil His own designs. I have been compelled to acknowledge my own blindness; I never had such a feeling concerning my own ignorance and inability to comprehend the plans and purposes of God as I have had of late. But I bow to His Supreme wisdom; it is infinite. He understands the end from the beginning; He has laid the foundation of this work.

I have testified, I might say hundreds of times, before public men, that I believed if I had not done what I did in reference to plural marriage I would have been damned utterly. I have said this before leading men; I have said it before the President of the United States; I have said it wherever I have talked about the subject. I can only speak for myself; but the command came to me in such a form from my God that I believe I would have been damned if I had not obeyed it. Having this belief embedded in my very nature, what could I do but obey? It was either obedience on the right hand or damnation on the left. Yet, notwithstanding this, I obeyed the law; and hence it is, I say, we need the Spirit of God to be with us, because all these things come in conflict with all our pre-conceived ideas and that which we have framed in our own minds. We have to trust to our God for the results. He has laid the foundation of this work; He has carried it forward to the present time, and He will take care of it in the future.

I say now publicly that it is the intention of the Latter-day Saints to obey the law and leave the results with the God of heaven. But some of our brethren have asked this question: "How can you reconcile it with consistency that our brethren who go into court now and say, 'We will obey the law,' whereas before all felt this to be wrong?" The conditions are entirely different, as you will see. It needs no deep penetration to perceive how differently we are situated now from what we were then. Our position is not at all what it was. We now say, "We bow in submission to the law." It would have been almost a betrayal for some of us to have done this before.

Suppose that a number of men were holding a citadel and the enemy on the outside demanded a surrender, the great bulk of those within would per-

haps say, "No, we shall not surrender; we will maintain this citadel," whereas the few would exclaim "Yes, we will surrender it," and hoist the flag. Now the rest would feel that to be a betrayal on their part. But suppose, on the other hand, that the whole body inside had been beleaguered for some time, and, finding it of no use to stand longer on the defensive, agreed to join in the surrender, then it would be no discredit to hoist the flag. This example may not exactly illustrate our position, but to my mind it has some features bearing upon it. Everyone can now join in the surrender honorably. We have made covenants it is true; but each man must arrange his affairs so that he would not violate those covenants, thereby bringing down the displeasure of God. But he must honor the law of the land. I do not know whether it is wise to talk too much upon this question, but I think we had better deal with it plainly and meet it squarely as it presents itself to us rather than dodge it. That is my view.

I want to save this people if possible from distress, from sorrow—to save ourselves from the evils that the enemy would heap upon us if they could take the advantage. This they are trying to do by asserting that we are not honest, and so seeking to get us in continual trouble. This is not at all necessary. This people have suffered for several years now as no people ever have before within the confines of the United States. We have suffered quietly, and our grief has not been much known. It has been concealed from the world to a very great extent. The anguish and misery that have been inflicted upon families have been born silently. We have passed through very serious trials, but I believe with all my heart that there is a brighter day dawning upon Zion.

I would like to refer to the remarks made by President Woodruff this morning. He said that a short time ago there were no Apostles upon this stand. I do not know how you felt at that time—I had not the privilege of being and meeting with you; but I know how I and the brethren felt who were deprived of that opportunity. This is changed; glory be to God every day! We have freedom and we can meet with you and speak to you, and give you counsels as the Lord requires of us. We can entreat you so to live as to have a testimony in your hearts concerning this.

I wish to allude to another point; I mentioned it yesterday. Some have said to us they believed that if we had taken the course Daniel did when he was put in the lion's den, and the three Hebrew children when put in the fiery furnace, perhaps it would have been more heroic and more consistent with our profession as Latter-day Saints. A person looking at this superficially might think there was something in the spirit of it. I have no earthly doubt that if President Woodruff had been required to go into the lion's den or into the fiery furnace, or to do anything else in the way of sacrificing his life in order to save this people, he would have done it. I have not a shadow of a doubt that President Taylor would have done the same. All of us knew his courage and firmness.