

that land. For, mark you, the land of Missouri is not alone the land of Zion; but wherever the people of God are gathered together and they sanctify the land through obedience to the commandments of God, that land will become a land of Zion unto them. This, therefore, is the land of Zion unto us. Men may ridicule the use of the word "Zion" as applied to this land in connection with this people; men may look upon its use with contempt and may despise it in their hearts; but if you are the people which you profess to be, and you are living according to your covenants, and are observing the commandments and statutes which God has given to you, then you are the people of the Lord. Perhaps you are not all the people that the Lord has in the world. We will not be so egotistical, or so vain, or so narrow in our hearts as to suppose that the Lord has no other people upon the broad face of the earth than this people; but we will concede that in every nation, among every tongue and every people the Lord has men and women who honor Him in their hearts, who love Him, and who are seeking to keep His commandments according to the knowledge which they possess and the understanding which they have. All honor be to them! We do not despise them, neither will we reject them nor cast them out. It is this class of people that the Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are sent forth to hunt up and to gather out from the nations of the earth; and wherever they are found and the Spirit of God has power to reach them, when they hear the voice of the Good Shepherd they know it, and they are willing to render obedience to that voice and to the commandments of God. I verily believe that there are thousands and tens of thousands, and perchance millions, of the children of men today who know nothing about the truth of the mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and who have perhaps scarcely heard of the Book of Mormon, or of the Doctrine and Covenants, or of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who are today, so far as they have knowledge, the children of God, and are blessed of Him, and are acknowledged and owned of Him as His children. We most cheerfully acknowledge this great truth—for it is a truth. If it were not, we would cease to send our Elders to hunt them out from the nations of the earth. Why, there is scarcely a man or a woman in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who has not been gathered out from the nations of the earth, or who has not descended from those who have been gathered; and our kindred are still among the nations of the earth, and perhaps as honest as many of us are. Many of them never had the opportunities which we have had. They have not been favored as we have been with opportunities of becoming acquainted with the principles of the Gospel and of receiving the witness of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. But the Lord knows these people, and He will feel after them, and the day will come when they will be gathered into the fold of Christ; when they shall have the privilege of listening to the truth, to the inspiration of the Spirit, to the voice of the true Shepherd, and

of becoming acquainted with the way of life and salvation.

But there is a difference—and I do not hesitate for one moment to declare it to this congregation, nor would I hesitate to declare it anywhere in the world, for it is true—between those who are honest in heart in the midst of the world and those people who have received the Gospel and who have been gathered into one community, having come out from Babylon that they might not partake of her sins nor receive of her plagues. While there are thousands and millions of the children of God who are scattered among the nations of the earth and are still in darkness in relation to the principles of life and salvation, you have received light, you have been endowed with wisdom from on high; or if you have not, then there is something the matter with you. Certainly it was your privilege to be endowed with wisdom from on high. It was your privilege to receive intelligence and knowledge from God which no people on earth can possibly receive except they repent of their sins, are baptized for the remission of their sins and receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, as you have done.

Therefore, if we are not the people of God, and if this land is not the land of Zion, tell me, if you can, where I may go upon the face of the earth to find the people of God and the land of Zion; for it is the people of God that I am looking for, and it is the land of Zion that I have desired to search out. And it is for these objects that you have gathered to these valleys in the midst of these mountains. We have come here to serve the Lord, and the Lord has said:

Behold, blessed are they who have come up unto this land with an eye single to my glory, according to my commandments;

For them that live shall inherit the earth, and them that die shall rest from all their labors, and their work shall follow them, and they shall receive a crown in the mansion of my Father, which I have prepared for them;

Yea, blessed are they whose feet stand upon the land of Zion, who have obeyed my Gospel, for they shall receive for their reward the good things of the earth; and it shall bring forth in its strength!

Need I ask the Latter-day Saints if they have received the good things of the earth since they came to these valleys? Need I ask them if the earth has yielded in its strength to them? Is there a Latter-day Saint anywhere who will say that the earth has refused to yield in her strength to this people, or that this people have not received the blessings of the earth? I remember very distinctly when I first came to this valley how it appeared to me. If there was a barren place anywhere on the earth, surely it was here. The very grass was dry and apparently dead, and there were no green trees and no shrubbery to give joy to the eye or gladness to the heart; there was no appearance to this land calculated to make it a place to be desired. The soil was dry and apparently barren. The earth was bare. Whatever had grown upon its surface had withered or been destroyed by the vast hordes of crickets and grasshoppers which infested the valley at that time, and everything was forbidding. I remember a large field

which was plowed and planted about six miles from this place, on the bench between Mill creek and Canyon creek. It had been plowed by a combination of labor in order that the soil might be tested, and that they might get as near as possible to the waters which flowed from the canyons, that none of it should waste before it could be brought upon the soil. Wheat was planted upon that soil, and it was irrigated according to the best knowledge that was had at that time by the people. But after the season's toil of plowing, planting and irrigating, it was found that the labor was thrown away. Not a spear of wheat grew above six inches high. The wheat sprouted wherever there was sufficient moisture in the soil to cause it to spring up; but because of the drouth and the barrenness of the soil, it withered and died. Not a grain of wheat was harvested from that great field. What now? Why, any of you that want to see the change that has been wrought in this valley, go now upon that very same soil. It was abandoned then as worthless, valueless. It was thought that nothing could be produced upon it, and we went more toward the lower part of the valley and began to cultivate the soil there. For years this land that I speak of produced nothing but sunflowers and weeds, which seemed to flourish very well. But after a while we became a little more numerous, and we began to spread out. This land was then re-occupied little by little, and the people began to cultivate it again. Now go and see it for yourselves. There are hundreds of prosperous, happy homes, and hundreds of happy people living upon that once barren soil and deriving their support from it.

I can remember that for years the land lying between here and Bountiful and that in Bountiful, particularly the south end of it, no one attempted to cultivate, because it was considered worthless, and a man was thought to be throwing away his time to have anything to do with it. The choicer little spots of ground lower down in the valley, where there was a little moisture, were thought to be the most valuable in the valley, and there the people sought to obtain their inheritances. What is the result? It has been proven beyond any doubt that those lands that were once so barren and forbidding have become today the most valuable, the most fruitful, and the strongest and best soil of all the lands of our valley, and the men that now occupy these bench lands possess more wealth to the acre than those who occupy the lower grounds, when it comes to producing cereal food for animals. I remember also at Kaysville, where now you see comfortable homes and prosperous people, that you could not get straw of wheat, of barley, nor of oats sufficient to feed a team as you passed through the country; and the people that occupied that barren bench were under the necessity of husbanding their oxen and every spear of straw that they thrashed out in order to keep their teams from starvation through the winter. Go there today and look at it, and what do you see? Why, if you want to see great ricks of hay, go there; if you want to see fuel in abundance for all kinds of animals, go there; if you want to find a people who have become wealthy