

followed it, wonderful for this generation to hear, wonderful for us to live in an age such as this and to be so favored as we have been—that God, the Eternal Father, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Fountain of all existence and of all power, has condescended in our day to come down from heaven, from His glorious abode, accompanied by His Son, Jesus, to restore to the earth this love and these gifts, to give to men this wonderful power and these extraordinary gifts! Is it not wonderful to think of? Ought we not, of all people, to be the most humble, obedient and loving people that live or ever did live upon the earth? It seems to me that we should be. Think of living at a time when this event so far reaching in importance to heaven and earth has taken place—the Father Himself, accompanied by His Son Jesus Christ, condescending to come from heaven to usher in this dispensation and to prepare the way for the restoration of that authority by which He Himself acts and governs all things! And this has actually occurred.

Our Father and Our Savior did not confer this authority by their own hands upon Joseph Smith; but God sent His servants who held authority to do this. He honored the authority that He himself had bestowed. He had bestowed that authority upon Peter, James and John, and He sent them. They were preceded by John the Baptist, who held the authority of the Aaronic Priesthood. The Lord honored that man because he had received the authority and held the keys, and He sent him to restore the authority to baptize. He then sent the three Apostles whom I have named to confer the Melchisedek Priesthood, with the authority to lay on hands and to perform all the duties connected with that Priesthood.

My brethren and sisters, this is the origin of this authority by which this wonderful change that has taken place in our hearts has been accomplished. It is the authority by which you were baptized, by which you were confirmed members of the Church, by which the gift of the Holy Ghost was conferred upon you. It was that Priesthood that came from heaven. It is not our gathering together that has brought this about. The gathering of the people to these mountains is the fruit of the love that God has begotten in our hearts, which has inspired us with a desire to be with our brethren and our sisters and to be within the sound of the voices of the servants of God. I have heard hundreds say, "Oh! I do so want to see the Prophet of God. I want to go to Zion and be with the Saints of God. My heart yearns continually for this privilege." I have had this said to me thousands of times in various lands. And this has been brought about by being born again, by the love of God descending upon us and filling our hearts—transforming us. Now, where we have retained this feeling, it is as strong within us today; yes, and stronger than it ever was. It is not a feeling that is confined to the first week, or month, or year; but it increases as the years go by, and there is only one thing that will cause its decrease, and that is the commission of sin and the forgetting of the covenants that have been made with God.

I call your attention, therefore, to the power which has produced all these delightful results to which I have so briefly alluded. What is that power? It is the Priesthood of the Son of God. It is the power by which all things were created and are held in their place. Shall I startle you when I say that our Father himself controls the universe and occupies His exalted station because of the Priest-

hood? Whether it is startling or not, it is nevertheless true. Our Eternal Father is the creator of all things through the power of the everlasting Priesthood—that Priesthood which has been bestowed upon and exercised by the servants of God in our day. That is the power which has produced the fruits to which I have alluded.

Now, I believe that many of us have forgotten all this. I am sorry to say that I discover among the Latter-day Saints a fear of that Priesthood, a dread of its exercise, a shrinking from contact with it, for fear that some undue influence will be brought to bear upon us through it. Today the greatest sorrow of my heart, the feeling "I am sorry," arises from the fact that the Latter-day Saints, in many instances, are turning their backs on the Priesthood of the Son of God, and are disposed to treat it with contempt. I do not care for myself personally. I believe I can truthfully say that I have had little of the feeling to seek the applause of the multitude or to seek the favor of men. I have not sought office. I have not sought for place in the Priesthood or in any other capacity. When I was a little boy the only desire I had was that I might be worthy to be an Elder. Beyond that I have never sought place or power. On the contrary, I have shrunk from it, and I have besought God to deliver me from it if I could be saved without it. The Lord revealed to me what I would have to pass through, and I besought Him not to put me in this place if I could get my salvation without it. In alluding to this, therefore, I do not do it on any personal account. I do not want any honor from men, if I can have the honor of God. But I do want the Priesthood that God has bestowed, and which I bear in common with my brethren, honored. I want to see this people who have received so many blessings—in fact, whose whole condition, happy as it is, is entirely due to the Priesthood of the Son of God—I want to see them honor this Priesthood with all their hearts. I want to see them honor God, who has restored it; to see them receive its counsels, and to be guided by it under all circumstances; to not imagine that they can live without it, and that they can gain celestial glory without it, thinking that they have received so much and now are independent and can get along without the aid of the Priesthood. I tell you, if you indulge in that feeling, you will lose the blessings that God has promised unto you and He will withdraw those which He has bestowed upon you. You will go into the dark, you will lose all power, and all these glorious gifts that He has given unto you. You young men, of whom there are so many in this congregation, let me say to you—and I think I can speak now as one having had some experience—if you want to be happy, if you want to be blessed, if you want to be prospered in the earth, listen to the counsels of God's servants and obey those counsels. Make it the object of your life to obey God in all things. I say to you, if you will do this, the blessings of God and the power of God will rest down upon you as you have never imagined it could. I tell you this because I know it through my experience. I know the Lord will hear this, and that this will be the case with you.

It seems that we are going through trials. The faith, the integrity and the steadfastness of the Latter-day Saints are being tried and tested. The Lord is going to test us in every direction. He will have a tried people. He has said this. Everything that can be shaken will be shaken. We will have to show our integrity in the midst of trials and temptations. We will have

to learn to be obedient in all things. The Lord wants to have a people of this kind. He has led us to this land, has given us a goodly heritage, and there is nothing in the world to prevent us from being a very great and mighty people before the Lord, except our own misconduct. But if we allow ourselves to be diverted from this, and follow false teachers, false guides, and listen to the blandishments of the Evil One, as sure as we do this we will lose those blessings that He has promised to us and sealed upon us; for I presume that the most of us have had great blessings sealed upon us in the house of the Lord.

This is a good time and place for us to talk to each other, a good time to get the Spirit of God, and have our hearts softened under its influence, and to talk plainly. I feel so. We want to find out what the mind of the Lord is concerning us. He wants to make us a great people. He will do it with those who will be obedient to Him. But I often think it is a good deal with us as it was with the children of Israel when they were led out of Egypt. Every man over twenty years of age that left Egypt, excepting two, died in the wilderness, not reaching the promised land. Two men, Caleb and Joshua, were so full of integrity and devotion to the Lord—which they showed when they were sent to Canaan with ten other spies and were the only ones that brought back a good report—that the Lord preserved them, and they were the only two out of the whole host of Israel that were over twenty years of age when they left Egypt who entered into the promised land. Why was it? Was it not the will of the Lord that the whole of them should enter in? Certainly it was; but they provoked Him in the wilderness by their unbelief, their hardness of heart, their rebellion, and the result was, they died before the promised land was reached. Will it be so with us? I fear it will with many, because of their want of steadfastness, their want of obedience, their disposition to reject the counsel of God, who has wrought such mighty miracles in our sight as He did in the sight of the children of Israel.

Look back through the history of our people and see what mighty miracles God has wrought in our behalf. Why, the gathering of us together here in these mountains is one of the most stupendous miracles ever witnessed. God led us forth out of bondage with an outstretched arm, planted us in this land, and has converted this wilderness into a fruitful field and made it, it may be said, the joy of the whole earth. People look upon it now and say it is the most blessed land there is in the United States. This is admitted by very many, and will be more and more so as we go on. Now, these miracles have been wrought in our sight; we have seen them; God has done all this for us; and yet today there is a large element of the Latter-day Saints who do not want "the rule of the Church," who do not want the servants of God to talk to them, do not want our counsels, do not want us to tell them what to do. The mere mention of the Priesthood, or of the Church, startles them. Is not this the case? I hope it is not here; you know whether it is or not; but that is the case elsewhere. And what is likely to be the result? I say to you—and I say it with all due respect to every man's rights, and without desiring to interfere in the least with any political platform or any political declaration of principles—there is nothing that can take place or be attended to outside of the Priesthood of the Son of God. What I mean by that is, the Priesthood embraces the whole life of all of us and of every human being who will obey the Gos-