

DISCOURSE

BY

APOSTLE ORSON PRATT,

DELIVERED IN THE

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REPORTED BY JOHN IRVINE.

I will read a few passages of Scripture which will be found in the 54th chapter of Isaiah. (The speaker then read most of the chapter referred to.) Continuing, he said:

I hope that the congregation will pardon me for undertaking three Sabbaths running to instruct them when there are so many of our brethren—those who are ordained and filled with the spirit of truth—who would be glad, no doubt, to speak to the people; but a great many of my younger brethren, younger than I am, may perhaps have a great many opportunities after I may pass away, provided that the Lord sees proper in His wisdom to call me hence.

I feel a great pleasure in standing before a congregation of Latter-day Saints, or a mixed assembly of those who belong to the Church and those who have not received the great message which the Church has received. It gives me great joy and great satisfaction to speak to them in the name of the Lord, and unfold, as far as the Spirit will give me utterance, that which the Lord has said concerning His people in the latter days. I had nothing upon my mind when I arose and walked into the stand, but upon opening the Bible my eyes fell upon this chapter, and I thought that I would read it—and perhaps something might occur in relation to this chapter that would be interesting in regard to the latter days, for certainly what I have read relates to future times, times that have not yet come.

"Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes" is the exhortation of the prophet to some class of people that should dwell on the earth. If we wish to know what class of people the Prophet had reference to, read the last verse of this chapter: "This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." It would seem then, from the declaration given in that clause of the seventeenth verse of this chapter, that the Prophet was speaking of his servants and their heritage—that is, the heritage that his servants should occupy—that they were not to be narrowed and contracted in their feelings in regard to their inheritance as though it were to be in a small tract or region of country. The Lord had otherwise determined according to the words of this chapter. He intends they should inherit a great land, that they were to stretch forth the curtains of their habitations, and for fear that they would be limited in their views and contract themselves to a small region of country, the Lord says expressly, "Spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes." Well, we are trying to do this as Latter-day Saints. When we first came here we located this city in the month of July, 1847, some 32 years ago this last summer. Then it was thought by many that had not a knowledge of prophecy, that we were too expanded in our views to lay out a city—being only a handful of pioneers—to layout a city covering several miles of ground, when there was not yet a house built; when comparatively there was before us a great dry, barren desert. It seemed almost folly to even some of the Latter-day Saints to see the surveyor with his measure line, others with their instruments of observation, getting the height of this land above the sea level—making great preparations, while we yet camped, a little handful of us, in wagons and in a few tents. It seemed folly to lay out a city covering an area of several square miles; but those that did this work were under the direction and inspiration of the Almighty. We knew that this people would become a very great people. We knew that the words of Isaiah would be fulfilled which are recorded in the 60th chapter, "A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation." Now we believed that. It was not merely an opinion such as might be formed by the enlightened judgment of the human family, but by the inspiration of that Spirit which knows all things

we laid out a city sufficiently large in extent to accommodate and gather together an extensive population for this inland country and desert. Have we been disappointed? Has the Lord disappointed us in our expectation? Go over the area of this whole city, over these northern wards and western wards, and travel and traverse all the different lots and streets and see if you find many vacant places. Is not the land generally taken up? Is it not generally occupied? Are there many vacant lots where there are no houses or habitations? Are there many places where there are no fruit trees, no gardens? Are there many streets where there are no ornamental trees, no water ditches? We find after we have traveled several days and traversed nearly all the streets of this city, gone for miles each way, that all the lots with some very few exceptions seem to be occupied, and not only so but some of the lots originally intended only for one family are now split up, divided and subdivided, and contain several habitations in the same lot, and scarcely room enough at that. We find the population coming into this city so great that there seems to be scarcely room, and even our water in dry seasons seems to be very scarce, not sufficient to water even the trees that are so necessary to be kept alive to say nothing of gardens and flowers and shrubbery. "Enlarge the place of thy tent and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not," that is don't be stingy, don't be contracted, don't limit yourselves to a small area of country but break forth on the right hand and on the left. Already within the last 32 years we have been fulfilling this commandment. We have stretched forth the gardens of our habitation several hundred miles in the south especially, and one or two hundred miles in the north, into the Territory of Idaho. Utah does not seem sufficient for us, hence we have built many large towns and villages in Idaho. We have spread forth our towns, our villages and our settlements to the south for some 300 or 400 miles, and even after doing this we find the place is too strait, and the saying is: "give place to me that I may dwell." We would scarcely suppose that a work of this great and important magnitude would have been accomplished in so short a time as scarcely one-third of a century, when all this great basin—nearly all with the exception of one or two small portions of the country traversed by Fremont and a few of his followers—was explored and considered an unprofitable desert, considered unfit for the habitation of man, in consequence of the dryness and parched condition of its soil. But the Lord when He begins to fulfill and accomplish a work among His people does so by degrees. He did not convert this great American desert, several hundred miles in extent, into a fruitful garden in one day, nor in one year, but in a few years, comparatively speaking, He has accomplished this work and has done it too with an eye to the predictions that were uttered by His servant Isaiah, the Prophet, and His servant, David, the Psalmist.

The Sabbath before last I addressed the congregation and spoke of the people, inhabiting the great mountain territory, removing. You will recollect this. You know our enemies have had a great many speculations about our moving. A great many have supposed that we would remove to an island of the sea; others have pointed out Vancouver's Island, others Russian America, as it used to be called; others have pointed out Mexico; others the islands of the Indian Ocean; and others South America as the future destination of the Latter-day Saints. But Sunday before last I endeavored to point out to you our hopes, our views as contrasted with the views of our enemies, in relation to our future destination. I will repeat again, to bring to the remembrance of the Latter-day Saints, and those who might have been present on that occasion, what was then said. We expect that these mountains will not be the residence of all the Latter-day Saints; we expect that the great majority of the people will emigrate. We want to tell you where our eyes are fixed. As stated in our former discourse, they are fixed upon a land—not in the distant islands of the Indian Ocean, nor in the Pacific Ocean, nor in South America, but our eyes are fixed upon a land on the western boundaries of the State of Missouri and the boundaries of the State of

Kansas. We expect to go there just as much as we expect the sun will rise and set. We have no other expectation. We expect to return there just as much as the Jews expect to return to old Jerusalem in the latter days. Perhaps you may inquire if we expect to return as a majority. Yes. Do we expect to return as a great people? Yes. Do we expect to return with our wives and our children? Yes. Do we expect to return in a peaceable manner? Of course. Have you ever seen any other feeling on the part of the Latter-day Saints, only to promote peace wherever they may settle? What has been our object from the commencement? Peace and good-will to all men. But perhaps you may still further inquire concerning our emigration to the eastern boundaries of the State of Kansas, and to the western boundaries of the State of Missouri, what we intend to do in that part of the country? We expect to be farmers, a great many of us. We expect to introduce all kinds of machinery and manufacture. We expect to build mills. We expect to become a very industrious, frugal, economical people. We expect to have our merchandise and our stores and storehouses in that land. We expect to build a great many hundred schoolhouses in that country, just the same as we have already done in this country and in the two adjacent territories, Idaho in the north and Arizona in the south. We do not calculate to neglect our children in regard to their education. We expect to build a great number of academies of the higher schools, and besides a great many school houses. We expect to erect Universities for the still higher branches to be taught. We expect to build many hundreds of meeting houses, and we expect to be a people very densely located there—not one man taking up six or eight miles of land calling it his farm, we don't expect to live in that way, but we expect to settle a very dense settlement in that region of country. We expect to own the land, too. How? By purchase. We expect to purchase the land that we have not already purchased. We have already purchased a great deal of land in Jackson county, Clay county, Missouri, and our purchases are on record if they have not destroyed the record; but we were driven from that land, from our farms and homes; our houses were burned down, our merchandise that we had in our store was taken and strewn through the street; our printing office—one of the most distant western offices in the Union—was also destroyed; the type was taken out and scattered through the streets; our hay stacks were burned; our cattle were shot down, and we were driven in the cold month of November from our houses and lands purchased of the general Government, and we fled before our enemies. "Well," says one, "are you not afraid to go back again to purchase land in that country when you were thus treated in the early settlement in 1833, when you were driven from your homes, some of you massacred, your property destroyed—are you not afraid to return?" O, I expect they are more civilized now. Do you think civilized people would murder now? Do you think they would drive people from their homes now? We may give them a chance to see. At any rate we shall fulfill our part, purchase the land, gather together upon our own purchased land, and we calculate to obey all the laws of the State of Missouri, and all the laws of the State of Kansas that are constitutional in their nature. But, says one, suppose the people should rise up and say you should not possess the land, what would you do? We would leave the matter in the hands of the Lord, just the same as we did at first when He led us by revelation to where the great central stake of Zion should be built. We went there because the Lord told us to go. We settled upon the very spot where the Lord commanded us. We commenced to lay the foundation of a temple about three-quarters of a mile from Independence, Jackson County, Missouri. It was then a wilderness, with large trees on the temple block. I visited that place 47 years afterwards, namely a year ago last September, and not a tree was to be found on that temple block—not so much as a stump—everything seemed to be cleared off, and one would scarcely know, unless very well acquainted with the ground, where the temple site was located. There, however, we expect to build a temple different

from all other temples in some respects. It will be built much larger, cover a larger area of ground, far larger than this Tabernacle covers, and this Tabernacle will accommodate from 12,000 to 15,000 people. We expect to build a temple much larger, very much larger, according to the revelation God gave to us 40 years ago in regard to that temple. But you may ask in what form will it be built? Will it be built in one large room like this Tabernacle? No; there will be 24 different compartments in the Temple that will be built in Jackson county. The names of these compartments were given to us some 45 or 46 years ago; the names we still have, and when we build these 24 rooms in a circular form and arched over the centre, we shall give the names to all these different compartments just as the Lord specified through Joseph Smith. Now our enemies do not believe one word of this. They think we are enthusiastic, they think that this is all nonsense, and I do not know but there may become of the Latter-day Saints that begin to partake of the same spirit owing to their assimilating themselves so much to the fashion of the world, and they have lost their strong and powerful faith in that which God has predicted by the mouth of His servants. Perhaps you may ask for what purpose these 24 compartments are to be built. I answer not to assemble the outside world in, nor to assemble the Saints all in one place, but these buildings will be built with a special view to the different orders, or in other words the different quorums or councils of the two Priesthoods that God has ordained on the earth. That is the object of having 24 rooms so that each of these different quorums, whether they be High Priests or Seventies, or Elders, or Bishops, or lesser Priesthood, or Teachers, or Deacons, or Patriarchs, or Apostles, or High Councils, or whatever may be the duties that are assigned to them, they will have rooms in the Temple of the Most High God, adapted, set apart, constructed, and dedicated for this special purpose. Now, I have not only told you that we shall have these rooms, but I have told you the object of these rooms in short, not in full. But will there be any other buildings excepting those 24 rooms that are all joined together in a circular form and arched over the centre—are there any other rooms that will be built—detached from the Temple? Yes. There will be tabernacles, there will be meeting houses for the assembling of the people on the Sabbath day. There will be various places of meeting so that the people may gather together; but the Temple will be dedicated to the Priesthood of the Most High God and for most sacred and holy purposes. Then you see that, notwithstanding all these Temples that are now building in this Territory, and those that have been built before we came here in Kirtland and Nauvoo, the Lord is not confined to an exact pattern in relation to these Temples building in the different States any more than He is confined in the creation of worlds to make them all of the same size. He does not make them all of one size, nor does He set them rolling on their axes in the same plane, nor does He construct any in many respects alike, there is variation as much as there is in the human form. Take men and women. There are general outlines that are common to all, but did you ever see two faces alike among all the millions of the human family? What a great variety, and yet all are constructed in general outline alike—after the image of God. So in regard to the building of Temples. The Lord will not confine Himself to any one special method to be so many feet long, so many feet wide, and so many places for the Priesthood to stand, but He will construct His Temples in a great variety of ways, and by and bye, when the more perfect order shall exist we shall construct them, through the aid of revelation; in accordance the Temples that exist in yonder heaven. And when I speak of yonder heaven I do not refer to that kind of heaven the sectarian world sings about, beyond the bounds of time and space. I have no reference to any heaven beyond space, but I have reference to the heaven that the Lord has sanctified and made heaven in other worlds that He has created, consisting of all kinds of materials the same as our world is, and when this world passes through its various ordeals, it, too, by and bye, will pass away and die like the body of man and be resuscitated again, a new heaven and a new

earth, eternal in its nature, new worlds that are thus created and quickened by the fullness of the celestial glory will be the vens where the Gods will dwell, in other words, those that are like unto God, when their are changed in all respects unto His glorious body, changed materially and cleansed from and redeemed, they will the immortal and dwell in a new world. Now in this world will be Temples, and these Temples will be constructed according to most perfect law of the kingdom, for the world in they are built or in which stand will be a celestial body. Last Temple that I am speaking of this last one to be built in son County, Missouri, will be constructed after that heavenly plan in all particulars. Why? Because it will never perish, it exist for ever. "What! I mean to say," says one, "the materials of that temple wear?" "Do you mean to say," says one, "that some of you may enquire hearts, 'that age will have upon the walls and the material that temple?' This is what I mean to say that not on Temple, but all the buildings shall be built round about Temple, and the city that built round about it, which called the New Jerusalem, built of materials that never decay. "But," says one, "the be contrary to the laws of nature. You may cite me to some buildings that existed before that were built out of the most able materials that could be and yet when the storms of rain and snow came, these buildings began to waste away until could scarcely be recognized. I do not ask you to think the temple and the city round about will defy the rough hand of and the work of the elements globe, and exist for ever, so natural laws are concerned, there is a principle higher these natural laws. Did never think of it—a higher principle, a higher kingdom that all these laws of nature, as you and I have been accustomed to understand ever since our I say there is a higher law, a trilling power over all the nature, that will prevent buildings from decaying; and while dwelling upon this subject say a little about another that is the building up of Palestine with the new Jerusalem. be the old Jerusalem rebuilt its former site. Now, will the ever be destroyed, will it ever Will the Temple to be built in time ever be thrown down or furrowed with hail, rain, snow, frost—will these ever have a effect upon it? No, not in the Why? Because God will be. So He will be in the temple on this continent, and by His by His laws—which are superior all those grosser laws of nature will preserve both of these cities on the western hemisphere, on the eastern hemisphere, from decay whatsoever. Now, we recorded here in this book, 81st chapter of Jeremiah, the city on the eastern continent, not be thrown down any more. It seems, therefore, to eternal city never to be destroyed. "But," says one, "I cannot believe that; I cannot believe but what cities will be subject, just as anything else to decay." I believe this good book—the If you do, you are obliged to that such things are possible you want to know some of I will mention one instance, will recollect that Moses commanded Aaron to take a pot of manna lay it before the Lord, to be their generations. Now it noted fact that if the children of Israel gathered more manna would last them until after the morning, it would decay, but last day before the Sabbath gathered manna for two days they found that on the Sabbath it was preserved. Who preserved it? Why did it last two days instead of one? Because God acted those lesser laws, or nature, by His divine power, is greater than them all, and therefore preserved for two that which would not last the other days of the week twenty-four hours. Well, that the Lord ordered the manna be placed in the tabernacle be kept for their generations, they might see the bread where He had fed them in the wilderness when He brought them forth