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## THE POWER OF EVIL.

*Discourse delivered at the General Conference of the Church, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday, April 7th, 1895, by*

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[REPORTED BY ARTHUR WINTER.]

I ask and desire this morning the faith and prayers of the Latter-day Saints in my behalf while I stand before you. This is not merely an idle ceremony, for if I possessed all the oratory and learning of the ancient Greeks and Romans it would not give me power to edify one immortal spirit in the children of men or to point any immortal soul to the way of salvation. I am entirely dependent upon the Lord. I always have been during my life, and in my travels and pilgrimage, preaching the Gospel of Christ to my fellow men. It does not make any difference what age a man is in the preaching of the Gospel, whether he be twenty-five, ninety, or five hundred years of age, if he is only inspired by the Spirit and power of God. Many of the ancients lived to a very great age. Father Adam up to the last speech he ever made to his children, according to the revelations of God, was filled with the Holy Ghost, and he was nearly a thousand years of age.

I have some things upon my mind I would like to present to the Latter-day Saints if I can get the spirit of them. I think it would be profitable to us to spend a little time in reflecting and meditating upon the powers that be—the powers that exist today on the earth and have existed from eternity unto eternity—good and evil, light and darkness, Christ and Belial, or Lucifer, the son of the morning. When we look over the history of the world we can see from the creation of Father Adam down to our day the operation of these two powers. And these powers will exist until the end of time, and from that time henceforth, until there is a change in the destiny of the spirits of men. It seems that from the time of the great rebellion in heaven, when one-third of the hosts of heaven were cast down for their rebellion against the great Eloheim and Jehovah, the Creator of heaven and earth, there has been a warfare against God, against Christ, against His Church, against His Priesthood, and against everything that would tend to salvation and eternal life. And in looking over the history of the world, from the revelations of God to us, we can see in the peopling of the

earth and in the building up of cities by the inhabitants of the earth, the powers of evil, of darkness and of sin have had great control over the children of men. Men were led to sin and to do evil until those ancient cities, like modern ones, were filled with iniquity. The Lord raised up prophets and inspired men in all those dispensations, when cities and nations became ripened into iniquity, to give them commandments, to warn them of the judgments of God, and to tell them what to do to escape those judgments. And when these cities and nations were fully ripened in iniquity and would not repent, all that those prophets proclaimed unto them came to pass. You may take all the ancient cities—Thebes, Nineveh, Tyre, Sidon, Babylon, Jerusalem and others—and they had prophets raised up among them. They were warned of God, and were told what awaited them unless they repented of their sins, and all came to pass as the prophets spake unto them. My mind rests upon Jeremiah. The Lord called him in his day to go and warn King Zedekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the prophet told them what would come to pass. The king and the inhabitants were wroth against him and they persecuted him, and he had so many trials to go through that a man in reading of them would not be surprised if Jeremiah felt like saying, "You may all go to destruction for what I care; I'm not going to stay with you." But the Lord had said unto Jeremiah, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." All that Jeremiah said to the inhabitants of Jerusalem came to pass, and the history of Jerusalem is terrible. The whole house of Israel had warning; prophets were raised up among them, and they prophesied unto them. All the judgments that visited them were foretold.

I speak of these things because they are on my mind, and we are in a somewhat similar condition ourselves. Take the days of Christ. As soon as Christ was born how quickly Herod sought His life! Joseph had to take Mary and the young child into Egypt in order to save the child. The power of evil was after Him for His destruction. And did the Savior, when He was grown to manhood, escape that power? Was there anything about Him in this respect that differed from others of the human family? There was not. He was tempted, He was tried, and the enemy labored for His destruction through His whole life. His mission was a short one. It was only three and a half years from the time he entered into the Priesthood until He was crucified, and that, too, by this power.

And the sorrow that has come upon the Jewish nation in consequence of this act of theirs, and the bill that they have had to pay, has been indeed great, and all that the prophets said concerning that has come to pass to the very letter. Nearly nineteen hundred years have rolled around since the death of Christ, and that yoke has been upon the neck of the Jews from that day until this. They have been trampled under the foot of the Gentiles, in fulfilment of the words of the prophets of God, and because they shed the blood of the Savior, their Shiloh. And it has not yet come to an end with them.

John, while upon the Isle of Patmos, clothed with the glory of God and wrapt in the visions of heaven, portrayed, prophesied and wrote concerning the events that should take place down to the coming of the Son of Man. He told us concerning the restoration of the everlasting Gospel. He says:

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth,

Saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come.

That has come to pass. The time has come when the Lord has set His hand to fulfil the flood of revelation contained in all the records of divine truth. The Lord raised up a man, ordained and prepared from the foundation of the world, to stand in the last dispensation and fulness of times, to receive the Gospel and the Priesthood, to organize the Church of God, and to prepare the way for the coming of the Son of Man. We know that these two powers were manifested with the Prophet Joseph as they were in the days of the Savior. The very moment that he received these revelations from God and proclaimed them, it seemed as though all earth and hell were let loose for his destruction. It appeared as if the devil was afraid that he would live to carry out these prophecies. You know his history. Some of us have been associated with that Prophet. We have seen this spirit of the evil one manifested. The Prophet Joseph was never let alone by the powers that exist until he, like the Savior and others, sealed his testimony with his blood. But during the short time that he dwelt in the flesh he accomplished all that he was ordained to do. He not only organized the Church, but he brought forth this book of revelations that I hold in my hand—the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, which contains some of the most sublime revelations God ever revealed to man on the earth. The Lord also chose Twelve Apostles, High Priests, Elders, Priests, Teachers and Deacons, and set in order the whole organization of the Church of