

deed a land of Zion unto us; and the promise is, that if we will obey the laws of God, if we will put our trust in Him, if we will draw near unto Him He will draw near unto us, and He will reward us with His favor and His blessing. He will rebuke the devourer, and He will cause that the earth shall be fruitful, that it shall yield in its strength to the husbandman, the tiller of the soil, and to the herder of flocks, He will increase his kine, and will prosper him upon the right hand and upon the left, and he shall have an abundance, because he puts his trust in God; he draws near unto Him, and he is willing to prove Him, to see whether He will not open the windows of heaven and pour out blessings upon him that he shall not have room to contain them. Let every man who has received the Gospel of Jesus Christ receive this saying, and hearken to these words, for all they are worth. Some men may esteem them lightly, and those who do will, without doubt, fail to draw near, they will neglect to prove the Lord, they will not fulfill the commandments that He has given, and they will never know that God tells the truth, and that He is able to fulfill His word and promise unto His people when they are willing to obey and keep His law. While they who appreciate these promises, who obey these laws that were given anciently, and have been renewed again in the dispensation of the fullness of times, for the blessing of the people, for the building up of Zion, for the feeding of the widow and the orphan, for the spreading of the Gospel of Christ to the nations of the earth, and for the gathering of the people from the four quarters of the earth, those who hearken to these words, prize them as the truth, and apply them in their practice throughout their lives, will come to know that God is a rewarder of those who diligently serve Him, and that He is able to fulfill His promises unto them.

A short time ago I met with a brother—I need not call his name, for he is but one among thousands who can bear the same testimony that he bore, and he bears that testimony not only by the word of mouth but by the evidences of thrift, of prosperity, of progress and of improvement which surround him in the midst of the deserts, this season he has gathered in rich harvests, his farms having produced in abundance, while the farms of many of his neighbors are clogged with weeds, and their harvests have been only one-half or one-third what his has been. How do you account for it? I account for it in the fact that God has blessed him, and so does he, for he is an intelligent man, a man that not only labors wisely and prudently, but in the fear of God, and in the desire of his heart to obey His laws. Said he to me and my companion with whom we were travelling: "God has blessed me because I have striven to keep His laws, and because I have been true to my family." He went out there upon the desert seven or eight years ago, impoverished by persecution and exile, being driven from his home and from his affairs, compelled to wander in exile for years, part of the time preaching the Gospel. He returned seven or eight years ago, and settled down upon the desert. Today, out of the earth, the burning sands, he has produced beautiful homes, he has fruitful fields, which are spread out before the eyes of any man who wishes to go and look upon them. He pays his tithing, he remembers his offerings, he is obedient to the laws of God, and he is not afraid to hear testimony to his friends and neighbors that it is through his obedience that God has blessed and prospered him, and made him what he is today. He is not the only one,

there are others that are prospered in like manner. And I testify it is because God has blessed him, and his soil, and his labors, and has given him the increase, securing to him the blessings for which he sought and labored. He has acted in good faith with the Lord, the Lord has known his heart, and has blessed him accordingly, and he is prosperous today in that desert, while as to many of his neighbors—go and look for yourselves at their broad acres. They tell the story for themselves. His lands are clear from noxious weeds, because he has labored, and taken care of his lands, and that by his industry and intelligent application of labor, showing that God has inspired him, and enlightened his mind. The Lord has blessed him in his basket and in his store, in his labors and in the thoughts of his mind, he has been inspired and enabled to accomplish the work that he has done; I testify that it is because of man's faith in the promises of the Lord, and his desire to obey His laws, that he is blessed and prospered of Him.

I have been blessed. I have been prospered. I might have been more faithful, and I might have been more greatly blessed. But the Lord has blessed me inasmuch that I have not lacked for anything that was needful for my welfare. I have not had luxury, nor "rolled in wealth," but God has fed and clothed me, with all of mine, and He has given us health and strength of body. And yet we might have done our duty better and been entitled to greater blessings, no doubt. I aim to pay my tithing. Now there is no use of my saying this unless it be true, because the evidences are there in the books. If I say I pay my tithing when I do not, Brother Heber J. Grant or some of the brethren who look after these things, men of figures, would go to the books, and they would say, "You said you pay your tithing, but you do not. We know just about what your income is, and here is what the books say." So I would stand condemned at once if I were to say to you that I paid my tithing when I did not pay my tithing, because not only the Lord would know I had not done it, but my brethren would know also that I had not done it, because the books show exactly what I have paid. No matter about that, the fact is this, I believe what I preach, and I do not preach that which I do not believe. I am not here for that purpose. I have not been called to that mission, or for that business. I preach that which I believe and that which I do know to be true; and I do know that if men will obey the laws of God, God will honor and bless them. I have proven it all my life through. I saw it manifested in circumstances which occurred in my childhood, and I know that God has blessed the widow and the fatherless when they have been obedient to His laws and have kept His commandments.

I can tell you the history of a widow woman, with a large family, who was more particular, if possible, to pay to the Lord what belonged to Him than she was to pay to her neighbors to whom she might be indebted, and she never was indebted to her neighbors, thank God, for anything that she did not pay to the last cent, because the Lord blessed her with plenty, and in her latter years she did not have to borrow of her neighbors, nor did she have to call upon the Church for support either, but she paid thousands of dollars in products and money into the storehouse of the Lord, although she was a widow with a large family to support. I know this. I can testify of this, and that the Lord Almighty blessed her, not only in the products of her fields, but in her flocks and herds. They were not devoured. They were not destroyed. They did not lie

down and die. They increased. They did not stray away; and thieves did not steal them. One reason for that was, she had a little boy that watched them very carefully under her direction, and prompting. Her eye was upon everything, she had supervision over everything, she directed those whom she employed, and her children; and I am a witness—and here sits another witness [Patriarch John Smith]—that God, the Eternal Father, blessed her and prospered her while she lived, and she was not only enabled to maintain herself and children that were left to her in poverty, in a day of trial, and when she was driven out into the wilderness, but she was able to feed scores of the poor, and to pay her tithes besides. Verily the Lord prospered her, and she was blessed. I remember one time when that same widow went to the tithing storehouse in this city with a load of potatoes in the spring—they had been kept over winter. And one of the tithing office clerks said to her, "Widow —, I don't see any use of your having to pay tithing; you ought not to pay tithing. You ought to keep what you have." She said to him, "William, you don't know what you are talking about. I pay my tithing that I may be blessed." "Would you deprive me," she said, "of a blessing?" "No," he said, "I would have you keep your tithing and bless yourself with it." Said he, "There are a number of able-bodied people here that are well qualified to work and produce their living, but they are living from the tithing, and I don't see that a widow should be required to pay her tithing to feed those that are not working for it." Now these are about the words of this man, who was employed at the tithing office. But "no," said the widow, "I propose to pay my dues to the Lord; I propose to pay my tithing, and any man that would prevent me from doing this would deprive me of a blessing." Where is that man and his family today? He apostatized. He didn't last long in the Church. He turned away, and went back to the east somewhere and took his family with him. He probably long since has gone to his rest. And not one of his family is in the Church. I bear testimony of these things because I know what I am talking about. I want to tell you a little more: While this widow was paying her tithing and being blessed, there was a little boy who really thought that tithing office clerk was about right. That widow's boys had to work very hard, and they knew how those potatoes were raised. They knew how the corn and other grain was raised, they knew what it was to take care of the sheep, and the horses and the cows that were tithed, and all about it. They knew how it was done, for they had it to do. And one of the little boys of that widow thought that clerk was more than two-thirds right about it. By and by the widow died, but she left very comfortable property for her children, dug out of the desert here: the children were young, and I confess to you that they were not as faithful in paying their tithes and their offerings as their mother was; they had lost their mother, and what was the result? In a few years, everything that she left them had gone to rack and ruin. That was the result. The cattle were turned out upon the range, and that was the last they ever saw of them. The neighbors' cattle broke into the fields and destroyed the crops, and they did not reap the harvests they had done before; and it was only a few years after the death of the widow when the children had not much to show for what was left them, and it was not until they became old enough to appreciate the truth, and to commence to obey the laws of God and keep His