

"And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

"They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

"Of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

"God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

I have listened this afternoon with much pleasure to the testimony of Elder Eggertson, who has spoken to us. His testimony is the same as that of all the Elders who go forth as messengers of salvation to the nations of the earth. In his remarks is found the secret of the success and power which attended the proclamation of the Gospel by the Elders of this Church. If there should be an inquirer desirous of knowing how it is that our Elders go forth and preach what is called "Mormonism," but which we call the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as they do year after year, they can find the reason for this and for the strength, endurance and patience which are displayed. In the testimony that has been borne unto us this afternoon. It is because God gives unto His faithful servants a testimony concerning the truth. When men go forth as bearers of this message, and live as they should do—humbling themselves before the Lord, putting their trust in Him, bringing their sorrows to Him, laying bare their hearts before Him in humble prayer, and depending upon Him for the strength and the assistance that they need, they receive a testimony that God hears their prayers, that they are accepted of God and are His chosen servants. And we can send our Elders out by hundreds, with perfect confidence to meet all the hardships, the privations and the afflictions through which they may have to pass because of their advocacy of so unpopular a religion as that which the Lord has given unto us to declare to the nations of the earth.

Every parent who parts with his son can feel perfect confidence, though that son may go forth without money to sustain him, without experience in the things of the world, and without friends, only such as God will give to him. He can let his son go with full confidence that if he will do right he will receive the blessings of God during his absence, and will return strengthened in the faith of the everlasting Gospel, full of hope, full of testimony and full of strength to bless his fellows among whom he may dwell after his return. Do you not know that this is the case, my brethren and sisters? Have any of you ever parted with a son, who has been called to go and preach the Gospel, that you have not had this feeling and this confidence, that if he would live pure and keep the commandments of God, he

would come back a developed man in the things of God, with increased faith, enlarged knowledge and a broader comprehension of the character of the work which God has established? It is this that constitutes the strength of this Church. It is this feature that makes it a power in the earth. It is this that develops the faith of those who take this course.

I have read in your hearing a portion of this great chapter which forms a part of the Apostle Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews. The whole chapter is worth reading, as other portions of Scripture are, because they are the words of God. This chapter gives us a clear conception of that which can be accomplished through the exercise of faith. I have been led to think that some of the Latter-day Saints do not appreciate as they should do the power of faith, and that they reason that if certain results do not appear likely to come to pass, looking at them from a natural standpoint, it is useless for us to expect them. In other words, there is too much of a disposition growing up in our midst to walk by sight and not by faith. I have heard that some of our people feel discouraged and disheartened at prospects that are before them, and they are disposed to look at the dark side of affairs, to anticipate disaster, and to imagine that there is some fate awaiting us that will be very serious in its character, and from which it is useless for us to make any exertions to escape.

I do not know how general this feeling may be. I have not met with it myself, not probably having had the opportunity of mingling with those who entertain it; or, if they have entertained it, they have not expressed it in my hearing. I have, however, as I have said, heard considerable concerning its existence. But I wish to say to you, my brethren and sisters, this afternoon, that this whole work in which we are engaged, from its inception until the present time, has come in contact with everything that men would call natural; that is, the results which have been wrought out have not been according to the judgment of men concerning them. If the Latter-day Saints had believed, in the beginning of this work, that which was said by men of the world concerning the work and the preaching of the Gospel, they would have sat down and resigned themselves to the fate that was predicted regarding this work. But this was not the spirit of him whom God chose to lay the foundation of the work—the Prophet Joseph Smith. It was not the spirit of those associated with him. They were filled with faith. And when this Church numbered no more than would occupy a small room, I have heard those who were present on many occasions say that they heard the Elders then predict in the plainest manner that which we now behold. They foresaw, by the spirit of prophecy which God poured out upon them, the development and advancement of this work and the great and mighty result that would be accomplished through the preaching

of the Gospel unto the inhabitants of the earth. No greater evidence can be brought forward of the divinity of the mission of Joseph Smith and his prophetic office than the predictions which he uttered in early days concerning the future of this work.

Before such a principle as the gathering was known among men; before it had ever been heard of, much less taught as doctrine, the Prophet Joseph, as you will see if you will read carefully the revelations which he received, foreshadowed the gathering of the people of God, the bringing of them from distant lands, and the building up of a great power called Zion, in the earth, through the gathering of the people from the various lands where they dwell, and where they would hear the Gospel preached by the Elders who would carry it to them. He told the people with great plainness concerning these matters, and those who had faith believed him. Though they were mobbed; though they were despoiled of their property, their houses burned, their fields, gardens and orchards destroyed, their cattle shot down, and they themselves driven out as homeless wanderers, they never lost sight of the great prophecies that had been uttered in their hearing concerning the future of this work. They were undaunted in the midst of their afflictions. They were unyielding in their faith. When they were driven out of Missouri, in the midst of the most inclement weather, destitute of everything almost that would make life comfortable, or even contribute to its support, in this dark hour they never lost sight of the promises which God had made to His people; and they believed, as firmly as we can believe today, with all our experience, that the Church of God would roll forth in mighty power, and that it would increase in numbers and in strength and in everything that would make it great, until God would accomplish through it all His purposes and all that He had predicted by the mouths of His holy prophets.

There were some, it is true, who did not have this faith. They faltered, they doubted, they fell by the wayside, and they lost their faith, becoming alarmed at the seriousness of the opposition that they had to contend with and at the gravity of the threats which were made against them. They feared that such a fate as was threatened would come upon them, and in that hour they trembled and they fell, leaving the Church, not believing that the promises which God had made would be fulfilled. But those who had faith in God and in His promises did not falter. Mobs might surround them, as they did, armed to the teeth, threatening their lives and endeavoring to exterminate them from the face of the earth; yet they pursued unfalteringly the path marked out, putting their trust in that God who had created them, and whose word they knew could not fail. Heaven and earth might pass away; but they knew that His word could not fail, and they put their trust in it,