

liberty they could desire, and promising to those who should possess the land many precious things; for He has told us that none should be brought here except they should come by His permission. Therefore, the emigration that has come from the beginning, and that is still coming, comes by the permission of the Almighty. He is watching over it, and He will control it and bring to pass His purposes in connection with it. He has told us that if we will only worship the God of this land, Jesus Christ, we cannot be brought into bondage or into captivity by any other nation. The powers of Europe may band together and indulge in hopes of conquering this nation; but the Lord has said—and it will be fulfilled if we do right—that they will be defeated in all their schemes, and this shall be a land of liberty unto the righteous. This nation of ours, so glorious in its past, so glorious in its prospects of the future, will stand and never be overthrown, unless the inhabitants of the land reject Jesus Christ, the King and the God of the land. Now we know the conditions upon which victory will be assured to us as a nation. If this nation had listened to Joseph Smith, the Prophet of God; if they had been counseled by him, God would have adopted this nation and its government, and made it His; for the promises are to that effect. Now, what the future will be depends upon the conduct of those who possess the land and upon the administration of affairs in the land.

There is one thing that has gladdened me very much during this recent agitation concerning war; I have been pleased exceedingly at the course that has been taken by the administration in this threatened difficulty. There has been so manifest a desire and determination on the part of President McKinley and those immediately connected with him, to keep down excitement, to prevent the circulation of falsehood and everything that would disturb the public mind and inflame it against Spain, that I have been very much pleased.

In connection with this I would like to read a revelation which the Lord has given to us as a people, because I see in the conduct of the administration some features that agree with the instructions of the Lord. The Lord, in speaking about the plan that He recommended to His ancients, says:

"Behold, this is the law I gave unto my servant Nephi, and thy fathers Joseph, and Jacob, and Isaac, and Abraham, and all mine ancient Prophets and Apostles.

"And again, this is the law that I gave unto mine ancients, that they should not go out unto battle against any nation, kindred, tongue, or people, save I, the Lord, commanded them.

Here is a law given that is of the utmost importance to the inhabitants of the earth, as well as to us as a people. It is the law by which the inhabitants of the earth should be governed, and we, as Latter-day Saints especially, should understand this law and be governed by it; and not, as we have been told at this Conference, indulge in warlike demonstrations or manifest a bloodthirsty disposition. We should be a peaceful people, seeking peace, and endeavoring to escape all the horrors of war, and to avert them from the nations of the earth, particularly our own nation. The Lord says:

"And if any nation, tongue, or people, should proclaim war against them, they should first lift a standard of peace unto that people, nation, or tongue."

I have been impressed (and I say this aside from any political bias, not wishing political feeling to enter into a

question of this kind) with the conduct of the administration in relation to this. There has seemed to me to be a determination on the part of President McKinley and those immediately associated with him to push off war and to do all in their power to avert it. Because of their apparent hesitation some have become inflamed against them, and have felt that the dignity of the nation was not being maintained, and that we were not doing as we should do to punish Spain for her supposed action in relation to the destruction of the battleship Maine, and because of her treatment of the Cubans. The feelings of our nation have been stirred up by reports in the newspapers, many of which have been incorrect and without foundation. While the examination concerning the destruction of the Maine was going on, the administration has been under the continued necessity of publicly denying the false stories that had obtained circulation; and they did this in the interests of peace, to keep the people of our nation from being misled and stirred up to such a degree of indignation that they could not be controlled. I have admired this, and I have thanked God that this spirit has been given unto the men that have our nation and its affairs in charge, because I have recognized how much it agreed with what the Lord has said. Spain has not yet proclaimed war against this nation; but if she has countenanced (which I do not believe she did) the destruction of the battleship Maine, or even if the ruling powers in Spain have done it, and were determined to have war with us, the Lord says we should lift up a standard of peace unto that nation. That is the duty of this nation. That is the duty of the Latter-day Saints, when their enemies come against them to make war upon them. We must proclaim peace; do all in our power to appease the wrath of our enemies; make any sacrifice that honorable people can to avert war, with all its horrors, entailing as it does dreadful consequences so numerous that they cannot be mentioned. It is our duty, I say, as a nation. The influence of the Latter-day Saints should be used in this direction. We should seek to quell these feelings of anxiety to fight and to shed blood. Our influence should go forth like oil poured upon the troubled waters, quieting the waves of discontent and wrath that are aroused by this fearful spirit. The Lord then tells us what should be done:

"And if that people did not accept the offering of peace neither the second nor the third time,"

Not only ought we to extend the offering of peace the first time to a nation that proclaims war against us, but again the second time; and if that should be rejected, again the third time; and if it be rejected the third time, then

"They should bring these testimonies before the Lord."

Go to the Lord, and say, "Here are our testimonies. We have offered peace the first time; we have offered it twice; we have offered it three times; but our offerings are rejected, and this nation is determined to have war with us. Now we bring these testimonies before thee, Lord."

"Then I, the Lord, would give unto them a commandment, and justify them in going out to battle against that nation, tongue, or people,

"And I, the Lord, would fight their battles, and their children's battles, and their children's children's, until they had avenged themselves on all their enemies, to the third and fourth generation.

"Behold, this is an ensample unto all

people, saith the Lord your God, for justification before me.

I do not look for our nation to do this. It is scarcely to be expected, in the nature of things, that they would do it. But it is the true principle, and we as a people should use our influence for this purpose. Our prayers should ascend to God; our petitions should ascend to the government of our nation to do everything that honorable people can to avert war. We have no fear of the effect of the combinations against us. Spain might inflict great damage upon our coasts. Her naval strength is equal if not superior to ours. We have a very extended line of seacoast, and a difficult line to defend against a strong naval power. And we might suffer in the beginning. But the promise of God is that if we will do right as a nation, if we will serve Him, they shall not have power over us, or be able to bring us into bondage; and in the end we shall prevail. This is a glorious promise which is made to the inhabitants of this land. I would to God that the whole nation would believe it. I would to God that they would accept the testimonies of the past, the prophecies that have been referred to this afternoon; for I say to you, as I would like to say to this entire nation, there are prophets of God in the land. The word of God is in the midst of the people. The Lord reveals His mind and will unto His servants the Prophets. The proofs of it are before all the nations of the earth. There is abundant evidence to substantiate the statements which have been made that the Lord has revealed His will, and that there are Prophets in the land. And if the nation would believe, the Lord would make them the great and mighty power that we are told by the ancient Prophets this nation might become.

To us as Latter-day Saints these principles are of the utmost importance. I do not want to see our young men get filled with the spirit of war and be eager for the conflict. God forbid that such a spirit should prevail in our land, or that we should contribute in any manner to the propagation of a spirit of that kind! But one may say, "Is it not our duty to defend our country and our flag? Is it not our duty to maintain the institutions which the Lord has given to us?" Certainly it is. And it is no part of cowardice to take the plan that the Lord has pointed out. No man need be afraid that the Lord or any just man will look upon him as a coward.

There was a time when men who became angry at each other fought duels. A man of honor considered it his duty, if he received an insult, to challenge the insulter, and the man that was challenged had the choice of weapons, and they fought in single combat to avenge their honor. And such a feeling prevailed on this question that brave men were liable to be charged with cowardice if they did not fight. It took the bravest kind of men to refuse to fight. But it is not an evidence of true courage to be willing to rush into a fight. Sometimes the bravest of people shrink from any such action as this; when the time comes to fight, however, they are the bravest, and the slowest to yield.

The Lord has given us a command in connection with this subject that is worth while for us to bear in mind:

"For he will give unto the faithful line upon line, precept upon precept; and I will try you and prove you here-with;

"And whoso layeth down his life in my cause, for my name's sake, shall find it again, even life eternal:

"Therefore be not afraid of your enemies, for I have decreed in my heart, saith the Lord, that I will prove you