

Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save He shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which He commandeth them." That was Nephi's faith. He knew that God was all-powerful, and he immediately acquiesced in the wish of his father. His next elder brother was influenced by him and he was willing to go, too, and the two eldest sons went also, but reluctantly and without the least confidence in the success of the mission. The history of it is known to most of you. They went in first and asked Laban for the plates. They offered him all their property; but he would not listen to it, and in fact his servants chased them away. The elder brothers looked upon this as a confirmation of their fears, and because their brothers were not of their opinion they beat them with a rod. But Nephi determined to do the thing that God required, believing with all his heart that God would ask nothing of him that He would not assist him in doing. He went forth again and obtained the plates, and they were the means of saving that people and their descendants from many evils.

This is a striking illustration of what can be done. It was the same, brethren and sisters, in coming to this land. There were doubters who said, "You cannot go into the wilderness and live. If you start out to the Rocky Mountains, you will fail." But the servants of God did not have these fears. President Young was moved upon by the Spirit of God to take a certain course, and most of his brethren were one with him. There were some of the Twelve that did not see as he did. Lyman Wight and James E. Page did not want to go, and did not go; but the rest of the Twelve were one with President Young. He said the Lord had pointed out to him the course to be pursued, and he led the people forth. They were penniless and destitute of almost everything necessary to make such a stupendous journey. Why, as we passed through Iowa the people had to sell their leather beds, and afterwards everything they had that could be sold to get provisions. If we had looked at this naturally, men would have said, "This man is leading this people to destruction. What have they got to sustain them. They are going forth into an unknown land, and who knows when they get to any place that they are going for that they can live?" It was easy to say this, because no one knew anything about this country, comparatively speaking. A few men had crossed here, but they knew nothing about the climate, or whether the soil was capable of sustaining human life. The few who had lived here had lived like Indians; they had hunted and trapped and lived on meat, and a little corn, where the Indians could raise a little along the streams.

How was it in Winter Quarters? The people suffered great hardships. I remember myself, when a boy, going day after day for my uncle's family to Brother John Van Cott's, and waiting for my turn at his big coffee mill to grind a little corn that we could eat. We bought wheat whole and ate it, and had to send down to Missouri for a little corn, and lived to the plain-

est and most humble manner, not enough scarcely to eat. But the Spirit of God rested upon the people, and they were cheerful. They had a testimony from the Lord that that which they were doing was right, and that it was the Lord's will that they should do it. Then, as I have said, we started across the plains from Winter Quarters, traveling without knowing the point of destination. Of course, it was thought we should go to Upper California; for all this country was then called Upper California. The treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo had not been consummated, and Mexico owned this country. But Upper California was a vague term. It was known we were going to the Rocky Mountains; but where in the Rocky Mountains? What kind of a country it was, and whether we should find a suitable place or not, was a mere matter of faith; there was no knowledge on the subject.

But the Lord led this people forth. He fed them when they were hungry. He furnished them means. I never heard of one starving to death. We were pinched for hunger, and many were laid on the road-side worn out by the exposure and hardships that they had to endure; but the bulk of the people were sustained by the power of God. Their faith was rewarded, for God blessed them; and though they had but little to eat and little to wear, they could rejoice continually in the blessing and favor of God and the knowledge that He was their friend. No happier people ever lived then, nor since, than those who lived here the first two years that we came into this valley—from 1847 to 1849—when the people were deprived of almost all the comforts of life and suffered indescribable privations and hardships. They were happy because the peace of God rested down upon them, and they were sustained and buoyed up in the midst of their trials and difficulties.

It has been so throughout the history of this Church. It was so in the early days, when the people were driven out of Missouri, after suffering the persecutions that they had endured there. They did not lose their faith. They knew that God had laid the foundation of Zion; they knew that God had organized His Church, and that He had restored the Gospel of the Son of God and the everlasting Priesthood. That testimony was a living and burning testimony in the heart of every faithful man and woman. Persecution, trial, hardship, could not extinguish it; nothing but death itself could destroy it in the breasts of the faithful Saints. So it has been from that day until the present.

As I have said, the experience of this people is different from that of any other people upon the face of the earth that I know anything about. We have proved God. We know He lives. We know that He will feed us, that He will clothe us, that He will shelter us. We know that He watches over us. We know that His angels are round about us, and that nothing occurs but, in His providence, if we do right, will be controlled for our good and for our eventual salvation. He will let no trial descend upon us without giving us strength and grace to endure it, if we will live so as to obtain it. This is His promise to us. And God is bound

irrevocably by His covenant to us. Am I irreverent in saying this? I hope not. I do not say it with any spirit of that kind. But it is a fact. When we went forth into the waters of baptism and covenanted with our Father in heaven to serve Him and keep His commandments, He bound Himself also by covenant to us that He would never desert us, never leave us to ourselves, never forget us; that in the midst of trials and hardships, when everything was arrayed against us, He would be near unto us and would sustain us. That was His covenant, and He has amply fulfilled it up to the present time, and has shown that we can tie to the promises that He has made. We have proved these things through experience. When a man goes forth on a mission and knows that God hears his prayer; when he wants a pair of shoes and he gets the shoes; when he wants a coat and he gets the coat; when he wants a hat and gets the hat; when he wants shelter and somebody kindly gives him shelter, and when friends are raised up to him, can that man doubt after that? Can he fear after that? Why his faith is built upon a rock, and he knows that God will hear and answer him if he will do right. He knows that God is his friend, and that He cannot forget him.

Now, here is a combination of people of this kind. This Church is composed of this element. Our little children know this. They grow up in that atmosphere of faith. They know that the Lord hears their prayers. One of my little boys had lost something one day, and he wanted to find it, as it was something he was very desirous not to lose. After searching for some time and not finding it, it occurred to him that he might ask the Lord; and he knelt down by himself and asked the Lord to help him find that article. He got up from his knees and not a minute passed before he found it; yet he had searched before in vain. Now, that was the natural impulse of that child, because he had been told that God would hear and answer prayer. Our children have this faith, and grow up in it. Of course, there are some who lose this faith, either through their own carelessness or the neglect of their parents; but the bulk of them have this spirit of faith.

We are passing through difficulties at the present time. We have heard a great deal said about famine. We have not talked so much about it of late; but for very many years the Elders of the Church spoke about famines that were coming. Now we have a famine of money. I am thankful that the famine of money has come before the famine for food. I do not want to see this people pinched for food. I would rather that we would take to heart the counsels we have received concerning these matters. Some have stored up food, and because the famine has not come they have settled down to the feeling that there will be no famine and they need not store any more food. But a famine for food may come just as suddenly as this famine for money has. It has come like a wave, unexpected, almost sweeping over this entire land, causing unutterable trouble, paralyzing every business enterprise,