

what happens to others as that which immediately concerns our selves. Hence, naturally, all the preaching about what God revealed formerly has only a weak impression comparatively, and it does not take the effect that it should. The faith it produces is something as powerless as faith possibly can be.

In order to produce this, preachers are under the necessity of resorting to all sorts of sentimental anecdotes, death scenes, war scenes, dreams, etc., or even to drums and tambourines. Revivalists know the effects of these artificial methods and prefer them to the simple tale of Him who died on Golgotha—a proof of the poverty, spiritually, of the prevalent systems. Now, how is this changed by the simple announcement: "God has spoken?" This at once stirs the whole world and the whole hell, and something definitive comes out of that. It produces either faith or condemnation. Where faith is the result it is a strong faith. What gave the former-day saints power to endure all for their religion? What gave the Prophet and his fellow-martyrs power to endure all hardships and death at the hands of enemies? This assurance: God has spoken. God has revealed His will. Such faith this assurance will always produce. How had Joseph the Prophet come to discover this fundamental truth? No Catholic, no Lutheran, no Episcopalian, no Presbyterian, no Methodist, no Baptist was in the position of teaching Joseph this truth; none but God.

Let us further consider the great truth revealed in these last days concerning God. While all the world, as far as the influence of Christianity is felt, knows how to repeat the words of the prayers which our Lord taught His disciples: "Our Father, which art in heaven," yet who has understood this one word "Father" in its full meaning? We call upon every honest, believing soul in the whole world to inquire into his own mind and see whether this beautiful prayer before the days of Joseph the Prophet had any more significance than being a beautiful figure of speech? Or was there one single theologian who had understood that God really is what He teaches us to call Him, Father? If there be, we are not aware of it. But here comes a young man, educated in no school, formed according to no existent religious system, and opens up to us an infinite view of eternities past and eternities to come by declaring that God is in reality our Father, that we are His children, and that we are here for certain purposes, which accomplished will bring us back to an eternal home, in a circle of real brothers and sisters. Say, O ye inhabitants of the world, can this glorious truth, emanate from anybody but God?

Another peculiarity which marks this message is the importance it attaches to obedience to God. "By the prayer of your faith ye shall receive My law." (Doc. and Cov., sec xli, 3); "None shall be exempt from the justice and the laws of God" (Ibid, cvii, 84); "Verily, I

say unto you, that in time ye shall have no king or ruler, for I will be your King and watch over you; wherefore hear My voice and follow Me, and ye shall be a free people, and ye shall have no laws but My laws when I come, for I am your law-giver." (Ibid, xxxviii, 21-22). Had Joseph the Prophet received his instructions from men he would have appointed a pope, a bishop, a presbyterian, a synode, or something similar as the highest authority of the Church; but he did not. For God alone obedience is demanded; a proof that he was a messenger of God.

This will be still better appreciated when it is considered that, although obedience is required, yet the liberty of man is fully preserved. Obedience is required but not from fear, not from servitude, but from free choice. In looking over the history of the world we find that it has always been the great trouble of mankind to find the proper middle way in this respect. Nations have had their liberty, but it has not been possible to regulate this so as to give us room for abuses. Liberty has been perverted into lawlessness; the people have been the victims of unbridled agitators who, under the cover of patriotism, seduced and robbed the masses, until the people, tired of this liberty, after many sufferings, rose and laid the power down into the hands of a few, or even of one, preferring the chance of having one or a few public robbers to many thousands. But as anciently Scylla avoided, Charybdis was near, so here. What was once done as a safeguard against spoliation and lawlessness became in course of time a curse. It developed into despotism. The people suffered for centuries perhaps, but finally the oppression, becoming too great, the burdens too heavy, the people rose and crushed the tyrants under its weight. Freedom was again established, and the progress in the circle again commenced. For these two extremes, equally dangerous, despotism and licentiousness have always been the trouble with mankind. Now, here comes a young man, Joseph the Prophet, who had studied no politics, no history, and who teaches us a system by which both these extremes, both these dangers are avoided, how to obey without being serfs or becoming serfs, and at the same time to enjoy the fullest personal liberty, "the doctrine of common consent," without placing us in danger of licentiousness. If God had not taught the Prophet this, who had? Who was his teacher?

Another peculiarity, not less marked, is found in what might be called the rites observed in this last dispensation. Almost the entire world had lost the right form of baptism, for instance, and all had forgotten the true signification and use of that rite. A man who had only human wisdom for guidance would under such circumstances probably have either disregarded the act altogether as a mere outward form, or would have attached very little importance to it. Both these tendencies are found abund-

antly among Christian professors. But here comes a young man and teaches us not only the right form of baptism (although this was the most unpopular one), but also its true signification and its use both for living and dead.

Looking at baptism, the doctrine of gathering, the temple services, all the rites revealed through Joseph the Prophet, as a God acceptable worship, we must ask: "Is it possible that all this is from men? Is it likely that a deceiver would have taught doctrines so unpopular, so little calculated to gain public favor?" We think not. When a man wants to deceive he must follow popular roads, flatter the vanity of the masses, yield to their prejudices and establish himself on the very ground of their ignorance. Advanced truth, truth trampled under the feet of men, always come from God.

People who know the religious observances here spoken of only from representations given by a hostile press, where everything is ridiculed, cannot, of course, appreciate the force of the proof they convey. But every one who is familiar with these to the Latter-day Saint's peculiar rites, and who understand that their sole object is to teach the people "Holiness to the Lord"—any one who will consider that similar means were adopted under the grand Mosaic dispensation in order to impress the people then living with this same lesson, "Holiness to the Lord," and any one who perceives how wonderfully well these rites, in every detail, are calculated to impress this very idea, that without holiness no one can see the Lord, he will feel in the contemplation of all this that here surely is the wisdom of God revealed to man. No analysis, however, can do full justice to this subject. It must be felt and realized in the experience of man in order to be appreciated.

In conclusion, like scripture itself, the message of Joseph the Prophet begins its work with a recognition of our fall, our total ruin; it then brings the soul into harmony with God and with itself; it enlightens and educates the conscience, quickens and purifies the feelings, subjects instinct to reason, reason to love, and all to God. It provides with ample means of reaching happiness never dreamt of, in worlds without end. Hence, the conclusion necessarily follows that the man who taught us this must himself have been a scholar of God.

EFFECTS OF THE DOCTRINES.

When investigating the claims of a religious system it becomes necessary also to consider the effects which such a system produces in the lives and characters of those who embrace it, as well as its general influence. If a tree is known by its fruits, so are also doctrines. Those that produce good fruits cannot be evil.

It is therefore customary to refer to the effect of the Gospel in the first part of our era as an evidence of the truth of its claims. These effects are well known and worthy of consideration. Paul points out that some of