

necessaries of life, and this in our own land! But I am not here to try to scare anybody with famine, although the Lord has revealed through His servants that famine is one of the scourges that He will send upon the inhabitants of the earth in the last days, and as the Lord lives, He will send it in His time. As the Lord blessed the earth in the beginning and caused it to be fruitful and bring forth for man, so sure can He put His curse upon it, as He did upon the land of Canaan and caused it to be barren and unfruitful; and so sure can He send the devouring insect to sweep the earth of the crops that are upon it, and He can scourge the nations that boast of their wealth and of their power to resist the providences of God. He can teach them a lesson when He will; and when the time comes, as God lives, He will teach them a lesson, however little they may believe it possible for Him to do it. It is as easy for Him to send famine in this bountiful land of ours as it is for Him to send the cyclone; and it is just as easy for Him to send the devouring element of fire, which consumed Chicago a number of years ago and which is now from time to time devastating cities, as it is to send famine or the cyclone. I believe in the almighty power of God, and in His justice, and mercy; and I have unlimited faith in the words that He has spoken by inspired men. I believe that it is our business to prepare against the day of famine, of pestilence, of tempests and earthquakes, and the time when the sea shall heave itself beyond its bounds. How shall we do it? Shall we do it by storing a granary full of grain? Not exactly; that may be good in a small way. How shall we do it better than that? By studying and carrying out the principles of true economy in our lives, and by a system of fraternity and love by which each one will help his brother, and all stand united, so that none shall suffer from want when it is within the power of others to alleviate it. One of the great promises that the Lord has made concerning His people, as contained in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, is that they shall become the richest of all people. Now, how can this be fulfilled every day we spend all that we earn, and borrow a little besides of our neighbor? The first thing we know, our farms will be in the hands of the money lender, and instead of being the richest of all people, we will be the hewers of wood and drawers of water, the menials and dependents of those who know enough to take care of their means.

Perhaps you may think this is not the kind of gospel that should be preached on the Sabbath day; but there are some, I have been warned by Brother Richards, that will not be here tomorrow, because their business will require them to be away, perhaps to guard themselves from the evils that threaten them. Now, if we want to be the richest of all people upon the face of the earth, let us be industrious and economical and save our means. Not that we should build our hopes upon our riches, not that we make that our god; but for what? That we may be able, when perilous times shall come, to meet the necessities of the times and the obligations that may rest upon

the people of God to consummate the purposes of the Almighty in the land. I pity a rich man that loves his money more than he loves God. I think there is nothing much more contemptible in the sight of God. I do not think we have many of that class amongst us. We cannot tell exactly; but the Lord may require a test of us some time that will prove us in this regard. At present, however, He is suffering us to go along as we please, and so we do not know just how we would do if all we had was required of us. Some day we will be weighed in the balance, and it will be known whether we love the world more than we love God. Next to a rich man who loves his money more than he loves God, the most pitiable thing that I know of is the poor man that loves his dollar more than he loves God. If there is any difference between them, it is in favor of the rich man. Surely the poor man who loves his little more than he does God can never be made a steward over many things. It will be as hard for such a poor man to enter into the kingdom of heaven as for the rich man. They are both on an equal footing, so far as that is concerned. The Lord has said that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. That is not because the man is rich—for the Lord designs that we shall be the richest of all people. Consequently there can be no crime in being rich. The crime is not in possessing the money. We hear it often quoted that "money is the root of all evil." But this is not so. The scriptures do not say so. They say that it is the love of money which is the root of all evil. And this is true both in the case of rich men and in the case of poor men. It is the love of it that will prevent a man from entering into the kingdom of heaven, not the possession of it; for if a man could possess worlds and hold them subject to the command of Him who made them, he would be on the summit of acceptableness to the Lord.

Let us reform in this direction. As I have said, President Taylor told us when money was plentiful and times were easy, that then was the time to pay debts. But did you ever see a man pay his debts and free himself from obligations when money was flush and times prosperous? No, it seems to be contrary to human nature; and a man has not to learn principle better than most of us understand it if he will carry out this counsel in times of prosperity. You remember, doubtless, what the negro said in his prayer. His master wanted to raise more cotton that he might buy more negroes, and he wanted to buy more negroes that he might raise more cotton; and so the negro prayed: "O, Lord, bless the poor white man, for the more he gets the more he wants." This is the character of too many men, and the Latter-day Saints are no exception to the rule. The more prosperous we are the more we spread out. The time to retrench, to learn true economy, and to lay the foundation of prosperity is when money is scarce, when times are hard, and when we see the necessity of being economical and prudent. Therefore, I say to you, now is the acceptable hour, now is the time for all the people to study true economy, and to begin to retrench and free themselves from debt, and become a free and independ-

dent people. In order to do this we want to save our means, and use it to provide labor for our people at home, that they may not be destitute of something to do, or compelled to beg almost for something to eat, which is already the case with too many amongst us. They do not want to beg; they ask for work. This is a condition of things that never should have existed in Zion. It is enough for it to exist under the effete institutions of the old world, where the wealthy own the land, the houses and the mills, and the poor are dependent upon them. But every man should be his own master here, and there should be no master over us except one, who is merciful, charitable, long-suffering and loving toward His children. If we will only do our duty as Latter-day Saints and be wise in the use of our means, circumstances will be overruled for us, our labors will be blessed unto us, the land will be made fruitful, and we will reap bountiful harvests and rejoice in them; for God will bestow His favors upon His faithful children. But if we spend that which He gives us in riotous living, in wanton pleasure; if we cast it to the dogs and strengthen with it the hands of the wicked, how can we expect that we will become the richest of all people? And we may look for afflictions to be brought upon us from time to time, as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ and an understanding of our duty. Of course Babylon has come here. The Lord said: "Come out of her, my people, that ye may not partake of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Well, we did come out in the beginning; but we have invited it here, and now it is here, and the worst of it is the Latter-day Saints are to some extent partaking of her sins, and look out that you do not also receive of her plagues. Now is a good time to repent of these things. Now is the time to curtail expenses. Now is the time to cut down extravagance and to deny ourselves a little worldly pleasure. But let us be charitable. Do not condemn one another. I am not condemning you. I am not finding fault with you for this more than with myself. There is not the least feeling of blame in my heart. I do not censure my brethren. But sometimes I find fault with our acts and course of life. But let us be charitable one towards another. Do not go and take your fellow-servant who owes you a few cents and demand that which he owes you, and if he asks you to wait a little season, you thrust him into prison, figuratively speaking. Remember the parable of the Saviour on this subject, and be charitable and merciful one toward another.

Now, I have been preaching poverty and referring to hard times; but looking over this congregation and seeing this garden of flowers that rises before me on the heads of these beautiful women of Zion, I cannot see much poverty here, nor any indications of hard times. All here is as a garden in spring time, when everything is fresh and lovely. Surely there are no hard times here! So with these brethren, all clad in rich raiment and with plenty at home; each one with two or three mowing machines, and two or three reapers lying out in the field, in the hot sun, or run back into the creek