

heaven as they should do. This is what we ought all the time to have before us. It should be the first thing with us in the morning, and the last thing when we shut our eyes to slumber at night, that we appreciate with grateful hearts the blessings that God bestows upon us. Then we can roll out two or three hundred thousand dollars to finish a temple, and it becomes a matter of convenient effort for the people of God to take hold of and accomplish with delight.

This leads me to the consideration of temples. How blessed we are. Three temples already among us, and the people are laboring in them to benefit the hosts of the dead that have gone before. Yet there are a great many Saints who have not got their eyes opened to see that there is really any importance in their going to the temple, and some have not felt to attach any importance to their taking hold and helping to build it. But generally there is to this labor a greater and a more universal good feeling of generosity among the Saints than upon any other thing that donations are asked for. That is a testimony to us that the building of temples is a divine work; that the temples are the gates of heaven, and that men and women in them may get nearer to the Lord than they can anywhere else on this earth. This has always been so, and it is now the case more than ever before. Have we found it out? is the question. We read a great deal about Solomon's temple. If a mason talks with you a few minutes and you have anything to say about masonry, he will tell you that his ideas and instructions have come clear down from Solomon's temple. And that temple, let me tell you, was built by a people that lived in a section of country a great deal less than this Territory of Utah. The land of Palestine is estimated to contain about 12,000 square miles, while Utah Territory contains more than six times as many, or about 80,000 square miles. Think of it! That land was so highly cultivated that it supported its millions of people; and it had besides that, all around on the hills and in the valleys, multitudes of flocks and herds—"cattle upon a thousand hills." The people who inhabited that land were among the very wealthiest on the face of the earth. For hundreds of years they lent and did not borrow, and they were the head of the nations on all that continent. The Lord blessed them with that glorious temple. Now, we have several Stakes here in Zion that extend over as much territory as was contained in the whole land of Israel, which had that temple. But we could put two temples of that size—that is leaving out the part that was intended for the congregations of the Gentiles—into this temple that is now being finished in Salt Lake. Solomon's temple was not a large one. But it was very precious, because it was overlaid with gold. Its implements, cups, trumpets, horns, and all its articles of service were made of gold and of silver. They had the precious metals in those days in immense quantities. The dome of the temple was covered with gold. When the sun rose in the morning it reflected and threw off a great spot of light like another sun, and its brilliancy shone extensively over all the country around.

Now, the Lord has blessed us to build three of these good sized temples, just for pastime, while we have been constructing this one that President Young laid out forty years ago. We have come nearly to the finishing of the fourth temple. Are the people of Israel in these valleys of the mountains sensible of the importance of these temples, and do they appreciate the value of them? It is a question that we may do well to ask ourselves. We go into them and receive ordinances and endowments, but do we realize that these ordinances were revealed to the Prophet Joseph after he had dedicated the Kirtland Temple, and just before the finishing of the Nauvoo Temple, after having been bid from the foundation of the world? When the revelation of these things came it caused a commotion in the earth, and stirred up the wicked to try and destroy him. The spirit intimated to him that he might not live to see that temple completed. He took the Twelve aside and conferred upon them these ordinances, some of which you have been permitted to receive in the temple, and they in turn administered the same ordinances to Joseph and Hyrum, who had first bestowed them upon them. Thus, you see, a few obtained this measure of fulness that we had not had before. There were ordinances of the Church that were not administered since the days of that temple until the first temple here in 1877, at St. George. Many of the ordinances had to be suspended; but some few could be attended to in the Endowment house. Here are now three temples in which we have the privilege to go and labor, and the fourth nearing completion. This is something that has not been known on this continent since shortly after the days of our Savior. A short time after he was here on this land, the Church apostatized, and Moroni hid up the Book of Mormon records in the hill Cumorah; and the whole land went into desolation, into wilderness, and into the degradation of the Lamanites. Now the Lord has restored these things. How precious! One after another He has revealed those things which, He says in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, have been kept hid from before the foundation of the world. Do we sense, then, that we are living in the enjoyment of blessings that the former nations never had—that Israel did not have in the days of the Lord Jesus, that the ancient patriarchs did not have? They had promises made to them and certain blessings given to them. The Lord came and revealed Himself personally to some of them once in a while. He came and ordained some righteous men Himself. But the pouring out of the fulness of these blessings upon the human family has been withheld until our day, when it seems that He has poured them down without measure upon us. It is good to sense these things. There is something about these matters of serious moment, if we will but seek to find it out and know what it is.

What was the very first thing that the Lord required the children of Israel to do after He had rescued them from the hands of Pharaoh? You remember how the Lord had to wrestle with Pharaoh. He sent upon him plague after plague, but each time his heart grew harder and harder, till the first-

born of every house, and of the cattle, were dying, dying by the providence of God. He then concluded he had better let the Israelites go, and they started out. There were six hundred thousand people over twenty years of age, beside children and many cattle. Rather a bigger camp than that which started out of Nauvoo! But as soon as the Lord got them fairly over the Red sea, where the Egyptians could not follow, He had them camp around Mount Sinai. Then He took Moses up into the mountain and gave him the law, and told him to go to work and build a temple right there in the wilderness—a portable temple. They called it a temple when they got up into the land of Canaan. They camped with it awhile at Jericho, at Shiloh, at Gilgal, and other places. The Lord considered it necessary for Israel to have among them this temple, or tabernacle, that there might be a sacredness there, and that they could know that the Lord was with them. Let us look at this a little. What was the nature of that tabernacle? That little ark of the covenant that was hid up in the most holy place contained the rod of Aaron, the two tables of stone containing the ten commandments, and the pot of manna. No man or woman was permitted to go in there on pain of death, except the High Priest, who had to go once a year to expiate for the sins of the people. It was where the power of the Lord was shown. The priests had to be consecrated and set apart with holy sacrifice and anointing for these things, and it had to be done according to the order of God, so that He might make Himself manifest to that people, and He be known as their leader, and they be known as His people, and that their God was such a God that there was none like Him in all the earth. If they were journeying and the nations said that they could not come among them, but must go around, Aaron, invested with his garments, etc., as the High Priest, went in there and asked the Lord: "Shall we go up to battle against these people and fight our way through, or shall we not?" And the voice there between the cherubims on that holy place told them whether they should, or should not, and they did accordingly. The Lord was with them, and His angel attended them constantly. It was a sacred thing, and they had to deal with it sacredly. The camp of Israel, aside from the tribe of Levi, was not allowed to camp near it. The priests had to camp nearest to it, and the Levites next to them. Only the tribe of Levi were permitted to handle and convey this tabernacle through all their wilderness journey. Thus everything was kept sacred to the Lord. While they did this the Lord was their friend. How glorious it was for them! When they were in difficulty He came down in His cloud right at the door of the tabernacle, and talked with Moses and told him how to settle the difficulty. When Aaron had got the people worshipping a golden calf, the Lord in His wrath, after bringing them up that way, was ready to turn in and destroy them. But Moses put himself in the gap. He said the Egyptians would say, "For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth." But the Lord said: "Let me alone, that