

After the nation had struggled along, increasing in knowledge, and power, and experience, and had maintained their independence and liberty for upwards of half a century, and had made rapid strides in teaching, developing, and enjoying the principle of physical, moral and religious liberty, the Almighty determined to assert his right, and establish an everlasting kingdom upon the unalterable principles of eternal truth—a kingdom which could never be destroyed nor ever be shaken, though the heavens should pass away, and the worlds disappear with a universal crash.

The Lord now saw that there was one nation upon the earth, where he could venture to begin the great work—where a theocracy could exist in an ecclesiastical form, being legally and lawfully entitled to all the rights and protection guaranteed in the great American constitution in common with all religious parties. The kingdom of God could not be set up without calling officers and inspiring men, and revealing laws; while this Republic elects its own officers, and makes its own laws.

The American Congress do not pretend to inspiration: the speaker who occupies the highest and most honorable station in the lower house, is not a prophet; he does not deliver the word of the Lord as law. Neither does the honorable president of the Senate say—thus saith the Lord God: But all the deliberations and enactments of that illustrious body are the results of human wisdom. They would not suffer a prophet of God to come into their midst and dictate the laws that should be adopted by the nation. They would show him the door. They would call upon the officers that are appointed to keep order in that honorable assembly, to put out such a character; they would very likely say, we will not, for a moment, listen to him, though he may profess to be inspired and to have received heavenly visions, and to have seen God and talked with him face to face, as Moses, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob did, yet we will let him know, that he must not come among us and undertake to dictate us as to the kind of laws we shall pass. This is not a theocratic form of government and therefore we will not listen to him.

In ancient times, we find even kingly powers bowed to prophets and revelators. Nebuchadnezzar in all his glory could give heed to the prophet Daniel, could listen to the interpretation of his own dream; he believed in prophets; but the people of these latter times have strayed so far from a theocratical form of government that they do not even believe in such things as dreams and visions inspired of God; hence, it would be a difficult matter for such a man as Daniel to approach the august assembly annually convened at the capitol.

I have often contrasted, in my reflections, the faith of the present nations of christendom with the faith of the ancient Egyptians and Babylonians. These nations, as wicked as they were, did believe in the spirit of prophecy and revelation; they did receive a prophet—hence we find the Egyptians exalting a Joseph from a dungeon because he had a dream, and because he gave the true interpretation thereof. Said Pharaoh, there is no man among us that is so able to dictate, guide and direct the affairs of this nation as this man. He has had a dream—the Lord has revealed to him something about our future condition—what is to take place in Egypt and in the surrounding nations. The Lord has revealed to him that there are to be seven years of plenty and seven years of famine. What man is so well fitted to stand next to me in authority, to dictate and guide the affairs of this people in regard to the approaching famine? Let him be exalted and honored.

Would they thus honor a prophet in this day? No. They would say, he is a false, visionary character, and is not fit for a justice of the peace or for any other office of the least responsibility. The inhabitants of great Babylon, one of the most popular nations on the earth, having gone forth, conquering and to conquer, until the Jewish nations and all nations were brought in subjection to them, still had confidence in prophets; and their great king Nebuchadnezzar, surrounded with all the magnificence of power and sitting on his throne, dreamed a dream and he had confidence there was something in it; he did not despise the spirit of revelation as the American congress would, or as the kings, emperors and nobles of the earth, at this day, would do; but he considered it indicative of something in the future, and a proclamation was sent forth among all the wise men of Babylon, commanding them to reveal his dream and the interpretation thereof, or they should be put to death. About the time they were to carry out the sentence of the king and put to death the astrologers and wise men of great Babylon, Daniel exclaimed, 'Why is the decree so hasty from the king?' and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would show the king the interpretation. Through the prayer of faith, the secret was revealed to Daniel, and he came before the king and said, 'thou, O king, sawest and beheld a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet, part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces; then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold broken to pieces together and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors and the wind carried them away that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. This is the dream.'

I will now relate the substance of the interpretation. This great image which you saw represents the successive kingdoms of the world, down to the setting up of the kingdom of God.—The head of gold represents the great kingdom

over which you reign; the breast and arms of silver represent another kingdom inferior to thee, that shall succeed thy kingdom, which all commentators agree, was the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. The belly and thighs of brass represent another kingdom which shall succeed the Medes and Persians, which, all agree in saying, was the Macedonian empire; the legs of iron represent the next in succession which shall have universal dominion: all agree that the fourth represents the Roman empire. The feet of iron and clay represent the ten kingdoms which shall spring out from the broken fragments of the Roman empire. Governments in their weak and divided state were to have place on the earth, until the kingdom of God should be set up in the last days.

The kingdom of God was entirely distinct from this great image; it formed no part of it, but it was represented as a stone cut out of the mountain without hands. That stone smote the image on the feet, not on the head, nor upon any other portions of the body; it was first to commence its operations upon the feet and toes of the great image; and then the feet, toes, legs, breast, arms and head were to be broken to pieces, and become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors and the wind was to carry away the whole image and there was to be no place found for it, while the little stone was to increase to such a magnitude that it should fill the whole earth, and the dominion, even the greatness of the dominion, under the whole heavens, was to be given to the Saints of the Most High. This is the true interpretation of this remarkable prophetic dream.

It is not my intention, this morning, to say much concerning the particular relations which the kingdom of God will have towards the religious views of men and nations. This department of this great subject was so ably investigated by our President, Sabbath before last, that I should esteem it a folly for me to attempt to throw any new light upon it. Indeed, it would be very difficult to find language to express the ideas more clearly and plainly, than they were expressed by him.

My object has been, this morning, to take another branch of this subject, and show you the times and the seasons of establishing a theocracy upon the earth, and perhaps say something about its final triumph.

From what has been said, we can perceive that some parts of Daniel's prophecy have already been fulfilled. The predictions were of such a character that no man, by his own wisdom, in the days of Daniel, could have possibly foreseen those far off events. What man, by his own human wisdom, could, for a moment, have supposed that the kingdom of the Medes and Persians would overthrow the great empire of Babylon, in the way that it was foretold by Daniel? Again, what man, uninspired, could have foreseen that the Greek empire, under the government and rule of Alexander, would go forth and overthrow the Medes and Persians, and bear rule over all the earth, and finally, that he should die and that the kingdom should be divided among four of his generals? which is all clearly foretold in the 7th and 8th chapters of Daniel. What man, by his own sagacity, without the inspiration of the Almighty, could have understood that a great iron kingdom should arise and be diverse from all the other kingdoms and should brake in pieces and devour the whole earth and stamp them down with oppression and tyranny? which it is well known, was done by the great Roman empire. All these things were fulfilled literally.

Again, what human foresight could have predicted that this great kingdom should be overcome and broken up, and that the fragments should compose the modern kingdoms of Europe together with those governments that have emigrated from Europe to this western continent?—All these prophecies have been literally fulfilled. Why, then, not look for the kingdom of God to arise literally from the mountains, as a little stone, to break in pieces the great image? If one portion of the prophecy has been literally fulfilled, why not look for the literal fulfillment of the balance? I expect the literal fulfillment of that prophecy, relating to the Saints of the last days, arising like a small stone unconnected with this image, and disunited from all forms of government, both civil and ecclesiastical; I look for such a kingdom to arise with a separate form of government and to continue, and prevail, and progress, until the dominion, and the greatness of the dominion, under the whole heavens, shall be given to the Saints of the Most High. I look for that to be fulfilled literally, just as much as I know the other to have been fulfilled literally.—I know that it is often argued by those who profess to be wise men, that the kingdom, represented by this little stone cut out of the mountain, took its rise 1800 years ago. Let us examine this; for it is of the greatest importance that we should understand the times and the seasons.

Daniel said that the kingdom which was to be established in the last days, never should be destroyed, nor left to other people, but should exist forever and increase until the whole earth should be filled by the Saints of the Most High. How did it happen with the kingdom of Christ that was set up in ancient times? I have already related it, but I will again briefly state that the kingdom of God, set up 1800 years ago, did not fulfill the terms of the prophecy. It was not set up at the proper time. The whole image which Nebuchadnezzar saw, was not then standing complete from the head of gold to the feet of iron and clay which should have been the case, before the stone is cut out of the mountain without hands. Did it stand complete 1800 years ago? No. Where were the iron legs in all their power and grandeur? Where were the feet and toes, that were part of iron and part of potter's clay? or, in other words, the ten kingdoms which were to succeed the great empire of Rome? In the days of the ancient kingdom of Christ they were not in existence; the image was not complete; it lacked the lower portions; it lacked the legs and feet of iron and clay. It is true, the Ro-

man empire then existed, but not as the great western and eastern portions. It is known, that it was long after Christ before Rome was divided into two kingdoms representing the two iron legs: the capital of one was at Constantinople and the capital of the other at Rome in Italy.—But where were these legs, feet and toes, a few centuries before, when the kingdom of Christ was on the earth? They did not exist.

In those days, there was no stone from the mountains and there were no feet and no toes to be broken in pieces. Instead of the ancient church fulfilling the prediction in breaking the image, events proved a state of things directly the reverse. Some of the governments forming the image, made war with the Saints and overcame them, and the ancient kingdom of Christ was destroyed from the earth.

Hear what the prophets predict in relation to the ancient church. Daniel says, "And I beheld and the same horn made war with the Saints, and prevailed against them." (See Daniel VII, 21.) Again he says, "And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; and he shall destroy wonderfully and shall prosper and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people." (See Daniel VIII, 24.)

He further says, "And such as do wickedly against the covenant, shall be corrupt by flatteries; but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits; and they that understand among the people shall instruct many; yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil many days. Now when they shall fall, they shall be helped with a little help; but many shall cleave to them with flatteries." (See Daniel XI, 32, 34.)

John, the revelator, in describing this same power under the figure of a beast, says, "And all the world wondered after the beast." "And it was given unto him to make war with the Saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." (See John's Revelation, chapter XIII.) Therefore, instead of the ancient church overcoming the image, it was itself to be overcome by the image. History shows the sad fulfillment of these predictions. Therefore, the former day kingdom was not the stone of the mountain. The ancient kingdom, being overcome, fled to heaven; and the priesthood was caught up to God and to his throne; and there the Saints are reserved in heaven until the coming of the Son of God to reign on the earth, according to the predictions of the prophets; then he will bring that kingdom which is in heaven with him: he has to set up a kingdom on earth preparatory to that which will come from heaven. This preparatory kingdom must be established on the earth, where men-made governments exist; it will be a kingdom increasing in greatness, and power and glory, on the earth, for many years preparatory to the coming of the king with the heavenly kingdom, at which time both the heavenly and earthly will be united in one, under their great Head and Lawgiver.

Having demonstrated the fact that an everlasting kingdom is to be set up in the last days, let us next inquire whether the period has arrived for such a grand event to be fulfilled. Is there anything that should be fulfilled before we ought to look for such a kingdom? Can any one show one prediction that needs to be accomplished, before the kingdom of God is set up on the earth, never again to be destroyed?

The remnants of the old Babylonish empire, under the form of other governments, will be found mostly in Asia; the breasts and arms of silver will also be found in Asia; the belly and thighs of brass will be found part in Asia and part in Europe; the broken iron kingdom still exists in Italy, Europe; the feet and toes exist throughout Europe, and among the governments of America of European origin. Thus the location of the image is known—its head being in Asia, and the other extremity in America; no part is lacking; it lays stretched out over lands and seas, occupying nearly the whole of the two great hemispheres of our globe. The old, wrinkled, worn out monster seems ready to break in pieces; all that seems to be necessary is for some power, distinct and independent, to set the old thing a crumbling, and its final dissolution will soon follow; such a power will be the kingdom of God, cut from the mountain. The location of the stone of the mountain could not be in Asia, Africa, or Europe, nor upon any distant island of the sea; but it must be in America, near the extremities of the feet and toes. This mountain kingdom could not be found in the low countries of America, but in some high elevated region.

There is no country which would better answer the terms of the predicted location than that elevated region bordering upon the great Rocky Mountain chain. A kingdom in that high region might well be called a mountain kingdom, and be thus designated by the inspired Daniel. Its proximity to the western extremity of the image would almost preclude the idea of any other mountainous location.

But to establish such a kingdom, some one must receive divine authority; and what is the testimony of the Latter Day Saints in regard to the calling of any one in this church? We want now to test our selves: are we the kingdom of God that was to be established in the last days, or are we not? Have we the characteristics of that kingdom? Have we been called in that way and manner that the servants of God in ancient days were called?

To answer this question, let us go back to Joseph Smith, the one that organized this Church by the commandment of the Almighty. When, where, and how were you, Joseph Smith, first called? How old were you, and what were your qualifications? I was between 14 and 15 years of age. Had you been to college? No. Had you studied in any seminary of learning? No. Did you know how to read? Yes. How to write? Yes. Did you understand much about arithmetic? No. About grammar? No. Did

you understand all the branches of education which are generally taught in our common schools? No. But yet you say the Lord called you when you were but 14 or 15 years of age? How did he call you? I will give you a brief history as it came from his own mouth; I have often heard him relate it.

He was wrought upon by the Spirit of God, and felt the necessity of repenting of his sins and serving God. He retired from his father's house a little way, and bowed himself down in the wilderness, and called upon the name of the Lord. He was inexperienced, and in great anxiety and trouble of mind in regard to what church he should join; he had been solicited by many churches to join with them; and he was in great anxiety to know which was right. He plead with the Lord to give him wisdom on the subject; and while he was thus praying, he beheld a vision, and saw a light approaching him from the heavens and as it came down and rested on the tops of the trees, it became more glorious, and as it surrounded him his mind was immediately caught away from beholding surrounding objects. In this cloud of light, he saw two glorious personages, and one pointing to the other said, "Behold my beloved son hear ye him." Then he was instructed and informed in regard to many things pertaining to his own welfare and commanded not to unite himself to any of those churches. He was also informed that at some future time the fullness of the gospel should be made manifest to him and he should be an instrument in the hands of God of laying the foundation of the kingdom of God.

Some few years after this, having proved himself faithful before the Lord, he was commanded by an holy angel, to go to a hill about three miles from his father's house; and to take from the ancient place of their deposit certain plates on which were recorded the ancient history of this great western continent from the earliest ages, until the records were hid up by an ancient prophet some four centuries after Christ.

In the year 1827 he was permitted to take those plates from their long deposit, and with them the Urim and Thummim, a sacred instrument such as was used by ancient prophets among Israel to inquire of the Lord: he was commanded of the Lord, notwithstanding his youth and inexperience, to translate the engravings upon those plates into the English language. He did so; and others wrote from his mouth. Here then was the way that the Lord commenced a preparatory work for the raising up of the kingdom of God. What use would it have been to have raised up the kingdom of God without giving new revelation on doctrine? If a church were raised up without the spirit of revelation, it could not stand forever: it would be broken up and scattered the same as the other systems of the day into numerous fragments, one contending he was right, and another that he was right; and thus it would be anything else but the kingdom of God, it would be a perfect bedlam. But to prepare the way, the Lord gave a lengthy revelation, contained in the Book of Mormon, including prophecies, and the fullness of the gospel, as taught by the mouth of the Savior himself on this vast continent 1800 years ago.

With such a revelation, the kingdom of God could be set up, having an unerring guide in doctrinal subjects, a something to show the true points of the gospel of Jesus, and the first principles of the laws of the kingdom, and thus remove all cause for any division of sentiment and opinion.

This inspired book was revealed to Joseph Smith in fulfillment of those prophecies which I have often repeated before you, and which clearly predict that such a work should come to establish the kingdom of God on the earth. The book was printed in the early part of the year 1830; after which the Lord gave express commands to this young man to assemble together a few who believed in the work, and lay the foundation of the church; accordingly on the sixth of April, 1830, the latter day kingdom of God commenced in its organization, consisting of only six members in the town of Fayette, Seneca county, State of New York. Was this in reality, the kingdom of God? Yes; it was its beginning or merely a nucleus around which proper materials were to gather and be organized. In the beginning of January 1831, the Lord gave a revelation, for the few members of his kingdom to gather together from the State of New York and Pennsylvania to the State of Ohio; they gathered to the place called Kirtland, Geauga county. They stayed there a few years, during which the gospel of the kingdom was extensively preached in the United States and the Canadas. The Saints continued gathering to Kirtland and to Jackson county, Missouri.

The enemy was on the alert and knew the difference between the establishment of the kingdom of God, and those systems established by man. If the church was permitted to prosper, he feared that his time was short. With the hopes of destroying the kingdom, the devil waged war against the Saints in Jackson county, and 1200 men, women and children, were scattered abroad in the cold months of November and December, 1833, wandering houseless and homeless, without food or fire, over the wild prairies and desolate wilderness of that country, pursued on every side by ruthless mobs. After this they settled on the north side of the Missouri river, in Clay county, where they resided some two years; they were again forced to leave, and sought refuge from their persecutors still further north in the unsettled portions of the State. In the mean time, the Saints in Kirtland were forced to leave their homes fleeing from their enemies into Missouri. In 1839 they were driven out of Missouri into Illinois. In 1844 the great Prophet of this last dispensation was murdered while under the pledged protection of the Governor of Illinois. In the winter of 1846, some fifteen or twenty thousand were forcibly expelled from their homes in Illinois. In the summer following, the sick, and the poor, and the aged, whose circumstances had