

and His disciples asked Him to show unto them the Father, he replied, "Have I been so long with you, and ye have not seen me? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." We are told in Genesis that "God made man in His own image." But the Holy Ghost is a Being without tabernacle, and as a spirit or essence extends throughout the immensity of space. It is the minister of God, who spake in the beginning, when His spirit moved upon the face of the waters, and said "Let there be light," and formed the earth temporarily as He had before formed it spiritually.

Doubtless there is much concerning the Holy Ghost, or the Spirit of God, which is not understood by men, because it has not been entirely revealed. But we are taught that it is the third Person in the Trinity, and the difference between it, as a personage, and the Father and the Son, is that the Holy Ghost does not have a tabernacle, a resurrected body of flesh and bones, while the Father and the Son possess such bodies.

Certainly it is a reasonable doctrine, one to commend itself to the judgment and consideration of any intelligent thinker, that if God is our Father and we are His children, we belong to the same species; and while the Spirit of God, in one sense, is that light which shines in the sun, glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees, lives through all life and gives to the different tribes and families of men that measure of light which they are expected to live up to and by which they will also be judged at the last day, when we consider God as a personage of tabernacle, as our Heavenly Father in whose image we are created, it is certainly reasonable to think of Him as a man; and of our mother in heaven as a woman. If God made man and woman in His image and they are His children, then men and women on the earth are in this respect like unto God, and are destined to become more like Him as they advance.

This opens to the view of the student and thinker a glorious field for thought and reflection. It enables us to be patient in the midst of tribulation, of trials, and sorrows, to evince that courage and fortitude which have in every age been so prevailing a characteristic of the Saints of God. Why? Because they were the children of light. Unto them it was revealed that they were indeed the offspring of God, and that He whom they worshiped was once as they were; that He endured for the sake of education, development, and eventual perfection and exaltation all the ills that flesh is heir to. They could therefore gaze upon and endure with stoicism their afflictions even when tied to the stake to be burnt for their opinions, when immured in dungeons, dragged at the tails of horses, thrown to wild beasts, or set fire to and used as torches to light the imperial gardens of Rome; crucified, sawn asunder, persecuted, loaded with calumny and opprobrium, subject to proscriptive and persecutive legislation—so long as they kept the

faith and bore that light which God kindled in their bosoms, until death put an end to their sufferings.

It is this knowledge, and the sustaining power of the Holy Spirit, which enables the Saints of latter days to bear with fortitude and patience the trials to which they are subjected. They expect trouble, and they know that it is necessary. Troubles and trials are the ministers of God. They teach us His truths, they save our souls, by whipping us into the path of duty and obedience, from which we are so prone to stray. To say that our trials are too numerous or too severe is to impugn eternal wisdom, to attempt to re-judge the justice of an All-wise God, of an All-merciful Father, and to cast reproach upon Him who holds in the hollow of His hand the destinies of men and of nations, who setteth up one and putteth down another, according to the judgment and wisdom of His omnipotent will; who gives to the stars the orbits in which they revolve, who sets the waves their bounds, and controls the acts of men and nations, suffering them to go no further in their treatment of His people than will best subserve His purposes. When Satan afflicted Job he did it with God's permission, and could not have done it without. Job was a righteous man, and the Lord declared him to be such, which seemed to make Satan angry, just as it does men sometimes to hear others spoken well of and honored, and he desired to destroy him. But he failed, because Job was faithful and patient and maintained his integrity. Saul was jealous of David and persecuted him, but David bore it patiently, forgave and returned good for evil, and came off more than conqueror. He suffered no more than was necessary for his good; neither will any man, neither will any people.

We Latter-day Saints expect trouble. We do not believe in going half way to meet it, but we do believe in preparing for it. When we see the clouds gather and hear the thunder roll, we know enough to put on our overcoats and wraps, if we walk out, or to stay indoors from the inclemency of the weather. And so when we see the clouds of persecution filling the horizon and hear, afar off, the thunder muttering and bellowing, presaging coming trials for us as a people, we know it is time to put on the armor of God, to gird up our loins, and be all the more diligent and faithful.

I was asked once if I were a pessimist, because I said that I had learned to expect trouble in this world. I answered no, I was an optimist; for a pessimist believes that all that happens is for the worse, while an optimist holds that all is for the best. I expect sorrow and trouble here, because I know it is inevitable, but I also regard it as essential, and that it is for the best good of those who suffer.

We are climbing the steep and prickly path by which God our Father was exalted, and Jesus our Elder Brother arose to sit down at His right hand. It is the path which

He has marked out for us, and with humble and pure hearts, and a desire to serve God and bless mankind, we should walk that straight and narrow way which leadeth unto life eternal. It is hard to discourage a people who believe this, who look upon life as only a link of an eternal chain, who regard death as a mere incident in their career, a milestone on the great and eternal journey. We are not living for this world, but for eternal life, although sometimes it would seem that we are in no very great hurry to obtain it.

We often put the temporal first, and the spiritual comes lagging after. There are Latter-day Saints who allow their business to come between them and God. There are men working today in their offices, stores and houses, when they should be here partaking of the Sacrament, nourishing their spiritual life. There are men deeply engrossed in the things of this world, making idols of that which perisheth, when God has said: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

Still, I do not believe that these are the actions or feelings of the main body of the Latter-day Saints. I believe that with all our faults and weaknesses we are trying to serve God, and that there is a saving element in the midst of this people, who have in their hearts firstly the spiritual, and who place the temporal where it belongs—always secondary, and who seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. We have only to gaze upon our Savior's example to see what is required at our hands.

We believe that society hereafter will be graded and classified just as it is here, and yet not as it is here. There the rich will not reign over the poor, because of wealth—the wealth of this world. There the powerful will not oppress the weak; there a man will not be considered greatest because he tramples on his fellows, and rides rampant over their rights and liberties. "Bigness" will not be esteemed greatness in the Kingdom of Heaven; and as for tyranny and injustice, fraud and wrong, they will never enter there. But there are degrees of glory to be inherited by us all, according to our works.

I pray that God may give us the Spirit and desire to labor for the Celestial Kingdom, that we may shine as the sun of noonday, that we may ascend to the uppermost realms to dwell among the most perfect, the most pure, the most righteous, and fall nothing below.

The choir sang the anthem, "O, Give Thanks," after which the congregation were invited to unite with the choir in singing the Doxology.

Elder Henry P. Richards pronounced the benediction.

#### LETTER FROM SWITZERLAND.

We are permitted to extract the following from a letter dated Tokomaru, New Zealand, March 1, 1890, written by Elder Ezra T. Stevenson to his father, Brother Edward Stevenson, of this city: