

martyrdom, on the one hand, or conformity to modern ideas on the other.

I thought he put the case very strongly and correctly from his standpoint. But we are not in the position that the primitive Christians were in every respect. The analogy is very close it is true, but we have promises which the primitive Christians did not have, and upon these promises I base my hopes and anticipations; and I may say I am joyful in the reflection that there is a difference, that we are living in a different age. This is the time when the fall of Babylon is decreed. This is the generation to which the Prophets and Apostles have pointed, the generation in which this great power, that has dominated the earth will be overthrown; and great will be the fall thereof. We live in the time when that will be accomplished. It will not be as it was with the primitive Christians, when they had to take to the catacombs and hide themselves, accused of every foul crime; accused, when they met together to eat of the bread and drink of the wine in commemoration of the Lord's supper, of killing infants and eating their flesh and drinking their blood. This was the character of the accusations made against them, and which furnished the basis for the Romish persecutions, just as the falsehoods told about us have furnished the basis for men to persecute us, and the nation stands by and witnesses it, and if they do not fully justify it, they say its all right for these are a vile people and should not be treated as ordinary people should be treated. So it was in the days of the primitive Christians, and they did assimilate with prevailing views to some extent. The Apostles and Prophets were cut off until there was not a man left who could say, "Thus saith the Lord." But this is not our condition today, neither will it be our condition. Depend upon it, it will never be our condition. God has spoken concerning this, and His word cannot fail. The heavens may fall, the earth may fall, but God's word never fails; it never did and never will. And in our age this great mother of abominations will be overthrown; the sword of their own hands will fall upon their own heads. And whatever our afflictions may be, whatever our trials may be, whatever we may have to endure, we can view the future with complacency, as far as we are concerned, and without fear; but our hearts may well be filled with sorrow and pity for the future of the children of men who reject the word of the Lord.

Jesus said to the people in His day, "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." That is what He said of

all that had been shed in the past. So it may be said in our generation. The sins that have preceded us; all the accumulated wrongs of centuries; all the accumulated wrongs the righteous have endured from the beginning of time to the present, will fall upon the devoted head of that great and cruel creature which was called by the prophets the mother of abominations. Within her organization, we are told, is found the blood of prophets and apostles, and every vile thing that has ever been perpetrated upon the earth; it is a receptacle for it all, and its fate is fixed. God has spoken it, its destiny is sure; nothing can prevent it unless it be entire repentance. There is no need for us to tremble, neither in our knees nor in our hearts. The God who has controlled all things for the good of His people and the prosperity of His Zion still lives. His arm is not shortened, neither is His power to save diminished; it is as great today as it ever was. We have been surrounded with gloomy circumstances many times; the horizon has been darkened; there have been but few rays of light to cheer us; but we have seen enough light to enable us to take a step or two, although the future has been enshrouded with gloom. But after passing through the shadow and the gloom into the sunlight again, we have looked back with wonder and amazement at His marvelous providences that have been exerted in our behalf, and we have been filled with praise therefor. This has been the experience of this people from the beginning; and we have felt that these trials have had a good effect upon us in strengthening us and preserving us in the truth.

The trials that we have had individually, the sorrows that we have endured, if we have received them in the right spirit, we can look back and see how beneficial they have been. I can truthfully say this day, in your presence and in the presence of the Lord, I have had my share of trial, but there has been no trial or affliction that I have endured that I did not bless the Lord for, praise Him for, after I have seen the good effect it has had upon me. There is no scene that we have had to pass through or difficulty that we have had to contend with but what, after it was over, I can look back—and no doubt you all can—and rejoice in the wonderful salvation God has wrought out for us. Many times it has seemed that destruction was inevitable; and how many have fallen by the wayside because of the terrors that have presented themselves to view! Our pathway from the beginning. It may be said, is lined with the graves of those who have lost faith, who were buried before they died, having lost faith and remained behind. They thought the work of God could not stand the pressure. That His promises could not be fulfilled. They felt as though they must save themselves or they would be destroyed, and they sought safety in apostasy, in denying God, and in breaking loose from their brethren and sisters. What has been the re-

sult? You who have had friends, relatives and acquaintances in this condition know what the result has been. Would you exchange your circumstances today with theirs? Do you not look back with unspeakable regret to think that those whom you have loved were so unwise, so foolish and so faithless as to lose their connection with the Church and their standing among the members of the Church? I am sure if you could give voice to your feelings respecting this it would be universal. You would say how much better you were off than those of whom I am now speaking. So it will be in the future. The man that loves God; the man that maintains his virtue, and refrains from committing any sin that will grieve the Spirit of God; the man that will not yield to intoxication or other habits that destroy the faith which God has implanted in our hearts, will continue to prosper, and will continue to live. They may not live in the flesh, but they will live hereafter. They will live with the blessed, they will live with those whom they love and with whom they can associate; and while they do live upon the earth they will live in the enjoyment of the Spirit of God, they will have peace at night, and through the night, and peace through the day. It is true they may suffer, but God will be with them. His angels will be around them to sustain them; and He will not only bless and prosper them but bless their children after them, for they will sow seed the fruit of which their children will gather in years to come. God does not forget His faithful people. He loves the righteous and He loves the courageous, He loves the true; but the traitors—those who forsake Him and betray their brethren—He—I was going to say—despises them; at any rate they fall under His displeasure; they become like wrecks, castaways stripped of their former power, bereft of the Spirit and blessing that attended them in former times. Some of you have no doubt seen fine vessels that have done good service stranded and wrecked, with nothing much besides the ribs and keel left; those who become darkened lose the Spirit and their faith, and thus become human wrecks, remind me of such unfortunate vessels.

Now, my brethren and sisters, I feel there is everything in the world to encourage us. God is with us. Let us live so He will be near us and His power rest down upon us; that when we call upon Him He will hear us; and that we may have a conscience void of offense towards all men. In all our dealings with our fellow-men we should be governed by the principles of righteousness, that we may at all times feel strong in the Lord, having power and ability to use the gifts that He has endowed us with for the benefit and blessing of our fellow-men. Beware of the spirit of selfishness, that so engrosses the hearts of men. It is one of the greatest prevailing evils that afflict mankind; it is an evil that the Latter-days Saints must di-