

great." Nebuchadnezzar walked upon the walls of this city, and communed with himself in the pride of his heart in this wise: "Is not this great Babylon which I have built, for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty?" He had been warned a little time before in a dream, which was interpreted by Daniel, the prophet, of the danger of giving way to the spirit of self-laudation, forgetting that God ruled in "the kingdom of men," and that He had power to give that kingdom to whomsoever He would. In his dream he saw a tree which was great and mighty, waving its lofty branches covered with magnificent foliage, filled with fruit which was meat for both man and beast; the top of which tree reached to heaven while its branches overspread the earth. While surveying it he heard a voice from heaven say, "Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves and scatter his fruit," etc. "Nevertheless, leave the stump of his roots in the earth," etc. The interpretation of the dream was this: That Nebuchadnezzar was the tree which he had seen in vision; for at that time Babylon was the universal empire; it had broken in pieces all the nations of the earth. It was called the "hammer of the whole earth," for this reason. And wherever the beasts of the field roamed, or the fowls of the air lodged, or the children of men dwelt, Nebuchadnezzar was the great king of all. Even the covenant people, the house of Israel, had been commanded to bow their necks to Nebuchadnezzar, whom the Lord at that time called His "servant." But he forgot that God who had made him great, and, like the politicians and rulers of to-day, the kings and presidents and magistrates, and mighty men, he imagined that he had done all this—that he had conquered the earth, that he had built this magnificent city; and as Napoleon in later times exclaimed: "I am France;" so Nebuchadnezzar declared: "I am Babylon the Great."

When he had uttered this vain boast, a voice fell from heaven, saying: "O, King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken. The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to

whomsoever He will." And it was done. Nebuchadnezzar, to his credit be it said, was converted; and when the "seven times" were expired, and he had suffered this humiliation until he had learned not to take the glory to himself, but to acknowledge the hand of God in His greatness, the kingdom was restored to him; and he gave thanks unto the Lord, and acknowledged that He was King of the earth as well as the King of heaven.

A strange feature of this fact in history is this: That though this great man—for he was a great man—was filled with pride, with vanity, with selfishness and ambition, yet God had deigned to call him: "My servant Nebuchadnezzar;" and by the mouth of His Prophet Jeremiah had commanded His chosen people to bow their necks unto the yoke of this king of Babylon. And it was to be "well with them" if they did so; but if they sought to ally themselves with the king of Egypt disaster and misfortune would follow. We all know how this was fulfilled: Jerusalem was taken, the city was destroyed, the temple was despoiled of its gold and silver vessels; the king of Judah, the princes and priests and many thousands of the people, who were not slain, were carried captive in chains to Babylon; because they hearkened not unto the voice of the prophet, to bow their necks to the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar, the servant of the Lord. Daniel the prophet, who interpreted that dream of this king's, and other dreams which he had, was one of the princes of the house of Judah thus carried into captivity. This sets us thinking. Nebuchadnezzar the Babylonian king, a servant of the Lord? The Lord called him so; and what is more remarkable, the man who was raised up to wrest from the dynasty of Nebuchadnezzar his kingdom in the reign of his son Belshazzar—Cyrus, the Persian—was predicted 150 years before he was born, by the prophet Isaiah, who says concerning him: "Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him, and I will loose the loins of kings to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut." Here was another man, supposedly a heathen, not of the house of Israel, whom the Lord condescends to name by name before he was born, and calls him not simply, "My servant," but "Mine anointed." And yet some men think that God does not reign on

earth. We are looking forward to the time when He whom we know as King of kings will come to take the reins of Government—He whose right it is to reign. We speak of that time and we look forward with joyous anticipation to that great reign of righteousness and peace of a thousand years duration, when God will rule over the earth, when Christ will be king. It appears to me, brethren and sisters, that God is the king of this earth now, that He is ruling over the earth, and always has ruled over it, and that He rules through the instrumentality of men. And the sooner we recognize this fact—though by no means do I intend to depreciate or disparage the other idea, the visible reign of the king of kings—that God is now king of this earth, that He now holds the reins of government and that kings and presidents, and magistrates, and judges, and congressmen, and cabinets hold their places by His Royal permission, the sooner we will arrive at the solution of a great truth.

We Latter-day Saints believe in the Priesthood—in the power which holds the right to rule and govern all things. This is what Priesthood means. It means nothing more or less. Priesthood is the power of God; it is the authority by which He rules in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. Gods and angels are the members of this grand brotherhood—this masonic fraternity of the heavens. On earth, what we term the Priesthood are certain ones whom God has chosen to represent Him—His servants, whom He has ordained as His ambassadors, and sent forth to act in His name and by His authority. We recognize this truth—that when a man has been commissioned of God and represents Him, the acts of that man are just as valid and binding as though God himself were the actor. We are told that a time is coming when this great King of kings of whom we have been speaking, will come in His glory to reign upon the earth, and before whom, when He sits upon the throne of His glory, will be gathered all nations, and He will divide them as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. The sheep He will place upon His right hand and the goats upon His left; and He will say to those upon His right, "Come ye beloved of my Father, enter into the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and ye fed me; I was thirsty and ye