

from what it is! Now there are hundreds of faiths, some professing one thing, and some another. For long ages there was but one religion among men professing to have our Master as its head, and it groped in darkness and introduced many things that were grievous and sinful and contrary to the written word of God. The result of these things was the rising up of great men like Martin Luther, contending for what they believed to be right. We are told of Martin Luther that when he commenced his opposition to the Church of Rome it was not with the expectation of establishing a new religious society, but in the hope that he might reform some of the abuses that had crept into the church. He bore record to the people that doctrines were being advocated contrary to the scriptures of divine truth, and he sought to correct these things and bring the church into what he considered to be the proper channel. The result was he was excommunicated and cast out of the Church of Rome. Then sprang up reform churches all over the face of the earth. But there is one peculiarity about all of these churches that sprang into existence—the men whom they are named after never intended to establish churches of their own. They sought to cleanse and purify the mother church, and for this they were excommunicated, and then came into existence the religious bodies that bear their names, without revelation or commandment from God, and consequently without authority. We believe that they were honest and good men, and that they were inspired to accomplish the work that they set their hands to do. The time had come when the God of heaven, in fulfilment of the promises that had been made, was about to accomplish a wonderful work among the children of men, to establish His kingdom upon the earth, and to usher in the dispensation of the fulness of times; and it was necessary that the priestly control that then existed over the minds of men should be broken, and that religious freedom should be introduced, so that men everywhere should have the privilege of worshipping God according to the dictates of their own conscience. To bring about this condition, we believe that the reformers were inspired of God, and we enjoy today the result of their labors. Men offered their lives that they might worship as they saw fit. Martin Luther, when his life was hanging in the balance, declared before those who accused him that the stand he had taken he could not recede from, and he prayed for God to help him. He was willing to lay down his life, if need be, as many before and many since have done. We believe that all these things were wrought out by our Father in heaven, that the minds of men might be free and that they might worship as they chose. Then when this great government of America had been set up upon this promised land, in fulfilment of the promise that the Lord had made to its ancient inhabitants, men were inspired to come here when in trouble and distress, and not turn from their determination; like the discoverer of America, who persisted that he could find a new world, and no one could turn him from it. That was because he was inspired of the Lord; the Holy Ghost rested upon him and impelled him forward to the accomplishment of his work. And God raised up men in America, in His own time, fired with

His Spirit, determined to establish a commonwealth that should be free, to which men of all nations might be invited, and in which they could live and worship as they saw fit. We believe God established this government. We not only believe this, but we have a knowledge of it. In a revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith, and recorded in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, it is said that the Saints wherein they had been wronged by their enemies should importune for redress. "According to the laws and Constitution of the people which I have suffered to be established, and should be maintained for the right and protection of all flesh according to just and holy principles. And for this purpose have I established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose, and redeemed the land by the shedding of blood." Doc. and Cov. Sec. 101. 77, 80. This government was established—the freest and the best there is on the face of the earth, and then the time came for the Lord to fulfil His promise, that before the second coming of the Son of Man the Gospel of the kingdom should be preached in all the world. When He was asked by His Apostles, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" He answered them by portraying the great events that should precede the end, and among other things He said, "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." This was one of the signs that should appear before His coming. John the Revelator saw "another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people. That was the proclamation of the angel who was to introduce the Gospel in the latter days. The way having been prepared, freedom established, that man might worship as he saw fit, that angel, we bear record, was sent from the presence of our Father with the proclamation of the everlasting Gospel. And to Joseph Smith that messenger came, delivered the Gospel to him, and gave to him the authority to preach the plan of salvation. We believe that John the Baptist came and laid hands upon the head of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery and ordained them to the Aaronic Priesthood; that he gave them the authority to baptize for the remission of sins, and with that authority came the commandment to preach the Gospel among the children of men. Then Peter, James and John came, in their time, and clothed the Prophet Joseph Smith with the authority of the Melchisedek Priesthood—that authority by which the kingdom of God can be built up and regulated in all the world. We believe these things have come to pass, that they are in fulfilment of the promises made of old, and that without they are fulfilled, without angels come from heaven and there is communication from our Father, all men are groping in the dark and will fall into the ditch together.

It seems to me, my brethren and sisters and friends, from the conditions that exist today in the religious world, that all men everywhere should be pleading with the Lord that there might come some proclamation from on high and some man who would speak in the name of the Lord, to guide the people who desire to serve God in the right

way. But Joseph Smith was despised, his name was cast out as evil, and his followers were derided and separated from the company of their fellow men, who have cried out, as it were, "Away with these fellows, for they are not fit to live." Notwithstanding this opposition and this evil speaking, the proclamation of the Gospel under Joseph Smith has gone abroad among the nations of the earth; and as an evidence that men have received an understanding of its truth, this Territory is filled with people who are willing to stand up and bear record that they know that Joseph Smith was a prophet, that they know that God has spoken, and that He has set His hand in these latter times to recover Israel and to gather them from the nations of the earth and bring them together in one, according to the promises that He has made; that He has not forgotten His promises, not gone on a far journey, not gone to sleep, but that He is the living and true God, and that the day has come to fulfil and accomplish all that He has spoken.

How thankful we ought to be, my brethren and sisters, that the Gospel has found us; that our ears have been saluted with the glad message of peace on earth and goodwill among men; that we have been persuaded by the Spirit of the Lord to come out from the midst of Babylon and gather up with the Saints of God. The Gospel net has been cast into the sea of mankind and it has gathered up its thousands and tens of thousands, who are here today in these mountains. What a testimony, my brethren and sisters, that the proclamation of Joseph Smith was not in vain! What a testimony this is to the world that the martyrdom of Joseph Smith did not stop the work that he had been commanded by our Father to establish! What a testimony that the passing away of President Young did not stop the onward march of the people of God. Men believed that Brigham Young was the great controlling spirit among the Latter-day Saints, and that it was because of His wonderful wisdom that the people were made as great as they were. While we honor the name of President Young and we know that God inspired him to accomplish the work, it is not to President Young that we give the glory, my brethren and sisters, but to our Father in heaven. We know that our Father guided President Young, as He guided President Joseph Smith, as He guided President Taylor, as He guides today President Woodruff. It is our Father who has controlled the destiny of this people, and we are making the same advancement today that we did under President Brigham Young or President Joseph Smith, and we will make just as great advancement in the future under the leaders whom God will call to be at our head as we would if President Joseph Smith were with us.

This work does not depend upon any man that has ever lived, or that lives today, or that ever will live. It is the work of God. He has said that He would proceed to do a marvelous work and a wonder among the children of men, and how wonderfully He has fulfilled that promise up to the present time! And how grateful and thankful we ought to be that we have gathered from the nations of the earth; that we have been made acquainted with the principles of the Gospel, and that down in our hearts is the belief today, just as strong as it was in the hearts of the