

made known to us through the proper authority. Nor does it matter to us, as his faithful servants, what that will may be, whether to build temples or anything else, we should engage with our whole heart in the work required of us.

The results of the labors of this people for half a century are before the world, which, although wrought in much weakness, and oftentimes in poverty and distress, have been, under the blessing of a merciful, a just and allwise God, crowned with success; and on this, the occasion of our jubilee year just closed, I, in common with my brethren, raise my heart and voice in praise to him who lives and rules in the heavens above, and in testimony to this being his work, even the work to be developed in the latter days, so often spoken of in holy writ. And I repeat what has been said that the judgments are nigh, even at the door, and this work is going to be fulfilled. Let us open our eyes and ears, that we may see and hear as the wise virgins, that we may rightly comprehend the nature of the work to be performed, not in some other generation, but in the generation in which we live.

I bear my testimony to the truth of what we have heard in relation to the judgments of God that are to come upon the earth, as well as in relation to the truthfulness of this latter-day work. This testimony was given to me many years ago, having embraced the Gospel as early as the year 1832, when the Lord opened the vision of my mind and manifested to me that it was of him, and that it was the commencement of that work which should eventually "fill the whole earth." I know this to be true to-day, and have known it and testified, whenever opportunity afforded, to its truthfulness ever since that early day; and I bear testimony of it this day before you, my brethren and sisters, and to all the world, that this is verily the work of God, and that he will fulfil the words that have been spoken to us his Saints concerning all things coming on the earth. And to the Latter-day Saints I would say, inasmuch as we treasure up in good and honest hearts the principles and words of life which God has revealed, and live in consonance with them, we have nothing to fear; on the contrary, the faithful will rejoice, not in the downfall of the disobedient and wicked, but in the realization of the promised blessings in which they will rejoice, both in time and eternity.

Then, my beloved brethren and sisters, let us awaken to the warnings we hear from time to time, and especially cherish the Spirit, and ponder over and improve upon the instructions of this Conference, for they are true and faithful, and to this you, as well as I, can testify. And when we go to our homes let us carry with us and impart the spirit of this Conference to our brethren and sisters of the several Stakes who have not been present, that they also may take warning and square their lives according to the principles of the everlasting Gospel, laying aside everything that is wrong, and doing that which is right in all things pertaining to our religion, as Saints of the Most High God. And that we may pursue that course which will guarantee unto us all the blessings of the new and everlasting Covenant, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

ELDER ERASTUS SNOW.

St. Paul once said, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." He said this to the ancient Saints in reference to

the spirit of hatred and persecution raging in the world against the Apostles and their followers. I have sometimes thought, when we hear and read of the vituperation and lies abroad in the earth concerning this people, when we see how they are misrepresented and slandered, it would seem as if the flood gates of hell were opened to swallow them up, and we might at times almost despair were it not for the assurance that we feel that God is with us, that the Lord of Hosts is our God, and he has led us until the present time, and we are encouraged to continue our efforts and labors with the feeling and assurance that he has not departed from us, that he has not cast us off, notwithstanding our follies and the many evils in our midst, and notwithstanding that the servants of God are called upon to speak by way of reproof and oftentimes to rebuke with sharpness. God has spoken by one of the ancient prophets in this wise: "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." The word of the Lord, though it be sharp like a two-edged sword, has salvation in it. It is the power of God unto salvation to all them that believe, and by the sharpness of the word of God are we brought to comprehend ourselves, to see ourselves as God sees us, and to purge evil from our midst. And it becomes us to lay to heart the word spoken, and it should begin with the Apostles, Presidents of Stakes, Bishops, the Presidents of Quorums, and heads of families and run through all the organizations of society, and the spirit of repentance, of reformation and of purification should flow in our midst, flow through the people in all our organizations until every man, woman and child shall feel that the Spirit of God rests upon them; we should put away evil, and endeavor to overcome the world, to withstand the influences of the hosts of hell, to resist the example of evil minded persons, to resist temptations of pride and vanity, and cease to be hypocritical; in other words, to be honest before God and one another, for his eye is upon us. Our ways are openly known unto him. It becomes not his people to seek to hide their ways from the Lord. Hypocrites do this. Many of the Gentile Christians do this, as did many of the ancient Jewish Pharisees, for which they were rebuked with severity by the teachings of the Savior. None of us need think that we shall be benefitted by covering up our uncleanness and expect that we shall be sanctified by the outer ordinances of the temple of our God, when the inner man is corrupt. There is power in all the ordinances of God's house to all those whose hearts are clean, who accept the ordinances of God in faith and with purity of purpose. The Gospel of Christ is a savor of life unto life to all those that receive it in honest hearts, while it is a savor of death unto death to all those that reject and handle the truth in unrighteousness. So with all the ordinances pertaining to the priesthood. They bring condemnation to the hypocrite and evil doer, while they bring sanctification to those who are clean in spirit. And the priesthood which we have received with the keys and ordinances thereof can only be received and handled in connection with the powers of heaven, and on principles of truth and righteousness. The Lord has restored all the keys of this priesthood unto Israel in the last days through his servant Joseph by the hands of the ancients who held the priesthood before him, who bore the keys of the kingdom when they were upon the earth in ancient times; the Apostles Peter, James and John, and John the Baptist, from whom he received the priesthood pertaining to the gospel of re-

penitance and baptism for the remission of sins and the promise that this priesthood should not again be taken from the earth until the sons of Levi should be purified and all that was promised Israel should be fulfilled; and however much individuals may fall away from Zion and forfeit their blessings, however much men may apostatize from the truth, and iniquity abound, and the love of many wax cold, yet the Lord will work in the midst of his people, turning and overturning, rebuking and cleansing, until he has performed all he has promised. And when the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled, the power of God will be made manifest in the redemption of the House of Israel. As it is written, "And so all Israel shall be saved. There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Knowing this, the Apostle Paul says to the Romans, who were Gentiles, "Be not high-minded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." This is the work which God has commenced on the earth, to fulfil the promises made to Abraham concerning his seed, and the promises made to Joseph concerning his seed, the degenerate sons of America, among whom God is working in his own marvelous and wonderful manner, preparing their hearts for the changes that await them in accordance with his promises, when the cup of iniquity shall be filled up in the midst of the Gentiles, and his judgment shall be poured out upon them to break them in pieces as a potter's vessel is broken.

We are witnesses of these things and know the things whereof we speak, and we rejoice in the manifestation of the spirit bearing witness of these things among the people of God, and though there are many who are negligent in duty, dark in their understanding, covetous in their hearts, worldly minded and cling to this world and are more or less beset therewith, yet the Lord is working in the midst of his people; for poor, frail, feeble, faulty, sinful as we are, taken as a whole, we are the best the Lord has been able to find, and therefore he is not disposed to cast us off, but to reprove, admonish and instruct, that he may make us what he has called us to be in deed and in truth, saints of the last days.

May God help us to keep our covenants, cleanse ourselves from sin, our hearts from all hypocrisy, our persons, our habitations, our towns and our cities; and may our municipal officers as well as our ecclesiastical officers have wisdom, strength, power, nerve, and energy to stem the current of crime, to check the progress of drunkenness, whoredom, profanity, and all manner of abomination, and execute judgment and justice in the land with firmness, vigor, and strength; and may God bless every officer of the law who magnifies his calling with soberness, diligence, and honesty, and every Apostle, President, Bishop, Elder, Priest, Teacher and Deacon who labors to put away evil from himself, his household and the community, and every mother in Israel who teaches her children righteousness and faith, and every organization for the improvement of the rising generation. May grace and peace be multiplied upon them through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.