

# TITHING.

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## TITHING.

Tithing and consecration are designed of God as *the* means whereby his people are to be made *equal* in temporal things, without which they cannot be equal in spiritual things.

Their design is to take the riches of the rich, and give what is needed to the poor; and inasmuch as the priesthood are called to be *examples* to the flock of God, they should be the first to *practice*, as well as teach those lovely, heaven-born principles. God is no respecter of persons,—he loves all the workmanship of his hands,—and, black and white, bond and free, male and female, are alike unto him. (2 Nephi 11: 14.)

The word of God has ever taught that his people should be one. Jacob says,

“Think of your brethren, like unto yourselves, and be familiar with all, and *free* with your substance, that they may be rich like unto you.”—Jacob 2: 5.

The Lord, through Joseph the martyr, said,

“Let every man esteem his brother *as himself*, and practice virtue and holiness before me.”—D. & C. 38 (old ed. 12), 5.

Again, in 70 (old ed. 26) 3.

“Nevertheless, in your *temporal* things you shall be *equal*, and this not grudgingly, otherwise the abundance of the manifestations of the Spirit shall be withheld.”

Again, in 101 (old ed. 99) 2.

“I, the Lord, stretched out the heavens, and builded the earth as a very handy work; and all things therein are mine; and it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine; but must needs be done in *mine own way*; and behold this is the way, that I, the Lord, have decreed to provide for my saints; that *the poor shall be exalted, in that the rich are made low*; for the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare; yea, I prepared all things, and have given unto the child-

ren of men to be *agents unto themselves*. Therefore, if *any man* shall take of the abundance which I have made, and impart not his portion, according to the law of my gospel, unto the *poor*, and the *needy*, he shall, with the wicked, lift up his eyes in hell, being in torment.”

And to the foregoing agrees the teachings of Enoch, the New Testament, and the Book of Mormon.

The Spirit of Christ is the spirit of liberty, of love, of unity in righteousness, and of *equality*, both in temporal and in spiritual things. Holy men and women of every age have *practiced*, as well as taught these things. Bad men have both taught and practiced the opposite.

What are we to think of men who profess to be God's ministry, who will, under the sacred name of TITHING and CONSECRATION, take by *constraint*, of the penury of the poor, and add it, year after year, to their *abundance*? Can we still claim them as the Lord's shepherds? Verily, no!

The authorities have taken by exaction, and in some instances by force, what they have been pleased to call tithings and consecrations, even from the poor. Many of the poor in Europe, have been cut off for not paying tithing, when they could scarcely get bread for their young and helpless families. Similar things have been done in Utah, yet there is not one item of law to warrant the collection of tithing from the poor.

The tithing should be collected *for* the poor, instead of *from* them. They are to receive needed aid *from* the tithing, instead of paying any. The poor, who are worthy to belong to the church, are worthy to be aided by the rich. This is according to the word of God, and the Spirit of Christ, and the great principles of love and unity which must ever actuate the church of

God, and mark the teachings of its priesthood.

The poor may contribute of their mites, as did the poor widow, but this is not tithing, it is simply an offering.

All are under obligations to build up the church, in righteousness, with their might, mind, and strength; but the law of tithing takes means only from those who have to *spare*, and not from those who can with difficulty supply their ordinary wants.

The law of tithing, when faithfully executed, oppresses no one, deprives no one of any thing they really need. It is designed to supply want, instead of creating and increasing it. It proposes to take means from where it is not needed, and put it where it is, and thus bring about an equality for the common good. It is a principle by which one member of the body of Christ manifests its care, and love, for all the others.

The members of Christ's body, (the church), are members in common, members one of another. When one rejoices, all rejoice. When one suffers, all suffer. The law that governs one, governs all,—it blesses all, it humbles all, it *enriches* all. The law reads:

"In answer to the question, O Lord, show unto thy servants how much thou requirest of the properties of thy people for a tithing?

"Verily thus saith the Lord, I require all their *surplus* property to be put into the hands of the *bishop* of my church of Zion, for the building of mine house, and for the laying the foundation of Zion, and for the priesthood, and for the debts of the presidency of my church; and this shall be the *beginning* of the tithing of my people; and, after that, those who have thus been tithed shall pay one-tenth of all their *interest* [not earnings, nor time] annually; and this shall be a standing law unto them *forever*, for my holy priesthood, saith the Lord.

"Verily I say unto you, it shall come to pass that all those who gather unto the land of Zion shall be tithed of their *surplus* properties, and shall observe *this* law, or they shall not be found worthy to abide among you. And I say unto you, if my people observe not *this* law, to *keep it holy*,

and by *this* law sanctify the land of Zion unto me, that my statutes and my judgments may be kept thereon, that it may be most holy, behold, verily I say unto you, it shall not be a land of Zion unto you; and this shall be an *ensample* unto all the stakes of Zion. Even so. Amen."—Doc. & Cov. sec. 106 (old ed. 107).

Again,

"If thou lovest me, thou shalt serve me and keep all my commandments. And behold, thou wilt remember the *poor*, and consecrate [give, or devote] of thy properties for *their* support, that which thou hast to impart unto *them*. \* \* \* And inasmuch as ye impart of your substance unto the *poor*, ye will do it unto me, and they shall be laid before the *bishop* of my church and his counselors. \* \* \* Every man shall be made accountable unto me, a steward over *his own property*, or that which he has *received by consecration*, [gift from the bishop], inasmuch as is sufficient for himself and family."—Doc. and Cov., sec. 42 (old ed. 13) 8, 9.

Here, then, is the *law* and the *only* law, by which Zion and her *stakes* can be built up. The "standing law" for the priesthood, as well as the people "forever."

1st. The saints are to be tithed of their *surplus*.

2nd. Those who have paid their *surplus* are to pay one-tenth of their "interest [which is their gains] annually."

3rd.—The tithing and consecrations are to be used for the relief of the *poor*, "for their support," also for the building of the temple, laying the foundation of Zion, for the priesthood, &c.

4th. The tithings and the consecrations should be laid before the *bishop* and his counselors; and, therefore, not be put into the hands of the president of the church.

5th. Those who gather to Zion, or her stakes, and will not obey this law, "shall not be found worthy to abide among you."

6th. Every man is accountable to God, "a steward over *his own property*," whether he gained that property by his own labors, or received it by gift, (consecration), from the bishop.

This law diffuses the properties of the saints, equally, among them all, "According to their families, according to their *circumstances*, and their wants, and needs."—51 (23) 1.

It opposes the giving of the properties of the church, into the hands of one, or a few. The properties of the church, and of the individuals composing it, are designed for the benefit of the whole, and not to enrich a select few. To centralize the wealth of the church in the hands of the few, is to deprive the many of their rights, their blessings, and their powers; and to violate the spirit, as well as the express terms of the law. A system that requires the wealth and services of its adherents to be placed under the absolute control of its leaders, is a despotism of the rankest class; and a people who submit to such a system are in bondage.

The law of tithing, as found in the books, proclaims *equality*, and "liberty to the captives." It lifts up, and gladdens the heart of the poor, of the aged, and of the infirm. As it is the offspring of love, so it is sustained by love. The church cannot be organized fully without it, and Zion cannot be *sanctified* without it; and if the saints, in their gathered condition, are not organized according to it, "they will be cut off."—51 (23) 1.

Brigham Young, and his co-workers, have taught the people to pay one-tenth of all they possessed, whether they were rich or poor; to pay one-tenth of their time, or its equivalent; to pay one-tenth of all their earnings; and after all this, required them to pay wall taxes, water taxes, meeting-house taxes, school-house taxes, and have importuned them for consecrations, and donations for the temple, for halls, for missions, for funds to emigrate the poor, and to send out missionaries to foreign lands, and among the Indians. They have taught the people to consecrate *all* their properties, their wives and families, and their own

persons to the leaders. And so they have to-day, absolute control, dictatorially, over the greater portion of the wealth, and of the people in Utah; as well as having ownership of a great part of the best property in Utah.

What property most of the leaders have to-day, they obtained directly or indirectly through the saints. The saints are just as much entitled to the funds of the church as they are or ever were, yet some of them are in poverty, wanting, in some instances, food and raiment. While some, like the Son of God, have not where to lay their head, Brigham and his co-workers are rolling in the luxuries procured by the riches which, of moral right, belong to the saints; and hundreds, yea thousands, of those who by hard labor *earned* these riches, are dragging out a poverty-stricken, priest-ridden, miserable existence. O ye Saints of the Most High! Is this the work of God? Is this *equality*? Is this unity in Christ? Is this loving our neighbor as ourselves? Is this Christ's teaching and example? Hear now the word of the Lord:

"But verily I say unto you, that, in time, ye shall have no king nor ruler, for I will be your king and watch over you. Wherefore, hear *my* voice and follow me, and you shall be a *free* people, and ye shall have no laws but *my* laws, when I come, for I am your LAWGIVER, and what can stay my hand? But verily I say unto you, teach one another according to the office wherewith I have appointed you, and let every man esteem his brother as himself, and practice virtue and holiness before me. And again I say unto you, let every man esteem his brother as himself: for what man among you having twelve sons, and is no respecter to them, and they serve him obediently, and he saith unto the one, be thou clothed in robes and sit thou here; and to the other, be thou clothed in rags and sit thou there, and looketh upon his sons and saith, I am just. Behold, this I have given unto you a parable, and it is even as I am; I say unto you, be one; and if ye are not one, ye are not mine."—Doc. & Cov. 38: (old ed. 12) 5, 6.

In this, God's love for his people is expressed in unequivocal terms. He

loves them *alike*, if they are obedient. He does not propose to exalt one above the other, but wills that they shall be *equal*; and *commands* that "every man esteem his brother as himself." God commands the saints to be *one*; but for them to put their property, their judgments, their wives, and their families, also the properties of the church, under the entire control, counsel, and disposal of Brigham and his co-workers, would not effect the oneness commanded, but a oneness such as is sought for by tyrants, and can be obtained by them only as the people surrender their agency, their rights, and their power.

Unity, under the gospel, works *liberty*; and both are produced and sustained by law, and *that* law affects the priests as well as the people. The law that governs one must govern all, otherwise there is not unity. The rights, blessings, privileges, and powers of the people, *belong to the people*, and not to the priesthood. And the priesthood must not take them from them, nor control them by constraint, if they do, the people are brought into bondage, and the priesthood become oppressors. The priesthood should obey the law as well as the people, otherwise they are not united in one. The priesthood are not *rulers*; they do not *make* law; but they are called to *administer* the law, as servants of Jesus Christ. They are not masters, nor Lords, nor Gods; but ministers for Christ, ministering his word and Spirit.

When men take property by force, fraud, or craft, either from rich or poor, though they call it tithing the people, it is oppression,—it is robbery.

When they, by *any degree of constraint*, collect properties as tithing from the saints, they do it in violation of the law of God.

Joseph the martyr, in his instructions to Bro. Edward Partridge, the bishop, in regard to the manner of executing the law of consecration, and supplying the wants of the poor, says:

"I proceed to answer your questions concerning the consecration of properties.

"First, it is not right to condescend to very great particulars in taking inventories.

"The fact is this, a man is bound by the law of the church, to consecrate to the *bishop*, before he can be considered a legal heir to the kingdom of Zion; and this, too, *without constraint*; and unless he does this, he cannot be acknowledged before the Lord, on the church book; therefore, to condescend to particulars, I will tell you that every man must be *his own judge*, how much he should receive, and how much he should suffer to remain in the hands of the bishop. I speak of those who consecrate more than they need for the support of themselves and families.\*

"The matter of consecration must be done by the mutual consent of both parties; for to give the bishop power to say how much every man shall have, and he be *obliged* to comply with the bishop's judgment, is *giving* the bishop more power than a king has; and upon the other hand, to let every man say how much he needs, and the bishop be obliged to comply with his judgment, is to throw Zion into confusion, and make a slave of the bishops. The fact is, there must be a balance or *equilibrium of power*, between the bishop and the people; and thus harmony and good-will will be preserved among you.

"Therefore, those persons consecrating property to the bishop in Zion, and then *receiving an inheritance back*, must show reasonably to the bishop that he wants [needs] as much as he claims. But in case the two parties cannot come to a mutual agreement, the bishop is to have nothing to do about receiving their consecrations; and the case must be laid before a council of twelve high priests; the bishop not being one of the council, but he is to lay the case before them."—*See Ch. Hist., Mill. Star, vol. 14, p. 450.*

Such are the teachings of the great seer. In them we find nothing that warrants constraint, but the very opposite,—constraint is expressly forbidden. The bishops cannot use nor control any person's property, except with their consent; and consecrations, and inher-

\*The individual consecrates *all* his property, giving an inventory to the bishop, and then takes back what he needs, and this he does by *right*, though with the consent of the bishop; and this is the manner of *his receiving* inheritance by consecration.

itances, are made and received by the "mutual consent" of the persons and the priesthood.

Here is gospel freedom; here is christian liberty;—liberty defined, assured, and *protected* by the law of God. Here is "a balance, or equilibrium of power," between the priesthood and the people. The power of judgment, of how to act, of what to do, of how much to give, and how much to retain, belongs to the people. Will the saints see their rights and maintain them,—or will they, weeping, kiss the chains of their captivity!

The system of tithing and consecration, as carried out by the Utah authorities, is strikingly similar to the practice of king Noah and his priests.

"He [king Noah] did not keep the commandments of God, but he did walk after the desires of his own heart. And he had many wives and concubines. And he did *cause* his people to commit sin, and do that which was abominable in the sight of the Lord. Yea, and they did commit whoredoms, and all manner of wickedness. And he laid a tax of one-fifth part of all they possessed; a fifth part of their gold and of their silver, and a fifth part of their ziff, and of their copper, and of their brass, and their iron; and a fifth part of their fattings; and also, a fifth part of all their grain. And all this did he take, to support himself, and his wives, and his concubines, and also, his priests, and their wives, and their concubines: thus he *changed* the affairs of the kingdom. For he put down all the priests that had been consecrated by his father, and consecrated new ones in their stead, such as were lifted up in the pride of their hearts. Yea, and thus they were supported in their laziness, and in their *idolatry*, and in their *whoredoms*, by the taxes which king Noah had put upon the people; thus did the people labor exceedingly, to *support iniquity*. Yea, and they also became *idolatrous*, because they were deceived by the vain and flattering words of the king and priests: for they did speak flattering things unto them.

"And it came to pass that king Noah built many elegant and spacious buildings.

"And it came to pass that he placed his heart upon his riches, and he spent his time in riotous living with his wives and concubines: and so did also his priests

spend their time with harlots. And it came to pass that he planted vineyards round about in the land: and he built wine presses, and made wine in abundance; and therefore he became a wine bibber, and also his people."—Mosiah 7: 1, 2, 5.

King Noah took one-fifth, but the Brighamite system takes more. This terrible evil cannot exist long, for God will deal with those who practice and tolerate it, as he did with king Noah and his people, if they do not repent and turn from it. The people of king Noah, because of their wicked leaders, "Did boast and delight in blood, and the shedding of the blood of their brethren, and this because of the wickedness of their king and priests."

While in this wicked, blinded state, the Lord did send them warning to ~~turn~~ turn them away from the teachings and practices of their leaders, and to cause them to return unto him and keep his commandments. And Abinadi

"Went forth among them, and began to prophesy, saying, behold, thus saith the Lord, and thus hath he commanded me, saying, Go forth and say unto this people, thus saith the Lord: wo be unto this people, for I have seen their abominations, and their wickedness, and their whoredoms; and except they repent, I will visit them in mine anger. \* \* And it shall come to pass that they shall know that I [not Adam] am the Lord their God, and am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of my people. \* \* Yea, and it shall come to pass that when they shall cry unto me, I will be slow to hear their cries; yea, and I will suffer them that they may be *smitten by their enemies*. And except they repent in sackcloth and ashes, and cry mightily to the Lord, I will not hear their prayers. \* \* And it shall come to pass that I will smite this my people with sore afflictions; yea, with *famine*, and with *pestilence*; and I will cause that they shall howl all the day long. Yea, and I will cause that they shall have burdens lashed upon their backs; and they shall be driven before, like a dumb ass. And it shall come to pass that I will send forth hail among them, and it shall smite them; and they shall also be smitten with the east wind; and insects [crickets—grasshoppers]—shall pester their land also, and devour their grain, and they shall be smitten with a great pestilence; and all

this will I do because of their iniquities and abominations."—Mosiah 7 : 8, 11, 12.

By this we see how wicked leaders corrupt God's people, and how the people suffer for following their false teachings and wicked practices. God is just, and his justice is terrible to the transgressor of His law, whether priests or people. It will not do for God's people to say we have done thus and so, because our "file-leaders" have counselled us. The fact is, God holds every saint accountable to him for his own conduct, let the leaders do as they will. Every man must stand or fall for himself; not trusting in another. All men are to be judged, not for others' doings, but for their own. And all people who have "the books," Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, will be justified or condemned by the word of God contained in them. Every man will be held accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment, in spite of "file-leaders." If we govern ourselves, touching the matter of tithing, consecrations, donations, and offerings, by the law and the principles laid down in those books, it will be well for us, both in time and in eternity.

The saints who will tamely submit to the unlawful exactions of their leaders, are but forging their own fetters. The saints should go "to the law and the testimony," and if their leaders "speak not according to these, it is because there is no light in them."

By the "Inspired translation of the Holy Scriptures, by Joseph Smith, the Seer," we learn that Abram paid tithes to Melchisedec on the same principle as is taught in the Book of Covenants.

"And he [Melchisedec] lifted up his voice and he blessed Abram, being the high priest, and the keeper of the storehouse of God; him whom God had appointed to receive tithes for the poor. Wherefore, Abram paid unto him tithes of all that he had, of all the riches which he possessed, which God had given him more than that which he had need." Gen. 14 : 37-39.

This is an exalted, and an exalting

principle. It is God-like. It commands the admiration of men and angels. How different it is from the low, oppressive, degrading system that filches the bread from the hungry mouths of helpless women and children; that builds palaces for the few, and hovels for the many; that clothes the leaders in robes, and they who are led of them, in rags; that gives riches and ease to those in authority, and a crust, with incessant toil, to the masses; that puts unlawful power into the hands of the priesthood, and chains upon the people? "God is love," "but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel."

"Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord."—Jer. 17 : 5.

When men assume to control, by their priestly authority, the properties that belong to individual saints; when they arbitrarily dictate how, when, and with whom they shall spend their money, or exchange their produce, or devote their labor, it is priest-craft; it is tyranny; it is a degradation of the holy priesthood, and a robbery of man's inalienable rights. The Lord says:

"Every man shall be made accountable unto me, a steward over his own property."—D. & C. 42 : (old ed. 13) 9.

And the man who yields up to others that stewardship, robs himself of his God-given rights. He surrenders to others what God has entrusted to him, and proves himself unworthy.

The Lord holds the officers in the priesthood responsible for their acts, and the saints are authorized to do the same.

"It shall come to pass, that the inhabitants of Zion shall judge all things pertaining to Zion; and liars, and hypocrites shall be proved by them, and they who are not apostles and prophets shall be known."—Doc. & Cov. 64 : (old ed. 21) 7.

By this we see that the saints are to "judge" of the acts, character, and fitness of their servants,—the ministry, and of "all things pertaining to Zion," which includes the temporal "things,"

tithings, consecrations, with all church moneys, and church properties.

President Young and others claim that it is nobody's business what they do with the tithings and properties of the church; that it is the duty of the saints to pay in their tithings, consecrations, donations, &c., and it remains for the leading authorities to use it as they may choose; but the *law* which we have quoted, and common sense likewise, reserves to the people the right to know how their hard-earned properties are used, and to "judge" for themselves as to whether they are used wisely and righteously, and to dictate how they shall be used.

That bishops, trustees, agents, and stewards, over the temporal things of the church, are to give to the church an account of their respective stewardships, at such time as the wisdom of the church may direct, is reasonable, and it is enjoined likewise by the law.

"For it is required of the Lord, at the hand of *every steward*, to render an account of his stewardship, both *in time* and in eternity."—D. & C. 72: (old ed. 90) 1.

This is the law of God for the government of his church; and he says:

"And ye [people and elders] shall see that my law is kept. He that receiveth my law and doeth it, the same is my disciple; and he that saith he receiveth it and doeth it not, the same is not my disciple, and shall be cast out from among you."—D. & C., 41: (old ed. 61) 2.

The saints are under obligations to God and man to see that all church properties are collected, and used in righteousness and wisdom, strictly in keeping with the law. If any of the priesthood, from the first president to the deacon, persists in acting contrary to the law of God, and wisdom, they should be "cast out" of their office, for the law says:

"He that is slothful shall not be counted worthy to stand, and he that learns not his duty and shows himself *not approved*, shall not be counted worthy to stand."—D. & C. 104: (old ed. 3) 44.

Joseph the martyr taught that the

trustees, bishops, and agents for the church were responsible to the church for their acts, and that they should render a proper and faithful account of the same.

"The agents have had too great latitude to practice fraud, by receiving donations and never making report. The church has suffered loss, and I am opposed to that system of collecting funds when any elder may receive moneys.

"I am opposed to any man's handling the public funds of the church who is not duly authorized.

"I advise that some means be devised for transacting business on a sure foundation. The Twelve are the most suitable persons to perform this business; and I want the conference to devise some means to bind them as firm as the pillars of heaven, if possible. The Twelve were always honest, and it will do them no hurt to bind them.

"It has been reported that they receive wages at two dollars per day for their services. I have never heard this till recently, and I do not believe it. I know the Twelve have never had any wages at all. They have fulfilled their duty—they have always gone where they were sent, and have labored with their hands for their support, when at home. If we send them into the world to collect funds, we want them to return those funds to this place, that they may be appropriated to the very purpose for which they were designed. I go in for binding up the Twelve, solid, putting them under bonds; and let this conference institute an order to this end, and that the *travelling expenses of the agents shall not be borne out of the funds collected for building these houses*, and let no man pay money or stock into the hands of the Twelve, except he transmit an account of the same immediately to the trustee in trust; and let no man but the Twelve have authority to act as agent for the temple and Nauvoo house.

"I would suggest the propriety of your saying that no money should ever be sent by any man except it be some one whom you have appointed as agent, and stop every other man from receiving moneys. It has been customary for *any elder* to receive moneys for the temple, when he is travelling, but this system of things opens a wide field for every kind of imposition, as any man can assume the name of a Mormon elder, and gather his pockets full of money and go to Texas. Many com-

plaints have come to me of money being sent that I have never received. \* \* We cannot give an account to satisfy the people, on the church books, unless something is done.

"It was then voted unanimously that the Twelve be appointed a committee to collect funds to build the Nauvoo house, and receive moneys for the temple, with this proviso:

"That the Twelve give bonds for the safe delivery of all funds, coming into their hands, belonging to the Nauvoo house and Temple, to the Trustee in Trust, and that the payor, also, make immediate report to the Trustee in Trust, of all moneys paid by him to the Twelve; and that the instructions of President Joseph Smith, to the conference, be carried into execution. \* \* \* \* \*

"Elder Brigham Young objected, and said HE SHOULD NEVER GIVE RECEIPTS FOR CASH, EXCEPT SUCH AS HE PUT INTO HIS OWN POCKET FOR HIS OWN USE; for it was calculated to make trouble hereafter, and there were better methods of transacting the business; and more safe for the parties concerned; that he wished this speculation to stop, and would do all in his power to put it down. To which the Twelve responded, *Amen*. Elder Young asked if any one knew any thing against any one of the Twelve, any dishonesty; if they did he wanted it exposed; he said he knew of one who was not dishonest. He also referred to muzzling the ox that treadeth out the corn, &c.

"President Joseph said, I will answer Brother Brigham. The Twelve need not spend all their time abroad, they can spend the time belonging to the Temple, for to collect funds; and the remainder of the time they may labor for their support; and they may call on the public to supply their wants. It is no more for the Twelve to go abroad and earn their living in this way than it is for others. The idea of not muzzling the ox is a good Quaker song, but we will make the ox tread out the corn first and then feed him."—*Times and Seasons*, vol. 4, p. 181-183.

The acts of the priesthood are valid and binding on earth and in heaven when they are in accordance with the law of God; and when they are not, they are of no force, and are not binding, neither with God nor man. The law is supreme. The priesthood may err, and indeed are liable to do so, but "the law of the Lord is perfect," it is

that which is ordained of God to govern both priests and people.

The secret of power, in the priesthood, is in their learning, and doing the commandments of God, "and his commandments are not grievous."

"I, the Lord, am BOUND when ye do what I say, but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise."—D. & C. sec. 81: (old ed. 87) 3.

"He that turneth away his ear from hearing the LAW, even his prayer shall be abomination."—Prov. 28: 9.

Joseph the martyr teaches, in his letter on baptism for the dead, (D. & C. sec. 110, old ed. 106: 9), that the virtue and power of the priesthood consists in their righteous, lawful acts; and that *only* when they minister "truly and faithfully in authority," (or according to the law), "in the name of the Lord," are their acts and teachings binding; and then cites as a precedent the words of our Savior to Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys."—Matt. 16: 19.

If the priesthood fail to render complete accounts of their acts, the church should at once compel them to do so.

When trustees, bishops, and agents, fail to give faithful and lawful accounts of their use of tithing, consecrations, and church properties in general, they should be compelled to do so by the laws of the land. An agent for the church who uses for his own private purposes the funds of the church, is an embezzler, a criminal, and should be prosecuted as such. Priestly office cannot screen him. The law of the church, Doc. & Cov. 42: (old ed. 13) 22, says that if any member rob, steal, or lie, they "shall be delivered up unto the law of the land," and it is quite as consistent that those who embezzle church properties should be tried by the law of the land.

It is essential to the purity, fair fame, and general welfare of the church, that her officers are *honest*, in the strictest sense; and that they serve the church for Christ's sake, rather than themselves for their own sake.