

SUPPLEMENT TO THE SAINTS' HERALD.

LAMONI, IOWA, DECEMBER 10, 1892.

[Reported for the Herald by Belle B. Robinson.]

SERMON BY ELDER JOSEPH LUFF,

DELIVERED AT

INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI, NOVEMBER 13, 1892.

Subject, REVELATION CONTINUOUS.

THE speaker read Revelation 22: 18, 19: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

It is quite evident from this announcement, that is, when we take it as an authoritative utterance from God, that he intended what he said to stand for itself; that in order to accomplish his design whereunto it had been appointed, there was and would ever be no necessity for any change in it as to its character, by adding or subtracting. Yet while that is the evident intent of it, the passage has been made to do service against the end unto which it was ordained, by those who have not been able either from ignorance or design, to comprehend its real purpose.

As a body of religionists the Latter Day Saints have taken the position, and believe they were warranted in so doing by the testimony of the word, that as God commenced, so he would continue; that man would never have any occasion to point to the Almighty's work of the past and make reasonable use of it as against any subsequent work performed by him and thus reveal him in conflict with himself. And while this is correct, it is nevertheless evident from the fact already announced of this passage of scripture being used against the claim made by us in respect to continued revelation, that the Almighty understood from the beginning what the methods of men would be in subsequent time, and therefore he by inspiration authorized the wording of that which was given to man in such a way as to put it out of human power to reveal him in contradiction with himself.

One feature of our faith that seems to

be objectionable to the mind of the majority of religionists outside of our own society is found in the claim that God will reveal himself to man, and that the purpose served and the object in mind on his part in the years past when doing this kind of work would still continue to be the purpose in all subsequent time for doing like work, so that if human necessity was considered sufficient to make it fitting that God should open the heavens and from thence pour in upon human understanding an explanation of his design and in connection therewith furnish strength to help mortals out of the extremities into which their environments crowded them, that under like conditions in later years he would repeat himself. When we have made claim of necessity for continued revelation and manifestation of miraculous power in the world, we have been met with the objection on the part of some, that there is no real necessity for it. They have told us that there was a necessity in former time for the manifestation of divine power in such cases as the Bible refers to when Peter was instructed to catch a fish and from it take the money to pay the tribute required of them, and that it was necessary that God should reveal unto Paul certain things in regard to his ministerial work associated with the introduction of the gospel in earlier years, and a great many things then occurring were performed because of a special necessity, and that the necessities of to-day are not like unto them, hence a repetition of such manifestations would not be in order. And yet these very persons urging these objections fail to note that while in the letter of their objection they may be correct, yet the principle involved, the main thought that is contained in the objection as urged by them, furnishes to us strength for an argument against their position in this regard. If there is no necessity for a duplicating of these special manifestations referred to, as revealed in localities then,

not general in their import, it may be just possible that other conditions surrounding us locally or as individuals place us in just as extreme conditions or situations as these men were placed in; and if what was shown to them or done for them at that time will not meet our case, it is necessary for God to meet our case by something different. The strength of the argument is furnished from the very objection.

But before taking the general view of this subject that is warranted, let us make use of the Bible as a channel of instruction in regard to spiritual concerns. We believe that it in its teachings relates to the spiritual nature of man, and its object is to acquaint him with his relationship with God and to enable him to so deport himself that under all conditions of life he may give pleasure to the Almighty; and for his encouragement it gives him testimony that under certain conditions the Almighty was pleased to favor his obedient followers with revelations of his good will, of his pleasure, and in connection therewith to put himself on record in such a way as to warrant the belief ever afterwards among those who should read of these circumstances, that he would never change in this regard, and that all members of his family, be they born early or late, were of equal importance and worth in his sight, and that conditions or situations into which they were found, for which they were not in any sense responsible themselves, he would not allow to interfere with his general design in regard to his family; he would treat them all alike, the conditions of motive being equal. When, therefore, this statement comes to me in these words: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." I cannot for a moment gather the idea that the Almighty wished to be understood that he would cease there and then from ever talking with the human race, or in other words, that they need never expect from that hour any revelation of his will to man; but that what he had given as contained in this communication to John upon Patmos he proposed should stand for itself, and that no man would have need to apologize for what it contained. And while there are people in the world to-day who would scorn the idea as I have stated it, of taking the stand and saying in so many words they had an apology to offer for something the Almighty had said or done, yet they proceed in a covert way to do the apologizing by trying to "doctor" what God has done; and that is the meanest kind of an apology. It is unfortunate on

the part of the Almighty either that he ever should have said some things that he did or, on the other hand, that he should have made selection of men in after years who did not understand what he did say and put them under the necessity of "tinkering" it so as to make it better adapted to the necessities of the age.

When we apply this text as it is given to the idea of continued revelation from God to man, we find that it in no sense interferes with that hope that the rest of the Scriptures gives birth to within the human soul; for while it declares that God requires that what he had uttered should stand upon its own merit without human interference and nothing should be added to it or taken from it by men, he has never made the statement nor in any way intimated that he himself as God would never proclaim unto the children of men what might seem necessary in the way of further information for the regulation of human affairs. There is no intimation of this kind; but, "if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book."

Another thought: A great many people when using this verse in order to base their objection to our claim for continued revelation, fail to discover that the very passage itself forms the strongest weapon against the very faiths they are advocating and which make necessary such an attack upon our own. For this reason, every man who says that revelation ceased at Patmos, whether he means to imply it or not, does state in fact that every creed that has been formulated since Patmos has been formulated without revelation from God. If revelation ceased at Patmos, then everything that has been done with reference to man or that has been formulated with reference to the spiritual necessities of man since then has been done without consultation with or warrant from God; and I care not whether you go back to the oldest creed formed this side of the revelation at Patmos, or the latest, every one of them must stand upon the admission which has been made by the objector who uses this text in that way—that it has been framed in the wisdom of men. Hence if God gave this Bible as a regulator of human life or as something to be conformed or subscribed to by mortals, it is mine by right, mine as a common heritage that belongs to me as a man, to take this text and make an investigation; and if I shall make the discovery that these men who forbid me believing that God shall add, after Patmos, anything to the volume of revelation that was then in possession of mortals, are advocating any of the creeds of the world, I turn to them and

say, "Sirs, in examining these creeds I take the liberty of making comparison with what is contained in the Bible, and I find that you have left out very much of what this Bible contains." I take one after another of these creeds, and in making the examination I discover that one has attached very much of importance to one feature, another has considered that feature unimportant and has eliminated it, and each creed has been formed in its turn with a view to remedying the defects or striking out the obnoxious features of the other; for if they believed that the creeds already in existence expressed their idea of religion, they never would have formulated another religion; and every creed that has been formed has been formed with the thought uppermost in the formulators' minds that existing ones needed some reform, that they did not compare fully in every respect with their idea or conception of the Bible intention. Therefore, as I take each of these in turn and make the comparison, I discover that one discards what another extols, one places a premium upon that which another discounts; but I have failed (and I represent a great many people who in their searching have failed) to discover any single formulation known as a creed upon this earth that embodies within it every feature or doctrine enunciated in the New Testament record,—no less, no more. Some of the most popular creeds of the day exclude baptism as an essential feature; another makes it the *summum bonum* of its theory and yet discards the "laying on of hands." Another teaches that the "resurrection of the dead" has been ordained for those who live on earth, but it has been appointed for a certain period in the wisdom of God when all that have ever lived shall rise, and that only one line shall be drawn somewhere between that vast host, and those standing on this side of the line shall go into a condition of being spoken of as one of "glory and peace," while the other shall be borne into a sphere where torture shall be endured by them forever and forever, without hope or thought of cessation. Just as these points are referred to for convenience' sake to-night, so we might name a host of others, and when we did so, make the discovery that the creeds fail to compare with the strict requirements of this book.

Now we turn to these men who have taken this text as a basis upon which to build their objection to the idea of continued revelation and then read the following: "If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life and out of the holy city, and from the

things which are written in this book." Each of these individuals claim by heritage or by right some of the promises that are contained in this book, and yet they proceed to form creeds and ask men to subscribe to them when these creeds in themselves have rejected a great portion of what is embodied in this record; and this testimony of the word upon which they base their objection to the idea of new revelation clearly informs us that in doing this they rob themselves of the things contained by way of promise in the book of life and in the holy city and the things written in this book. I think it was well said by one writer that the word of God is a two-edged sword. In the use of it by those unacquainted with it or uninformed by the Spirit that furnished it to the world, it does more damage on the back cut than on the off cut, and very often men place themselves as pitiable objects before the world when they undertake to use God's word against God's church, when they undertake to use the past revelation of truth against existing and proclaimed truth in their day, and this is the spectacle that creed apologists and defenders present themselves in before the world at the present age, while they denounce men for believing that God will continue to reveal himself. Creedology reveals itself as a shallow, defective institution against which we are warranted in using the language of this text, "If any man shall take away," etc.

But one thought we have particularly in mind in bringing this to-night before us, not only to dwell upon this particular text, but to deal with the idea, the principle as it exists in itself, as to whether or not there is warrant for believing that God has so much respect for, feels as much consideration for, and will reveal as much respect and consideration for his servants in this age as in former time. Hence we refer to another of the objections urged against us, based upon the testimony of Paul to Timothy whom he upon one occasion called his son in the gospel: "From a child thou hast known the Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation." The objector urges that if Timothy had known the Scriptures from childhood, and they made him wise unto salvation, then they were sufficient to make all other men, later born, wise unto salvation, and no new revelation is needed. When this statement is made by them they fail to notice that the very text they use containing Paul's writing to Timothy, forms a part of the New Testament itself, which never had been written in the days of Timothy's childhood—did

not have an existence; and if, therefore, it had no existence, and all that was in Timothy's possession was the Old Testament record, and that was sufficient to make him wise unto salvation, then the argument means that there is no need for the New Testament record to-day, and Christ's mission in the inspiring of it was an unnecessary one. So that the objection is in the nature of a good many others that are suicidal in themselves: it destroys itself; it takes away the very foundation upon which it rests; because if this fact is as I have stated it, then the man who urges this objection would have no New Testament from which to select his objection. If his argument was worth anything, he would not have a page from which to take his objection because it of necessity wipes out the entire New Testament record.

Another presents the statement that Paul had testified that God had given to them "all things that pertained unto life and godliness;" and if there had been given unto Paul or the rest "all things that pertained unto life and godliness," there was no necessity for any addition to what had been given, at any later period. When these people take that into consideration, they fail to notice that they have not got all that Paul possessed that pertained unto life and godliness. If we are not enjoying direct revelation from God. He walked and talked with God. He and his associates were ministered unto by the Spirit of God almost at every turn of their existence or their journeying. If we have not got that, then we have not all things that pertain unto life and godliness; and that same apostle made the statement that the letter itself killeth, but the Spirit giveth life; and if all that we have is this letter, we have that which says, "This shalt thou do, this shalt thou not do;" but it does not bring with it any life energy by which we shall be stimulated to do or refrain from doing. Paul and his conferees had the very things of which we only have their testimony. The gospel to them consisted not in "word only," but in power; and they not only lived in its enjoyment, but they had grace furnished them in abundant measure. One man on a certain occasion, when I was speaking on this subject of revelation in his hearing, told me I did not read far enough in the thirteenth chapter of Corinthians and that I should turn and read the eighth verse: "Whether there be prophecies they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." But I asked the individual that he should take a piece of his own advice and read a little farther than

the eighth verse: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." If we have not half what the Apostle Paul had, how much do we know? is the important thought. I called the attention of the individual to this fact, that there was a time when perfection should be reached, when men should be able to look upon the face of a perfect God, and when all the surroundings would bear the brand of perfection, and we should be able to look upon God face to face, as this word says: "Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face." And I asked the man if he believed "that which is perfect" had come. He said, "Yes. Here we have in the New Testament that which is perfect. Paul had only part of the record; they were not all prepared, not all combined or bound as we now have the records compiled in the New Testament; but," this man said, "we are so much better off now than the Apostle Paul was, because we have the record in its entirety; that which is perfect was to be the New Testament Scriptures." It was a strange presentation, but it seemed to me the help given of the Spirit was sufficient to meet even that exigency, and we did it in this way: "If a man should give to me a thousand dollars and I should write down upon paper that such a thing had been done,—that I had been made the owner of that thousand dollars by gift from such an individual, and I should hand that paper into the care of somebody else, I would then take the thousand dollars and use it to my advantage. By and by some other man would catch hold of the paper and he would read it; I did not have the perfect thing but he had it. I was in possession of the thousand dollars and could use it, but that man had the perfect thing, he had the record telling him of just what I possessed." He would not admit of that. I asked him, then, if the figure was not illustrative of the thought as herein contained, that if Paul was in possession, and his associates also, of all things that pertain unto life and godliness, and if unto them had been committed the Spirit by which they were enabled to certify to the correctness of these things, if the certificate they made could possibly be the perfect thing, while the blessings and the authority under which they made the certificate was not the genuine thing itself. It would never hold as an argument before intelligent people, for he was compelled to confess that all we had was the printed record in testimony that the Apostle Paul ever had what he claimed to

possess; and if the record we study is true, they were the possessors of something more, or something in addition to that which has been committed to us. It is rather a strange thought to force upon the human mind that a Savior, one that had declared it impossible for him to change his feelings to his children, to so ordain that unto some should be given the ladder or the steps by which they should ascend unto heaven to his own presence, and should at a certain time take away the ladder, and yet insist that those who were deprived of it should climb just as high and reach a condition of spiritual and moral excellence as great as those to whom it had been furnished. The Almighty designed the perfecting of the human race, and Paul says, when writing to the Ephesians, that he had given unto men apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints; and to the Corinthians he writes, "when that which is perfect is come," then those things can be done away—the object will then have been reached; but so long as there remains a solitary son or daughter of Adam on the earth desiring perfection, the means ordained of God unto that end will be essential, and no effort on the part of man to interpret the Bible can make it mean any other thing than that an impartial God ordained that these means should continue. It would be the biggest revelation of monstrosity regarding God for any of his authorized representatives to state to me that he exacted of me as much as he did of others, and yet took out of my power the means of performing it; that he gave to them and withheld from me all the helps, and yet made one demand that all should rise to the same standard of excellence.

Now I take it for granted that the general promises of God as stated in this book hold good always, and that whatever my Father said to my older brother, and in saying it stated it was for the benefit or enlightenment of the family, holds good with me. I use a common illustration here that I have often used in the past. If an individual should come into this locality where there are a number of farmers or agriculturists, and should make the discovery that they were not raising more than about sixty bushels of corn to the acre, or not more than twenty-five bushels of wheat to the acre, and should ask the privilege of lecturing in the presence of a number of these farmers, and should tell them about a country where they raised a hundred and fifty bushels of corn to the acre, or seventy-five bushels of wheat, and gave a clear description of the place, of the character of the grain, and its ready

sale in the market and the convenience of the markets in that country, you would naturally take it for granted that that individual had some object in view in coming and representing such a community yonder and in testifying in this way. If some one should step up and ask you what this man's object was, you would say, "He wants to get the people to move out of this locality and colonize that place yonder;" and if this man should say, "If you doubt my word in regard to these things, I have some pamphlets which contain certain certificates, to this effect," and the people seize upon them, and when they retire to their homes they read carefully the contents and discover certificate after certificate there in support of what this man has stated in regard to this land, and return to the man the next evening of his lecture and inquire of him how this place is to be reached, and after awhile they make up their minds to sell out their interests here in Missouri and move forward to that land and settle there, and acting upon this determination they are soon found colonizing a portion of that country, they till the soil, sow the seed, cultivate carefully, and at the time when the harvest is ended they find themselves with nothing before them, more than they had in this country, and begin to wonder where the mistake could be, whether in them or in the man, and read that same pamphlet and think there must be some mistake, they say: "We are in the wrong, we don't understand the nature of the soil, of the climate, and what is required at our hands to secure such a harvest; but we will learn by a little experience," and they try it another year with about the same success, and suddenly the thought comes to them, "Why here are some people who have lived here twenty-five years." They examine and discover that these people gather no better harvest than they themselves have gathered. Now, do these people sit right down and content themselves in the joyful possession of land, such land as this that the book testifies of? Ah, no! The business of every man in buying a farm is to get a harvest from it that will satisfy his expectations. He moves from one country to better his conditions, by increasing the harvest or the reaping as a result of his toil. After they find by effort they can produce nothing greater than they could in this country, they seek for that man and ask him what his object was in representing the country in the way he did. He says it was to have them invest there. "We have invested, and discover that as a result of our toil there is nothing more to our advantage than there was there." He says, "Did you ex-

pect more?" "We certainly did." "On what ground did you expect it? The people I talked about—the book don't carefully state—lived over two hundred years ago when they raised corn and wheat in such abundance as that." "Two hundred years ago?" "Yes, sir." "Well, sir, did you suppose that there was any consolation for us, living in 1892 and possessing a farm that yielded such an abundant crop two hundred years ago?" What consolation is there to me in owning a foot of ground in this or any other country simply because of what it yielded a century or more ago? The abundance that made it a proverbially profitable acreage of the past was all consumed by the people of that age; and my family would sit down and read or listen to that lecturer, and my children with myself and wife might starve while they learned how other people fared so richly in the past. And don't you know that spiritual matters are to be represented by temporal and physical surroundings, and when a preacher comes before me and says that under certain conditions people reaped a spiritual harvest beyond anything that the people of to-day are enjoying, and he tells me that in the service of God such and such things were enjoyed by the faithful Saints, and in evidence of this puts this book before me, I read certificates from John, and Peter, and James, and Matthew, and Luke, and Mark, all declaring that in the service of God there was a harvest of spiritual felicity and divine fellowship enjoyed under certain conditions that was sufficient to satisfy the heart and more than answer the cravings of those who lived within the lines of righteousness, and as a consequence I am influenced to cut loose from these selfish inclinations and pursuits of the past and begin to serve God; and as a consequence of this man's advice, I unite with one of the popular churches of the day, pay my dues, and begin to cast about for the harvest in the proper time. I go upon my knees and I ask for help. I meet exigencies in this life such as this book said there must be, and in the meeting of these exigencies I must do without any of the help that these men had. I try it for one, for two, or perhaps for ten years, and then I go to the man and ask him, "Have I been deceived in regard to this?" And he tells me, "No; you must remember," he says, "that that spiritual harvest was enjoyed eighteen hundred years ago." What is the good of religion to me, if all these benefits were only to be enjoyed eighteen hundred years ago? My wife, my children, with their spirits and my soul may starve and perish while we read and while preachers preach and while men

read with regard to the spiritual wheat and other grain that was devoured by men who lived eighteen hundred years ago. There is a something associated with it that is so deceptive in itself as to place morals in the present age in a quandary from which they cannot possibly extricate themselves consistently, and that is the reason why infidelity stalks rampant in the churches; that is the reason why men around us to-day are rising up in the superiority of their intellect, and resenting the insult that men who have pretended to stand by the Bible in the past are offering to them when they demand they shall stand by certain things from which they cannot extract anything to sustain the spiritual man, or frame the character that they are expecting to develop. You take an individual, starving into your house; or if he comes starving for bread, famishing for drink, knocking at the door of some clergyman's house, he invites him in and seats him at the parlor table. I don't care how luxuriously that room is furnished or adorned; it matters not if the coverlet upon that table has ornamentation that shows a lavish expenditure of hundreds of dollars. The minister turns to the fourteenth chapter of Matthew and tells him to read there a statement about the Savior having fed several thousand people with five barley loaves and two small fishes, and the preacher stands and looks around at this man while he reads and expects him to grow fat. After the man has gotten through he says, "Now, sir, I have finished it." "How do you feel?" "I feel worse as the time goes on," he says. "I don't believe you can have read that, sir; read it out loud." And he begins right there at the first verse of that chapter and reads it along carefully until he almost faints as a result of the effort, and when he is done he sinks almost fainting to the floor, and the minister is surprised that he has not gathered strength and nutriment of body in consequence of reading in regard to this, and he lifts the man up and sits him in that chair again and says, "What is the matter? There is something wrong; there were five thousand people there fed with only five loaves and two small fishes. What is the reason that so many were nourished there by a miracle and you reading of that account gather no strength from it?" "Ah," he says, "the mistake is in your interpretation of the sense of it; bring the loaves and the fishes here, and I will get strong, too. Don't give them the loaves and fishes and expect me to grow fat on reading that they ate them. That won't do," he says.

So I take here the record, and I discover that God provided a bill of fare. Upon

the table is placed the viands that are named in that bill of fare. He furnished it to men in years ago, and he certified to them that he was unchangeable; not an impartial thought or feeling in regard to any of his children could find a residence within his Fatherly heart or nature. And he says, "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Make the proclamation universal, and when response is made to this and they gather round, they read the bill of fare, they read of the things that were had years ago, enjoyed by Peter, James, John, Matthew, and the rest of them of whom this Bible certifies; and as they sit around that same table that history warrants them in believing their older brethren eighteen hundred years ago gathered, they expect to be fed; but the very man that puts this Bible in their hands says, "You are fools or Mormons if you think you are going to be fed as they were fed. It is true that the table and the viands are there; the bill of fare was printed for you to feed on; the food was for them." Don't you know there are scores of men who have so mistaken their calling as to be using this book in that way to-day; they are expecting that I shall live upon the spiritual nourishment that these men consumed eighteen hundred years ago, and they are astonished at me because I am dissatisfied with any such misrepresentation of a God unchangeable and impartial.

There is in the age in which we live a demand made upon those who have sufficient intellect, strength, or will to think, to rise up in the assertion of that superior spiritual knowledge, and in the face of religious communities,—in the face of any church that dares place the name of Christ as a label upon it, and demand that it shall either furnish the food or else not complain of people starving upon the bill of fare. As Latter Day Saint ministers we use the warrant of the word and declare that unrighteousness in man forfeited the spiritual blessings once enjoyed. Apostasy from truth caused the loss; but upon our return to the law of Christ he opens the heavens and sends forth a stream of light, certifying to us that he is willing to answer all the demands of the spirit as in times past, and that if people were willing with holy feet to use the ladder on which their fathers climbed, he was willing to place it within their reach. He only took it away because they spurned it and sought to pollute it with their unholy feet. It follows that divine help belongs to us as it is our natural child heritage.

God furnished it in these latter days, and because he has done it Latter Day Saints are making the claim among the children of men that God proves himself unchangeable by revealing himself as he formerly did. God is renewing his covenant; he is making manifest his power; he is educating people by the same means as he did in earlier years.

The objection comes up upon the text that I have used to-night that "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book," and mark you, while they quote it just as it is there, what they mean is that if *God* shall add unto these things—that is the sense in which they apply it. But the language means if any *man* shall try to interfere with what God has done, God will not hold him excusable. Now if the Senate and the Congress of the United States should enact certain laws, and they should be published in pamphlet form and circulated among the people, and there should be a little clause appended saying that if any man should add to or take from them certain inflections by way of penalties should be visited upon them, you would not come to the conclusion that because they certified that no man should be allowed to do that, that therefore another Senate could not pass another law; but you would understand that the Senate and the House reserved the right to themselves to enact the laws, and that individuals, as individuals, must not do it, must not change or corrupt, or try to interpret them in a way to deviate from their original intent.

Those acquainted with history are aware that this Apostle John after returning from the Isle of Patmos, wrote his gospel and epistles, and thus if the human or ordinary interpretation of the times is the correct one, God inspired John to place himself under the very condemnation that the people are warned against; but the intent of it is simply that which the language itself contains or sets forth. If you turn to the first chapter of the book of Revelation you have it announced there that when the messenger told John he was about to show him things that were to come to pass, he added, "What thou seest write in a book;" so he kept on his work, writing notes as the revelations were given to him until he had completed, and then the messenger said: "Now, I want you to send these unto the seven churches, and I testify that unto every man that adds unto this book, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." No other book under the heavens but this one book of Revelation was referred to, which was never compiled

until hundreds of years afterwards as a part of what is now known as the New Testament record; hence when the gospel of Jesus Christ is proven in all its appointments, it needs no help from mortals in order to make it mean anything different; and instantly we undertake to enlarge upon it, or make it mean more or less than it declares, we will be furnished with an experience that will prove to us the folly of correcting Deity.

And so in all features in connection with this work, if we as individuals are prepared to live up to its contracts, if we will move in harmony or in rapport therewith, then we will be in the condition of safety that the brother mentioned this afternoon when he said, "By and by when we get before the judgment seat, if the Almighty should be inclined to find fault with us for something, we would turn to him and say, "Father, it was so written in the book and we have done as we were told; it is so written." That is the reason I have argued in the past that our safety is in resting upon what is declared there and in taking it as intended of the Almighty and resting upon the assurance that it gives, and allowing the Almighty to make good according to his own feeling, in the experience of all, that which he has promised. And if it seems to me that my experience is larger or broader; or God has been more generous in his abundant revelation to me than to some others, while he has left them to work problems out by earnestness of delving, he sanctifies them by one process of revelation and me by another. We should permit him to act his own part, that he may, by and by, when these different classes of men shall stand before him at the judgment day, be ready to defend himself for what he did or for what he did not; and every man who has kept the law and has received that unction that has been satisfactory or otherwise to him, shall be able to look in the face of that kindly, that generous, that benevolent Father, and say: "Father, my consolation and the strength of my claim I base upon the fact that I obeyed the law, I walked according to the command. If I did not enjoy as much in life as a consequence of it, my Father, my life was consecrated to your

service and you must answer to yourself for that."

Now the everlasting truth that has come to us as Latter Day Saints is worthy of all the sacrifice that we can possibly make, it is worthy at our hands of all the endurance that may be placed as a tax upon us, in the simple fact that an infinite God stands back of it and he has the right, for he possesses the wisdom, to so develop men that every man's character shall at least answer all the demands of not only the *letter* but the *spirit* of the law that was resident in him when he caused it to be written as it is.

May he help us to be consistent in our lives and in the putting into practice all the principles of right that are so briefly referred to in this word, so that at last when he shall look upon them who have heard us preach, he shall see there the legitimate results of a Christian administration of his own law, for the results of the exercise of which he himself must bear the responsibility. I don't feel half so safe in men's hands as in Christ's, though I have no reason to doubt any man's integrity that I have been associated with in the gospel work. While I feel that my human interest and all would be perfectly safe in their hands, yet I tell you I don't feel one tithe of the safety in any man's hands, as I feel to-night in the hands of the Eternal himself, from the simple fact that he does not look simply upon these outward acts. Down into the depths of that spirit and that heart that he has made resident within me he looks and understands the forces that work within me, whether they are honest or not. If he can look there, understand them, measure them for you, measure them for me, then it is for you and me not only to guard the expression or utterance of the lip, but to guard the heart centers from which the forces are sent forth in streams that touch the lip and reach the minds of others through that medium. The great purpose is that we shall have the heart pure and as a consequence of that the world shall be bettered by the influence of our labors and utterances wherever we may be found among the children of men.