

A LETTER ON THE LATTER-DAY WORK OF THE LORD. NO. 1.

"BUT THOUGH WE, OR AN ANGEL FROM HEAVEN, PREACH ANY OTHER GOSPEL UNTO YOU THAN THAT WHICH WE HAVE PREACHED UNTO YOU, LET HIM BE ACCURSED."—*Gal. 1 : 8.*

DEAR M—Years have rolled their rapid flight, and many changing scenes have left their record on time's page, since we parted. Trials and temptations have fallen to my lot, and I doubt not, to yours also; for though life appears to some, but one long festive day, and time touches very lightly, their unclouded brows; still to very few I opine does it wear for long the rosy garb it was wont in their school days to assume. To night, my heart is filled with gratitude, that our lives have been spared, through all these changes; and though not permitted to see you face to face, I can address you with the "tongue of the absent."

It is in compliance with a promise made you, in the happy hours of our former intimacy, that these pages will be written. Doubtless long e'er this it has escaped your memory, or you may have regarded it as being too visionary for practical life, and so have left all thought of it behind, when we bade adieu to our *Alma mater* to enter upon life and its untried scenes. But if so, then it has been different with me, for I have not only had it in memory, but now sit down to redeem it. When talking of the various denominations, upon one occasion, and speculating as to why it was, that there were so many, and that their doctrines were so conflicting. Why it was that you as a Presbyterian believed the "blood of Christ efficacious only for the few," and I as a Methodist believed it was not only shed for all, but was efficacious for all, if they would comply with the requirements of the gospel. This you held they could not do, for it was not so ordained and I held they could or else man was not a free agent, and God gave salvation to whom He pleased, without regard to the individual at all. Such attributes as you worshiped in God, would have driven me to the earth's extremity to have avoided even the mention of His name. This would be but additional proof to you that I was not one of the elect, while in my heart of hearts I should feel that God was a God of love and justice; and that there was neither love nor justice in such doctrine; while speculating upon such things you may remember that I surprised you by saying, I did not believe any church then in existence was right, and though the Methodists come nearest to my belief, still if the scriptures were true, they

fell far short of preaching the gospel in its purity and power. Furthermore, I told you I believed such a church would arise, and if I should be blessed enough to find it or hear thereof I would share the glad news with you. This is the promise above referred to, and to you dear M—let me say, as I desire to say to all into whose hands these pages may chance to fall, they have been written with rejoicing, thanksgiving and prayer, and if you are honest in heart, and pray to God to give you light you too shall be made to rejoice, even as I have been, in the knowledge of one Lord, one faith, one baptism. My prayer to God is, that they may point some—if it be but one precious soul—to the light as revealed in God's word, and the pure principles of His gospel, as taught and practiced by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Doubtless you will repeat the name and ask where such a denomination is to be found, as in all probability you have never heard of them, but when I tell you that by their enemies, and by the world generally they are called "Mormons," your ignorance in a measure, will be enlightened and you will say: "Oh! yes, I have heard of them, but it cannot be possible that you are so deluded as to believe that such a people have, or ever did have the love of God in their hearts, much less that they have the pure gospel, while the other churches are in darkness and error. Oh! my friend, you cannot mean this." Yes dear M—I mean it all, and if you will lay aside prejudice, and pray to God for His Spirit to rest upon you, I have faith to believe, when you have finished these pages, you will ask yourself, can this be true? Can it be that God himself has established His church, and that He is truly in their midst, and that to bless. Nay, further, I predict that if you will take your Bible and search its pages, you will be constrained to admit that many of the prophets foresaw this very work and spoke concerning it. At this time however, it is not my object to speak to you of the proof the Bible so amply furnishes, of the great work of the *last days*, but desire first to give you a little light in regard to the history of our church, its doctrines, and present condition. If preadventure dear M—you (or any who may chance to read these lines) have made up your mind,

that "no good thing can come out of Nazareth," that it is all false and intended to deceive, then go no further with me, for prejudice and truth are by an unalterable law opposed to each other; and if the mind is full of the bitter waters of prejudice, it is simply a waste of the oil of truth to pour upon it, for unlike chemistry, there is no third ingredient, which will cause them to combine. There is however a power which can *displace* the one and make room for the other, and that is the desire to *know* the truth, and fearlessness in searching for the gem. Should this desire possess your heart open your Bible and follow me in the feeble efforts I shall make to direct you in your search. Prayerfully read what has been prayerfully written, and may God bless and guide you into all truth.

First then, I know you will say, have you fellowship with the Mormons of Salt Lake, and do you believe their awful doctrine in regard to polygamy, and the many other abominations practiced by them? No! *Once and forever we do not! The fellowship we have with them, is such fellowship as the christian world has with the heathen and barbarian.* We have now missionaries, laboring in their midst, boldly denouncing their crimes and preaching repentance. This they are doing at the risk of their lives, for there is no people upon the face of the earth, towards whom they cherish such a hatred, as they do towards us. Let it suffice upon this point for me to say to you, that any one who is not a true, loyal and law abiding citizen, cannot be a faithful member of our church and with those who are not this, we desire no fellowship, until they repent and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Doubtless the next question which will arise in your mind is, how can it be possible, if they ever had the light, and God was ever in their thoughts, that they could have become what they now are? How could they have so fallen away and become so utterly corrupt?

First dear M—I want you to bear in mind that we claim to have more light upon the scriptures, and in regard to the dealings of God with men, than all the christian world beside. And why is this? Because we are the *favoured few* of God? Nay, verily, for God is just and impartial, and has given unto all men their agency, and has pledged His veracity "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," but this is the reason, as Jesus said, "this is the condemnation, that *light* has come into the world and men *choose darkness rather than light.*" We claim to preach and obey the gospel of Christ: and that we are the *only church* upon earth that does.

Very bold doctrine you will say, but if the Bible bears us not out in it, then will we stand corrected, but, and if it does, what then? You will remember our Savior said, "if the light which is in thee become darkness, *how great* is that darkness?" We claim (and can establish it) that Joseph Smith who under God, was the founder of our church, was a man divinely inspired, commissioned of the Lord and a prophet of the living God; that our form of church government is the same as instituted by the inspired apostles of Christ, and that from the form and spirit of this government, every church upon earth except our own has apostatized. If this be correct, then it no longer remains a mystery, that the church as a body having sinned against God, *the light* which was in them became such *great darkness.* After the martyrdom of Joseph Smith, the church was scattered, as sheep having no shepherd. Many of them had departed from God, and from the pure principles of his gospel, and were ready to believe a lie that they might be damned. Corrupt leaders were not wanting, to blind the eyes of the innocent, and they forgetting in whom they should have trusted, were led astray, and thus was the lust of power and abomination of corrupt men gratified. But just here dear M—I want you to bear in mind that this second apostasy, from the truth, was seen by the apostle, and clerally predicted in 2 Thes. 2: 3-13. It has generally been applied by commentators, to the Catholic Church, but that Church arose hundred of years ago, while here the apostle refers to an event, which is to precede the second coming of Christ, by only a short interval, and the Wicked One was to be destroyed, by the brightness of His coming. At a future time I trust to show you, that Brigham Young is the man here spoken of by Paul, for in the temple at Nauvoo, Ill., he did sit as God, showing himself that he is God. I wish you to observe, that in no place, when the Catholic Church is spoken of, is any reference made to the temple of God; but here was a temple, built by the command of God, and in it was the Son of Perdition revealed. Again in 2nd Peter 2: 1, 2, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who *privily shall bring in damnable heresies,* even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction, and many shall follow their pernicious ways: by reason of whom the way of truth, shall be evil spoken of." Observe here dear M—if you please, that on account of these evil persons, and the damnable heresies they bring in, *the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.*

Now who speaks evil of any Protestant denomination, because of the iniquities of the Roman Catholic Church? And who at this day speaks evil of the way, which *they call*, the way of truth? Will not universal observation bear me out in the assertion that none do who value their reputation or standing in good society? I think it will. On the other hand what are the facts. Why said a prominent citizen of a flourishing town in the west, "If a man moves into a place, he had better confess to being an infidel rather than a Latter-Day Saint, or as we call them Mormons; for in one case we have some respect for him, in the other none." This is in fulfillment of the Savior's words: "If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of His household." It is also in fulfillment of Peter's prediction, and in the last great day, when all things shall be made known, then shall many know that in their very midst were His disciples, poor, humble, unknown, as were His disciples of old; and spoken evil against, as His followers always have been and always will be.

One peculiarity just here, I wish you to observe, and not you alone my friend, but I would that the whole world might observe it too, and profit thereby. Many of those who separated themselves from the church, immediately after the death of Joseph Smith, because they saw the corruption of the church, and that God was no longer feared or revered, by those that had set themselves up as rulers over the people; many of these I say, were those who had been with the church from its first rise, had borne the heat and burden of the day, and were ready at any time to seal their testimony with their lives. In hours of persecution, they had more than once been suddenly reduced from affluence to poverty, had suffered a thousand times more than death, and now in the hour of their sorest trial, when their prophet is dead, the church is corrupted, and given up to be devoured of wolves; when God himself seems to have deserted them: then I say observe their faith. They are among the world now, and in many instances it is not known, that they were ever Mormons. Many of them, by honest industry have accumulated wealth, and others occupy honorable positions, in their country's service.

They have been deceived the world says, and by the wisdom of the world, if we judge them, they have gained their knowledge too dearly to be betrayed again. Alas! for the wisdom of the world, which measures itself against that soul, *which knows* that its Redeemer lives. Thank God for the grace He bestows upon His hum-

blest follower, so long as they walk in His ways! Though the hours of their waiting were numbered by years, though many of them were called to their final reward, yet many have been spared to see the church reorganized, and moving forward like Israel of old under the direction of Israel's God. Not more appropriate and justly applicable to the Children of Israel than to the scattered saints, are the words of the apostle: "For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned: but now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city." Heb. 11: 14-16.

No sooner in their scattered homes, whether those homes were high or low; did the glad news reach them that God was again remembering Zion, and that His church was being built up, than from the north, south, east and west, they flocked to its fold. Like to the joy of Jacob when he wept upon the neck of Joseph, is their joy. Gladly do they count all things as dross, that they may be numbered with the people of God, and stand upon Mount Zion, when He shall come to reign with His saints. The years of their bondage are not before them saith the Lord, but are forever ended. Thanks be to His name "whose ways are not our ways." Perhaps you will ask did not their prophet sin also, for the followers of Brigham Young assert that he was knowing to and practiced much of their wickedness before his death. If he sinned dear M—his sin lies between him and his God. He was mortal man, and as such liable to sin. We are commanded not to let them stand to us in the place of God, for the Lord says, "Cursed is he that trusteth in man or maketh flesh his arm." If he sinned, God may have suffered it, to teach His followers, that He is a jealous God, and will suffer *none* to usurp His place in the affections of His people. We have His law, it is pure and holy, and nothing which conflicts with it *can be right*, though it were preached by an angel from heaven. But doubtless many will say, how can it be that he was a prophet of God and yet allowed to commit sin. Why God suffers such things to be, is not for me nor yet for any one to say; but that He does suffer them, no one at all familiar with the Bible, can for a moment question. Was not David a man beloved of God—a man after God's own heart, and yet how grievously did David sin. To injury he added murder, and yet when he humbled himself God forgave him. Solomon was blessed by God with wisdom

above all the kings of the earth, yet in his old age we find him bowing his grey head to idols, forgetful of the mighty God of Jacob; and were a further example needed to witness the frailty of man, look upon the Israelites after they had made a solemn covenant with God, and while the cloud concealing His glory from their view rested upon the mount, and their lips were scarce closed from saying "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do," when they demanded of Aaron to make them a *golden calf*, and they who had seen the manifestations of God's power, as no other people had, bowed down and worshiped it. And it would be well to observe just here, that though Aaron made the calf, God punished the people for it. The sin was theirs, not Aaron's. Should you say that this was before the gospel flooded the world with light, and that since then men have not done so, let us see if your ground is tenable, for if it is, most gladly will I give you the benefit thereof. Did not Peter the intrepid zealous disciple deny his Lord, even with cursing? Did not Judas betray Him and all his disciples, even the loving John forsake Him? Why do we hear Paul reproving the church at Corinth for a sin so heinous that it is not even mentioned among the Gentiles. Again in writing to the same church, he rebukes them for the abuse of the sacrament of the Lord's supper in these words, "For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken." 1 Cor. 11: 21.

How dreadful the thought, that the emblems of our Lord's broken body and shed blood should be so used, and by the church of the apostle's own planting; but having said this much, dear M—I leave the subject with you, knowing that you will find in all your reading of the scriptures ample testimony upon this point, for they are the records of God's dealings with a fallen race, and their candor is one of the best evidences of their truth. In this probationary state, man is liable to temptation and sin. With our best efforts, we find, like Paul, that when we would do good evil is always present with us. That the Mormons at Salt Lake grossly misrepresent the teachings of Joseph Smith, I know. They would heap odium upon his name, even as they have denied the name of Him who bought them, but woe unto them for the hour of God's vengeance is near, and *innocence shall be vindicated*. And now dear M—I come to speak of the *doctrines* of the Latter-Day Saints, and will refer you to the declaration of Paul in his letter to the Galatians. It appears there were those even in that day who tried to make innovations, teaching perhaps that it was not very important *what* they believed and how

they worshipped, so they were *honest* therein. But let us hear what Paul says.

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Gal. 1: 6-8.

Does this appear like strong language dear M? Paul undoubtedly *knew* what he was saying, and had authority to speak. It was not because he feared the downfall of his own and the upbuilding of another church; but let him give his own reasons: "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me, is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Gal. 1: 10-12. Ah? here then is the secret, Paul's *ordination*, was not of man, but Christ himself was his teacher. We understand now why Paul's language is so strong, and why he fears lest his converts be led to embrace any other gospel, or to vary at all from the gospel he taught. It was not *guess work* with Paul, but Jesus Christ was his teacher, and he *knew* what he spoke. Yes dear M—Paul *knew* and it is your privilege—the privilege of every one to *know* if they come to God aright. But to open up a way of salvation God gave His only begotten Son to suffer and die the ignominious death of the cross. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." John 14: 6.

Now when Jesus gave His commission to the eleven disciples, He said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Mark 16: 15, 16. As the promise is only to the believer, what are we required to believe? John tells us that "This is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ."

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