

The Saints a Peculiar People—Gathering of the Poor From Europe

Remarks by Elder Brigham Young, Jun., delivered in the Old Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, November 17th, 1867.

I am grateful for this privilege of speaking to you for a short time this afternoon, and I trust that the Spirit of the Lord will be present to bless and edify both the speakers and hearers. By our experience we can testify that the Spirit of the Almighty is always present where His Saints congregate, and no person can come into their assemblies without feeling the influence of that Spirit, although he may not personally possess it. I have met with religious bodies of people in various nations, but I have never experienced that heavenly influence in any of their meetings that I have invariably felt while assembled with the Latter-day Saints.

There is something about this people that is truly peculiar, and this peculiarity consists in their enjoying the Holy Spirit to a greater degree than it is enjoyed by any other people of the present day and for many ages past. The possession of this Spirit makes us happy under every circumstance of life, except in committing sin. The Lord has enlightened our minds by the spirit of revelation; hence, wherever you find a Latter-day Saint upon the face of the whole earth, you will find a happy person. Faithful Latter-day Saints everywhere triumph over all the ills that humanity is subject to, because they know that the Lord has redeemed them, and brought them forth to bless them with salvation in His presence.

We, as a people, cannot sufficiently realize what the Lord has done for us. When we reflect upon the situation of this people in Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, Ohio, and other places, and contrast our present position with our circumstances then, we can, in a measure, realize what the Lord has done for us, and we begin to understand that He has led us from the midst of our enemies, and planted us where no man maketh us afraid. This has not been done by the feeble effort of man, but by the power of the Almighty, and the praise and thanksgiving of all His Saints are justly due to Him.

This people are greatly blessed by receiving the Spirit of the Almighty, and by being privileged to go into His house and making covenants with Him, and in return receiving the keys of eternal life from his hands. We are peculiar in this. There is no other people upon the face of the earth that we know anything about who are permitted to make such covenants with the Most High God. If we do not appreciate these blessings it is because we do not live faithfully to the covenants we have made—because we do not do all in our power to fulfil the commandments of the Almighty, and obey, fully and freely, the words and counsels of those who hold God's authority upon the earth, who have led us thus far efficiently, and who can lead us into the presence of our Father and God.

These servants of the Most High have called upon us, as a people, to step forward and do our utmost to deliver our brethren and sisters who are now in the old countries. The Lord has placed means in our possession to do this. He has led us forth from the midst of our enemies, where the lives of our leaders were constantly sought, and where no man durst say, he knew that Jesus was Christ, and that he lives. In delivering us, He has given us new life, and all that we require to sustain us and to make us happy and comfortable. Now, shall we use a portion of these means which He has given us to gather the Saints? The people of this city are better prepared today to emigrate every Latter-day Saint from foreign lands to these mountains, than the whole people of Nauvoo and surrounding country were prepared to emigrate one hundred families. I believe this statement to be true, and that it will bear scrutiny. While we feel very poor, we are really increasing in wealth; yet as we increase in wealth, our wants increase. If we have a fine carriage, we must then have a fine horse and harness to go with it; but instead of spending our means upon unnecessary luxuries, it is far better for us to sacrifice everything in property that our hearts are set upon, and let it go where it can be used to the gathering of Israel. This is the standard to which all the faithful are approaching, and the sooner we reach it the better for us. We must, sooner or later, give our whole hearts to our Father and God, if we wish to gain salvation. We owe to Him every energy of our souls, and all the earthly wealth we can amass, if He calls for it through His servants. We should look upon God as being unjust were He not to give us the blessings we are entitled to through His promises.

There are hundreds in this congregation who know the situation of the poor Saints in the old countries, for they

were once in the same condition themselves. It has not improved any since you left; but you were not able to realize it then as you should now be able to. When you were there in the midst of your enemies, when your children wanted bread, and were destitute of clothing and the comforts of life, there were none to help you to preserve them from perishing with hunger. Here you are comfortable, and the great majority of this people in these mountains are wealthy, and it has all been given them of the Lord. Then, shall we refuse to subject all we have to Him? When we identified our interests with this Church, we made a Covenant with Him to aid all in our power to gather together the honest from every land, kindred, tongue, and people, but we are too apt to forget our covenants, and to be slow in the performance of our duties. An immense labor has already been performed; many thousands are now in this Territory who have been gathered from the nations of Europe, and from other parts of the earth, still there are thousands in those lands who are praying for deliverance, and whose greatest hope in life is to identify their interests with ours in this our mountain home, and join with us in building up cities and temples to the most High God. They look to us for help, shall they look in vain? Shall we not, with uplifted hands, covenant afresh that we will devote the means which God has given us for the building up of His kingdom, and the gathering of His people of the house of Israel? Those who are not living under broken covenants will feel ready and willing to do this.

If we do not put forth our hands to strengthen the cause of Zion on the earth with all we have and are, it is a dereliction of duty on our part, to say the least of it, and for which we stand accountable to God. In a few months the emigration of the year 1868 will leave England, and now is the accepted time for the means to be supplied. The sooner we put forth our means for this purpose the better, that our agents may not be pressed for time to make every necessary arrangement.

If you will show me a member of this Church, in this or any other country, who has faithfully paid his tithing, although he might only get ten shillings a week, and have to support a large family out of it, if he has been obedient to the counsels of the servants of God, there you will find a man who has prospered continually. It is invariably the case that men who have been honest with God have been greatly blessed of Him, even until they had not room to contain His blessings. I have known men in the old country whose wages did not exceed \$2.50 per week, and out of this small sum they have supported a family of nine persons, paid their tithing, and in three years saved money enough to emigrate the whole of them. This could not have been done if the Lord had not blessed them. This is their testimony. I have seen it, and it is my testimony. We have seen His blessings so often and so visibly bestowed upon the faithful, that there is no room to doubt His word or His ability to bless us with all that we need. The words of the Apostle may be very fully applied here: "And he that doubteth is damned—for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Every intelligent Latter-day Saint, who has made himself acquainted with the dealings of God with this people, has no room to doubt the hand of the Almighty. We cannot doubt and at the same time enjoy the blessings which are for the faithful.

May God bless you. Amen.