President B. Young's Journey South—Indian Difficulties—Walker—Watching and Prayer—Thieves and Their Deserts—Eastern Intelligence—Financial State of the Church—Gaining Knowledge, Etc.

An Address by President Brigham Young, Delivered in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, May 8, 1853.

I take the liberty to occupy a short time, this morning, in addressing my brethren and sisters.

I do not profess to be extensively versed in historical lore, still I expect to be able to relate a small portion of my own history to you this morning, referring especially to the latter part of my life, say for three weeks past.

It is known by you all, that I started from this place with the intention of journeying south to the extent of our southern settlements, but I have returned short of performing that journey. I will state the reasons why, that the minds of the people may be at rest, and freed from anxiety.

We went to the city of Provo, in Utah Valley; where I had some business to attend to. We tarried there a short time before proceeding on our journey, the principal items of which I wish to lay before the brethren, in connection with some circumstances that had transpired previous to our leaving this place. These circumstances combined together, caused a suspicious feeling in my own heart. I have endeavored all my life to follow one portion of the instructions of the Sa– vior to his disciples, that is, to "WATCH." *I am a very watchful man*.

Previous to my starting from this city, there was an express sent from Iron county, that Indian Walker manifested hostile feelings; for it seems he had drawn out his men on a small portion of our brethren, and commanded them to return home, when they were in pursuit of supposed thieves; these Indians would not suffer them to proceed any further.

This circumstance, small as it might appear to some, caused suspicion in my mind that all was not right with the Indian chief, though I expected to visit him on my journey.

After tarrying at the city of Provo a day and a night, I was accosted in a very abrupt manner by a stranger, a person that I knew nothing of, and had never seen before. I have learned since that he is an American from the State of New York, and has been living in New Mexico some years. This person came to my carriage, while I was standing upon the steps of it, arranging my luggage, preparatory to proceeding onward, and said in a rough, authoritative tone, "*Is Governor Young in this carriage?*" "No, sir," I said, "but he is on the steps of it. What is wanting?" I turned round to see who addressed me, and saw this stranger, dressed in buck-skin, pretty well smoked. He said, "I have a little privacy with you." Stepping aside, far enough not to be heard by any other person, I said, "Say on, sir." "*But I want to see you in private*," he replied. I said, "I have no privacy with strangers; if you have any communication to make to me, you can do it by letter." He walked, and left me. That was all that passed between us. As soon as he intimated that he wanted a private conference with me, I scanned the man, and saw that his pockets were filled with deadly weapons, and of his intentions I had my own thoughts.

I went about my business, but in the meantime sent a man to reconnoitre him, to whom he made some haughty expression about Governor Young. Said he, "Governor Young need not feel so damned important, I associate with Governors when I am at home, and have money enough to buy Governor Young and all his wives." He further said, "I have four hundred Mexicans waiting my orders, and can have as many more if I wish, besides, the Indians here are all at my command."

I soon learned to my satisfaction, that he had come into the Territory to buy Indian children, and sell them again for slaves. Therefore I issued the Proclamation which you have no doubt read in the pages of the *News*, gave orders to the Lieutenant General, and he has done what he has.

We proceeded on our journey, and found that this man had been trading with the Indians. He said, "He asked no

odds of the authorities of this Territory, but calculated to buy all the Indian children he could." He was told it was against the law. He replied, "Catching is before hanging."

When I arrived at San Pete, I learned that one hundred and fifty Yampa Utes on the west fork of the Sevier River, had come over to Walker's camp. I did not believe that this Mexican trader had four hundred Mexicans lying on the head waters of the Sevier, for I did not think that men would patiently wait in the snow and frost for a man of his appearance. Instead of Mexicans, they turned out to be those Yampa Utes.

I sent out a reconnoitering party consisting of thirty men, to learn their intentions, if possible; also the whereabouts of D. B. Huntington, who had gone previously, but I have not heard from them, nor him, since they left us at Salt Creek, about a week ago last Tuesday morning. Amasa Lyman and Charles C. Rich proceeded on their journey, and omitted calling at San Pete. I went to San Pete to learn the situation and proceedings of the Indians. Arapeen, it appeared from some cause, had been dissatisfied, and had left. Before he left, he gave them to understand that he desired peace, and wanted to live in peace. However, I was prepared for whites, reds, or blacks, by night and by day, and always intend to be.

This is a short account of my journey. I wished to lay it before you as it was, in consequence of the different statements which have been made, that vary considerably from the truth, after passing through a few hands. After relating the simple facts as they existed, you may regard them as you please; but when you tell them over again to your neighbors, tell them as they were, or not at all.

I have heard a great many different stories since I came home, and find the minds of the people very much agitated about the probable result of the hostilities of the Indians, and the presence of the Mexicans among them. I will tell you the reason why I returned home before accomplishing the remainder of my contemplated journey—it was because I wished to return. You may inquire why I wished to return. I will tell you. I am a great coward myself, I do not wish to rush into danger imprudently. If there should happen to be any trouble with Indians, and I away from this place, there would be more trouble here than with me. Of this I was fully aware, and it was proved to my satisfaction when I returned home. Imagined danger always produces the most trouble. The Indians are very much as *they* say the whites are, that is, uncertain—not to be trusted. The whites *may* be uncertain, *but I know* the Indians are. I dislike to trust them far. I never wish to be injured, nor have this people injured by Indian depredations, committed upon them; and if the Saints will do as they are told, they will never suffer from that quarter in this Territory.

Take up the history of the first settling of America, and you cannot read of a colony ever being settled in the midst of savages, without having trouble, and suffering more from them than this people have in Utah. What is the reason? It is because those people did not know how to take care of themselves. We can scarcely read of one colony founded among the aborigines in the first settling of this country, wherein the tomahawk of wild Indians did not drink the blood of whole families. Here there have been no such deeds committed; because when we first entered Utah, we were prepared to meet all the Indians in these mountains, and kill every soul of them if we had been obliged so to do. This preparation secured to us peace.

Every settlement that have been made in these valleys of the mountains, have received strict charges from me, to build, in the first place, a Fort, and live in it until they were sufficiently strong to live in a town; to keep their guns and ammunition well prepared for any emergency; and never cease to keep up a night watch, if any apprehensions of the Indians being hostile were entertained. We have suffered nothing from them, compared with what we have suffered from white men who are disposed to steal; and I would rather take my chance today for good treatment among Indians, than I would among white men of this character.

I have no recollection of the Indians killing any of this community, except one man, which happened about three years ago this spring, who had started for California, on foot and alone, against counsel. The red skins found him and slew him. I have never heard of their even disturbing a family; and I do not intend that they ever shall, if watching, and praying, and being ready for them will prevent it.

I have always acknowledged myself a coward, and hope I always may be, to make me cautious enough to preserve

myself and my brethren from falling ignobly by a band of Indians. I am satisfied that the men who follow Walker, who is the king of the Indians in these mountains, do it out of fear, and not because they have real regard for their leader. If he becomes hostile, and wishes to commit depredations upon the persons or property of this people, he shall be wiped out of existence, and every man that will follow him. This is my calculation, and I wish you to be ready for it.

Yesterday morning, we received a communication from father Morley, in which we were informed that Walker and Arapeen came down to pay him a visit. The morning that we left San Pete, we sent back by the hands of Arapeen's two messengers, some little presents in the shape of shirts and tobacco. Walker said to Father Morley, "Tell brother Brigham, we have smoked the tobacco he sent us in the pipe of peace; I want to be at peace, and be a brother to him." That is all right. But it is truly characteristic of the cunning Indian, when he finds he cannot get advantage over his enemy, to curl down at once, and say "I love you." It is enough for me to know that Walker dare not attempt to hurt any of our settlements. I care not whether they love me or not. I am resolved, however, not to trust his love any more than I would a stranger's. I do not repose confidence in persons, only as they prove themselves confi– dential; and I shall live a long while before I can believe that an Indian is my friend, when it would be to his advantage to be my enemy.

I wish now to put you in mind of a few things. Do you pray for Israel? You will no doubt answer in the affirmative. These Indians are the seed of Israel, through the loins of Joseph who was sold into Egypt; they are the children of Abraham, and belong to the chosen seed; were it not so, you would never have seen them with dark, red skins. This is in consequence of the curse that has been placed upon them, which never would have come upon them in the world, had their fathers not violated the order of God, which was formerly among them; for in proportion to the light they sinned against, so were they reduced by the curse of God, which has been visited upon their children for many generations. They are of the House of Israel, and the time has come for the Lord to favor Zion, and redeem Israel. We are here in the mountains, with these Lamanites for our neighbors, and I hesitate not to say, if this people possessed the faith they ought to have, the Lord Almighty would never suffer any of the sons of Jacob to injure them in the least; *no never*.

But I am suspicious that this people do not possess the faith they should have, therefore I calculate to carry with me proper weapons of defense, that if a man should aim a blow at my person to take away my life, before he is aware, *he* himself is numbered with the dead. I have always been thus prepared for years. It is a matter of serious doubt in my mind, whether this people have faith enough to control the Indians in these mountains, by that alone, without works. Again, you may pray as fervently for them as for yourselves, which I have always done; it is my business to pray for them, and seek the redemp– tion of Israel, but something more is wanted to hold them at bay.

Who are Israel? They are those who are of the seed of Abraham, that have received the promise through their forefathers; and all the rest of the children of men, who receive the truth, are also Israel. My heart is always drawn out for them, whenever I go to the throne of grace. I love Israel, I long for their salvation, and look forward with a desire full of hope and peace to the day when they will be gathered and saved; when their forefathers who enjoyed the Gospel, and through their faithfulness received great promises and blessings for their posterity, shall see them fulfilled upon their heads.

I wish you to have faith to lay hold on the promises, and claim them as your own. If you had faith like the ancients, you might escape the edge of the sword, stop the mouths of the lions, quench the violence of fire, open the prison doors, and burst asunder iron fetters—all this could be accomplished by faith. But, lest you should not have faith, we have caused to be done that which has been done, in having this people prepared for any emergency that should arise. My advice is *be on the watch all the time*. Do not lie down, and go to sleep, and say all is well, lest, in an hour when you think not, sudden destruction overtake you.

We will carry this out a little further. Never permit yourself to sleep in your houses until your doors are made perfectly secure, that the Indians cannot come in and kill you in your sleep. In this respect the people generally are careless, and perfectly unconcerned. Some want to be separated far from their neighbors, and own all the land around them saying, "all is right, all is peace, and the Indians are perfectly good natured, and wish us no harm;"

wrapping themselves up in the mantle of security, with a few shattered boards roughly put together for a door to their houses, and that without any fastening. Were it not that the people of this city are kept stirred up continually, and teased from time to time by some person on this matter, it would not be one year before fifty men could conquer and slay the whole of the inhabitants.

Are you sure you have faith enough to bind Satan so that he can have no influence in this city? If you are not, you had better watch as well as pray. Are you sure you have faith enough to control the ungovernable nature of the Lamanites, or subdue a Gentile mob? If you have, I am glad of it, it is the first time this people ever enjoyed it. Even suppose you have faith to accomplish all this, will you add no works to your faith? And if you have the spirit of prayer to an almost unlimited degree, will you cease to *watch?* I have prayed many times, and had a man at the door to watch for the murderer who thirsted for my blood. Then he would pray, and I would watch. What for? To kill the bloodthirsty villain. I would not go and seek for him, but when he came to kill me in my own house, I wished to be prepared to disembody his spirit, to save my own tabernacle, and send his down to the dust, and let him go to the place prepared for murderers, even to hell.

Suppose we had faith enough to accomplish all we have been speaking of, which would be the most proper, to use prayer alone without watching, and have faith alone without works, or watch and add works to faith? I will mix works with my faith, and watching with my prayer, and reap the benefits of their united operation.

A few words more concerning Walker the Indian. He sent word to us that he was coming down to this city to trade. That is all right, it is very good. I expect he will be peaceable, and the rest of the Indians also. I have no doubt of it. Why? *Because they dare not be any other way*. If they dare be otherwise, I know not how quick they would be at war with us. But they will be kind and peaceable, because they are afraid to die, and that is enough for me.

If they will in the least receive the spirit of the Gospel, I shall be glad of it. There is no doubt in my mind but Walker has felt it from time to time, and I am satisfied that our faith and prayers will do a great deal of good to these wretched remnants of Abraham's seed. We must continue our labors until we have faith to bind Satan; and if you and I do not live to do it, our posterity will step forward and accomplish it after we are gone.

When a person is placed in circumstances that he cannot possibly obtain one particle of anything to sustain life, it would then be his privilege to exercise faith in God to feed him, who might cause a raven to pick up a piece of dried meat from some quarter where there was plenty, and drop it over the famishing man. When I cannot feed myself through the means God has placed in my power, it is then time enough for Him to exercise His providence in an unusual manner to administer to my wants. But while we can help ourselves, it is our duty to do so. If a Saint of God be locked up in prison, by his enemies, to starve to death, it is then time enough for God to interpose, and feed him.

While we have a rich soil in this valley, and seed to put in the ground, we need not ask God to feed us, nor follow us round with a loaf of bread begging of us to eat it. He will not do it, neither would I, were I the Lord. We can feed ourselves here; and if we are ever placed in circumstances where we cannot, it will then be time enough for the Lord to work a miracle to sustain us.

If you wish to know what you must do hereafter, I will tell you in a few words—*keep your powder, and lead*, and your guns in good order. Go about your work, plough your fields, work in your mechanic shops, and be ready in the morning, at noon, or in the night, that whenever you are called upon, you can put your hand upon your musket and ammunition at the shortest notice. "*Be ye also ready, for in an hour you think not behold the thief comes*," and takes away your horse from your stable.

How many complaints have been made to me by men who have had their horses stolen out of their stables, or out of their corrals, or of clothes being taken from the line. The reason why people lose their property is because they do not watch it. Have I ever complained of any such thing? No! Why? *Because I watch my corral*. Do I lose anything out of my barn. No. *Because I lock it up*, and keep somebody there to watch it. Do I lose any clothing? Not that I know of. I tell my folks not to leave out their clothing. "Why," they ask, "is there any danger of their being stolen?" It is none of your business, they will not dry after dark, therefore take them in, and hang them out again in the

morning. That is the way to live, and this is what I wish to say to you concerning these matters, that your minds may be at peace. All will be peace this summer, if you will keep on watching.

If you want to know what to do with a thief that you may find stealing, *I say kill him on the spot*, and never suffer him to commit another iniquity. That is what I expect I shall do, though never, in the days of my life, have I hurt a man with the palm of my hand. I never have hurt any person any other way except with this unruly member, my tongue. Notwithstanding this, if I caught a man stealing on my premises I should be very apt to send him *straight home*, and that is what I wish every man to do, to put a stop to that abominable practice in the midst of this people.

I know this appears hard, and throws a cold chill over our revered traditions received by early education. I had a great many such feelings to contend with myself, and was as much of a sectarian in my notions as any other man, and as mild, perhaps, in my natural disposition, but I have trained myself to measure things by the line of justice, to estimate them by the rule of equity and truth, and not by the false tradition of the fathers, or the sympathies of the natural mind. If you will cause all those whom you know to be thieves, to be placed in a line before the mouth of one of our largest cannon, well loaded with chain shot, I will prove by my works whether I can mete out justice to such persons, or not. I would consider it just as much my duty to do that, as to baptize a man for the remission of his sins. That is a short discourse on thieves, I acknowledge, but I tell you the truth as it is in my heart.

As you have heard the history of our journey south, I will now give you a little of what is going on in the world beneath us, gleaned from the eastern mail which came in last evening. I know there is a great anxiety in the minds of the people to learn the news, as it is now seven months since we had anything from that quarter.

I understand that New York is yet standing in the same place, also the cities of Philadelphia and Washington still flourish, also the old Bay States, with the Northern, Southern, and Western States, are all there yet, and Franklin Pierce is President of them. That we guessed would be the case, last year. But if the Whigs had had half the cunning that men have here, they would have beaten that party, and Franklin Pierce would not have been President; but they do not knew enough.

Brother Orson Pratt was in Washington, when he wrote last March; he is probably now in England. He has published a paper called *The Seer*, seven Numbers of which have appeared before the public. He also hired a Hall in that city, when he first arrived there in December last. Many came to hear him at first, but they kept dropping off, until there were so few that he gave it up, but he continues publishing.

There is influence enough there, among the priests, and the members of Congress, to keep the people away from hearing Orson Pratt. They are all well persuaded that if they contend with him, he will break up their churches. Ignorant as they are in other matters, they know enough to guard against that. The paper has a good effect. He says, “A great many who have apostatized, say, had they seen the Revelation on Celestial Marriage, years ago, they would never have left the Church. They believed ‘Mormonism;’ but supposed there was no such Revelation in existence.”

He says that hundreds of families from whom the light of truth had well nigh departed, are again reviving, and inquiring how they may get to the Valley. There is no opposition compared with what has been. The public prints burlesque the doctrine published in *The Seer*, which is about all the opposition there is. And what can they say? Nothing more than what they always have said. I can sum up all the arguments used against Joseph Smith and ‘Mormonism’ in a very few words, the merits of which will be found in “Old Joe Smith. Impostor, Money Digger. Old Joe Smith. Spiritual Wife Doctrine. Imposture. The Doctrine is False. Money Digger. False Prophet. Delusion. Spiritual Wife Doctrine. Oh, my dear brethren and *sisters, keep away from them, for the sake of your never dying souls*. False Prophets that should come in the last days. Old Joe Smith. ANTI-CHRIST. Money Digger, Money Digger, Money Digger.” And the whole is wound up with an appeal, not to the good sense of the people, but to their unnatural feelings, in a canting, hypocritical *tone*, and there it ends.

I have not learned anything yet of any change being made touching the Executive Officer of this Territory. Brigham Young is still the Governor of Utah. Brother Bernhisel has succeeded in getting liberal appropriations for the

Territory, among which twenty thousand dollars has been appropriated for a Penitentiary. I appointed Dr. Willard Richards, Secretary *pro. tem.*, which appointment has been honored by the General Government, and one thousand eight hundred dollars appropriated for his services; notwithstanding I rebuked the runaway Secretary in a public manner, when he and his companion publicly insulted this great people; and notwithstanding the hue and cry which they made about the "Mormons in Salt Lake Valley." I have courage enough to tell a man of his meanness no matter whether he be a Sheriff, a Judge, a Governor, a Priest, or a King. I have courage enough to tell them of their wickedness, and expect I always shall have.

The general news you will get through the columns of our city paper.

We have a great many letters still back at Laramie; when our mail carriers left there, there were seventeen mail bags, six of which they brought away. As a general thing, the people will get their letters; as the newspaper bags were chiefly left, and the letter bags brought on.

I will say a word concerning the brethren who left here last fall. Daniel Carn had to leave Germany, and bro– ther Orson Spencer could not obtain permission to stay in Prussia. The Governor said to the brethren who went to Jamaica, that they might minister among the people; and the minister from the States did all he could to have them stay there, but they had to leave on account of the prejudices of the community, and they are now preaching in the United States. These are some of the leading items we have received per this Mail.

I now wish to say to the Latter-day Saints that which will be a great comfort to them. We laid before you our Church indebtedness a year ago, last April Conference; it now gives me great consolation to be able to say that every dime of that debt is paid, and money left, enough to answer our purpose at present. [A general expression of satisfaction in the congregation.]

The Lord has delivered us from this difficulty. I never liked to be in bondage to my enemies, but I would be as willing to owe the brethren money as not, for it is better doing good in my hand, than to be looked up in a chest, doing no good.

When the brethren go to the world to administer salvation to them, we wish them to go perfectly clean, and represent an honorable and independent people. It is a great consolation to me that we do not owe the Gentiles one red cent, or not more than one tenth part of the money we have got on hand, at the furthest.

We can now put forth our hand and help the poor Saints, that are scattered abroad, to this place. We can now obtain articles to build the Temple we have commenced. Joseph Smith laid the foundation of the great fabric, and we have commenced to build upon it. If we do right, there will be an eternal increase among this people in talent, strength of intellect, and earthly wealth, from this time, henceforth, and forever.

I might tell you many great and good things, but I will tell you at once, if you will do your duty, and live as you ought to live before God and your brethren, you will have good with you all the time. It is our duty to apply our hearts to wisdom, and learn enough of the things of God to enable us to see the world as it is, which is one of the greatest privileges that can be granted to man. It is not only a privilege, but a duty for the Saints to seek unto the Lord their God for wisdom and understanding, to be in possession of the spirit that fills the heavens, until their eyes are anointed and opened to see the world as it really is, to know what it is made for, and why all things are as they are. It is one of the most happifying subjects that can be named, for a person, or people, to have the privilege of gaining wisdom enough while in their mortal tabernacle, to be able to look through the whys and wherefores of the existence of man, like looking through a piece of glass that is perfectly transparent; and understand the design of the Great Maker of this beautiful creation. Let the people do this, and their hearts will be weaned from the world.

If this people will pursue the course they are bound by their obligations and covenants *to take*, they will obtain spirit enough to see and understand all things in heaven and on earth, that are sufficient for their salvation. The cobwebs of early traditions and antiquated superstitions will be brushed away, and they will plainly see that the world is just the world, and nothing but the world, and we are no– thing but people on the world, designed to fill the measure of our creation, to bring to pass certain results that pertain to our exaltation.

Let us seek the Lord with all our hearts, then shall we be weaned from the world; no man will love this, that, or the other thing, except to do good with it, to promote the eternal interests of mankind, and prepare them to be exalted in immortality. No man can be exalted unless he be independent. I will use a comparison to illustrate this idea. If you put an animal or being not endowed with intelligence on a throne, he would be nothing but an animal still; but put intelligence into that creature, to give him knowledge how to prepare himself to reign on that throne, and fortify it with strength, then he is exalted. Mankind are naturally independent and intelligent beings, they have been created for the express purpose of exalting themselves. When they apply their hearts to wisdom, they will then get understanding. There is the fountain, go and drink at it, ask and receive all you wish, for there is an eternity of it, it will never become any less. It is for you and me to receive wisdom so as to be prepared for exaltation and eternal lives in kingdoms that now exist in eternity.

May God bless you. Peace be upon you. Be fervent in spirit, humble, teachable, and prayerful, taking care of yourselves, endeavoring to save yourselves and all you have any influence over, which is my continual prayer for you, in the name of Jesus. Amen.