

those rough looking, sin-stained men were softer, and their thoughts purer, than they had been perhaps for many a day; all because they had remembered the sweet songs about God and heaven, that their mothers and loved ones taught them in their days of childhood and purity."

Dear Saints, truly God has bestowed a great blessing on all who have a talent for music; and I hope all Latter Day Saints will cultivate in themselves and their children (the Hopes) this power of music. Music has power to soothe the savage, melt and soften sin-hardened hearts; comfort the weary, revive the dying; and I bear testimony that I have felt its power, known instances of its power, and seen its power. I hope all Saints will take note of its great power for good. God speed the new music book. Latter Day Saints have always been noted for their singing, (even by our enemies). Saints, arouse! Our beautiful inspired songs of Zion were given of God for a wise purpose. Improve your talents, that these sweet songs, sung by the spirit and understanding, may have power to gather into the fold of the true shepherd many straying, wondering children. May the sweet power of their melody accomplish all God designed.

Your sister in Christ,

SARAH A. ROSE.

THE OLD SOLDIER'S TESTIMONY.

Sermon preached by Bro. William B. Smith, in the Saints' Chapel, Deloit, Iowa, June 8th, 1884. Reported by C. E. Butterworth.

BRO. SMITH arose and said: Ladies, gentlemen, brothers, sisters and friends:—The subject I have under contemplation is the presentation of some particulars of history concerning the rise of Mormonism. While traveling among the Latter Day Saints, and others who are not of our faith, I am subjected to a great deal of criticism, or am asked a great many questions in regard to the opening of this new dispensation. I am glad to find so many of my brethren among the people. I thought to preach two discourses, or rather, let the Bible preach one, and I the other. That the Bible may preach one, I will read 2 Timothy 3:1-5:

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away."

This is what we have been trying to do. This is the Bible sermon. I hold in my hand the Book of Mormon. In the past I have had some experience and personally know something about this matter. The world has been filled with articles for the purpose of making it appear a falsehood; and they have gathered these articles and statements together and printed them in books, in order that they might show to the world that it was not true, or worthy of their credit. I have examined these books, and have found that they have been pleased to have their assertions circulated

far and near. The great effort of the Christians to advance science and increase knowledge, is commendable; but the great effort put forth in this direction is for the purpose of keeping the people in ignorance.

One of the great hobbies raised upon which to fight is the angel's visit to Joseph Smith. They do not undertake to show that it is not the way God has dealt with his people from the beginning. God has always communed with his people, by dreams, visions, revelations, and the ministering of angels. They have never undertaken to show that there are no such beings as angels, or that angels can not be seen by men. Is it impossible for God to send them? "Angels are ministering spirits." God sent his angels at the birth of Christ. One appeared to Zachariah, to Elizabeth, and to Mary. Joseph was warned when to flee into Egypt, and was told when to return. This work came forth in fulfillment of the predictions made by the holy prophets.

Ministers take a great deal of pains to make it appear that this book was compiled from a manuscript written by one Solomon Spaulding. Many statements have been made and circulated far and wide, even printing some of them in books to be used in our schools. It has been printed and placed between the lids of the Bible, in order that in time it might become sanctified. They could not tell bigger lies. Ministers of old called Christ a wine bibber. I know that this Spaulding story is a falsehood. I remember when Joseph called his father's family together, and told them that he had seen an angel, and what this angel had told him. When Joseph received the plates, he did not say they were the Spaulding manuscript.

It will be remembered that just before the angel appeared to Joseph, there was an unusual revival in the neighborhood. It spread from town to town, from city to city, from county to county, and from state to state. My mother attended those meetings, and being much concerned about the spiritual welfare of the family, she persuaded them to attend the meetings. Finally my mother, one sister, my brothers Samuel and Hyrum became Presbyterians. Joseph and myself did not join; I had not sown all my wild oats. At the close of these meetings the different ministers began to beat around to see how many converts they could get to join their respective churches. All said, Come and join us, we are right. Where is the gospel of Christ? Where is the church of Christ? There is a lost gospel. There is a lost church. And here let me say, that it was at the suggestion of the Rev. M——, that my brother asked of God. He said, "Ask of God." It was the church of Christ he was seeking for, what all should seek. God promised to give knowledge to all who lacked, if they would ask. Accordingly he went and bowed in prayer to God. While he was engaged in prayer, he saw a pillar of fire descending. Saw it reach the top of the trees. He was overcome, became unconscious, did not know how long he remained in this condition, but when he came to himself, the

great light was about him, and he was told by the personage whom he saw descend with the light, not to join any of the churches. That he should be instrumental in the hands of God in establishing the true church of Christ. That there was a record hidden in the hill Cumorah which contained the fulness of the gospel. You should remember Joseph was but about eighteen years old at this time, too young to be a deceiver.

I well remember the effect produced upon my father's family, when he told them he was to receive the plates; how they looked forward with joy, and waited until the time should come. The circumstances that occurred, and the impressions made on my mind at that time, I can remember better than those which occurred two years ago. We were all looking forward for the time to come, father, mother, brothers and sisters. He did not receive the plates at the time he expected, but some four years afterward. He had not lived as directed. When he went to get the plates he found them as he was told he should. He took them from the stone box in which they were found, and placed them on the ground behind him, when the thought came into his mind that there might be a treasure hidden with them. While stooping forward to see, he was overpowered, so that he could not look farther. Turning to get the plates, he found they had gone; and on looking around found that they were in the box again; but he could not get them, and he cried out, "Why can't I get the plates as Moroni told me I could?" The angel then appeared to him, and told him it was because he had not done as directed. That the plates could not be had for the purpose of making money. That he could not have them for four years.

I remember how the family wept when they found Joseph could not get the plates at that time. It has generally been stated that my father's family were lazy, shiftless and poor; but this was never said by their neighbors, or until after the angel appeared and the story of the golden Bible was told.

After my father's family moved to New York State, in about five years they cleared sixty acres of land, and fenced it. The timber on this land was very heavy. Some of the elms were so large that we had to nigger them off. They were too large to be cut with a cross-cut saw. We built a frame dwelling house and out buildings. My brothers Joseph and Hyrum had to work. Joseph did not have time to make gold plates.

The time to receive the plates came at last. When Joseph received them, he came in and said: "Father, I have got the plates." All believed it was true, father, mother, brothers and sisters. You can tell what a child is. Parents know whether their children are truthful or not. The proof of the pudding is not in chewing the string, but in eating the pudding. Father knew his child was telling the truth. When the plates were brought in they were wrapped up in a tow frock. My father then put them into a pillow case. Father said, "What, Joseph, can we not

see them?" "No. I was disobedient the first time, but I intend to be faithful this time; for I was forbidden to show them until they are translated, but you can feel them." We handled them and could tell what they were. They were not quite as large as this Bible. Could tell whether they were round or square. Could raise the leaves this way (raising a few leaves of the Bible before him). One could easily tell that they were not a stone, hewn out to deceive, or even a block of wood. Being a mixture of gold and copper, they were much heavier than stone, and very much heavier than wood.

Where is the Spaulding Story? I am a little too old a man to be telling stories. There is no money in telling this story. I expect to stand before angels and archangels and be judged for how I have told it. When Joseph received the plates he also received the Urim and Thummim, which he would place in a hat to exclude all light, and with the plates by his side he translated the characters, which were cut into the plates with some sharp instrument, into English. And thus, letter by letter, word by word, sentence by sentence, the whole book was translated. It was not written from the Spaulding Romance. That story is false. Some say this romance was stolen by Sidney Rigdon while at Pittsburg. This is false. Sidney Rigdon knew nothing about it. He never saw or heard tell of the Book of Mormon until it was presented to him by P. P. Pratt and others. He was never at my father's house to see my brother until after the book was published. If he had wanted to see Joseph at that time and remained very long, he would have had to be in the field rolling logs or carrying brush.

I was too young to be as much concerned about this matter as the others, but all were anxious that I should obey the gospel. I have seen the three witnesses, and have questioned them closely. They all tell the same story. They are all dead but one. David Whitmer, the only living witness, still lives and may be found at Richmond, Missouri. Now is the time to go and see him and make a scientific examination of his physiognomy and see if he can see angels where there are none.

Why did all those who first believed this story continue to do so until they past into the other world?

I am satisfied that all who have believed in this work and continue to the end, will have no cause to regret it. I am glad for the privilege I have in telling these things. Glad to find so many who believe with this people. May God bless you all. Amen.

A gentleman in the congregation asked, "Where are these plates?"

Ans.—"They were delivered to the angel again."

Ques.—"How much did they weigh?"

Ans.—"As near as I could tell, about sixty pounds."

When you retire to bed think over what you have been doing during the day.

Never be idle; if your hands can't be employed usefully, attend to the cultivation of your mind!

"MEN'S HEARTS FAILING THEM FOR FEAR."

EDITOR HERALD:—I see in *Herald* of June 16, 1883, an article headed, "Men's Hearts Failing Them For Fear." I wish to write a few thoughts on the subject, and as I have not had very many years of experience in this work, I trust if I get wrong that some one will give me an eye-opener.

I would first ask, Who was it that gave man his free agency, and gave him a commandment, and attached the penalty of death if man broke the commandment, "For in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die?" It appears to the writer, that Satan's object at that time was to deceive, or at least to devise a plan to induce man to break the command God had given. After man had broken the command of God, who was it that cursed the earth? Was it the devil, or was it God? Who was it that had the authority to say, "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return? We make the argument that as God had the power in the beginning, and had not man broken the law, there would not have been any death and suffering of man. By sin death entered the world. Here we see the justice of God, that when his law is broken, justice and judgment must have their demand.

We ask, How was the destruction of Sodom brought about? Hear the words of the angel: "The Lord hath sent us to destroy it." (Genesis 19:13). The Lord promised if there were ten righteous persons in the city that he would not destroy it; but there were not. Was this the devil's work, or was it the justice of God, punishing them because they had become so corrupt? We answer then, that God had the power, the overruling power at that time.

I will try to bring a parallel case with the destruction of Jerusalem. I call the reader's attention to Doctrine and Covenants, sec. 4, par. 3:

"And you must wait yet a little while, for ye are not yet ordained; and their testimony shall also go forth unto the condemnation of this generation, if they harden their hearts against them; for a desolating scourge shall continue to be poured out from time to time, if they repent not until the earth is empty, and the inhabitants thereof are consumed away, and utterly destroyed by the brightness of my coming. Behold I tell you these things, even as I also told the people of the destruction of Jerusalem, and my word shall be verified at this time, as it hath hitherto been verified."

As I am a firm believer in the prophecies of this book I will quote again:

"After your testimony cometh wrath and indignation upon the people; for after your testimony, cometh the testimony of earthquakes that shall cause groaning in the midst of her, and men shall fall upon the ground and shall not be able to stand; and also cometh the testimony of the voice of thundering, and the voice of lightning, and the voice of tempests."

Is this being fulfilled? I leave it for the reader to judge. Has not Christ said, "All flesh is in mine hand?" I would prefer to be in the hands of the Lord. And did not Christ say, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Matt. 28:18.

The sentence of death was passed on man by God; Christ says all power is given

him; he says his word shall be verified. If this be so, is it the devil that is causing all this destruction on earth, or is it because we are living in a day when the world is ripening for destruction because of the wickedness of man. You may say the devil works with man to accomplish his ends. Suppose he does, does man have to be obedient to the devil? I think not. I may go contrary to law, and take the life of my fellow man, and because I allow, the evil passion to fill my mind, and cause me to commit the horrible deed, how would I look before the judgment seat of God, pleading for mercy, and saying the devil overcame me, when I had my free agency, to do good or evil. Methinks I hear the sentence pronounced, "Depart from me, ye cursed." Adam did not make such a plea, "The woman gave me and I did eat." The woman said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." But were these proper excuses for them to make? The command had gone forth, the penalty attached, and man had to suffer.

We are told Christ commanded the tempest to cease while he was with his disciples on the water; if so, why does he not come out and do so to-day? Has he not the power? He says he has all power, and if it be contrary to his will, why does he not stop all this trouble? Or has the command gone forth because of disobedience? Then if Christ has all power, the devil's power must be limited at least. If the old fellow has the power some say he has, and can send forth the wind hither and thither, as he wishes, it seems to me he would concentrate all his forces at once on the Saints of God, and sweep them off the face of the earth. This would be the first thing he would think of doing; but it is not so. We stand as good a show as the world, and my faith reaches still further. Says one, the righteous suffer with the wicked. Sometimes they do, and sometimes they suffer when the wicked do not, and there have been ways of escape for God's people in times gone by, when the wicked have suffered. Sometimes the wicked are allowed to kill the Saints of God. It was so in the days of Christ, and it has been so in our days. Who was it that shed the blood of our prophet? Was it the devil, or was it a wicked mob that violated the laws of the land, and put to death our beloved brethren. Who was it that crucified our Lord and Master? It appears to me it was man. Christ says, "I lay it down of myself."

The Devil had no power over Christ. How was it with the destruction of Jerusalem. Here we see the prophecies of our Savior fulfilled. He could see the wickedness of that people, and he knew destruction awaited them. They were shut up in Jerusalem, and it appears to the writer, that it was the wicked slaying the wicked. Christ had prepared a way of escape for his people, and they were left to be destroyed; and when Titus went around, and saw them in that condition, and the deep gore flowing around the putrid bodies, he groaned heavily, and raising his hands, called God to witness, that it was none of