

The limited amount of time which I may use this afternoon, compels me to take but a partial glance at certain points that I wish to notice in connection with our text.

Among the first principles that were revealed to the children of men in the last days was the gathering; the first revelations that were given to the Church were to command them to gather, and send Elders to seek out a place for the gathering of the Saints. What is the gathering for? Why was it that the Savior wished the children of Israel to gather together? It was that they might become united and provide a place wherein he could reveal unto them keys which have been hid from before the foundation of the world; that he could unfold unto them the laws of exaltation, and make them a kingdom of Priests, even the whole people, and exalt them to thrones and dominions in the celestial world.

For this purpose, in 1833, the Saints commenced to build a Temple in Kirtland, the cost of which was not less than one hundred thousand dollars. A mere handful of Saints commenced that work, but they were full of faith and energy, and willing, as they supposed, to sacrifice everything for the building up of Zion. In a few weeks some of them apostatized; the trials were too great, the troubles were too severe. I know persons who apostatized because they supposed they had reasons; for instance, a certain family, after having traveled a long journey, arrived in Kirtland, and the Prophet asked them to stop with him until they could find a place. Sister Emma, in the mean time, asked the old lady if she would have a cup of tea to refresh her after the fatigues of the journey, or a cup of coffee. This whole family apostatized because they were invited to take a cup of tea or coffee, after the Word of Wisdom was given.

Another family, about the same

time, apostatized because Joseph Smith came down out of the translating room, where he had been translating by the gift and power of God, and commenced playing with his little children. Some such trials as these, you know, had to be encountered.

I recollect a gentleman who came from Canada, and who had been a Methodist, and had always been in the habit of praying to a God who had no ears, and as a matter of course had to shout and halloo pretty loud to make him hear. Father Johnson asked him to pray in their family worship in the evening, and he got on such a high key, and halloooed so loud that he alarmed the whole village. Among others, Joseph came running out, saying, "What is the matter? I thought by the noise that the heavens and the earth were coming together," and said to the man, "that he ought not to give way to such an enthusiastic spirit, and bray so much like a jack-ass." Because Joseph said that, the poor man put back to Canada, and apostatized; he thought he would not pray to a God who did not want to be screamed at with all one's might.

We progressed in this way while we were building the Kirtland Temple. The Saints had a great many traditions which they had borrowed from their fathers, and laid the foundations, and built that Temple with great toil and suffering, compared with what we have now to endure. They got that building so far finished as to be dedicated; this was what the Lord wanted, He wished them to provide a place wherein He could reveal to the children of men those principles that will exalt them to eternal glory, and make them Saviors on mount Zion. Four hundred and sixteen Elders, Priests, Teachers, and Deacons met in the Kirtland Temple on the evening of its dedication. I can see faces here that were in that assembly.