

THE LEAVEN OF THE GOSPEL—THE SAINTS SHOULD DIVEST
THEMSELVES OF OLD TRADITIONS—POLICY OF MAKING
GOOD FARMS AND STORING UP GRAIN

A DISCOURSE BY ELDER GEORGE A. SMITH, DELIVERED IN THE BOWERY,
GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, APRIL 6, 1856

Recorded by G. D. Watt

It certainly is enough to try the nerves of the strongest man and the lungs of a giant, to rise and address such an immense assemblage as is here this morning, especially with the reflection that they are expecting to listen to and be edified with what I may be able to say.

When I reflect that yesterday I saw the Saints coming in from the south, and some of them on foot, both men and women, bringing their children some fifty miles in their arms, as many did, to get here and attend this Conference, and consider that such labor is to be requited by the instruction and intelligence which they will receive, and then undertake to address an assembly under these circumstances, I feel the necessity for the faith of the Saints to be exercised in my behalf, to enable me to speak for the instruction and edification of so vast an assemblage.

When I was about twenty-one years old I went on a mission, in company with Elder Don C. Smith, the youngest brother of the Prophet Joseph, through the States of Kentucky and Tennessee. When he rose to preach he wished to see a pretty good sized assembly, and to talk at least a couple of hours; when it was my turn to speak, some thirty minutes, perhaps, was as much time as I would wish to occupy. We occasionally had a small assembly, then Don would say, "Come, George A., you are good at preaching

a picayune sermon; suppose you try this time."

It would seem today as though a picayune sermon would not answer the purpose, if the size of the congregation is the scale in which the discourse should be weighed.

It is said, in one of the parables, that "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened."

In 1830, on the 6th day of April, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized with only six members. Joseph, in one of his letters in relation to Alexander Campbell, in December 1835, said that "the three measures of meal might be compared to the three witnesses who were called upon to testify of the Book of Mormon, and who selected and ordained twelve Apostles to go forth and be special witnesses to all the world."

Whether the application was really intended to be laid down as a rule I will not say, but it is very evident that when Joseph Smith laid the foundation of this kingdom he commenced depositing the leaven of truth, and that that leaven has continued to increase up to 1856, when an assemblage of the Saints, who are here as representatives of this people, is crowded out of such a spacious building as the Tabernacle, and obliged to assemble in this large Bowery, also densely filled.