

purification. What is more visible to the eye than the dealings of God, our Father, with us for the past year? First came the innumerable swarms of insects by millions, sweeping off our crops, then the drought drying them up as does the sun the dew, consuming nearly all the insects had left. How was this? Because the snows were kept from the mountains during the previous winter.

What next? The drought continued month after month, preventing the grass from growing as it has done in falls of previous years, and thus leaving our ground destitute of feed.

Then what? A severe winter, deep snow, so deep as to cover the few spears of grass that were left. Thus one calamity after another, one punishment after another, is enough to convince us that all proceeded from the hand of the Lord our God.

Has He not a purpose in this? Is it not an affliction to us, to you and to me? Do you not feel it? Will it not learn us a lesson? Yes, it will.

I feel to say in my heart, O Lord, chasten me, let thy chastening hand be upon me, if thou seest there is no other way of escape. I would much rather be chastened than to heap up an abundance of this world's goods, and neglect some of the most important duties of my religion. Hence, when I pray in relation to myself, my prayer is for the Lord to chasten me, and also in relation to this people my prayer is, O Lord, let thy chastening hand be upon this people, until they learn to obey those good and wholesome counsels that are poured out from this stand by those who preside over us.

They are clear, their garments are clear, and I am a witness, for I have been here, except on a few occasions, and have witnessed these things. And I have heard some of the most touching and forcible discourses and arguments from our Presidents, calling

upon the people to be more economical, and faithful in keeping the commandments of God; and they have exhorted us to these things with all their energies and powers.

I have also seen that many, who have had those teachings drop into their ears, would go away, and say, "What a blessed sermon we have heard today," and that be the last of it. Many of you who have heard the instructions I have alluded to are witnesses to this; many of you have heard that saying, and seen it followed by that conduct.

If those instructions be not observed, will not the good have to suffer with the careless and disobedient? Yes, they generally do; but a truly good man or woman will not be forgotten, neither will they be tormented.

If they have not a handful of flour, and no potatoes, yet they feel well, and if they die all is well; but the man whose heart is not right feels the smart.

How much better it would be for the Lord to chasten us, or even to send us down to our graves, than to suffer us to live in carelessness, with our minds given up to the vanities and foolishness of this life instead of attending to the things that are of real value and importance.

In ancient days the righteous had to suffer with the wicked, for we learn that Achan took the wedge of gold and hid it in the earth, contrary to the instructions given by the Lord, and in a day or two the Israelites were smitten and driven before their enemies, and no doubt many of those who perished were good men. There was sin in the camp, and when they found it out that it was with Achan, and he was punished, they prevailed against their enemies, because the sin was put away from their midst.

It was similar in the case of Korah, Dathan, Abiram and some 250 others