

in any age of the world. We are indebted to the Lord our God for this knowledge, and are responsible to Him for the use we make of it, for He has not given us all this that we may feast our souls and sit down and go to sleep. He has not given it to us for this purpose, but for us to act upon it, and by the use of it become strong to carry out His work on the earth. He has given us this power and means of obtaining knowledge from the heavens, that we may exercise the principles of righteousness and truth, in order to prove ourselves worthy of those greater things that are yet in store for the faithful, and that are yet to be revealed, through a constant scene of trial and of proving. What has been the case in Israel? Why the fact has been that as soon as the people got those blessings which they obtain in the "House of the Lord," that seemed to be the end of the law unto them, it seemed to be the height of their ambition, and they sat down and went to sleep, or became covetous and greedy of gain, whereas the powers conferred were tools or instruments in their hands to enable them to work for God.

This is the course that has been pursued by the people generally, and those whom we can say the least of in relation to transgression have some sins to atone for and make restitution. We have been nearly all more or less in the dark. Yes, all the quorums in the Church except the First Presidency. God be thanked His light and power has been in them to watch, while the rest have slumbered. The Twelve take this as strongly to themselves as any, and have acknowledged that they have been asleep. Yet we have been abroad laboring to bring people to the knowledge of the truth, to the knowledge of God, a knowledge and power such as they never could have before received on the earth, hence the condemnation that we are

brought under is beyond that which any other people could be under; then what has been the mercy of God? It is that now while in these circumstances, nearly all have got to sleep, and some in the darkness of their minds have wandered far from the Lord, and have committed sins that in their own estimation and judgment cause them to feel that they are worthy of damnation for having violated their holy covenants. And does the Lord go to and cut them off? Or does He send a chastisement and destroy them with plague, and sweep them off from the earth? No, this is not the tone of our Heavenly Father to us this day, but His voice to us is, that if we will now turn from and forsake our sins and draw near unto Him, that He will forgive and never cause the sins of this people to be remembered against them, but will blot them out from His remembrance forever. What unbounded love and tender mercy are here evinced to this people, while asleep, and enveloped in the dark shadows of death to that fearful extent that the word sleep will not properly express the state of the people. We have been mesmerized and could not be brought out of it without the most extraordinary means being used. We had become like "icebergs," we were so cold and dead, that when President Young got up to speak he could not free his mind, and has not been able to do so for the last several times that he has spoken, feeling that there was not room in our hearts to receive his words. And what a sight was it in Israel to see the Social Hall filled, with the chief authorities and Elders of the Church, a body of men upon whom rests the responsibility of administering salvation to this earth and its inhabitants, and to see such a fog there, and such darkness that the Presidency could not there free their minds, but had to lift the almighty sledgehammer to break the flinty