

It has probably been the case in this dispensation, that the Saints have taken joyfully the spoiling of their goods. But to how great an extent have we taken patiently the spoiling of our goods as trials that were calculated by our Father in heaven only for our good?

We have been in the habit, in consequence of the feelings that pervaded our minds, of looking at the doings of our Father in a limited light; and we have been in the habit of looking at his operations in this way, and whatever was required of us today we regarded as being the fulness of his purposes and of his operations with us; and if we should comply perfectly or readily today with the requirements made of us, we have thought that we had attained all that was to be obtained.

Well, is this so? No. He has been making requirements of us continually: requirement after requirement has been made of us. He has required us to accomplish a work today, and something else the next day; and each succeeding day, from the beginning to the present time, has brought some change in his requirements. He has required us to travel in one direction, for instance, today; and then the accomplishment of the same work which he has to do requires us to take a directly opposite course to what we were pursuing. Well, then, if taking up one course today and another tomorrow seems to be undoing the work of yesterday and to be diametrically opposed to the work of yesterday, can we recognize the hand of God in it? If we have recognized his hand in these things, we have had a profitable experience by them.

“But,” says one, “how can it be that God should require one thing today, and then something else tomorrow? We thought he was a straightforward dealing individual—that there

was no variableness, nor shadow of turning in him.” Well, this is the character of him; but, perhaps we have been in difficulty, and could not recognize the hand of God, and could not recognize the blessing in the present apparent suffering. We could not recognize the hand of God as on yesterday, when we thought we were in better circumstances than we are today. Where is the difficulty? It is simply that we have not recognized the hand of God so clearly as in the day that we have considered to be more rich with blessings and prosperity; and what is the reason? “Why,” says one, “we could not see the design of these things.” Well, if we could not see their ultimate design, there must have been a reason why we could not see; and we will consider that there was a purpose in this, as well as in the Lord sending the Gospel which has reached our ears.

Suppose that we should have known that it was his purpose to bring us to this place; why, we never could have believed that we were following his counsel when we were traveling to every other place; for in our journeyings we traveled towards almost every other place before we came here; and, in fact, every other place that we have visited we visited before we came here; and still we were following the purposes of God every time and in all those windings. Well, if we could not know it then, it will be good to know it now—to discover it and to look at it in a way and to an extent that will profit us. It will be well to look at the true position we have been in, now that we understand that all the scenes that we have passed through have been for the accomplishment of his purposes.

If we did not understand his purpose at the beginning, we must at some time comprehend it, or we never can see his hand in it—we never can be blessed with that freedom from