

regard for, neither understand the Constitutional rights of the people; and the people said amen to that purpose. We were able, last fall, to keep them from us, and we are well able to defend this city—how long, I do not know.

If we love our improvements and property better than we love the lives of our brethren, the Lord will lead us in a way to waste us instead of our property. Can you understand that it is better to lose property than the lives of men, women, and children? But if we are so wedded to our property that we would rather fight for it than sacrifice it, if required, for our religion, then we are in a condition to be wasted, and our property would go into the hands of our enemies.

We are able to defend the city and keep out our enemies; but if we prove to our Father in heaven and to one another that we are willing to hand back to him that which he has given us (which is not a sacrifice), and that we love not the world nor the things of the world, he will preserve the people until they can become righteous.

You never heard me say that we would stick to this city; but we will defend ourselves against the floods of iniquity which our enemies wish to overwhelm us with by the introduction of a licentious and corrupted soldiery.

If we vacate the ground, that may satisfy them; but if they undertake to come in before we are ready, we will send them to their long home.

Some may marvel why the Lord says, “Rather than fight your enemies, go away.” It is because many of the people are so grossly wicked, that, were we to go out to fight, thousands of the Elders would go into eternity, and women and children would perish.

Is every man and woman wicked? No: the majority of this people are

doing the best they can; but the ignorance of the people is astonishing. Be patient. The Lord is full of mercy and great kindness, and bears with our weaknesses; and he wishes to bear with us until we come to understanding—until we know how to be righteous before him. I do not want men to go into eternity clothed with unrighteousness.

We have talked about redeeming Zion, but the people are not yet righteous enough to receive and build up Zion in its purity, though they are growing to it.

I have a certain knowledge within me that the Elders of Israel will never be permitted to lay judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet, with regard to the wicked and ungodly, until they understand righteous principles, and live to them. I do not care if we live until doomsday, and are hunted as long as we live, and go into the grave, and our sons and daughters come up after us, if they cannot arrive to the knowledge of the truth, they also will have to live in sorrow and affliction until they are worn out, and another generation shall come up after them. God is not willing that unholy hands shall carry out his judgments in the latter days.

When men go out to fight, I want them to go so full of the power of God that balls cannot hit them, and that the judgments and mercy of the Almighty may rest in their hearts: then they will know what to do.

Let this people go together, and be together, and let the women say there is such a thing as flax, and such a thing as a wheel with which to spin it. That makes me think of a young Boston lady on a visit to the country. She did not wish it known that she was at all countryfied, but wanted to appear quite delicate, and upon seeing a flock of geese, “O dear me,” said she, “what are those geese?” Some