

preach about so many things, that it will be impossible for the enlightened among his congregation to see anything in his ideas that will be calculated to edify or instruct.

I have made these preparatory remarks particularly for the benefit of my brethren of the ministry; for I know the difficulties they encounter when they go abroad. I have been abroad with several companies of missionaries from this place, and I have seen them lament and mourn, and have heard them tell their feelings one to another, saying—"O that I had occupied my time that I have spent as it were in folly, in treasuring up the principles of eternal life—that I had studied the scriptures—that I had made myself acquainted more extensively with the doctrines of the Church—that I had made myself acquainted with those principles revealed from heaven for our guidance! I should then have been prepared to stand before the inhabitants of the earth and edify them with regard to our principles." I have heard these lamentations for months after they were in their fields of labor; and I have really been astonished at the idleness of those who are growing up, who expect to be servants of God and to occupy a conspicuous place in the kingdom of God. I know many of us can plead some sort of an excuse. The hard labors we have to endure in irrigating the soil, in penetrating the mountain canyons for wood and timber—all these things have a tendency to fatigue the body and the mind, so that we have not the same opportunity for information that we would have, if we were more at leisure. After all, cannot every man look back upon many hours that have been spent in foolishness—perhaps in going to dancing school, or in going to parties wherein there is no particular profit? Not only hours, but days are spent that might have been used

for better purposes; consequently, you have not a sufficient excuse to justify you in spending your time in idleness.

Having made these remarks, we will now call your attention to the words of our text. How far I may, on the present occasion, treat upon the subject that is laid down in the text, I do not know. I will endeavor to treat upon it as far as my mind shall be opened by the Holy Spirit; and if any other subject is presented to me, I shall follow it, and deviate from the subject couched in the text. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

What "great and dreadful day of the Lord" is meant in the words of our text? Was it the great day of the coming of our Savior in the flesh to make an atonement for the children of men? Is there nothing contained in the last chapter of Malachi that will give us a clue to that day—that will give us an understanding of what is meant by the great and dreadful day of the Lord? Go back to the beginning of that chapter, and you will read thus—"Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts."

Were these things predicted in re-