

When we have learned to govern ourselves more perfectly than we have hitherto done—to guard ourselves on the right hand and on the left from the encroachments of evil—to set a seal upon our mouths and tongues, and only to use them according to the principles of eternal truth—according to the mind and will of God. When we have learned to do unto others as we would have them do unto us in all things, and to regulate ourselves not only by the written commandments of the Most High God, but by the words of wisdom and counsel imparted to us day by day through his servants—when we have learned these important lessons more perfectly, then we may expect the promise of the Lord to be more perfectly fulfilled to us, and not before.

I can recollect, twenty-nine years ago this present autumn, that I went into the chamber of father Whitmer, in whose house the Lord manifested himself in the organization of this Church, consisting of six members. I went into that chamber with the Prophet Joseph Smith, to inquire of the Lord; and he received a revelation for my benefit, which was written from the mouth of the Prophet by John Whitmer, one of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon. I was then only about nineteen years of age, and was desirous to know what my duty was. The Lord commanded in this revelation that I should preach his Gospel. I thought that was a very great and important calling, and I felt altogether incompetent unless the Lord qualified me by his Spirit.

Among other things contained in this revelation, the Lord gave me a command in these words—“Therefore lift up thy voice and prophesy, and it shall be given by the power of the Holy Ghost.” I thought to myself, that unless the Lord shall pour out his Spirit upon me more fully than anything I ever yet have

experienced, I never can perform these duties acceptably in his sight.

To prophesy without the Holy Ghost—to reveal—was something I dare not do. I would rather have had my head severed from my body than to have been guilty of so great a crime. Indeed, there is one of the most awful denunciations pronounced upon that man who undertakes to prophesy in the name of the Lord, without the Holy Ghost to inspire him. Such a man in ancient days was to be cut off from the midst of Israel.

I felt, therefore, the importance of those sayings; and truly, when I looked at the magnitude and importance of the command given to me to prophesy by the power of the Holy Ghost, I felt oftentimes to tremble and shrink, for fear I never should be able to fulfil and accomplish so great a work.

And I recollect another revelation that requires all the servants of God who are sent forth, to lift up their voices and preach and prophesy as it shall be given by the Spirit of God. Have we attained to this gift of prophecy as we ought as the servants of the living God? How few of us have obtained a message beforehand by the Spirit of the living God to deliver to the people, as Jacob, one of the ancient servants of God, did on the American continent. Jacob, the brother of Nephi, came into the temple to preach to the people, and declared to them that the Lord had previously revealed to him what he should say to them. He went and inquired of the Lord, and he revealed his mind and will, and thus Jacob found out what was wanted for the people: he understood their condition and what sins they had committed before the Most High, and he knew how to reprove them, because God had visited him by the Spirit of revelation.

How many of us have gone forth