

be punished.” For we are made nigh unto Christ by his blood. “But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach.” The Lord is here with us, not in person, but his angels are around us, and he takes cognizance of every act of the children of men, as individuals and as nations. He is here ready by his agents, the angels, and by the power of his Holy Spirit and Priesthood, which he has restored in these last days, to bring most perfect and absolute deliverance unto all who put their trust in Him, when they are ready to receive it; and, until they are ready, the work of preparation must be vigorously progressed in, while at the same time we in patience must possess our souls. For what scholar can at once make himself acquainted thoroughly with the beginning and the end of a finished education? It is a work of time. The Lord is gracious and full of kindness to his children, and has given them this probation to prepare themselves for his coming, and to dwell with him in mansions of glory.

I wish my brethren and sisters to understand that the contest between themselves and the power of Satan is now, today, and has been ever since the Lord Almighty bestowed his Holy Priesthood upon his servant Joseph. When holy angels were sent from heaven to call and ordain Joseph Smith, and he to ordain others, the war commenced against sin and the power of it, and will continue until the earth shall be cleansed from it, and shall be made a fit

habitation for Saints and angels. The Holy Priesthood has been restored expressly for this purpose. There is nothing that the Saints can ask, or pray for, that will aid them in their progress to the attainment of all the freedom, liberty, power, and conquest, that they are capable of desiring and making a good use of, that will not be granted unto them, if they will only patiently struggle on. I am happy in saying that the Lord is doing his work most admirably. Are we progressing as fast as the work of the Lord is progressing? He has pled with the people by the voice of his Spirit, by the voice of angels, and by the voice of his servants; but their ears are heavy. He is pleading now with the sword, as well as with the voice of his servants, and he will plead with them by tempest and storm, and soon will plead with them by famine and by pestilence. The Savior has said: “And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.”

The men and women, who desire to obtain seats in the celestial kingdom, will find that they must battle with the enemy of all righteousness every day. “Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplica-