

one desire that is not devoted to the Gospel of the Son of God and to the building up of his kingdom on the earth, that feeling or desire so far tends to death.

Knowledge increases among this people; they know more of the things of the kingdom of God today than they did in the days of Joseph Smith. There was confidence due from his brethren to Joseph which he did not receive. In his death they learned a profitable lesson, and afterwards felt that if he could only be restored to them how obedient they would be to his counsels. The influence and confidence that were denied to him have since, to a great degree, been centered where they see it belongs. Still the old leaven more or less reigns within us; our traditions lead us to reflect upon death as we formerly did, and to suppose that this life is only designed to prepare us to meet the last moments of the dissolution of the body. This life is now the only life to us; and if we do not appreciate it properly it is impossible to prepare for a higher and more exalted life. We live today to prepare for life tomorrow; and if we are prepared to live, death is divested of its terrors, for we die only to live in another condition. In fact, if we only appreciate this life, we will never die. Our bodies may sleep in the grave for a short time—the earthly particles of this tabernacle will return to their mother earth—but that ever-living power within us will never sleep, and we shall receive our bodies again.

The purpose of our life should be to build up the Zion of our God, to gather the house of Israel, bring in the fulness of the Gentiles, restore and bless the earth with our ability and make it as the Garden of Eden, store up treasures of knowledge and wisdom in our own understandings, purify our own hearts and prepare a people to meet the Lord when he comes.

The world is wrong and we have to right it under the direction of Heaven. For this purpose are we located upon the land of Zion, and the land of Zion is North and South America—the land where our heavenly Father made his appearance and planted the Garden of Eden. This land is choice above all other lands upon the face of the earth. We occupy these mountains as a safe retreat from the power of our enemies. When we first came here we did not know that we could raise grain of any kind. Probably some parts of South America are as good for raising wheat as this is; and in no part of North America can they raise better wheat than is raised here. God has blessed the soil for our sakes, and we live and prosper contrary to the expectations of our persecutors. Those who are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel may try to live here, but without our aid they cannot raise a subsistence.

The country where Joseph Smith, Jun., found the plates was then as good a country for grain and fruit as could be found upon the whole land, but when the Latter-day Saints were obliged to leave that region the ground began to cease yielding the accustomed amount, and the yield of wheat decreased probably one half. The Lord blesses the land, the air, and the water where the Saints are permitted to live.

The blessings of the Lord are great upon this people. They are increasing in flocks and herds and are gathering around them property in abundance on the right hand and on the left; let them be careful that they do not place their affections upon the things of this world and forget the Lord their God. The earthly means which we have been enabled to gather around us is not ours, it is the Lord's, and he has placed it in our hands for the building up of his kingdom and