

THE OPPOSITION OF WICKEDNESS TO RIGHTEOUSNESS—
PERSECUTIONS OF THE SAINTS—MISREPRESENTATIONS

DISCOURSE BY ELDER ORSON PRATT, DELIVERED IN THE
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Reported by David W. Evans

Through the mercies of our God we have assembled here in the capacity of a Conference to receive instruction and impart the same.

There are a great many points connected with the Zion of our God, now being established on the earth, which are necessary for us as a people to understand. God has not gathered us out from among the nations of the earth into these valleys without having a great purpose in view. Whatever portion of His purposes I understand I desire to abide by with all my heart, and I presume that every honest, upright Latter-day Saint desires the same.

We came to this formerly isolated place, and separated ourselves as far as we possibly could from what was termed civilization, not because we really desired to do so, or because of the fertility of the soil in this region, or the advantages we would enjoy in temporal things; but because we were in a measure obliged to do so. It is true that the Lord foretold to us, through the mouths of His servants, that the day would come when we should have to flee from our enemies, and that we would settle west of the Rocky Mountains. When we were dwelling in the State of Illinois, and had had a few years of comparative peace, the Spirit of the Lord rested upon His servant Joseph and made manifest to him that the wicked had it in their hearts to uproot His people who were established in Nauvoo,

the same as they had done in our former settlements. The testimony of the Spirit to the servant of God was, that however peaceable the people around us might seem, yet, if they would not receive the Gospel and acknowledge the authority which God had restored from Heaven, they would fight against His people. Our Savior said, "He that is not for us is against us." The truth of this saying we, as a people, have proven since the day that Joseph took the plates of the Book of Mormon from the hill Cumorah, in the town of Manchester, Ontario county, State of New York; and even before he succeeded in getting the plates, some seven years before the Lord entrusted them to his care, the prophet Joseph proved the truth of this saying. The Lord revealed himself to this youth when he was between fourteen and fifteen years of age, and as soon as he related this vision, although at that young and tender age, the wrath and indignation of the people were stirred up against him.

From that time, until he was between twenty-one and twenty-two years of age the opposition was continued. It did not matter how righteous, humble, or meek he was; it did not matter how straightforward his course of conduct was, all that the world wanted to know was, Does he profess something different from our religious notions? Does he believe that the heavens can be opened to