

to visit him; I do not know but he told the names of the angels; but, if my memory serves me right, he affirmed that Joseph appeared to him, blessed him, and bestowed upon him the keys and the authority. He also showed a letter bearing the postmark of Nauvoo, which he pretended had been written by Joseph, giving him (Strang) the authority to preside over the Church, in the event of anything happening to him. Others stood up in a similar manner: John E. Page, Lyman Wight, William Smith, and afterwards, Charles Thompson.

All these men arose, claiming that it was their right and privilege, by ordination or by special appointment, to take charge of the Church. But the Church then, as on many occasions previously and since that time, was able, through the light which its members possessed, to discriminate between the voice of the true and false shepherd. Still this peculiarity—being hailed as brethren by the wicked, characterized them in Nauvoo, as their predecessors in New York, Kirtland and Missouri. Instead of being hated and calumniated, and men seeking their lives and persecuting them, they were hailed with seeming pleasure and satisfaction. Men bade them “Godspeed” and urged them forward to claim the rights they called their own. But against Brigham Young, our President, the old feeling of animosity, that had been entertained against Joseph, existed with as great bitterness and intensity in the minds of the enemies of the Kingdom of God as it had existed during the lifetime of Joseph against him.

President Young, according to the statements of the wicked, reenacted all the evil deeds, as they were termed, that had been attributed to Joseph, and for which they killed him. Brigham became the inheritor

of all that animosity and hatred that had been manifested towards Joseph during his lifetime; and when Joseph slept in a bloody grave, the enemies of the Church turned their attention to Brigham Young, his legal successor.

If the Saints had wanted evidence in relation to who was the right man and who had the authority, the very fact that the world hated, reviled, and persecuted Brigham should have been sufficient evidence that he was taking the path which Joseph had trod, and that his course was pleasing in the sight of Heaven, and consequently hateful in the sight of hell.

There are rules, my brethren, which were given in the early days of the Church, respecting the Presidency of the Church. In the revelation which I have just read in your hearing, the Lord plainly sets forth to the Church what course He would have it take in relation to the keys that had been bestowed by Peter, James, and John upon Joseph; and that we may not be deceived He gives this rule:

“But verily, verily, I say unto you, that none else shall be appointed unto this gift except it be through him; for if it be taken from him he shall not have power except to appoint another in his stead. And this shall be a law unto you, that ye receive not the teachings of any that shall come before you as revelations or commandments; And this I give unto you that you may not be deceived, that you may know they are not of me. For verily I say unto you, that he that is ordained of me shall come in at the gate and be ordained as I have told you before, to teach those revelations which you have received and shall receive through him whom I have appointed.”

The Lord here made express provisions as to who should hold the keys of the kingdom, and how those