

THE BLESSINGS OF JOSEPH—THE AMERICAN INDIANS

DISCOURSE BY ELDER ORSON PRATT, DELIVERED IN THE TABERNACLE,

SALT LAKE CITY, FEB. 19, 1871

Reported by John Q. Cannon

I will call the attention of the congregation to a portion of the word of the Lord contained in the 33rd chapter of Deuteronomy, commencing at the 13th verse. What I am about to read is the word of the Lord through Moses. "And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, And for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, And for the precious things of the earth and the fulness thereof, and for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren. His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh."

These words occurred to me after rising to my feet, as the blessing of Moses upon one of the tribes of Israel. The Latter-day Saints are aware that in ancient times men of God were led by the spirit of inspiration to bless with prophetic blessings. Such was the case in the days of Noah, such was the case in the days of

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and such was the case in the days of Moses. Being prophets, the Lord inspired them to know and understand the future, to know what he intended to perform and accomplish on the earth. They understood by the spirit of prophecy the blessings that would come upon the righteous and the curses that would come upon the wicked. They understood that the Lord would bestow blessings bountifully upon those who would serve him and keep his commandments. Hence they predicted blessings upon them, not only of a spiritual nature but of a temporal nature, among which farms were given to them, kingdoms, thrones, and a great variety of blessings of a temporal nature were oftentimes conferred by the spirit of prophecy upon the descendants of those whom the Lord delighted in. Many prophecies are recorded in the Book of Deuteronomy, pertaining to the twelve tribes, among which were certain cursings if they did not keep the commandments of the Lord, and certain blessings inasmuch as they would keep his commandments. Indeed, six of the tribes of Israel, or men out of six tribes, representing six of the tribes, were commanded to go upon a certain mountain, and representatives out of the other six tribes were commanded to get upon another mountain. The representatives on one of these mountains were to pronounce blessings on conditions, while