

for the Lord hath comforted his people, he will have mercy upon his afflicted. But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." "Ah," says the Lord, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me."

The Lord never created this world at random; he has never done any of his work at random. The earth was created for certain purposes; and one of these purposes was its final redemption, and the establishment of his government and kingdom upon it in the latter days, to prepare it for the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose right it is to reign. That set time has come, that dispensation is before us, we are living in the midst of it. It is before the Latter-day Saints, it is before the world; whether or not the people have more faith in the promises of God now than they had in the days of Noah makes no difference, the unbelief of men will not make the truth of God without effect. The great and mighty events that the Lord Almighty has decreed from before the foundation of the world, to be performed in the latter days are resting upon us, and they will follow each other in quick succession, whether men believe or not, for no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, but holy men of God spake as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost, and what they said will come to pass; though the heaven and the earth pass away not one jot or tittle of the word of the Lord will go unfulfilled.

Some of us have lived in and been intimately acquainted with this church for the last forty years, a very few

more than that, and some less; but where is the Latter-day Saint or any other person who has ever seen this church or kingdom go backward? No matter what position we were in, whether exterminated by the order of Governor Boggs of Missouri, or whether we lay, sick and afflicted, on the muddy banks of the Missouri River; whether it was Zion's Camp going up for her redemption; whether it was the pioneers coming to these mountains, making the roads, building the bridges, killing the snakes and opening the way for the gathering of the people, no matter what our circumstances may have been, this kingdom has been onward and upward all the day long until the present hour. Will it ever go backward? No, it will not. This Zion of the Lord, in all its beauty, power and glory is engraven upon the hands of Almighty God, and it is before his face continually; his decrees are set and no man can turn them aside.

There never was a dispensation on the earth when prophets and apostles, the inspiration, revelation and power of God, the holy priesthood and the keys of the kingdom were needed more than they are in this generation. There never has been a dispensation when the friends of God and righteousness among the children of men needed more faith in the promises and prophecies than they do today; and there certainly never has been a generation of people on the earth that has had a greater work to perform than the inhabitants of the earth in the latter days. That is one reason why this church and kingdom has progressed from its commencement until today, in the midst of all the opposition, oppression and warfare which have been waged against it by men inspired by the evil one. If this had not been the dispensation of the fulness of times—the dispen-