

the garden, it might be said, of the United States; and from Missouri to Illinois—all rich and productive States. What is the result of our removals? We came to a land that was a barren, uninviting desert, and what are the remarks of visitors who come here now from the lands we formerly lived in? They wonder how it is that our fruit trees are so healthy, and that our land is so inviting. I honestly believe, if the people of the United States would observe this law of tithing, devoting a tenth of their substance to the service of the Most High, that instead of this land being in many respects so superior, the fertility which formerly prevailed there would be restored. And when the day shall come, as come it will, when we shall go back—and we expect to go back to Jackson County, Missouri, and to lay the foundation of a temple, and to build a great city to be called the center stake of Zion, as much as we expect to see the sun rise tomorrow; I say when that day shall come it will be found that that country will have its old fertility restored, and that all the lands that the people of God will occupy will be healthy and fruitful; and the land of any people who will honor God by obeying this law of tithing will be made fruitful to them, God will bless their industry, and they will rejoice and prosper therein.

There are many things connected with this subject that might be touched upon. One thing I will mention before I sit down, and that is the growing tendency among this people to look after their own interests and to neglect the interests of the work of God. This remark has often been made to us: “When you Latter-day Saints increase in wealth, are surrounded by the fashions of the world, and the waves of civilization

surge against your walls of barbarism, all your peculiarities will recede and melt away, and you will become like other people. Your plural system will disappear, for no man can sustain half a dozen wives if they are fashionable women, and no more than one.” I have heard this time and time again; and it is true that young men in the east will not marry because of the expense, they do not want to take a wife because they cannot sustain her according to the requirements of modern society. Now, there is a good deal of truth in this statement. If I thought we would become subject to the follies that now prevail I would have fears concerning the work of God and its perpetuity on the earth. If I thought that this people would lust after wealth, and that they would allow their feelings and their hearts to become set on the accumulation of money, and that they would think more of that than they do of God and his work, I would fear for its perpetuity. But God has said this work shall stand forever, and that it shall not be given into the hands of another people, and on that account I do not entertain any fears as to the result. But there are individuals in this community who have given way to these feelings about tithing. When men are poor, it is noticed that they are punctual in paying it, but when they increase in wealth it is less so. For instance, when a man has ten thousand dollars it looks a big pile to give one thousand as tithing. If a man’s tithing amounted to no more than five, ten, twenty, or even a hundred dollars, says he, “I can give that, but a thousand is a great amount,” and when called upon to give a thousand, no, I will not say “called upon,” the difficulty is we are not called upon enough, there has been neglect in calling upon us; but when it comes