

Jesus Christ, or the plan of salvation. They lived and died, generation after generation, in ignorance of these important truths, and many of them were doubtless just and upright men, so far as their traditions enabled them to act and walk uprightly.

Certain religious denominations entertain the belief that these people have all been consigned to endless torment; and not only those who have inhabited this land, but those who have inhabited Polynesia and Australia, the groups of Islands in the Indian Archipelago and throughout Asia and Africa. Who can contemplate such a plan of salvation, or rather condemnation, and admire the author of it, and worship him as a just, pure and holy being? Is there any wonder when such theories are propounded and advocated by the professed ministers of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, that men have revolted at such a belief and would not exercise faith in Jesus Christ? The wonder to me is that so many have received teachings from men who, professing to be ministers of Christ, have entertained such views as these. To think that God would consign to endless torment millions of his creatures who died in ignorance, of which they might have been relieved if he had revealed his will and sent his ministers unto them!

This is not the faith of the Latter-day Saints. The Gospel that we have heard brings to us peace and joy. There is no feature in it from the contemplation of which we recoil. There is no feature connected with it that we cannot sit down and contemplate with pleasure and joy, and the more we contemplate and investigate it, the higher our admiration rises for the author of it—the great and good Creator who has revealed it. So far as I understand this plan of salvation, which is the one taught

by Christ and his Apostles in ancient days, and which is left on record in the Scriptures, there is nothing connected with it but what excites my admiration and calls forth my unbounded gratitude to God for having revealed it, and for having given me the privilege of understanding it, so far as I have learned it. Instead of a Gospel filled with woe, sorrow and condemnation, it is a Gospel of peace, joy and happiness to those who received it.

We as a people, brethren and sisters, and we should always bear this in mind, do not believe that God our Heavenly Father will condemn any human being unless he has been made acquainted with the law which he has revealed; in other words, to use the expression of one of the Apostles, “Where there is no law, there is no transgression.” Unless a law is proclaimed unto men, that they may understand it, there can be no transgression of that law, and consequently no condemnation following its transgression; and if condemnation follow, there must be a knowledge of law. There must be a comprehension of a law and willful violation of it, before condemnation can come. There is no room for the exercise of pity to a person who, knowing a law, violates it. We do not have any feelings of pity to men who violate our laws when they understand them. We may regret their course, but when we know that they understood the law, and had power to live above it, and that through yielding to their weaknesses and to their propensities they have violated the law, we feel to say, “Let justice take its course, the punishment is a just one, and they must abide by it.” So it is in the Gospel—you will not be condemned for that which you do not understand, neither will any other people that ever lived—that now live—or ever will