

will bring men into judgment “for every word and every secret thought.” We believe a good deal as David says—Who is he that can dwell with devouring fire, and among everlasting burnings? That man who has feared God in his heart, and who has not lied in his heart, that man who will swear to his own hurt and change not, a pure, virtuous, holy man who regards the rights of others as he regards his own; a man who will concede to others all that he would ask for himself, and who seeks to promote the welfare of the human family.

The Elders of this Church have been called, as the disciples of Jesus were in former times, to go and preach the Gospel without purse and scrip. I have traveled hundreds and thousands of miles on this errand myself, and I see men all around me here who have done the same. What for? To benefit mankind, to tear away the veil of ignorance, to combat error, to reveal truth, to make known the Divine will, to tell to the human family that God has spoken, that angels have appeared, that the heavens have been opened, that light and intelligence have been communicated to man, that the everlasting Gospel has been restored, and that we, in this age, can enjoy the same blessings that the Saints enjoyed in former days, and to point out to them the way of life and salvation. We have received this commission from our God, and we have endeavored faithfully to fulfill it, so that our blood may be clear, and that when we come to stand before the Great Eloheim, when all nations shall be gathered together, we can say, “Oh God, we have finished the work which thou gavest us to do.”

What else? We are standing now rather in a political capacity.

How is this? We cannot help ourselves, the Gospel told us to gather together. Do the Scriptures say anything about it? Yes; but if they did not, and God gave us that command, the silence of the Scriptures would make no difference at all. But they do, for the ancient Prophets had a view of the gathering of the Saints in the latter days; they saw them flocking to the mountains like doves to the windows; and through them the Lord declared that he would gather his people “from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.” It is said—“I will take them one of a city, and two of a family, and bring them to Zion: And give them pastors after my own heart, who will feed them with knowledge and understanding;” and in speaking of the calamities of the last days he says that “in mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance.” But we gathered because the revelations given through our Prophet commanded us to do so, these revelations agreeing with those given on the same subject formerly.

Standing in this capacity, we form a large body of people. We have lived in different places, and as the believers in the Gospel in other ages were persecuted, so have we been; and having been persecuted and driven we have come here, as Geo. A. Smith said on a certain occasion, “because we could not help it.” We could not live in Nauvoo, yet we neither injured nor robbed anybody, neither did we interfere with anybody’s rights. They drove us from Missouri and from Illinois, and here we are, and what now? We were on Mexican territory when we arrived here, having been forced to flee from the United States because we could not have protection. Why was it? Who can tell why it was