

and Covenants.” No you don’t. “Well, we think we do.” Well, but you don’t, I am sure you don’t, and I will show you why before I get through. We are living in peculiar times—we cannot be governed by “Thus saith the Lord” independent of other influences. We are associated with national and judicial affairs that are opposed to every principle that God would reveal or will reveal. That is a fact that I need not argue before the Latter-day Saints, they all know it. Well, what then? The Spirit of the Lord has operated upon President Young to introduce these principles in our midst, that is, as near as they can be to conform to the laws of the land, for the people in these United States profess to be so pure, you know, that they could not think of having anything contrary to law; they would never dream of anything of that kind. Why, the people of the United States, including their Presidents, Governors and rulers, are the most law-abiding people you ever heard of, according to their professions, are they not? They cannot think of doing anything contrary to law.

Well, we have to go with the general stream; or at least it is necessary that we protect ourselves from legal cormorants, and from every man who would devour, tear in pieces and destroy, who is after our property and our lives. This class of persons would be very glad to take not only the property but the lives of some of the leaders of God’s people here on the earth; nothing would suit them better, they are so holy, pure and law-abiding. These are the circumstances that we are placed in. Now what shall be done? There are certain principles that emanate from God; but we have to protect ourselves in carrying them out, and make them conform, as near

as we can, to the laws of the land. In the Book of Doctrine and Covenants it is said, in the first place, that a man shall place his property at the feet of the Bishop. That is what that lays down, and you say that is what you would like to do. Some would, very many would not. The Bishop, after examining into the position and circumstances of the man, and finding out what his wants are, and what his capabilities and talents, what the size of his family, etc., appoints to him a certain amount of means, which he receives as a stewardship. “Well,” say some, “how does this order you are talking about introducing agree with that? Where does the stewardship come in?” I will tell you. We have organized this as near as may be on the principles of cooperation, and the voice you have in selecting your officers, and in voting for them and the stock you hold in these institutions is your stewardship. You may say—“Is not that taking away our freedom?” I do not think it is. I am not prepared to enter into details, but I should say that one-third, perhaps one-half, of the wealth of the world is manipulated just in the same way. How so? Why, there are among the nations national securities of various kinds issued, which are taken by the people; we have United States bonds, State bonds, county and city bonds in this country as well as in Europe, to which the people subscribe and in which they have an interest, all of which is voluntary, and the free act of the people; then we have railroad bonds, steamship bonds, and we have telegraph, mercantile, manufacturing and cooperative associations, which are represented by those who hold stock therein, and there are hundreds and thousands of millions of dollars throughout the world that are oper-