

this people, his power shortened, or his eye slept, but his eye has been upon us, his hand has been over us, and his providences have been in our favor. Circumstances have been overruled for good, the hand of the enemy has been turned away paralyzed, the efforts of the wicked to destroy us have resulted in our good and in their own discomfiture. The greater the efforts on the part of our enemies to destroy us, the greater the growth of the Church and kingdom of God, and the closer has our union been, the better have we been able to see the hand of the Lord over us, and the inspiration of the Almighty in the counsels of his servants, and the more have we been inclined to respect and abide by the counsels given. The very fact that the spirit of bitterness in the hearts of the wicked toward us at the present time is as virulent as it ever was, and is every way similar to that manifested against the former-day Saints, against the Savior when he was upon the earth, and against his disciples, or the people of God in any former age of the world, is an unmistakable evidence that the Lord God Almighty is with us today as much as he ever was since the organization of the Church, or as much as he ever was with any people he ever acknowledged as his since the world began. I do not believe there ever was a people who were guided by revelation, or acknowledged of the Lord as his people, that were not hated and persecuted by the wicked and the corrupt, and perhaps no people were ever more persecuted than this people would be, if it were in the power of the enemy today to persecute us, as it was in the power of Nero and the Romans to persecute the Saints in their day. There never was a time when it was more fixed and determined in the heart of the wicked to fight against,

and destroy the kingdom from the earth, than now, and their failure will be due only to the impossibility of the task they have undertaken. And this is an evidence to everyone that possesses the least spark of the light of the Holy Spirit—and should be to all mankind—that the kingdom of God is established, that his Priesthood is here, that the Saints, or many of them, are magnifying their calling and honoring the Priesthood, and also the Lord, both with their lives and with their substance, which are his.

For my part I do not fear the influence of our enemies from without, as I fear that of those from within. An open and avowed enemy, whom we may see and meet in an open field, is far less to be feared than a lurking, deceitful, treacherous enemy hidden within us, such as are many of the weaknesses of our fallen human nature, which are too often allowed to go unchecked, beclouding our minds, leading away our affections from God and his truth, until they sap the very foundations of our faith, and debase us beyond the possibility or hope of redemption either in this world or that to come. These are the enemies that we all have to battle with, they are the greatest that we have to contend with in the world, and the most difficult to conquer. They are the fruits of ignorance, generally arising out of unrebuked sin and evil in our own hearts. The labor that is upon us, is to subdue our passions, conquer our inward foes, and see that our hearts are right in the sight of the Lord, that there is nothing calculated to grieve his Spirit and lead us away from the path of duty.

Those only who possess the light of the Spirit of God and the faith of the Gospel, which can only be possessed through faithfulness and obedi-