

fidence in God which they have exercised. Consider, for instance, the position of the Three Hebrews. They could afford to trust themselves in the hands of God; they could afford to meet whatever punishment or affliction or persecution which might be heaped upon them in consequence of their obeying the law of God. But they could not afford to bow down and worship the image which Nebuchadnezzar had caused to be set up, because it was contrary to the commandments of God. The history of the result of their refusing to obey the royal edict, commanding all Babylon to fall down and worship it, we are familiar with; also with the similar circumstance in which the Prophet Daniel figured. In any and every age of the world when God has called or commanded a man or a people to perform a certain work, they through determination and perseverance, and faith in him, have been enabled to accomplish it; and I do not know of a single instance wherein anything ennobling or exalting has been gained when his command has been shunned or willfully disobeyed. I will here mention the case of Jonah, which presents itself to my mind, when the Lord sent him to deliver a message to Ninevah. The requirement was a little too much for Jonah, and he thought he would try to avoid it; but after he had spent three days and nights in the belly of a whale, he thought, no doubt, that if ever he got to land he would unhesitatingly obey the commandments of the Lord. The result we know. We take our Savior, and also the Apostles who followed him; we read the history of what they suffered and passed through. All of the Apostles suffered death (excepting one, whom they could not destroy), including the Son of God

himself, in order to seal their testimony with their blood; while the Savior had to suffer upon the cross, to fill the mission which he had been preordained to perform; which, by the way, is a very strange ensample to man, to see the Son of God, the Only Begotten of the Father on the earth, the Firstborn in the spirit world, a person of His high exaltation and glory, condescending to come forth to be born in a stable and cradled in a manger; and after he grew up, how he traveled about in adversity and suffering, never shrinking from any duty imposed upon him—it should certainly be a good ensample to all of his followers. And the Apostles themselves, because of their integrity to the truths of the Gospel which they had received through their Master, the Savior, they like him, suffered death, and thus sealed their testimony with their blood. They could perform no more than he could towards turning the hearts of the people to the truth; but they determined to risk whatever suffering, trouble or tribulation they were called to pass through for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus, that they might receive eternal life.

I bring this home to ourselves. I bring it home to the Latter-day Saints; I bring it home to our day and generation. Many of us have been acquainted with our Prophet and Patriarch, Joseph and Hyrum Smith. We know their lives; we know the suffering and trouble they passed through. These men are true and faithful unto death. They could afford to do it; but they could not afford to deny the faith; they could not afford to shrink from the important message which God had given unto them, of establishing this Church and kingdom upon the earth, but they could afford to be