set forth by its writers, the epitome of
the plan of salvation which is there given
unto us, we derive the highest consola-
tion, we obtain the greatest strength. It
is, as it were, a constant fountain send-
ing forth streams of living life to sat-
sify the souls of all who peruse its pages.
Our condition is bad enough, it may be
said, in some respects with this in our
possession and having this to refer to;
but we can imagine that it would be
much worse if we did not have it, if we
could not appeal to our fellow creatures
who believe in God, who believe in Je-
sus Christ, who believe in the Old and
New Testaments—if we did not have this
to appeal to, to prove that whatever our
peculiarities may be, however different
our views from the views of many who
profess Christianity, we at least share in
those views with others who were called
the people of God, the disciples of the
Lord Jesus Christ in days that are past,
and who among all people throughout
Christendom are recognized as the true
exponents of the word of God, and the
plan of salvation which He revealed.

There was a day in our history
when it was considered a crime for us
to believe in revelation from God. I
do not know that that day is entirely
past. There was a day in our his-
tory when it was considered very im-
proper for us to believe in Prophets or
Apostles—that is, to believe that they
ought to be in the Church. There was
a time when we were indicted by a
mob in its written proclamation for be-
lieving in miracles. It was considered
sufficient cause and justification to ex-
pel us from our homes because we be-
lieved that God, through His power,
could heal the sick, and perform mira-
cles like unto those that were performed
in ancient days by His servants. How
do you think it would have been, my
brethren and sisters, if we had not had
the Bible to refer to? How would it have
been with many of those who passed
through those scenes if they had not
had the teachings of the Apostles and
the words of the Savior written as we
have them in the Bible to comfort them,
to cheer them, and to show them that
it was not a new departure for men to
have those ideas and beliefs? With the
Bible in our hands we could test all men
who professed to be followers of Jesus
Christ; for God has plainly said, that
He is the same yesterday, today and for-
ever; that He does not change; that He
is as near unto His people in these days
as He ever was; that He is as willing
to hear their cries, to answer their pe-
titions, to grant unto them the desires of
their hearts, in our age as He ever was
in any preceding age. Now, this is a doc-
trine plainly taught in the Bible, and it
has been the cause of immense satisfac-
tion to those who have espoused its doc-
trine, it would have been a very trying
thing for us in the days of gloom through
which we have passed had we not been
assured in a very reliable way that God
would hear and answer our prayers, for
there have been many times when if
it had not been for this assurance and
this knowledge, the Latter-day Saints
would have sunk beneath the weight of
their afflictions, it is doubtful if they
could have endured them; but by hav-
ing this knowledge, by having received a
testimony concerning the willingness of
our Father in heaven to answer prayer,
and to deal with us as He dealt with
His ancient children, we have been com-
forted, we have been sustained, we have
been filled with hope and have been
cheered in our onward progress, and