

be persecuted, maligned and threatened, it ought not to make the least difference to us in regard to our enjoyment. Our trust should be in something higher than man. There is one Being whom we call our Father, and that is God, whom we should fear; we should hold Him in reverence and be so afraid that we would never do anything to offend Him or to grieve His Holy Spirit. But as for man! What is man? What is there about man that we should fear him? We have seen men in the plenitude of their power array themselves against the work of God, and they have passed away one after another; but the work of God lives and will live. Opposers may fight it, rave against it; organizations may be formed for the purpose of crushing it, but they will pass away just as sure as God has spoken and as we live. This work that God has established will roll forth. The power connected with it cannot be crushed. Men may apostatize, as many have done, but it will not affect the work. The three witnesses of this Book of Mormon, from which I have read—Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer and Martin Harris—two of them are now dead—testified all their days that an holy angel came and showed them the plates from which this book was translated—even they fell away. They disagreed with the Prophet Joseph, and fell away from the Church, one of them at least, because of unchastity, the cause most fruitful above all others of apostasy. When a man indulges in unchaste desires or practices he cannot stand in this Church, he will apostatize sooner or later unless he repents. One of the witnesses—Oliver Cowdery—upon whose head, with that of Joseph Smith, the hands of John the Baptist were laid, upon whose

head, in company with Joseph Smith, the hands of Peter, James and John were laid, even he fell away from this Church, and yet he never denied his testimony of the truth of this work, nor did Martin Harris. David Whitmer, the only surviving witness, is in the same condition. He, too, fell away from the Church during Joseph's lifetime, and became Joseph's enemy; but he never denied the truth of his testimony connected with the Book of Mormon, and still bears testimony to it today. These men, it might have been supposed, would have shaken the Church. Oliver Cowdery had the idea, notwithstanding the revelations he had received, that when he fell away the Church would receive a great shock. There were twelve men chosen as Apostles from the midst of the people, and of these twelve six fell away from the Church and ranged themselves against the Prophet of God. They were determined to destroy the work if they could. This reminds one of the parable of the ten virgins. There were five wise and five foolish; one-half of them were unprepared to go out and meet the bridegroom. So with the Apostles, half of them fell away. But did the Church stop? No; and if all the Apostles had apostatized it would not have arrested the onward progress of this work, for God has spoken concerning it, and His word will be fulfilled. And shall we fear man? Shall we fear earthly organizations? Shall we fear threats? Shall our knees tremble and our hands and our hearts falter because men array themselves against the work of God? If we do, then we mistake entirely its character. No such feeling enters into the heart of any faithful man or woman connected with this Church.