

The powers of darkness will gather around us and everything will look so threatening, so black and so impenetrable, that except to those who look at these things with the eye of faith, it will seem almost impossible for us to escape. There will be, doubtless, many such hours and many such times in our history in the future as there have been in the past. But what of that? As the trial may be, so will be the strength to endure it. There is a wise desire of the Lord our God in permitting these tests to our faith, to see whether in the midst of gloomy and threatening surroundings we shall falter, shall shrink and become timid and be overcome, or whether in the midst of this gloom, in the midst of these forbidding appearances, our faith will still be strong in our God, and in the promises, the precious promises, which He has made to us. Now we may calculate upon this just as sure as he has spoken.

There is this that is most extraordinary connected with us as a people. God in the beginning made a promise to us, which has been oft repeated, that notwithstanding all our enemies should do against us, we should have peace, peace should reign in our hearts and in our habitations, peace should be in our land and brood over us as a people. This is one of the great promises God made to us in the beginning. Read the closing verses of the 45th section of the Doctrine and Covenants and see what God has said concerning Zion, and the promises that are therein embodied respecting us as a people; that when other nations should be at war—when neighbor should rise against neighbor, when every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee to Zion for safety, in

Zion there should be peace. Now, as I have said, it is one of the most extraordinary features connected with this work of our God, that when it seemed as though the whole power of the nation was combining from every part of the land, execrations loading the air against the “Mormons” of Utah Territory, petitions coming up by thousands, popular prejudice appealing to popular prejudice and entreating the use of bayonets, of cannon and musketry to destroy us, and when it seemed as though Congress was in such a mood that it was ready to pass any law or to frame any enactment to accomplish those ends; that in the midst of all this unreasoning excitement, in Utah Territory, in the breasts of Latter-day Saints wherever they dwelt in these mountain fastnesses or scattered abroad among the nations of the earth, there was a spirit of unflinching peace, a spirit of quietude, a spirit of serenity, a spirit of calm and undismayed resignation, awaiting quietly and patiently the good providence of our God, knowing that in and of themselves they were helpless to defend themselves against these attacks, but having unshaken confidence in the promises which God had made to his people. O most wonderful! Most wonderful exhibition of calmness! Most wonderful exhibition of consistent faith! Most wonderful exhibition of fortitude, of courage, and of unflinching trust in the almighty power of that God whose existence so many in the world deny. A rare example to the nations of the earth of the willingness of a people to put their trust in their God, even to the very uttermost. Now, my brethren and sisters, if there is any great peculiarity connected with us as a people that is noticeable it is this: