

and not only the sons, but the daughters that are coupled with the sons, the wives that are coupled with the husbands, in this labor of love, the struggle for the maintenance of freedom and liberty. It is a source of satisfaction to me that the Lord has moved upon His servants and the Legislature of our Territory to be among the first to lead the van of human progress in the extension of the elective franchise to women as well as men, and to recognize the freedom and liberty which belongs to the fairer sex as well as the sterner; for the Gospel teaches that all things are to be done among us by common consent, and the Prophet Joseph commanded and introduced in our midst the custom we are following today, that of presenting to all the congregations of Israel, at our General Conferences, and our local or Stake Conferences, the General Authorities of the Church, to be justified or condemned by the voice of the people, to be upheld and sustained by the confidence, faith and prayers of the people; or otherwise to be reprobated by the votes of the people for their misdeeds or maladministration. These are things continually before the people, as well as the revelations which God has given unto us, and which are written and taught in our Sabbath schools and public gatherings, and to all who come within the scope of these instructions, viz., a love of freedom and liberty.

The leaders of this people are charged with being blind, leaders of the blind; and the people are charged with being blind, led by the blind. I deny the charge and brand it false. We know and understand perfectly that our leaders are neither blind nor are the people blind. On the contrary, we have received the light, the light of truth, the light of God.

We have come to the understanding that every soul of man, both male and female, high and low, is the offspring of God, that their spirits are immortal, eternal, intelligent beings, and that their entity depends upon their agency and independent action, which is neither trammelled by God himself nor allowed to be restrained by any of His creatures with His sanction and approval; that the whole theory of God's rule and government in heaven and on earth is founded upon this principle of agency—self, independent action. And it is upon the free and independent exercise of this agency that the decree of God is founded, that all men shall be judged according to the deeds done in the body, none having it in his power to say that he was not at liberty to exercise this agency untrammelled.

So far as relates to the administration of government and the exercise of political power, or the exercise of any manner of influence—political, religious or social—every man and every woman will be held accountable to God for the manner in which they exercise it. Kings and emperors, presidents and statesmen, judges and all officers of the law, will be held responsible for the administration of the power reposed in them. And if, while acting officially, they disregard their oath of office and violate the principles that should govern them, they become guilty of maladministration, and will be held accountable unto God, and should be strictly accountable to the people who place them in power. But every individual, in an individual capacity, will be held answerable to God for all his acts of whatsoever character, and so far as, in the exercise of that agency, men trespass upon the rights of their fel-