

INTEREST IN THE WORK OF GOD—FAITH IN THE DESTINY OF THE
 PEOPLE—“MORMONISM” A “KNOTTY PROBLEM”—NO FREEDOM FOR
 THE SAINTS—GOOD EFFECT OF SIFTING—GROWTH OF THE
 KINGDOM—COMMANDMENTS TO THE SAINTS—TRAVELS OF THE
 SAINTS COMPARED WITH JOURNEYINGS OF ANCIENT ISRAEL—
 INSPIRATION OF PRESIDENT YOUNG

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH, DELIVERED IN THE TABERNACLE,
 PROVO CITY, SUNDAY AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 3, 1882

Reported by John Irvine

I am deeply interested in the welfare of Zion. There is nothing that tends to benefit the people of God in the least degree in which I have not a deep and abiding interest. My feelings and desires are interwoven and centered in this latter-day work. I should have no other interest, desire, or feeling, and so far as I know I have not. I am thankful for this, because it does not seem to me to be any task to do, so far as I am capable, whatever the Lord calls me to do in the work of the ministry, or in the building up of Zion. I am proud to say this comes natural to me. I have no praise to bestow upon myself for it, and I ask none. I have no credit to claim on that score. I have this disposition and desire and I thank God for it. I feel that if Zion prospers all is well, and if Zion does not prosper, then my own happiness and prosperity is in jeopardy. For I expect nothing outside of the Gospel. I expect to gain no favors of the world. I do not court nor expect the love or sympathy of the ungodly. I do not care for their favor. I do not seek nor desire their society any further than it may be possible to do some good. If I am

sent to preach the Gospel to them I am willing to go and labor among them and do all the good I can; but when I get through with the labor that devolves upon me, by virtue of that calling and appointment, I feel—and I speak from experience when I say this—like other missionaries, most grateful for the privilege of getting home. I never was particularly pleased to go away. I went on a mission when I was quite a boy—some 25 years ago—and I have been engaged in missionary duties and labors more or less ever since. I have never been out of the harness, nor laid my armor on the shelf, nor have I sought to be released from that day to this. I have always been on the altar, so to speak, ready and willing to do whatever is required of me to the best of my ability. I am just as willing today as I ever was in my life. I expect to become more and more willing as I gain experience, as I get older—that is, if it is possible to advance in that direction, and I presume it is.

I have great faith in the destiny of this people. I never had any doubts or fears in regard to the destiny and final triumph of the people