

Those men who held the Priesthood—who were put to death in the flesh for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ—visited Joseph Smith. John the Baptist conferred upon him the Aaronic Priesthood; Peter, James and John, the Apostleship and Melchizedek Priesthood; and all the Prophets who held any keys and powers belonging to the Gospel these also visited Joseph Smith, and conferred upon him those keys and powers and authority to administer them on the earth. These are eternal truths, as the God of heaven lives, and they will prevail whether men believe them or not, or whether the wicked war against them or not. These truths belong to God Himself. He is the author of them. He has given forth certain decrees, and they will have their fulfillment in the earth.

Now, as far as the Latter-day Saints are concerned, I will say to my brethren and sisters, we ought to contemplate these principles. There is no power organized beneath the heavens that can stay the hand of Almighty God. He has set His hand to carry out His purposes. The world hate this people, because the Lord has called them forth out of the world, the same as He called His disciples of old. This is the position we occupy today, as His people. Though our numbers are small, yet "a little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation:" and the Lord will hasten it in His time. A little one has already become more than a thousand, or a hundred thousand, and in spite of all opposition this small one will become a great nation, and God will hasten it in His time, because God is our friend. Now, these are truths. They have emanated from God Himself.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the law of salvation. No man can be saved without it. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth—to Jew or Greek, Catholic, Methodist, Baptist, or any other sect or party on the face of the earth.

We, as Latter-day Saints, are called upon to build up Zion. We have been gathered to be instructed by inspiration and through the medium of the Holy Priesthood, in the principles of eternal truth. This is our condition today. Fifty-three years have passed since this work commenced. Joseph Smith dwelt in the flesh some fourteen years after he organized this Church. He holds the keys of this dispensation on both sides of the veil, and will hold them forever. God ordained him to perform a certain work. He performed it. He stayed on earth until his work was finished. All the keys, powers and principles which God gave unto him he left with his brethren; although whatsoever he left with his brethren did not take from him; for as Jesus says in a revelation given in regard to the Priesthood:

"Whoso is faithful unto the obtaining these two priesthods of which I have spoken, and the magnifying their calling, are sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies.

"And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father's kingdom; therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him.

"And this is according to the oath and the covenant which belongeth to the priesthood.

"But whoso breaketh this covenant after he hath received it, and altogether turneth therefrom, shall not have forgiveness of sins in this world nor in the world