

the land have come together. The land is here. The people have found the land which is so surprisingly fitted for their habitation. And there is no people that I know anything of, who can compete with us in these mountain valleys. They are ours by right of possession to begin with, by right of settlement, and they are ours by right of our capacity to inhabit and hold them, and they are ours by right of the blessing and the favor of God our Eternal Father, bestowed upon us and upon the land itself. And, as President Taylor suggests, they are ours by purchase as well as by those other rights.

Shall we be uprooted from this land? Shall we be extirpated? This is a question that presents itself very often, doubtless, to our mind. In the providence of our God, will we be permitted to maintain our foothold here, and to continue to increase and to spread? We have the answer to these questions in our own possession. It depends upon ourselves.

“Oh,” says one, “It don’t depend upon you, it depends upon another power. It depends upon this: whether you will abandon your peculiar practices; whether you will lay aside your peculiarities of doctrine and of religion, and conform to the views, to the institutions, and the practices that prevail in the nation of which you form a part.”

These are the comments of those who are not of us respecting this question or questions, which I have asked. They think it depends upon our abandonment of those peculiar features which make us a distinct people from the rest of the nation. On the other hand I state here in the presence of heaven, in the presence of the Great God, our Eternal

Father, that it does not depend upon this. It depends—I affirm it, and I am willing to stake my reputation upon it as a servant of God—it depends entirely, without question, without qualification; upon the Latter-day Saints themselves, whether they will continue to live in this land and to occupy it, and to enjoy the valleys and the peace which God has vouchsafed unto all who dwell here. I know that looking at matters naturally, we are in danger of being overwhelmed, extinguished. A people feeble as we are, a people possessing no greater resources than we have; a people of no greater numbers, of no greater wealth, of no greater influence in the earth—why, it would seem a bold and rash thing to say that we can withstand all opposition that may be brought against us. If God were to permit the world to launch its thunderbolts against this work; if God were to permit the world to unite against this work, to combine and to put in operation its forces against this work, I am willing to admit that there would be great danger of our complete overthrow and destruction, in fact it might be said there would be scarcely a question concerning it. But remember, my brethren and sisters, that this is the work of God. This is not the work of man. It has not been the wisdom of man that has guided this work. It has not been the wisdom of man that has sustained it. It has not been the wisdom of man which has defeated the plans of our enemies. It has been the wisdom and power of the Great God, our Eternal Father. He has chosen his instruments. But, then, how weak they are! How feeble they are! How insufficient their efforts and their words would be if He did not supplement them by the bestowal