

hind the most exquisite infliction of torture that any of the Saints have had to endure.” If you are faithful, you shall have the promised blessing pertaining to those characters who became partakers of the sufferings of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

When we look around us, what do we behold? We see the most unmistakable tokens of prosperity, peace, and plenty; the self-evident fruits of high heaven’s protecting care, industry, sobriety, and faith. What else do we behold? Wickedness—the hydra-headed monster, apostasy, dares to lift his head; thieves dare to prowl in our midst.

It seems, that no sooner can the Lord pour out His blessings upon His people, and Zion be favored for a season, than it becomes occasion for some to kick and flounder, turning their heel against that beneficent power unto whom they owe their being, their existences—who has fed them, and nurtured them, and led them, like as He did the Saints of old, all the day long.

What becomes the duty of the Saints under such circumstances? Do you realize that upon yourselves, in a great measure, depends your future prosperity, the prosperity of Zion’s cause, the extension and advancement of the cause of truth in the world? Do you consider that it is your duty to purify and sanctify your hearts before God, to put evil far from you, to resist the allurements, temptations, and devices of Satan, and thus panoplied in the bright armor of integrity, truth, and righteousness, with pure hearts, and clean hands, and arising in the strength, might, and majesty of the great Jehovah, put down iniquity, yea, with an eagle eye, ferret it out, and with a strong arm, hush in eternal silence every ingrate spirit, who profanes, with his unholy presence, the most holy place; who tramples under his feet, as a thing of

naught, those covenants, those most solemn obligations, which he has freely made? So shall Israel put away iniquity from their midst, and obtain and retain the favor of the Lord of Hosts.

Do you remember the history of the Gadiantons, as told in the Book of Mormon? We are surrounded by their descendants. Those loathsome, effeminate specimens of humanity, which we daily see in our midst, are their children, low, degraded, sunken to the lowest depths of human existence. We have our location amid their strongholds, where the ruins of their cities, towns, and fortifications are yet to be seen—they continue unto this day. Shall we, the Saints of the Most High God, who have been the special recipients of the oracles of life and salvation, to this generation, to all generations to come, to even those who have preceded us—shall we, through supineness and neglect, permit a foundation to be laid in our midst, for the ultimate triumph of wickedness, apostasy, and every abomination which maketh desolate? I tell you, if we do, we need go no farther in the progress of this work, for we shall most probably share the fate of those Gadiantons and their children. Better, far better, would it be for us to stop, and, in the first place, sweep from our midst and from our borders, every vestige of unmitigated wickedness and sin. If we do not put it down, it will put us down. If we do not, when we have the privilege, the opportunity, magnify our calling, fulfil our covenants, the Lord our God will withdraw His Spirit from our midst, as being unworthy and negligent servants.

I am aware that the devil raves and grows angry when the Saints prepare to build a temple. I am aware that he rummages every nook and corner, to gain the ascendant, seduce away, stir up strife, contention, and to hin-