

the only ones that were righteous. When Noah and his family had seen the dreadful wreck, the awful calamity, the heartrending scenes of distress and anguish, trouble and death, that overwhelmed the world—with all this staring them in the face, how soon his posterity departed from correct principles, and bowed their necks to the power of the adversary; how soon was the weakness of human nature made manifest! Consider the trouble, afflictions, war, and bloodshed that have come in consequence of all this, the fostering of evil passions in the human heart, and giving way to every kind of iniquity, being led captive by the devil at his will, until nation has been arrayed against nation, kingdom against kingdom, power against power, and authority against authority. Witness the human beings that have been slain, and the human carcasses that have been left to rot upon the battlefields; all this has been in consequence of not adhering to what is righteous, true, and holy.

Again, see the old Israelites. Abraham had been set apart, and selected by the Almighty, as a man who had proved faithful in all things, after being tried to the uttermost extremity. God positively said, "I know Abraham will fear me and command his children after him." Yet look at his children, and look at their seed in the wilderness, and when the arm of God had been stretched out in their behalf, see their rebellion, idolatry, and lasciviousness, and you will see fair specimens of poor, fallen, depraved human nature. Such was the case with them, and such has been the case in every age of the world. We cannot account for it upon any other principle, than that the God of this world has blinded, and does continue to blind, the hearts of the children of men, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of peace should shine in upon them, and they should be saved.

Wherein are we better than many of those of which we have spoken? God has revealed His truth to us; He has opened the heavens and sent forth His holy angels, has restored the holy Priesthood in as great power as ever it was in any age, and in fact greater; for we are now living in the dispensation of the fulness of times, when God has determined to gather all things in one, whether they be things in heaven or things in the earth; notwithstanding all this, are we much better than the ancient people we have just noticed? We can read the history of the people of this continent, in the Book of Mormon, of their faithfulness to God, and the principles of truth and righteousness, and the hand of God was stretched out in mighty power to save them from their enemies; and we read again of their destruction and overthrow in consequence of their departure from God. And among this people, who have been blessed with the light and revelations of God, who have been gathered from different nations, who have traveled thousands of miles for the privilege of listening to the oracles of eternal truth, of securing to themselves salvation, who have hailed with joy the message of mercy that has been extended to them, whose hearts in former times beat high with prospects of mingling with the Saints of God in Zion, and listening to the words of eternal life, what do we see even among them? The same specimen of fallen human nature; the same weakness, infirmities, and follies that have characterized men who have lived in former ages.

How many of us have fallen on the right hand and on the left; those we have judged to be men of intelligence, some of them have stepped aside in one shape and some in another. Some have given way to their corrupt appetites and passions, and have fallen in an evil hour, have lost the Spirit of