

or less, to darken the understanding and drive away from the heart that peaceable Spirit which whispers peace to the minds of the sons and daughters of God. I often reflect upon this subject much, and inquire in my own mind, and try to search out some of the causes of our being so far beneath the privileges which are guaranteed to us in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is not because the promises of God have failed. It is not because we are not worshipping the same Being whom the Saints worshipped in ancient days. It is not because there are insurmountable obstacles in our way; but the cause lies in our own selves. We are the individuals that shut out this light of heaven—this light of truth that would otherwise shine upon our understandings. Do you ever compare yourselves with those people that we read of in ancient times that were called the people of God? I mean some of the best of them. Not but that there were individuals who lived then, professing to be the children of God, who were just as imperfect in their ways and doings and conduct as some of us are. But, then, there were others who lived in ancient times who were far in advance of us. They attained to greater faith and to greater privileges than those we enjoy.

Where is there a servant of God in all the Church of Latter-day Saints that has enjoyed the same privileges that many of the first of the servants of God did 1,800 years ago on the Eastern continent? There are scarcely any. Have we beheld Jesus face to face? Have we conversed with him as Peter, James, and John, and the others of the Twelve did in that day and age of the world? No, we have not. There may have been some few exceptions. Have we attained even to the blessings of the lesser Priesthood, to say nothing about the higher blessings of the greater Priesthood? What are the

blessings promised to the lesser Priesthood? They are not only to hold authority and administer in the name of the Lord in temporal things, and administer in certain outward ordinances; but there are privileges that the lesser Priesthood enjoy far exceeding those temporal administrations. They were to have the privilege of conversing with angels. Did you ever reflect or realize how great a privilege this is?

Is it not a great privilege to go before the Lord and receive the ministration of angels, and instructions from their mouths with regard to what should be spoken to the people? But very few of the lesser Priesthood who sit under the sound of my voice, or who are to be found upon the whole earth, have attained to this privilege. If the lesser Priesthood have not attained to it, let us inquire concerning those that hold still higher authority, concerning the Elders, Seventies, High Priests, the Twelve, the various Bishops, and the various authorities and presiding Elders over different Branches and settlements. Have they even attained to the blessings of the lesser Priesthood? No. With the exception of a very few individuals who may have come up to their privileges, who may have had the visions of eternity opened to them, and may have conversed with angels, and received instructions with regard to their callings and duties, and what they shall say to the people; but, with the exception of these few individuals, the others are away in the background. And when we come to speak of the higher privileges, beyond that of receiving the administration of angels, you can scarcely find a man in all the Latter-day Kingdom that has come up to them. I have not. I speak it to my shame, and I speak it, as brother Gates spoke concerning himself, with shame, that I have not attained to