

hood, or the priesthood after the order of Aaron was made manifest more perfectly in the eyes of the people, bishops were called and their duties defined, requiring them to manage, in conjunction with the higher authorities, the temporal concerns of the Church. This organization continued to increase and grow, and become more and more perfect, until finally, temples were built to the name of the Lord, when the duties of these various councils of priesthood were, in a greater degree, made manifest before the people. The teachings were many that were imparted in those days, and a union began to exist among the Saints of God, such as had not been known among the inhabitants of the earth for many long generations.

After the completion of the Temple at Kirtland, and this more perfect organization had been established, the Saints of God began to increase and multiply to that extent that the Lord saw proper to place them in a country and land by themselves, where they could have a chance to enlarge their borders, to lengthen the cords of their habitation, to break forth on the left and on the right, and where there might be a majority in the land, and where they might have the privilege of serving the Lord their God, according to the dictates of their conscience.

Thus you see our Heavenly Father has been at work among this people, and with this people, for almost one half of a century, bringing together, gathering the branches of the wild olive tree from the distant nations of the earth and grafting them in and making them, as it were, one body, on this great western hemisphere.

You may ask, what great purpose the Lord has in thus organizing his people, year after year. The answer is, to accomplish a very important object, namely to make them like

unto one body, that there may be a most perfect union from the highest officer in the Church down to the lowest member; that there may be no disunion, no division of feeling or sentiment in regard to doctrine or ordinances or in any of the principles pertaining to the Gospel of the Son of God; and that there may be no division in our political ideas and sentiments, but that a perfect oneness may exist in the heart of every male and female, from the grayheaded old man down to the little child, that one feeling and one spirit may pervade the whole body, that they may be equal and bring forth the natural fruit again. That is the object; that is the reason why you behold the organization such as now exists throughout all these mountain regions. When has the Church, from its commencement exhibited what we now behold in all parts of our land—stakes of Zion having jurisdiction over every branch in the Church in these mountains, and over every family and every individual. And every one of these stakes has its presiding officer with his two counselors; and is also composed of numbers of wards over which bishops, with their counselors are appointed to preside.

What is the duty of the presiding officers of these stakes? To see that all things under their watchcare are conducted according to the order of God, to look to the spiritual concerns first, that pertain to their stake, and to see that the high priests, the seventies, the elders, the priests, the teachers, and the deacons are all doing their respective duties, according to the requirements of the Most High; and then they act as the presiding authority and power over the bishops that may be in the several wards of their stakes, seeing also that they are in the performance of their duty, in relation to temporal matters. And then