

and salvation over and above that which we understood many years ago? What is our standing in the midst of the people and before God today? These are plain questions, but pertinent; and we should propound these questions to ourselves often and thus become our own catechisers. If we find we are lacking in any one particular we should take immediate steps to remedy any defect, any neglect, and should cease any wrongdoing of which we may have been guilty. We can afford to serve God, but we cannot afford to take a contrary course; we cannot afford to apostatize and deny the truth; we cannot afford to become recreant to the principles we have espoused; we cannot afford to go back upon our covenants. We profess more. We declare more. I may use another term, which may be strictly correct, we pretend more than any other people upon the face of the earth. We have a right to do this, but when our pretensions are made known, when our professions become the property of others, to the extent that these pretensions are understood, we should be consistent therewith. Many of us were asked by our friends, will you not abandon "Mormonism?" No. Will you not leave the society of that people, and not go out to that wild wilderness country, but stay with us? We answered most emphatically, No. And our presence here today and for the many years that are past, testifies that that was what we meant, if we did not say so in so many words. Now the same scenes, the same conditions, the same society, the same influences, the same evils, unbidden, unsought for, undesired, have presumed to locate themselves in our midst. Shall we affiliate with that which we once

abandoned, drink with the drunken, shake hands with the evildoer, fraternize with the sinner, defile ourselves before God, and forsake the holy covenants that we have made? These are plain questions. We have gone too far; we have become possessed of too much understanding; we have professed too much to be able to afford to go back again and partake of any of the evils that we left in Babylon, years and years ago. And if we do so we shall do it at our own risk, and that risk and its consequences will be most terrible for us.

We are threatened, we are menaced; we feel it strongly, very sensitively, very keenly; and we shall remember well in the days, in the years and in the times that are to come the instruments that have made these threatenings, and that have dared to raise their arms and their voice and their influence against us, while in the pursuit of the principles of eternal life. What then is our course? In whom is our trust? In God; in his power; in his arm; in his strength. Have we not made his acquaintance? Has he not revealed himself to us in the Gospel that we have received? Do we feel tremulous in the day of trouble—that God will leave us and forsake us? Is this our condition? If it is we are not living our religion; if it is we are not keeping our covenants; if it is we have not cherished the influence of the Spirit of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, or it would produce other results.

It is true we number a very few people; numerically speaking our strength is weak. Many other things might be quoted concerning our position that are equally true; but understand this one thing—and the world of mankind will know it