

**LEADERS OF THE CHURCH INSPIRED—MAN'S FREE
AGENCY—TRUE INDEPENDENCE—JOSEPH SMITH ON
CHURCH GOVERNMENT—FALLEN CONDITION OF
MANKIND—GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM—NEW AND
EVERLASTING COVENANT—DIFFERENCE BETWEEN
SALVATION AND EXALTATION—TESTIMONY IN REGARD
TO PLURAL MARRIAGE—POLITICAL CRISIS—WHY THE
SAINTS ARE OPPOSED.**

DISCOURSE BY APOSTLE ERASTUS SNOW, DELIVERED AT THE QUARTERLY CONFERENCE,
PAROWAN, SUNDAY AFTERNOON, JUNE 24, 1883.

REPORTED BY JOHN IRVINE.

I want to say to the young men and the young ladies and to all the people—but especially our children, the youths in Israel—that the leaders of this people do not speak of themselves. That which they are striving to impress upon the people is of the Lord and not of man. The Latter-day Saints have not been gathered from the different nations of the earth, and brought together in these mountains to worship man, nor to serve man, to be their slaves, nor to be obedient unto man, and if anybody has such an idea or intention they have got hold of the wrong people. The people who are gathered here are not the people calculated to do such a thing. The faith we teach throws everybody upon their own responsibility; they are at liberty to act and choose for themselves, and all will be held responsible before God for their faith and conduct. The free agency of man is and always has been a prominent doctrine in this Church, and no one advocated it more strongly than the Prophet Joseph Smith. The free agency of man is inseparably connected with intelligence, as the revelations of God in the Doc-

trine and Covenants plainly and explicitly declare, that all intelligence is independent. Without this agency there would be no self-existence. And because of this agency, which existed in eternity before the worlds were, with intelligent beings, with our spirits when they existed in the spirit world—through the exercise of this agency Satan fell, and all those who clung to him and rebelled against our Heavenly Father. Brother Cannon has impressed us with the idea that obedience to correct principle, believing in the truth and living it and obeying it, is as good an evidence of independent thought and character—and perhaps a little more so—than to be disobedient; that no man, woman or child will be more independent by rejecting the truth, by disobeying correct laws and correct principles, than those who receive and obey the truth with contrite hearts. Now, what say you, you must all judge for yourselves, and choose what you will be. My experience and observation of the Latter-day Saints is that they are the hardest people I know anything about to either drive or lead in a wrong direc-