

speak in the name of the Lord, and I do not believe that any man should do this unless he can have the assistance of that spirit which God has promised to bestow upon His servants.

We who belong to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, believe in God; not a God who lived a few thousand years ago, but a God who lives today; a God who has a voice with which to speak today, and who has arms and a head, and bodily as well as spiritual powers, who can communicate His mind and His will unto His children, with the same facility in the days in which we live as He did in the days of the Savior and His disciples, or in the days of the prophets. If there is any feature characteristic of the present age that is more notable than another, it is the decay of faith in God. It is a characteristic of our age and time, and it is one that is increasingly manifesting itself among what are termed the Christian nations. I have myself frequently—especially of late years—been struck with the contrast between the present unbelief and the faith concerning God, which existed in the days when I first went out to preach the Gospel, or in the days of my youth. Skepticism is increasing on every hand, and if it were not for this Church, and the faith that is cherished by the Latter-day Saints, and which they are endeavoring to instill into the minds of their children, and of all unto whom they have access, there would be no Church of which I have any knowledge that, as a church, believes in God our Eternal Father, as he is described in the Scriptures—a God who can hear and answer—literally answer—the prayers of those who address Him in faith. The idea has become very prevalent of late years, in the so-called Chris-

tian world, that God does not interfere by any special providence in behalf of any people or of any individual; that He governs the universe and the earth upon which we stand, and the inhabitants of which we form a part, by grand and universal laws, and that those laws are never overruled. In other words, that there is no special interposition of providence in behalf of individuals or of peoples, but that the Lord rules by those grand laws which are applicable to all, and which all have to submit to, and that He does not concern Himself to listen unto the appeals of individuals in behalf of themselves, or of those in whom they are interested, or to have any special providence extended unto nations; and it is this feature of belief that causes mankind who are familiar with us, to entertain such ideas respecting our future as they frequently indulge in. You will often hear it said—I have heard it stated I may say hundreds of times when I have spoken to friends who are not of our faith, concerning the interposition of providence in our behalf; and the faith that we had respecting the deliverances that would be wrought out for us—I have been told that God is on the side of the strongest battalions, that God is on the side of the heaviest artillery; that God is on the side of the greatest numbers; and I have often provoked smiles of incredulity by the simple statement of our faith in God, and our hopes and anticipations concerning the care that He had had over us, the deliverances which He has wrought out for us, and the promises that He had made unto us concerning the future.

Upon this point and in this respect we differ, as I have remarked, from every people with whom I am acquainted—in this feature of our