

wine of the wrath of her fornication."

It has been charged to the Latter-day Saints that they set but little value upon the Christian Bible; that they criticize its translation and the revisions through which it has passed, and that it is our endeavor to belittle the importance of this holy book. The words which I have read are a portion of that sacred record which we are charged with undervaluing, and I choose them as a basis for my remarks, in order to show how groundless is that charge, with many others, which are made falsely against this people. The words you have heard include a prophecy uttered some 1,800 years ago by an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, one of the Twelve whom He chose in the days of His personal ministry upon the earth. He had delivered unto them the keys of the kingdom of heaven, promising them that whatsoever they bound on earth should be bound in heaven; whatsoever they loosed upon earth should be loosed in heaven; whosoever sins they should remit should be remitted, and whosoever sins they should retain should be retained. He gave them power to go forth to all nations and preach the Gospel of life and salvation, telling them among the last things He said that, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned;" and that certain signs should follow them that believed. The Apostles went forth baptizing in the name of the Lord, and confirmed His word by signs following.

On a certain occasion, towards the close of the career of the Son of God in the flesh, His disciples asked Him if He would at that time restore the Kingdom to Israel, and what would be the signs of His second coming

and of the end of the world. Among other things He told them that this Gospel of the Kingdom should be preached in all the world as a witness unto all nations and then should the end come. The Apostles set out upon the mission which had been given them, and we read in the Acts of the Apostles, and in their Epistles contained within the lids of this holy book, of the adventures which befell them, and the persecutions which they endured. It had been said of them by their Lord and Master, that they should be hated of all men for His name's sake; but "Blessed are ye," said He, "when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." And the day would come, He said, when they that put His disciples to death would think they were doing God's service.

Thus were the minds of the Apostles prepared for the fate which afterwards befell them. They embraced the truth, knowing that it might cost them their lives; for they had been told that if a man loved his life, or loved earthly possessions of any kind more than he did his God, more than he loved the work of that God, he was in no wise fit for His kingdom. They went into it with their eyes open; they knew what would befall them; but being men of integrity, men who loved truth, who based themselves upon principle, and thought more of doing the will of Him who sent them than they did of doing their own, they embraced their glorious mission and were willing even to lay down their lives for the sake of that Kingdom for which they were laboring.