

great captain at first, was exceedingly wrathful at the idea that God should propose to work upon him through such easy and simple forms; but the order through which he could be healed of his leprosy was prescribed of God, through the Prophet, and finally the Assyrian officer, through the plain, commonsense reasoning of his servant, concluded to waive his objections and comply with the requirements; and having done so received the promised blessing.

The first principles of the Gospel which we offer, and which put men in possession of the revelations of God, and a knowledge of this work, are precisely as simple, plain, and as easy of understanding as the order before alluded to, through which the heavens were opened to Naaman.

The Gospel was brought to our respective locations, far remote from these mountain vales. It found us citizens of various nations, speaking our respective languages, each possessing his peculiar notions and prejudices, with his associations, and a strong attachment to kindred, friends and country. However unpleasant, unkind, unjust, and inconsistent it might appear at first, we clearly foresaw that in receiving the Gospel we should be compelled to break off those associations, and sever those attachments, leaving the lands of our nativity, and go forth with our wives and our children to a distant land of which we had but little knowledge. Yet, a similar requisition was made upon the House of Israel, in the land of Egypt; also upon Noah and his family, and upon Abraham, and the family of Lot in the city of Sodom, and upon the families of Lehi and Ishmael, as mentioned in the Book of Mormon.

But, in the provisions of the Gospel which was offered to us, there were fairness and safety; it proposed to give, through obedience to its requirements, a perfect knowledge of its divine authenticity; so that, in leaving our kindred, breaking up our social relations, and going forth from our native lands, we should first become perfectly assured that it was no human contrivance—something gotten up to effect a political purpose or satisfy some worldly ambition, or to achieve some private end through human cunning or craftiness.

The Gospel was plain and simple in its requirements, and there could be no mistaking the precise nature of its blessings and promises, nor the manner and time in which they were to be secured.

The first feature, in this system, which struck us with surprise and arrested our attention, was its perfect similarity, in all its parts, with the Gospel as recorded in the New Testament. It required repentance, and a forsaking of sins, immersion in water for the remission of sins, with a promise that, through the laying on of hands by those having authority, people should receive the Holy Ghost, by which the knowledge would be obtained of the truth of the doctrine. Another remarkable feature, which called into exercise our most serious consideration, was the solemn testimony of the Elders, that they possessed the right to administer these sacred ordinances, by virtue of the Holy Priesthood committed to Joseph Smith, through the ministration of the Apostles, Peter, James and John. And furthermore, that this solemn and most important fact should be revealed to every man, upon his faithful obedience to the Gospel requirements.

In these propositions, though at