REMARKS

by Pres. B. Young, in the Tabernacle, in G. S. L. City May 20, 1866

                                                          Reported by G. D. Watt.

I have a few words to say to this congregation.  Very few of this vast concourse of people before me are <not-unaquainted> with the history of the Prophet Joseph Smith, a portion of which history has been <laid> presented before them to day, and on three different occasions previous to this.  There has been nothing related by Brothers Geo. A. Smith, and Alex. Mc<Gray>Rae to-day but what I am well aquainted with; that is, if I <am> have not <acquainted with the> seen all the incidents of Joseph's history which you have heard related, I am acquainted with them as you are aquainted with the circumstances that transpire in this City and in neighboring towns that you <did> do not see with your <yur> own eyes; but with which you are familiar.

I wish to speak perticularly and breifly of the character of Joseph Smith. The many charges which were brought against him of great crimes were entirely without foundation in truth, and the persecutions he received in consequence were entirely without cause, and almost without precedent.  The tirade of abuse which was hurled mercilessly against him and others was aimed through them at the truth --it was aimed against the preisthood of the Son of God which is again upon the earth-- it was aimed against the kingdom of God as it is this day.  It is the devil with his forces arrayed against Jesus Christ, and the few who accknowledge him upon the the earth.

While in Missouri Joseph Smith was not a military nor a civil officer, nor was he a politition; and he meddled with no person's business in the world; but sought to mind his own, and to save the children of men by preaching the Gospel. He was a private citizen of the United States, a man who faithfully observed law and order, as much so as any man that ever lived.  His public and private character was as well known to me as is my own to my most intimate friends. I never knew him to give <a> wrong counsel, or to do a wrong action; and if through the common weaknesses to which all men are heir, he ever <did> <do any> caused any person the  slightest injury greif, no man ever lived who could be more ready and willing to repent and make the fullest restitution than he was. He

had his weaknesses like other mortals, but that he ever gave a wrong counsel, or performed an act that could be justly   condemne<tion>d by the authorities of the country, I defy earth and hell to prove.  As a Citizen of the United States and in his religious carreer he stands <unseathed> unblemished by <wrong> individual wrong doing.

When he escaped from the hands of his persecutors in Missouri it was through the faith of the Saints, and by the power of God that was upon them.  Joseph understood this power and its efficasy to save from dangers the most imminent; therefore, no person ever saw him cast down in Spirit, nor did they ever see a shade of fear or despair <po> move a muscle of his face; but the spirit of his mission was upon him all the day long; he was always cheerful, and always had a word of comfort for his friends.  He was persecuted, and hated, thrust in dungons, and loaded with irons, and suffered cruel personal abuse, because he was a lover of the truth, and a faithful follower of the Lord Jesus Christ; because he received revelation from heaven, and the Holy Preisthood and the keys    thereof; because he had by the help of God established <a> the kingdom of God upon the earth; because the Lord had called him to step forth in this benighted generation to plant the standard of civil and religious liberty and freedom to every son and daughter of Adam -- to set up the Standard of Zion, and call upon all nations to come unto Christ and be saved.

He had the weaknesses that are sown in mortal flesh -- that all men are contaminated with more or less, but was he a just man?, No better man ever lived on the face of this earth from the days of Adam until now, Jesus Christ excepted.  He was a man of truth, a righteous man, a man possessing a high-toned morality, a man of sound judgement, and unclouded understanding.  I thus refer to Joseph Smith because the great bulk of this congregation were unaquainted          him,and only know him as they <have> read of him in history.   There is a few here who have passed through the circumstances with him which you have heard related here today, and which are called trials.

We have trials now, but they are light, and they were light to us then. When to all earthly appearance Josheph Smith and Hyram Smith and others could never escape alive from the hands of the mob, I knew that the Lord would deliver them, and fight the battles of His saints.  I knew that if we would take the counsel given to us through the servants of God, <that> there was not the least danger of His kingdom being destroyed.  It is necessary sometimes that the servants of God should seal their testemony with their blood; it was necessary for Joseph Smith to do so, and he did it like a man, and a Saint, and a martyr, and he will be crowned with crowns of glory, immortality and eternal lives.  <and> A little more let me tell this generation: no man of this <generation> dispensation will enter into the Celestail kingdom of God, without the permission of the Prophet Joseph Smith; this is true as God lives and as the eternities are.  He holds the keys of this dispensation, and no man in heaven, earth or hell can take them from him.  Let them war on against the kingdom of God, they will find out by and bye, that the Saints were persecuted for righteousness' sake.

I have thought of this to day: was Joseph Smith and his brethren persecuted in Missouri because he was a polygamist?  It was not thought of.  Is it not strange that they should persecute <the people of> the Saints when they did not beleive in polygamy?  Our enemies to-day would have us beleive that it is strange we could be persecuted for anything else.  Their persecutions and hatered of the Kingdom of God will be   the same to them as the struggles of an ox in the mire, whose endeavors to extricate himself only entangles him more and more <making> and causes him to sink deeper and deeper.  So it will be with those who persecute the Saints, until they sink into hell to reap a retributive reward.  They will sink away nationally and politically into insignificance, until they are pitied and dispised by all intellegent right-seeing men, and hated by one another more cordially than they now hate God and His Saints, until kingdoms will be cast down, and nation after nation will be broken up.  <This work has commenced with us.>

I heard Joseph Smith say about thirty two <many> years ago, when the State of Missouri refused to redress the wrongs of our brethren who were driven from Jackson County, if the Government of the United States and the State of Missourii did not take up that matter and redress the wrongs of this innocent people, they should have mob upon mob, until the country, east and west, north and south, <will> would be subject to one continuall scene of mob violence.  If we have not already seen the fulfilment of this, we will, for it will come, as the Lord lives, if we do not repent of our sins as a nation, and refrain from persecuting the innocent, and those that love and serve God according to the best of their ability.  Many of you will live to see mobs rule and reign, until the only law of the land will be mob law among all the people who will not serve God; and the time will come that he, who will not take up his sword against his neighbor, must needs flee to Zion.

I know that <these things are> it is hard for people to beleive any thing about Zion, who have no idea of it nor faith in it nor in God.  We have a good example of this in <old> Gen. Clark, when he said to us at Far West, Caldwell County, Missouri: <a few elders of this Church,> "0, that I

could invoke the Spirit of the unknown God to rest upon you and undeceive you, that you might no longer follow this fanaticism, but turn away from it and become as we are".  I heard this speech, but I was so disguised that my enemies did not know me.   I said to myself, I will see you in hell before I will quit my religion.  He said, "Gentlemen, you are the best people <that> who have ever been <in> in this State, You are the most industerious and peaceful people, and you have done more in this County, which has always been considered worth nothing, in three years than has been done in any county in this state.  Leave your religion; forsake it; we are not at war with you, but we wish you to dwell with us; you are the best mechanics we have, and <the best people we have in the country> we want your labor, but we want you to disperse among the people, of <and> the State, and live as we do".  That was, go to the grocery every Saturday and <have a> get drunk, <every religious> Some of the preists <there> who were in that country, <whom> <that we knew any thing about> at that time, would go with the people and <have a> get drunk, and race horses, etc.  <I said to myself: I shall not do it>. He further said, "You may desair of ever seeing your leaders again."  I said in my heart, You <lie> speak falsely; I shall see Joseph and Hyram again, and I know it.  He said:  <further>, You must not assemble together, and have bishops, High Councils, or any combinations whatever; you must not stay and plant another crop; for if you do, the people will be upon you, and if I am obliged to come to this place again, I shall not come with that clemency that I have this time.  I have discretionary power given me from the Governor to do as I please; <with> now, I say if you will break up your religious organization and disperse, and live with us, you are at liberty to do so; if <you> you will not do this, you must leave the State, etc., etc."

I think of a few of these circumstances sometimes; still, I would like to forget them, if it is right they should be forgotten; but when they are alluded to, I cannot help but think of them. <and talk of them>.  I try to forget that I ever was persecuted in Missouri, for my religion, that I ever was robbed of my property, and I try to persuade myself that I received from my fellow-citizens in Missouri, and that I still receive from my fellow citizens now permission to enjoy the immunities and the rights and privileges of an American Citizen, born and educated in America.  While I am being elbowed off from the enjoymento of my rights and privileges by unprincipled men, <yet> I <try to> still cling to my country and to its Constitution, like every true American should. I try to forget that I ever was driven from the States of Missourii and Illinois and was despoiled of my property by lawless mobs, and that I, to this day, have failed to obtain any redress whatever from the constituted authorites of <the> my country; but when I hear others talk of these sad occurences of the past I <am> cannot but think of them; yet, I try to feel that I am an American, that I belong to the soil of America, that I have drawn from the elements <and> of America all that composes my visible person.

Old Brother McBride, who was masacreed at Haun's Mill, passed through the revolutionary war, Many a hard battle had he fought for the <liberty of those constitutional> freedom of which that <those very> man enjoyed whyo hacked him to peices with an an old corn cutter.  My father was on his way at that time to Upper Missouri, and got as far as Huntsville, when a mob of <l00 men> one hundred men met him.  The<y> mob told himself and his fellow  <them> travelers <company> that, "if <they> we only knew that you were mormons <they> we would kill <kill them> you; we know you are emigrants from some of the States; <and> we call you Yankees, and you must turn about".   The mob took their wagon from them, and turned them back about one hundred miles.  My father was a soldier in the revolution<ary>.  After experiencing this violation of the Constitutional principles of freedom, he declared     that he wanted to live no longer; said he, "I have fought for the liberty of my country, and I would rather die than live to see it trampled upon by the inhabitants of the country whose liberty I have helped to secure." <I havae fought for.>

It appeared pretty hard in the eyes of many for us to go to Far West, to lay the corner stone of the Temple, according to the word of the Lord.  There w<as>ere nine of <us> the apostles there.  Some of the brethren said that we should not live to go there. I said we should live to go there and live to return again.  One thing was certain if we did not live to go there we <were> should die trying, for we were determined to fulfil all the Lord had spoken.  Our enemies far and near had said that there was one revelation that could not be fulfiled.  That revelation was given on the    8th of July, 1838; and was published in the Elders Journal, and went forth among the people; and our enemies <they> agreed that that revelation never could be fulfiled.  It was fulfiled, and we went our way rejoicing.

In regard to the Haun's Mill masacre, I will remark that it never would have occured if the Counsel of the prophet Joseph had been strictly obeyed.  To make an application of this to our own circumstances in these valleys  I will say, that I have  call scores around me to witness, and who will testify, that there never has been a settlement made outside of this <settlement> one called Great      Salt Lake City, or outside of this County, that those who made it have not been counseled to first build forts for their defence.  It has often been asked me how strong forts should be built to make our families secure?  The word has been given to the Saints in these valleys, as it was given to the Saints when they left Winter Quarters, to travel west into an Indian Country, "When you hitch your horses, do it so that the devil cannot get them"; "build your forts so that the devil cannot enter them,"  and then I will defy an Indian to do it.  There has never beena new settlement <built> commenced in this Territory <that has not> without the people being counseled to make a strong Fort before they took their women and children to it.  They have been counseled to build corrells in such position that they could cover them with their rifles, <within reach rifles shot of their forts>, that their stock could be defended at once upon the least sign of Indian interuption.  Our brethren have not faithfully followed this counsel; but they will go out to be killed by Indians as easily and kindly, and as unconcerned about their safety, as our stock are that are taken into the yard to be butchered.  The brethren cannot get rich <at this> by persueing this course; but when they have opened their farms, plannted their gardens, and built their houses, an Indian disturbance occurs, and they are have no place of safety to flee to; <but> and to save their lives and the lives of their wives and children and their stock they are obliged to vacate their new settlements, loosing a great amount of time and labor.

This is the kingdom of God, and <this Church and kingdom> is led by the revelations and counsels of God through the Holy Preisthood which He has restored.  If His counsels are obeyed, then shall we be saved temporaly and spiritually; if we slightly esteem them, we <shall> shall be scourged.  If any people in the world are upon safe ground, we are.  We beleive in God the Father, in Jesus Christ His Son, and in the Holy Ghost, we beleive in all the revelations which God has given to the ancients, contained in the Bible and in the Book of Mormon, and if there are any that are not contained in those books we beleive them.  And when we get more of the revelations of God, and <the> more of the history of His dealings with His people anciently, from the <ppla> untranslated plates of Nephi, we will beleive them.  We beleive all the revelations God has given through Joseph Smith and others in our day those that are published and many that are not -- and so we will continue to beleive on until by faith we shall atain to all the salvation which God has in store for His faithful children.

Who are the most secure, those who beleive all the counsels of God, and who are striveing constantly to live according to them, or those who lightly esteem them?  Which are realy standing upon the platform of salvation?  and which can claim, with the greatest confidence, salvation in their property, and life in the present and in the future state?  I would rather beleive two errors in the abundance of my faith than <than> through <my> unbeleife, run the risk of rejecting one truth  Who knows that Joseph Smith was not a prophet of God?  Who knows that this is not the true Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?  The devils in hell knew that Jesus Christ was a prophet and the Son of God, the saviour of the world, and they know that Joseph Smith was sent of God, and that this is the true Church of Jesus Christ.  The great majority of mankind do not beleive that Joseph Smith is a prophet, and that this is the true Church of Christ; and we do not care whether they beleive it or not, if they will only obey the words of truth and righteousness, and live a virteous and holy life, serving God and not sinning against him.

To say nothing about religion the life we <Pessess> live <in>, and the being we possess, demands of us all to do what good we can here, and do no evil.  If  we all did this faithfully, even then it would only make this world a tolerable place to live in in its present state; but to fight and war and contend and slay      each other do<es> no good, but creates unheard of misery, and damning sins, and such actions will sap the foundation <of> and bring about the <to> ruin of ny nation, and sink it into everlasting woe.  But war has become a refined art in our age; the ingenuity of man has been taxed to the uttermost to invent the most destructive weapons, and in         every age tens of thousands, I may say millions, of our race are slain upon the

battle field, <the> But there is no emporer king, potentate or president <that> who has ever lived upon the earth <that has> who has been the means of shedding the innocent blood of women and children, and perhaps of innocent men, but what will <has got to> reap his     reward in hell, and there is no help for it.  When one man is killed by the hand   of a murderer, it is truly a shocking circumstance; and the enormity of the crime is justly set forth in the public journals, and the murderer, if caught <is mu> and condemned, must give life for life.  This <is> murder upon a small scale is

horrible; but when at one fell blow the shattered remains of thousands are laid quivering in the agonies of death upon the battle feild, that field <it> is called a field of glory. The deed is considered heroic.  This is murder upon a large scale; the one leads its perpetrator to the gallows, the other to the top <upper>most round in the <hall> ladder of fame.

One murder makes a villain, millions make a hero.

But to return, Now recollect that <there was not one thing done> Joseph Smith simply attended to his garden, preached the gospel to his brethren, and to those who would come and hear him,  He visited Davis County and gave a little counsel to his brethren with regard to making new settlements, and paid attention to his own business from the 14 of March until the last of August, when the mob commenced their operations, when the whole state of Missourii was arraigned against that man of whom they knew nothing of only <what> as they could read in the public prints; and the cry was: "kill him, kill him," and this great cry came from the preists of Bail, who say they are preists of the true God, and the polititians echoed the sound, "kill him, kill him," when he was just as innocent of any crime as any man that ever lived. From the 14th of March to the last of  August was the only time that he lived in Missourii, and for this he was considered worthy of bonds, of imprisonment and death,     when he was guilty of no more wrong <whatever any more> than a little child.

May the Lord bless the good, and preserve His people and kingdom upon the earth, which is the prayer of all the Saints, until it shall reign triumphantly and a reign of peace be extended to all nations, and all be saved that can be saved. Amen.