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Benjamin Brown, 1794-1878

Autobiography (1794-1853) in Testimonies For The Truth
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PREFACE

My principal object, in writing the following brief history of my experience, was, in the first place, to preserve, for the benefit of my posterity, a record of some of the remarkable testimonies I have received.

But the deep feeling I entertain that the manifestations of the goodness of God, as here recorded, ought not to be buried in oblivion or forgetfulness, a desire to add my mite to the great ocean of testimony which the Lord has given on behalf of His Latter-day Work, and the request of several of my friends, have induced me to publish the history to the world.

That the following pages may do something towards removing the great darkness and unbelief that prevail, relative to revelations through the medium of visions, or other miraculous gifts, convincing some of the unchangeableness of the God of Heaven, in these respects, as well as helping to confirm those who already believe in these truths, is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

BENJAMIN BROWN

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TESTIMONIES FOR THE TRUTH

AUTHOR'S BIRTH AND PARENTAGE--EARLY RELIGIOUS IMPRESSIONS--
MARRIAGE--VISION OF HIS BROTHER, AND THE BIBLE--
THE DREAMS OF PREACHING--ATTENDS A "PROTRACTED MEETING"--
HIS IMPRESSIONS WHILST THERE--HE MEETS WITH THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS--
VISION OF TWO NEPHITE APOSTLES.

I was born on the 30th of September, in the year 1794, in the town of Queensbury, Washington County, state of New York. My father, Asa Brown, belonged to the denomination of "Friend Quakers." His business was that of a farmer. I worked with him chiefly until I was twenty years of age. During my boyhood I was much deprived of the benefits of education, owing to my father's removing from place to place, in new settlements, they affording him greater facilities for the purchase of cheap land than older ones. By these means he was enabled to have his children settle around him. Being thus brought up, far from the abodes of the religious sectaries of the day, my ideas of religion were just those which are naturally instilled into the mind by the statements of scripture, where no priestcraft to pervert them, diminish their force, or cloud their meaning, consequently I believed in the Bible just as it read, where the self-evident rendering of the context did not prove it figurative or parabolic.

The idea that revelation from God was unattainable in this age, or that the ancient gifts of the gospel had ceased forever, never entered my head, until I gathered the notion from the creeds of churches with which I became acquainted in after years. I can remember many times, on occasions of sickness amongst my relatives, while yet quite a boy, retiring to some barn, or other convenient place of the kind, and their being suddenly restored to health, in answer to prayers offered there, by me, in their behalf.

I continued thus until about fifteen years of age, when circumstances caused me to live in settlements where the sects of the day had established some of their churches, and I was unfortunate enough to hear their preaching. I soon began to lose my pure, simple ideas of God, and imbibe those more generally received, and, shortly after, by listening to the contending opinions of these parties, I found the hitherto simple Bible a perfect mystery.

I had previously been seriously and religiously inclined, but the jarrings and uncertainty of my new ideas shook that simple faith which I had reposed in the scriptures, and in God, until I began to mix with light or vain company. I at times thought little about such matters, but, in moments of reflection, the Spirit of the Lord would often show me the folly of my conduct, and bring to my remembrance the goodness of God manifested to me in past times.

The Universalist system appeared to me the most reasonable of the various denominations I came in contact with. The horrible hell and damnation theories of most of the other parties, in my idea, being inconsistent with the mercies and love of God. However, I did not actually join the Universalists. But their doctrine, with respect to the eternity of punishment, etc. savored to me of a more generous and godlike nature, than the contracted notions held by the other denominations, concerning God's purposes towards the human family.

Amidst all of the folly which, for short periods, I gave way to, a deep anxiety possessed me to find the truth, and I visited, and, to some extent, mingled with, the religious professors of many of the sects, at their meetings, and took part in the same.

About the age of twenty-five, I married, and settled on a small farm of my own. About nine or ten years later than this, after a fatiguing day's labor, I returned home one evening, and having partaken of my supper, turned my back to the fire, as my custom was, and leaned, with my head on my arms, on the chair top to rest myself and dry my clothes, which were moistened with the perspiration caused by the heat. My wife retired to rest, expecting me shortly to follow. Thus left alone, I was musing on things generally, but not particularly on any religious subject, when a vision of my brother, who had died some fourteen or fifteen years previous, appeared before me, praying. I heard his voice clearly and distinctly, and listened attentively. In the course of his prayer, he referred to a great work to be done on the earth during the last days, quoting several scriptures. I did not, however, fully comprehend the meaning of them, until, coming into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, years after, I saw the applicability of his words to the views of that people, with regard to the restoration of the gospel gifts, the great work of gathering the Saints of all nations in the last days, and the fullness of the Latter-day glory, for he particularly prayed for the hastening of these things.

Soon he disappeared from my view, when suddenly, to use a scripture phrase, a sound, as of a rushing mighty wind, with some accompanying influence, seemed to fill the house and myself, and I heard a voice saying--"This is the spirit of understanding." An open Bible appeared before me, so peculiarly placed, that I could see portions of several books of the

prophets and apostles at once. Directly I heard the above words, I began to read, understanding and intelligence burst upon my mind, and the glory and beauty that seemed to shine forth in the subjects treated of, no language can describe. The despatch with which I read, astonished me, for I seemed able to read a chapter in the time usually occupied in reading a verse, and the contents of a whole book were laid before my mind about as quickly as otherwise I could have perused a single chapter.

With the rapidity of lightning, various truths of the Bible were presented to my mind, and what each prophet or apostle had said on each particular subject met my eyes, in consecutive order, concentrated and connected, showing that each and all of those men, were inspired by the same Spirit, and had a distinct knowledge of the same grand events and glorious truths, particularly those which I had heard my brother pray about. I never before saw such connection between the scriptures. What one prophet had said on a subject met my sight, and directly, with the quickness of thought, I read what each of the other prophets or apostles had said about the same thing. I saw the whole at a glance, brought as it were to a focus. Such a chain of testimonies, and an interweaving of evidences, accompanied with that perception and comprehension which the Holy Ghost alone can give, none can realize, but those who have received that Spirit and revelations unto themselves. Such persons know just how it is.

I was disturbed, apparently in the midst of my vision, by my wife's calling to me, when the vision left me, and I felt just like a hungry man who is called or snatched suddenly away from a feast. But the joy and peace with which my spirit was filled remained with me, and I glorified God.

Things went on much as usual, till something like a year afterwards, when I had a singular dream, which, as it had a bearing on my future life, I will relate. I dreamed that I had been called to preach the gospel, and the first time I thus officiated, it was in a schoolhouse, in an adjoining town, with which I was well acquainted. I saw all the members of the congregation, which was small, and, when I awoke, I could distinctly remember the position each person occupied in the room. This so impressed my mind that I told my wife of it, and said I believed it would be realized, but she scouted the idea. What was I, a working man, to do with preaching! Well, at other times, it would have appeared equally foolish to myself, but it had been given to me that her mother, living at the place, knew by a dream the same thing, and I told this to my wife. At last she consented that if it turned out to be the case, she would believe the dream to be true.

In a day or so we paid her mother a visit, and found that she had dreamed, that night, that I was coming to preach in the town where she lived, and we learned, from her friends, that she had been entreating one of her relatives to carry her to my residence, that she might tell me of it. Although the truth of the dream was thus evidenced to me, I little thought what doctrines I was to preach, and in connection with what people or church. But I was to have greater evidence of the truth of my dream, as will be seen hereafter.

Five years more passed, and I was still unconnected with any religious party. At this time, what were called "Protracted Meetings," or religious services, continuing for days, and sometimes weeks, were very popular in America. In common with the rest of the "Universalists," I felt unfavorable to these meetings, but such magnificent reports of their results--the wholesale "conversion of souls," led me to attend one. I humbled myself, and determined to divest my mind of all prejudice, and put myself at least in a position to receive all the good that could be obtained. Before going, I covenanted with the Lord, that if he would reveal his mind and will unto me, whatever sacrifice or duty he might require at my hands, I would do it. Little did I think of the way my truthfulness would be tried, or possibly I might have shunned such a contract.

As soon as I began to attend, I felt the Spirit of the Lord operating upon me, so that I seemed filled to overflowing with its teachings, a continual stream of glorious truths passed through my mind, my happiness was great, and my mind was so absorbed in spiritual things, that all the time the meetings lasted, which was about fifteen days, I scarcely eat [sic] or drank anything. At other times, that which I subsisted on during these fifteen days, could not possibly have sustained life, but the Spirit of the Lord so operated on my system, that I felt full at the time, and had no desire to eat or partake of anything.

The subject of "Freemasonry" was just then agitating the public mind, so that many of the churches were divided about it, more especially the one to which most of the members attending this meeting belonged, being divided into "Masons" and "Anti-Masons." This meeting was called the "Masonic party." The other minister of the same church held Anti-Masonic principles, and refused to meet with the Masonic party, and kept most of his party away. This caused a great deal of quarrelling and contention, and much anger and bad feeling, of which I knew but little until afterwards. I had heard of the two parties, but had not interested myself in the matter, and consequently did not care much about it.

While sitting in the meeting, listening to the preaching, being much interested in what was being said, the Spirit of the Lord came upon me, and revealed that I was to visit the minister of the Anti-Masonic party, Judge Cushing, and tell him of his foolishness and wickedness in increasing the spirit of division between those who ought to be united as brethren in one common interest. It rained hard at the time, and feeling rather taken up with the preaching, I thought I would delay until the close of the meeting. This mission to me was a very hard task. How was I, a man from the thrashing-floor, to reprove a minister, and, moreover, a judge? But a few minutes had scarcely elapsed, before the Word of the Lord came to me again, with greater power than before, that I was to go at once! I had covenanted with the Lord, and I felt determined to fulfill, if it killed me; so I sprang to my feet, took my hat, and departed from the meeting.

I found the judge at a public inn, engaged in making some purchase. I requested to speak with him for a few minutes in private. He said he would attend to me presently. I sat down, but I had hardly done so before the Spirit of the Lord was again upon me, like fire in my bones, commanding me to deliver my message directly. I again requested to speak with the judge, stating that my business was urgent. He complied this time, and retired with me outside the house. The Spirit of the Lord gave me utterance, and filled my mouth with words, and I laid before him, in language which was given me, the impropriety of his conduct. The same Spirit bearing witness, the judge acknowledged his folly, said he would amend, and told me that he had had many sleepless nights on the same subject. He also said that, directly as I sat down, something told him for what I had come, although I was a stranger to him. In fact, he knew nearly as well before I had spoken, as after. This confirmed my faith that the Lord had sent me, but it was a great trial to my feelings at the time.

However, I had another trial to undergo, which occurred some days after, during the same meeting. While the minister was preaching, it was revealed to me to rise up and declare to the congregation, that they, before coming together to pray for the conversion of others, ought first to be reconciled one to the other, so that their gifts of prayer might be accepted by the Lord. The Spirit also said, that some in the congregation were guilty of oppressing the poor, taking unlawful usury, oppressing the hireling in his wages, and many other sins of the kind. I waited until the preacher had finished his discourse, during which the idea of having to rise and speak before this congregation of about fifteen hundred people, most of whom being members of Christian societies, I considered better persons than myself, filled me with fear, and the perspiration rolled off me profusely. Could such a thing have availed, I would sooner have given five hundred dollars than have buckled up to this task, but there was no escape, I had covenanted, and the moment the minister ceased speaking I delivered my message. It was received very well by the congregation, many fancying I was converted to their faith, and, being blessed with such gifts, a bit of a prize.

On coming out, two men, one a justice of the peace, and the other a colonel, came up to me. The justice asked why, if I had anything against him, I did not, as the scripture directs, go to him privately, and not expose him before all the congregation. The other said, "If you have got a man by the throat, you need not think that because it is pleasant to you, it is so to him." I told them that as the cap seemed to fit they might wear it. But I was much surprised, for I was not aware they were present.

About a day previous to the close of this meeting, I received a more important communication than either of the previous ones. A knowledge was given me that the ancient gifts of the gospel --speaking in tongues, the power to heal the sick, the spirit of prophecy, etc., were just about to be restored to the believers in Christ. The revelation was a perfect knowledge of the fact, so sure and certain, that I felt as though the truth had been stereotyped upon me. I knew it from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot--in the whole of my system, being filled with the Holy Ghost! I can compare it to nothing better than the change made on a clean sheet of paper by a printing press, leaving an indelible impression behind.

As the Spirit did not tell me to whom these things were to be restored, I at first fancied, in my ignorance, that the people with whom I had been meeting were about to be blessed with these things, so I joyfully visited the minister of the meeting, and laid before him the intelligence I had received. But, to my great astonishment, I met with an utter repulse. He told me, "It was all of the devil, for such things had ceased forever!" Had any one knocked me down with a beetle, I could not have felt more sensibly the opposition between the spirits by which we were actuated. I soon found, by the bold and determined way in which he fought against the principle of present revelation, etc., that it was not to him or his people that these gifts would be given. So I sought for them elsewhere. A few days after, curiosity led me to visit the Latter-day Saints, amongst whom I witnessed a fulfillment of the prediction, for I beheld a manifestation of the gifts of prophecy and tongues, and received the latter myself.

Notwithstanding that the above confirmation which I received of the truth of the Church of the Latter-day Saints, was very great, I did not feel sufficiently convinced to be induced to join them at once. I had experienced the Spirit of the Lord in a similar way elsewhere, so that when the elders of the Church, at this meeting, urged upon me to yield obedience to the gospel they preached, which possessed such evidences as the manifestation of the ancient gifts, I treated the elders very lightly, and replied, that as for the gift of tongues, I could speak in tongues as well as any of them. So I could, for directly one of them manifested this gift, the gift of tongues rested upon me, and gave me the same power. Thus did the devil seek to blind me, and turn that testimony which the Lord had given me for the truth, almost into an evidence against it!

However, I procured a Book of Mormon, and took it home to read, determined to investigate until I was fully satisfied. But I had scarcely begun to read, before I felt greatly to dislike the book. Ere I had perused ten pages, I rejected it altogether. Acting in this bigoted manner, I had resigned myself to the evil influence that was gaining power over me, so that, directly after, I felt a similar dislike seize me towards the Bible. Its statements of miracles, etc., appeared to me to be compounds of the grossest absurdity possible. I could see no light or good in it at all! and actually resolved never to read it again! But, oh! the darkness that seized me as soon as I had made this resolution! The light that was in me became darkness, and how great it was, no language can describe. All knowledge of religious truth seemed to forsake me, and if I attempted to quote scripture, my recollection failed, after the first word or so! So remarkable was this, that it excited reflection, and caused me to marvel, and finally I determined to repent of my resolve respecting the Bible, and I commenced to read again.

The book was hardly in my hand, when, as in a moment, my light and recollection returned as usual. This made me rejoice, and immediately the idea flashed across my mind, "What have you done with the Book of Mormon? Behave as fairly to that." I soon reproached it. But, even this time, I felt prejudiced against the book. I resolved, however, to read it through, and I persevered in its perusal, till I came to that part where Jesus, on visiting the continent of America, after his resurrection, grants the request of three of the twelve whom he had chosen, to permit them to live until his second coming on the earth (like unto John spoken of in the Bible). Here my mind half yielded to the belief which arose within me, that perhaps it might be true, whereupon I took the book and laid it before the Lord, and pleaded with him in prayer for a testimony whether it was true or false, and, as I found it stated that the three Nephites had power to show themselves to any persons they might wish, Jews or Gentiles, I asked the Lord to allow me to see them for a witness and testimony of the truth of the Book of Mormon, and I covenanted with him, if he complied with my request, that I would preach it even at the expense of my life, should it be necessary.

The Lord heard my prayer, and, about five days after, two of the three visited me in my bedroom. I did not see them come, but I found them there. One spoke to me for some time, and reproved me sharply on account of my behavior at the time when I first attended the meeting of the Saints, and treated so lightly the gift of tongues. He told me never, as long as I lived, to do so again, for I had grieved the Spirit of the Lord, by whose power that gift had been given. This personage spoke in the Nephite language, but I understood, by the Spirit which accompanied him, every word as plainly as if he had spoken in English. I recognized the language to be the same as that in which I had heard Father Fisher speak at the meeting. Such a rebuke, with such power, I never had in my life before or since, and never wish to have again. I was dumb before my rebuker, for I knew that what he said was right, and I felt deserving of it.

How these men went, I do not know, but directly they were gone, the Spirit of the Lord said to me, "Now, you know for yourself! You have seen and heard! If you now fall away, there is no forgiveness for you." Did I not know then, that the Book of Mormon was true, and that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of the Lord? Surely I did, and I do now, as surely as I know that I live. The world wonders at the zeal and faith of "Mormon" missionaries in diffusing their principles over the world; but the surprise of the world would soon cease did they know by what evidences the truth of the faith of the Latter-day Saints had been evidenced unto them, for by such proofs as the above, and by the revelations of the Holy Ghost, in tongues, prophesyings, visions, etc., has the work of the last days been attested unto thousands upon thousands, and in ways so peculiar, and attended with such circumstances, that no power of sophistry or reason can possibly show these proofs to be the effects of a fanatical mind or a diseased imagination.

And even could these proofs be overturned, the Latter-day Saints have the still stronger proofs found in the evidences of glorious principles, never before discovered, harmonizing with each other, and every known truth, and clearing up and connecting scripture statements from beginning to end, unlocking the great science of life, shedding light on our existence, and discovering, in the arrangement and combination of these truths, an infinite intelligence that none but a mind that knew the end from the beginning could display! Bear me witness, every spirit that has drunk at the fountain of these truths, the glory, majesty, sublimity, and completeness of which, have again and again made your hearts leap with joy, and cause you to feel that surely such principles are of God, for they have their Father's name enstamped upon their foreheads!

CHAPTER II

VISION OF THE LAST DAYS--BAPTISM OF THE AUTHOR AND FOUR OTHERS-- HIS WIFE'S DREAM AND BAPTISM--HE IS ORDAINED AN ELDER--VISITS KIRTLAND-- ON HIS RETURN, IS ATTACKED BY FEVER-- IS MIRACULOUSLY HEALED-- REVISITS KIRTLAND--BEGINS TO PREACH--MIRACULOUS HEALING OF A CANCER-- ACCIDENT AND MIRACULOUS HEALING OF JESSE W. CROSBY-- POISON MIRACULOUSLY NULLIFIED--CASTING OUT OF EVIL SPIRITS.

I was not baptized directly, as I hoped to have the pleasure of seeing my wife comply with the same ordinance, when we could enter the Church together. In the meantime I prosecuted my inquiries.

Shortly after inquiring of the Lord concerning the truth of the judgments preached by the Latter-day Saints as being at hand, and impending over this generation, I was shown, in answer, by a vision, the various scenes described in the revelations of the ancient prophets. The inhabitants of the earth appeared before me in their various occupations--plowing, sowing, fishing, and engaging in mechanical business. I saw them, under the infliction of the plagues, etc., lift their eyes towards heaven, curse God, and die. I also saw many other things as predicted by ancient prophets. Thus do I know the truth of the Bible, as well as of the Book of Mormon, and I am a witness for both!

A whole year and a half I deferred my baptism, still waiting for my wife, who, although at first favorable to "Mormonism," had become a determined enemy to the Church. When I went to hear the "Mormons" preach at Westfield, a village where the Twelve Apostles were holding their first conference, curiosity had drawn great numbers to hear them, so that they had crowded meetings all the time.

The second day of this conference, I, with four others, was baptized by Elder McLellin, and confirmed the same night. While undressing on the bank of the creek, preparing for the ordinance, Satan made a last effort to prevent my entering the Church. A man coming along by the waterside came up to me and said, "I wish to speak to you for a few minutes before you go into the water." Thinking of course that he was a friend, or a member of the Church, who intended to give me some instruction as to my behavior when in the water, I listened to him, and, having got me to retire some rods off, he said, "Have you heard what has come out?" "No," I replied, "what about?" "Why," he continued, "concerning the Mormons, it has been discovered that it is all an imposture, a regular hoax to deceive the people. The affair has just come to light. If you wait only a little, you'll hear all about it." At first this completely stunned me, for I was listening very attentively, considering him one of the Church, and for a moment I began to question, but quickly recollecting the

manifestations I had received, I told him he was a child of the devil, and I pushed past him to the water, and was baptized at once. This was on the 15th of May, 1835.

My wife, who had managed to be present when I was going to the water, and even threatened that she would not live with me, was, for a long while after, perhaps a year and a half, bitterly opposed to the work, but I knew from the Lord that she would come into the Church, and I told her so. As the way she was at last brought in was very curious, I will mention it. She dreamed one night that a large company of visitors had come to her house, for whom she had to prepare supper. On going into her buttery to procure the necessary food to cook, she could only find a small potato, about the size of a robin's egg, lying on a wooden trencher. However, with this small stock, she commenced, and by some wonderful means converted this little affair into a splendid preparation of pies, puddings, etc. When they were ready, she stood still, wondering how it had all been done, for, as may be supposed, it puzzled her sorely to conceive how, from a little potato, and that on a wooden trencher, she had produced such an elegant entertainment. Just at this moment, while she was thus marveling, I was awakened from my sleep, with a command sounding in my ears that I was to say to my wife, "don't you remember hearing that you should not despise the day of small things?" I was to speak at once, without waiting. So I awoke her, and without any preface did as I was bid.

The wonderful concurrence of these words with her dream, and the self-evident interpretation of it, referring as it did to her past conduct, (for one of the principal reasons of the opposition she felt to my joining the Church was, that she considered it disgraced her to have her husband belong to a Church that was so poor, and everywhere spoken against,) so impressed itself upon her mind, with other confirmations, that she was baptized, and has remained firm to the Church ever since.

When I had been in the Church about three months, I was ordained an elder, under the hands of Jared Carter. The next day, I, with my wife, went up to Kirtland, to visit the Saints living there. After a very happy time, during which the Book of Doctrine and Covenants was first presented to the Church, we started for home. While on the lakes, I was attacked by one of the lake fevers prevalent there, and became very ill indeed. I was, however, taken home and put to bed. The same day, two elders of the Church called in to see me, and, finding I was in such a condition, they laid their hands upon me. Whilst their hands were yet upon my head, I felt the disease remove from my body, commencing at the pit of my stomach, moving gradually upward towards the hand of the elders, and I was made perfectly whole. The same day, I was out at work milking my cows, and went round to invite my neighbors to hear the preaching in the evening. This was the first case of healing I had ever witnessed.

The succeeding winter, I again went up to Kirtland, to attend the dedication of the temple, and to meet with the solemn assembly that was there convened. There the Spirit of the Lord, as on the day of Pentecost, was profusely poured out. Hundreds of elders spoke in tongues, but many of them being young in the Church, and never having witnessed the manifestation of this gift before, felt a little alarmed. This caused the Prophet Joseph Smith to pray the Lord to withhold the Spirit. Joseph then instructed them on the nature of the gift of tongues, and the operation of the Spirit generally. We had a most glorious and never-to-be-forgotten time. Angels were seen by numbers present, and the first endowments were received. It was during this assembly that the Saints' favorite hymn was given by inspiration, commencing--

"The Spirit of God, like a fire, is burning!
The latter-day glory begins to come forth;

The visions and blessings of old are returning,

The angels are coming to visit the Earth."

The beauty and applicability of this hymn will be seen by the Saints, on reading the third and fourth verses, when it is recollected that this was a solemn assembly, and that the ordinance of washing of feet, etc., was just then being attended to.

It was also at this time that Elijah the Prophet appeared, and conferred upon Joseph the keys of turning the hearts of the

fathers to the children, previous to the reinstatement of the ordinance of baptism for the dead.

By this time, most of the members of the Pomphret [Pomfret] Branch, into which I had been baptized, were gathered up to Kirtland, the first gathering-place of the Saints; and I was left without anyone to counsel or direct me as to the way in which I should devote my labors in spreading the principles of truth, when one day the Word of the Lord, by the power of the Spirit, came unto me, saying, "I have fourteen sheep in Portland: go and gather them; then go south, where I have twenty-two more, and gather them also." I then began to preach for the first time, and for that purpose procured the school-room in Portland, and, through my friends, circulated a notice that I was going to preach. This gathered a small congregation of some thirty or forty people. At the time appointed I stood up to address them. As soon as I rose on my feet and looked on the congregation, the dream which I had had five years before, but which I had entirely forgotten, flashed across my recollection--there was the identical room I had seen with the very people and children, just in those positions in the place that I had described them to my wife years before, when I informed her that I dreamed I was called to preach the gospel! This was summer time.

I continued preaching at Portland until the winter came on, when, having baptized a few out of the place, they met at my house at Pomphret, on the Sundays, and on the week days I extended my labors in the south. As I was told, I found just fourteen in Portland, willing to obey the gospel, and by no exertion of mine could I get anymore; I also obtained, in the south, the twenty-two previously spoken of, but it was a year and a half before I completed the number.

Not long after receiving the office of elder, I was called to lay hands on a sister named Crowell, in Chautauque County, New York, who was afflicted with a cancer. Her life was despaired of by herself and all her neighbors, when she sent to me, and I was told to come that night if I wished to see her alive! Not being able to go then, I prayed the Lord to give her a good-night's rest. I visited her in the morning, and found that she had had a better night's rest than usual. I found her head, where the cancer had broken out, a dreadful sight, full of cancer worms, which were eating into the skull, three pieces of which had come out! I anointed her head with oil, and prayed the Lord in her behalf, and, being obliged, left immediately to attend to my hay. The next time I saw her was the following Sunday, when I met her at the meeting. She pulled off her cap, and showed me her head. It was entirely healed, and the flesh was as sound as ever. She said that within half an hour after my administering to her, she felt all the pain, which had previously been intense, and, to use her expression, "like a thousand gimlets boring into her brain," leave her entirely, and the wound healed up rapidly.

The Saints that I gathered at Portland, and that met at my house, were richly blessed with the various gifts of the Spirit--tongues, interpretations, prophecy, etc. I will relate an instance or two. One Sunday morning, while opening the meeting with prayer, the gift of tongues came upon me, but thinking of Paul's words, that it is sometimes wisdom not to speak in tongues, unless one is present who can interpret, and forgetting that a sister, possessing the gift of interpretation, was present, I quenched the Spirit, and it left me. Immediately, another brother broke out in tongues, the interpretation of which was, that, "the Lord knew we were anxious to learn of the affairs of our brethren in Missouri, and that if we would humble ourselves before him, and ask, he would reveal unto us the desires of our hearts." Missouri was some thousand miles from Portland. We accordingly bowed again in supplication before the Lord, and, after rising from our knees, and reseating ourselves, the same brother broke out singing in tongues, in a low, mournful strain. But judge our feelings when the interpretation was given, and was found to be some thirteen or fourteen verses of poetry, descriptive of affairs in Missouri, the murder of our brethren there, and telling us that just at that time--

"Our brethren lay bleeding on the ground,

With their wives and children weeping around."

We had so often proved the truth of similar communications, that we felt as assured of the truth of this shocking news, as though our eyes actually beheld the horrid sight. Our hearts were filled with sorrow. In a fortnight afterwards, we received a letter from John P. Green, a faithful elder of the Church in Missouri, who was, at the time he managed to write, secreted in the woods. The letter detailed and confirmed all the events previously revealed in tongues, proving that on the very day we had been informed of the transactions occurring a thousand miles off, the bleeding corpses of our brethren

lay stretched on the ground after the slaughter. It was either at or about this time, that the massacre at Haun's Mill took place.

When Elders Orson Hyde and Heber C. Kimball visited England, on the first mission to this country, and while we were yet ignorant of their success, it was revealed in tongues, at this same branch, that, just at the time we had the gift, these elders were standing with a multitude round some waters, attending to the ordinance of baptism. Information afterwards received from England confirmed this statement in all its parts.

Such things as these, oft repeated, confirmed our faith, and, I ask, is it wonderful, possessing such evidences that the Lord was with the Church, as those mentioned in the previous narrations, that neither reproach, drivings, burnings, robbings, nor even murderings, should be able to quench our love for the truths which had gained us such blessings? There was not a branch in the whole of the Church that did not possess abundance of such testimonies! Here in these and the following statements is the testimony of one individual only. But could I crowd into this little work all that I have witnessed of the kind, and then add to it the collected testimonies of the thousands in America alone, leaving out Europe altogether, it would present a flood of testimony of a mightier and more conclusive kind than has been given to authenticate any truth ever submitted to the world.

But priestly and secular opposers of "Mormonism" may ask, "How is it that we do not have such manifestations to convince us, and make true-hearted believers of us henceforth and forever?" The reason is this--where the "love of the truth" does not exist, no miraculous manifestation could impart it! and therefore none is given! The Lord wants the meek and humble in his Church, and where persons are not so he would not stir the leaves of a summer flower to induce them to join his people!

Many come, with their hearts buckled up to the highest point of resistance, before the elders of this Church, bitterly opposed to its truths, interfering as they do with popular creeds, endeared by custom, and many times coming in contact with something more beloved still--self-interests! and while under these feelings, which would lead such men to condemn anything as false which did not give them the evidences of power they asked for, or, if given, to attribute such evidences to the devil, those men require the Lord to be supplicated for some exertion of his power that they may be convinced! Are they worth it? Would they repay the trouble? Would untempered clay ever be fit to make a vessel of beauty? Never! Good materials, in the hands of a clever workman, may produce a perfect work, but bad never will, whether the workman be skillful or not. For should such characters, by the notoriety or influence of a miracle, be led to join this Church, not possessing that wholehearted love for truth, which would lead them to receive and advocate it, be its form or nature whatever it might, they are consequently without the necessary stability requisite to enable them to stand the shocks of prejudice and prior education, to which all are liable in a Church blessed with revelation!

The continually unfolding treasures of wisdom and knowledge, which have been hid up in Christ Jesus, the almighty contrast between the measures and notions of a God, and the puny, men-imposed ideas of the present time, would, most surely, sooner or later, prove too great for the contracted belief of such creatures, and from bosom friends they would turn to bosom enemies of the Church. What is the plain English of the above? Just this--all whose minds are not entirely open to conviction of truth, and filled with a determination to embrace it, come from wherever or in whatever fashion it may, even should it involve the renunciation of favorite creeds, or the loss of friends or salaries, are politely requested to "stand off," and keep out of the way of this Church! The Lord does not want them, neither do his servants--their mission is to others! Intelligence cleaveth unto intelligence, wisdom receiveth wisdom, and truth embraceth truth--this is a true principle, and the one by which the honest will be found out!

What is the object of my writing such things, then? Firstly, that the Lord's mercies may not go wholly unrecorded; and secondly, that those who are willing to believe in a revelation-giving God, may find their faith strengthened, until they obtain a knowledge that God is now as anciently, that he has neither lost the ability nor the will to prove the eternal sameness of his character in these respects!

One of the fourteen persons converted at Portland, was a young man, named Jesse W. Crosby, and, as he is well-known

to many in England, having since been president of one of the British conferences, and as it may prove interesting to many of the Saints, I will relate something that particularly affected him, occurring in his history.

He had been engaged with his brother, and brother-in-law, in felling trees in a wood, in an adjoining township. These three had felled some trees, and as they were standing very thick, one had, in falling, struck another, and broken off one of its limbs, which hung suspended by the other branches. It is a very common thing in forest country to see dry detached limbs hanging in this way for months, and sometimes years, without falling. This one was about ten or eleven feet long, and as thick as a man's thigh, and very high up the tree. Some of these trees grow from a hundred to a hundred and fifty feet high, and seventy feet above the ground before a single branch is found. Not apprehending danger, Jesse was working without his hat, just under this branch. Suddenly, a movement caused by the wind shook the tree, and the loose branch fell from a height of at least sixty feet, striking him on the crown of his head, crushing him to the earth. The violence of the blow broke in a portion of his skull, forming a hollow about as large as the palm of a man's hand. His neck and shoulders were also much injured. Altogether, a more deplorable object I never saw in my life.

He was carried home by his friends, most of whom were members of the Church, and his father, who was not a member, procured a doctor, who pronounced Jesse's case desperate, unless, on removing the broken part of the skull, it should be found that the skin of the brain was still entire, when, by using a silver plate over the exposed portion, a chance might still exist of his life. The doctor proceeded to cut into Jesse's head for that purpose, but was stopped by his mother, who strongly objected to this experiment, and sent for me to administer to him. I was then eight miles off, and at the time of my arrival he had not spoken, nor scarcely indicated any signs of life. Going into the room where he lay, I found it filled with the neighbors, who were mostly enemies of the Church. Sneers and jeers of "Here comes the Mormon, we'll soon see whether he can heal now," saluted my ears on all sides.

From a sign which I had received while on my way, I knew Jesse would recover, and being minded, on account of the reason given in the previous remarks, that such characters should not be privileged to behold a manifestation of the power of God, I, like Peter of old, cleared the house of all but Jesse's relatives, and administered to him in the name of the Lord. Jesse then recovered sufficiently to speak, after which he fell into a peaceful sleep, and, before morning, was altogether better. In less than four days, from the time of receiving this terrible accident, from which there seemed no human probability that he could recover, or, if he did, only to survive the loss of reason, he was again at work in the woods, hauling timber, the wound being entirely healed up. Since then, he, as an elder of this Church, has been on missions to various parts of the world, including England, and has lately fulfilled a mission to Nova Scotia. The above case of healing occurred in the winter.

Another very remarkable case of prophecy and healing came under my observation the following spring. A revelation was given by the Spirit, in tongues, to the effect, that one of our number would be poisoned by the enemies of the Church, and be brought nigh to death, but that if she was faithful and sent for the elders of the Church, she should be restored.

This warning was repeated twice at intervals of about a month. On the last occasion, in addition, it was stated that the person giving the interpretation would be the sufferer. This terrible idea so affected her, that she was completely overcome. After recovering, she proceeded home, and the weather being warm she drank of some sweetened water, which she had prepared in the morning, and had left in an exposed situation, for use. When she had done this the second time, she felt her mouth burn. She immediately declared she was poisoned, and commenced reaching (wretching) violently until she became blind. Her husband, after procuring a person to stay with her, left for one of the elders, but as he had to go some six miles before he returned with myself, she was, to all appearance, dead, and had not been perceived to breathe for an hour.

Upon arriving at the house, I asked the Lord to cause her to breathe, if she was to recover. Upon looking at her closely, I perceived that she gave two distinct gasps, such as are usually given when the breath is leaving the body. Had I not seen this, I should have concluded that she was dead, for the women who were watching with her said, directly we entered, that she was dead, and had been so an hour. I then administered to her in the name of Jesus, and prayed the Lord to preserve her life till my son-in-law returned with some oil which he had gone to procure. As soon as I had done this, she

was able to speak sufficiently, in a whisper, to ask for some water, but so great was her weakness, she fell over on her face when raised to receive the water. The oil arriving, we administered some to her internally, in the name of the Lord, when she arose without assistance, saying, "I am healed! I am well! but I am blind!" I then anointed her eyes, telling her that she should see the light of the day. Her sight immediately returned, and the next day, she, with her husband, was on her way to Illinois.

The cause of her going there so suddenly was that it had been given in tongues, directly after her recovery, that unless her husband departed at once from that place, both of them would be poisoned! With what had just occurred before their eyes, they needed no second warning this time. This was the same woman that was healed of the cancer, and she is now, I believe, in the valley of the Great Salt Lake.

Such things as these are "testimonies for the truth!" What truth? may be asked. Why, the truth that Jesus is the Christ, for he said that such things should follow his believers; and this is my witness that they have followed me. But if Jesus had been the impostor that infidels declare he was, would these signs have followed? No! Then these things are testimonies for that truth. They are also testimonies for the truth of "Mormonism," and a witness that the Latter-day Saints are true believers in Christ, for he never promised these signs would ever follow any but those who are true believers.

Many persons who "have the form of godliness, but deny the power thereof," argue, as a reason why the signs should not follow the believer, and as a justification for themselves not possessing the signs, that "if the miraculous signs had followed from the days of the Apostles to the present time, they would have been so common, that they would have ceased to be miracles, and therefore could not have been considered as an evidence of the truth of any system." Such people argue as if the more seldom an experiment is tried, the more it will prove!

Suppose I exhibit a piece of ice to an Indian, who has never beheld such a thing before, and I tell him that it can be dissolved by heat. I lay it before the fire in his presence, and he sees it turn into a liquid. Well, this is a miracle to him, and he knows that I taught him a truth. Now if I repeat the experiment, will he not be more sure of this than ever? "Certainly," you say. Then what would you think of a man who should argue, that "if the Indian was to stop long enough with me to see the operation a thousand times, it would become so common that it would cease to demonstrate the principle that ice can be dissolved by heat? Such an argument would be laughed at as absurd. But is it more absurd than to say, that "if the signs had followed in all ages, those signs would have been so common, that they would have ceased to be, to those who witnessed them," evidence of the truth of the system by which they were possessed. No man in his senses would believe such an argument, though he might allow that the rarity or novelty of such things would cease.

Two added to two will make four, if done by the schoolboy for the first time, and will do so just as much if performed by an aged accountant, who has done it a thousand times before. If believing in Jesus, and complying with his ordinances, when attended to aright, obtained the signs which demonstrated the truth of the gospel, eighteen hundred years ago, and the same had been repeated until the signs had become as common as pebble stones, the last time the signs followed they would have proved just as much as at the first. For if such things occurring in one age of the world were a monument to the truth of the gospel, when the same things are repeated every succeeding age, it but extends and strengthens that monument until it will become so firmly established, that no blasts of infidelity, or power of time, will be able to remove the monument from its place, but must leave it an eternal record of the truth to which it testifies.

The signs spoken of include the casting out of devils. This recalls to my remembrance something of the kind which occurred at the Pomphret Branch, previous to which I had had but very little experience as to what may be termed the physical power of the devil. I was then far from the body of the Church, consequently what I learned I had to find out by experience, having no one to tell me. The case was that of a sister, who was possessed, and whom I, with two other elders, was called upon to visit. Directly we entered her room, she called out, "Take your shoes from off your feet, this is holy ground, the Prophet Elijah is here." I saw the spirit by which she was influenced, so I walked up to her and said, "I am a servant of the Lord, I obey no command of the devil." She became uproarious directly, for all who had gone in previously, had complied with her directions.

As soon as we attempted to rebuke the evil spirit, in the name of the Lord, she arose up from the bed, on her feet, without apparently bending a joint in her body, stiff as a rod of iron. From this we saw the power with which we had to contend; and, failing at first to eject the spirit, we bowed ourselves in prayer before the Lord, and asked him to assist us. The evil spirit then came out full of fury, and as he passed by one of the brethren, seized him by both arms, and gripped them violently, [For similar instances of power see Elder Kimball's Journal.] and, passing towards me, something which by the feel appeared like a man's hand, grasped me by both sides of my face, and attempted to pull me sideways to the ground, but the hold appearing to slip I recovered my balance immediately. My face was sore for some days after this. The other brother that was seized was lame for a week afterwards.

As soon as this was done, the sister partially recovered, so much so that she obeyed anything I chose to tell her to do, whereas before she was perfectly ungovernable. Still she seemed to be surrounded by some evil influence. This puzzled us, for we knew the spirit was cast out, but we learned the cause afterwards. Just then it was revealed to us that if we went to sleep, the devil would enter one of the brethren. My nephew, Melvin Brown, neglected the warning, and composed himself to sleep in an armchair, whilst we were still watching with the sister. Directly he did so, the devil entered into him, and he became black in the face, and nearly suffocated. He awoke immediately, and motioned for us to lay hands on him, for he could not speak. We did so, and the evil spirit then left him, and he recovered at once.

About a week afterwards the same spirit reentered the sister, and this time fully confessed his character. In answer to our inquiries, he said his name was "Legion." This explained how it was that the woman, after we had cast out an evil spirit, was under an evil influence, for there must have been many spirits. [See case of Mary Magdalene.--Mark xvi, 9. The Lunatic.--Mark v.] He also reviled our priesthood, but he had to submit to it at last, saying to us, "O! you have the priesthood, have you? Well, then cast me out, command me to come out," trying to shake our faith, and thus incapacitate us to rebuke him successfully. Failing in this, he tried another method by entering me. I felt seized by a strange influence, and to every question put to the woman, I knew the answer she was going to give, for I was possessed by a similar spirit. This broke the chain of our union and strength, consequently I requested the elders to rebuke the evil spirit from me, after which, at our united rebuke, he left the woman.

Previous to this, the sister had been a very faithful Saint, and she ever afterwards was, but she had given the devil ground by encouraging a spirit contrary to the order of the Church, taking upon herself to rebuke the elders, and he claimed his right by virtue of her transgression. No doubt one object of the Lord's permitting him to exercise his physical power was to give me experience of such facts, without which I never could have known; but I, like many others who may read this record, might have argued my ignorance of such things, as a proof that they did not exist except in imagination. By "physical power" is meant such power as was manifested in the case of the man mentioned in the Gospels, who "could not be bound even with chains," so great was the strength of the devil by which he was possessed. I know very well that this religious generation are so fearful lest anyone should suppose there is any resemblance between their faith and practice, and those of the ancient church, that, after most vigorously asserting that "Apostles, Prophets, and other similarly inspired men, are done away; revelations are done away; visions are done away; tongues and prophecy are done away; healings and miracles are done away;" and, in a word, all external manifestations of the Holy Ghost, or the power of God, devils are added to this list of "done aways," and forsooth we are to rejoice and be exceeding glad.

Happy generation! Shall we say, where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise? They practically say it for themselves. What! they, "living in the blaze of gospel light, troubled with devils!" It is true that even now, sometimes, some are seized with strong afflictions called fits, which make them wallow on the ground, gnash their teeth, foam, tear their hair off their heads, and display such miraculous strength, that a dozen people cannot sometimes hold one person while under these strange affections. But what of that? Who but poor deluded "Mormons" would attribute such things to the power of the devil? May we ask what else they are caused by? Oh, they are caused by fits. Yes, but what are fits? "Why fits are--that is to say, we don't know what they are, except that they are fits." And this is all we can be told about the matter.

Then again, there are certain people called "madmen," who, generally, previous to their having "the disease," are quiet-going people enough, possessing no more bodily strength than anybody else, but who, through some "affection of the mind," have increased their bodily strength to such an extent, that they have to be manacled--bound with cords and fetters,

and put in great houses, where the windows have to be barred with iron, to protect them. "But these people are not possessed of devils, their brains are affected." Indeed, their brains are affected, as well as many other parts of their bodies, when the devil gets possession of them.

We are told these are mysteries. They were no mysteries anciently! But this generation, despising revelation as being requisite now, have lost the key of knowledge, and are consequently surrounded by phenomena which they cannot understand. And if the Bible does not happen to say anything about them, as such persons have no hope that God will, they are quite contented to die ignorant.

CHAPTER III

THE AUTHOR, WITH HIS FAMILY AND OTHERS, REMOVES TO NAUVOO-- HE AND HIS FAMILY FALL SICK-- HE IS MIRACULOUSLY HEALED THROUGH JOSEPH SMITH-- ACQUIRES CONSIDERABLE PROPERTY, AND BECOMES INTIMATELY ACQUAINTED WITH THE PROPHET--IS APPOINTED ON MISSIONS TO ALBANY AND THE EASTERN STATES; ALSO, WITH ELDER J. W. CROSBY, TO NOVA SCOTIA--THEY STAY TO PREACH IN JEFFERSON COUNTY, NEW YORK, AND RAISE SIX BRANCHES OF THE CHURCH-- TRAVEL THROUGH MONTREAL AND QUEBEC, TO NEW BRUNSWICK-- ARE INVITED TO PREACH THERE--BAPTISMS--PERSECUTION ARISES-- THE AUTHOR WAYLAID BY A MOB, BEATEN, AND LEFT FOR DEAD-- ATTACK ON THE HOUSE WHERE HE AND ELDER CROSBY WERE IN BED- THE MOB DISPERSED BY MRS. SHELTON--THEY RETURN AND REATTACK THE HOUSE-- ARE DISPERSED BY MR. SHELTON--TWO BRANCHES ORGANIZED.

The doctrine of gathering had been taught the Saints at Pomphret, and, in common with the others, I felt a great desire to gather up and live with the body of the Church. With this idea I endeavoured to dispose of my farm, but failure in my efforts to do this, was the only thing that saved me from a share in the Missouri persecutions.

The winter previous to the poisoning case, I sold my farm, and the time for me to vacate expired just before this took place. For several months I was preparing to remove, getting teams, wagons, etc. When the time arrived, with my wife and children, and part of the branch, including the woman who had been poisoned, and her husband, I started to find the Church, thinking it was still in Missouri, though we had heard that it had been mobbed and broken up. We journeyed until we came to Springfield, about a hundred miles from Nauvoo, where we met with some brethren, who had been driven out of Missouri, and who told us that the Church was collecting in Nauvoo, then called Commerce. We turned our course in that direction, and arrived there in June, the weather being very warm at the time.

We found Brothers Joseph Smith and Sydney Rigdon there, with a few others. The rest were coming in daily in a most distressed condition. Many of them were sick, and they had no house to enter when they arrived. The nature of the climate, combined with the hardships they had endured, soon made those ill who were, not so previously. Numbers of the sick and dying had to lie on the ground, with only a blanket over them. No springs or wells were handy, and the Mississippi waters were unfit to drink, so that many had to go miles for water to give to the afflicted. Sometimes one would go on horseback with a jug, and fetch a little for the sick, and take it round to them. It was frequently declared that the persecutions in Missouri were small matters compared to the miseries endured at this period in Nauvoo.

My family, with myself, were also taken sick, and I laid so for two or three weeks. I was so far gone that I was quite senseless, and all thought I was dying. Doubtless I should have died, but one day Joseph Smith was passing by my door, for I had managed to procure a house, and was called in, and, as I was afterwards informed, laid his hands upon me, and commanded me to rise and walk in the name of the Lord. The first thing I knew was that I found myself walking on the floor, perfectly well, and within ten minutes afterwards I was out of the house visiting my daughter, whom I had not seen for nearly a month. I felt so full of joy and happiness, that I was greatly surprised that everyone else was not as full of praise as myself. This was the second time that I had been healed instantly by the power of God, through his servants.

This man, Joseph Smith, was the one that the world says was an impostor, and a false prophet, and either deny that he

ever performed any miracle, or, if any are too well attested to be denied, attribute them to the power of the imagination over the body. Was it the power of imagination over the body, that cured me, when I did not even hear Joseph's voice, or know that any operation on my behalf was going on, until I found myself well? The honest in heart will judge righteously. Attempts had been made to build a city at this spot, previous to the entrance of the Saints, but all the inhabitants, with the exception of three or four families, had died, and the Saints used the deserted houses as far as they would go. It was a common saying among the inhabitants of the surrounding country, that, if the "Mormons" could live here, they could live anywhere. It truly was a most unhealthy spot, filled with ponds and stagnant waters, left by the overflowing of the Mississippi River, afflicting all the neighborhood with fevers and agues. From this condition I saw the city become, through the industry of the Saints, a healthy and prosperous place, being drained of these swamps, etc.

I lived there until I had accumulated a pretty handsome property. During this period, about seven years, I had frequent opportunities of continuing my acquaintance with Joseph Smith, seeing him mostly every day. From my actual knowledge, I can testify to the purity and uprightness of his life, and I know that he was a man of God. I had every opportunity to acquire this information, for, when escaping from his enemies, he has lived sometimes for a week at a time in my residence.

During this period, several missions were appointed me, one to the north of Albany, where I succeeded in baptizing a good number; another to the Eastern States. About a year previous to the death of Joseph, with Jesse W. Crosby, who had friends in that part, I was assigned a mission to Nova Scotia. Our route lay through Chicago, a distance of two hundred miles, which we walked. We then by steamer passed down the northern lakes to Buffalo, a journey of at least a thousand miles, and again took steamer on Lake Ontario, about four hundred miles further, and arrived at Sackett's Harbor. As we were destitute of means to prosecute our journey further, and as I had some relatives living at hand, we concluded to stop and preach awhile, until we could procure means to go on, but the weather coming on very cold, the waters froze up, and we were compelled to spend the winter in this place.

This brought me into the region of country where I had lived for ten years when a young man. The first place we commenced at was in the town of Lime, Jefferson County, New York. Here we procured a schoolhouse as usual. The custom in America in laying out townships, which are usually about six miles square, is in every two-mile lot to apportion a piece of land for a schoolhouse. When the schoolhouse is built, it is public property, and is vested in the hands of three trustees. This enabled us to sound the gospel in America easier, in some respects, than in England, for the consent of any two of the trustees had only to be obtained and we could use the room as much as we pleased after the school hours.

Two ministers, who usually occupied the room, greatly opposed us at the close of our preaching. They endeavoured to set the people against us, but these ministers displayed such a weak, mean spirit, that their congregation left them. One minister, who had a regular salary, with a small farm, for his preaching, had them taken from him, and many of his followers became members of the Church. We confined our labors chiefly to Jefferson County, where we found a few scattered members, and managed to raise up some six branches, consisting of about two hundred members. These were abundantly blessed with the gifts of tongues, prophecy, healings, etc., and the branches became very strong in the faith.

While we were here, I felt very anxious to know of the position of affairs at headquarters, and besought the Lord to enlighten me on the subject. He did so, revealing unto me, through the gift of tongues the interpretation of which was given to myself, many things concerning the Church, the temple ordinances at Nauvoo, and several other things, that I found, on my return to that place, to be strictly true.

Just at this time the spring was coming on, and the St. Lawrence River began to clear from ice, so that we were able to continue our journey to Nova Scotia. Previous to our departure we had a farewell meeting with the Saints. It was a delightful meeting, and they rejoiced much, for the Spirit of the Lord was greatly poured out. During the meeting, a little boy stood up and spoke in tongues, the tears rolling down his face all the time. The interpretation stated that, after leaving that place, I should go to another, where I should be mobbed and left for dead, and that the blood should run down from my head on my clothes and the ground. I took this for a timely warning, and thought that, by prudence, I might escape.

Accordingly, by great caution, I kept clear of much that I might have suffered.

We passed down the St. Lawrence River, and, after preaching a few times at Montreal, passed on to Quebec, where we distributed a few books, but the priests would not allow us to preach. At this place we wished to take the steamboat to Nova Scotia, but our means were inadequate, and the captain refused to lower the fare. Again we were frustrated in our purpose to proceed on our mission.

This was our position, when one day as I and Elder Crosby were walking about Quebec, wondering what we should do to accomplish our purpose, we came in contact with a gentleman, who told us a plan by which we might fulfil our mission--going on a sailing vessel to the mouth of the river Delieu, then by land to the headwaters of St. Johns River, (to) New Brunswick; he recommended us then to buy a canoe, and paddle down that river to the mouth, where we could for a small sum take ship any day for Nova Scotia.

This advice, we concluded to act upon, but, before we left Quebec, as our journey seemed to be diverted from its original purpose, I prayed the Lord to show us, in vision, those people among whom he wished us to stop, and confine our efforts, for our mission to Nova Scotia had been assigned to us at the request of Brother Crosby, whose friends lived in that part, and was more to comply with his desire than from any prior intention the Presidency had, with regard to the place.

Descending St. Johns River, in the canoe, we overtook a man on a raft, who asked us several questions, and finally we told him that we were preachers of the gospel. After hearing this, he invited us to stop at his house, about twenty miles further down the river, and preach there on Sunday. This we did. We had a large congregation, and found a fine opening for the spread of the truth.

At the close of the meeting, at which I preached, and Elder Crosby bore testimony, we were invited to dine with a family resident there. The wife of our host told us that, about two or three months before, the minister that had preached in that part of the country, left, and they were without any religious instructor, when she prayed the Lord to send some faithful person to supply his place. Thus engaged, she was shown in a vision two men, the elder of whom was preaching, but the other delivered an exhortation of a different kind. The doctrine, she said, was new to her, but it seemed true. She also recollected distinctly the clothes and appearance of these men, and, to her great surprise and pleasure, recognized them in Elder Crosby and myself, directly we entered the room. Of course our hearts were cheered at hearing this, and we felt assured that the Lord was working in the vineyard with his servants. Many, who find no difficulty in believing that the Lord, whom they declare all the while to be unchangeable, did such things anciently, [See case of Saul's vision of Ananias coming to him, and laying hands on him. Acts ix.] may think such things marvelous, and refuse to credit them, but the faith of such will condemn their practice.

We commenced to baptize soon after the foregoing occurrence, and the Spirit of the Lord was mightily poured out, in proportion to which the powers of darkness began to manifest themselves through the unbelievers. But that which enraged our opponents most was the baptism of some of the greatest men in the place. All manner of lies began to circulate about our conduct and intention. Amongst other things, it was stated that we were in the habit of interrupting public meetings, and many such statements were privately forwarded to the governor of New Brunswick by the religious ministers and other of our enemies. This led him to send down an order to three justices of the peace to convene a meeting, and produce whatever kind of evidence could be procured, either for or against, and report accordingly.

Before this meeting was held, we ascertained that these justices, who were our most bitter enemies, had been searching the law books for something to lay hold of us with, and had found an old statute, applying to the whole of the province, forbidding all dissenters to hold public religious services, without a written license from the governor. But the spirit of their purpose was shown by the fact that they had never put this law in force against the numerous dissenters that had flourished there--in fact, two of these justices were dissenters themselves.

The day of the meeting arrived, and all manner of witnesses that could be raked together were produced--amongst others a negro's evidence was taken, who had previously been convicted of taking a false oath. But for the purposes of this holy

tribunal this testimony was good enough! What mattered? He was not for the defense--upon which side of the question it did not occur to the justices, as a necessary thing, to call for any witnesses whatever.

I quickly discovered that it was high time to stir in the matter, or possibly the next discovery would be that we were inmates of a jail; so taking the advice of Squire Shelton, a gentleman whom we had baptized, I waited with him on Judge Bardsley, the judge of the county, who had frequently attended our meetings, and I procured a certificate from him that he had done so, and had heard nothing injurious to the people or the government. And with this and a similar certificate from Mr. Shelton, who was also a justice of the peace, Brother Crosby and I went to the governor's residence, and procured an interview, but we found him most terribly prejudiced against us, and very ignorant of law and gospel. He broke down, however, before the arguments of his aid-de-camp and counsel, who pleaded on our behalf, after battling with him for about two hours. The result was, that all law proceedings against us were stopped.

This enraged our enemies so much that our lives became endangered, and, to escape their violence, we had to sleep in the woods, and do our baptizing in the night, as their determination was to mob us the first opportunity. Unfortunately one of them overheard me promise to visit one of the brethren after I had been preaching one day. This mobber, with a party of about ten others, waylaid me. Some of them held me while the rest beat me about the head with their fists; but not being able to bruise me sufficiently in this manner, one of them took off one of my boots, and belabored me about the head with the heel of it, until I was covered with blood, which ran down onto my clothes and the ground. Some of them then threw me down, and jumped upon me with their knees, until they broke several of my ribs.

All this while I had been calling out loudly, whenever they did not stop my mouth. But it suddenly occurred to me that, if I feigned myself dead, they would leave me, thinking their murderous work accomplished, so I groaned loudly as if dying, and resigned myself into their hands, holding my breath as much as possible. This succeeded, the darkness of the night favoring my purpose, and they left me, and ran off as fast as they could. Directly they were gone, I arose, though with great difficulty, and went into a house not far from there, where I washed the blood off my person, and Elder Crosby, who also came there, laid hands upon me. The mob, however, by some means discovering that I was not yet dead, and that Elder Crosby was with me, met and resolved to attack the house that night, and, if possible, get possession of both of us, after which they purposed to cut off Elder Crosby's ears, tar and feather us, carry us out into the middle of St. Johns River, and, after tying stones to our feet, sink us both.

The first intimation that we received of this determination was by a wooden rail being hurled against the window. The rail broke through the window, came in upon the bed where we were sleeping, and awoke us both. We immediately sprang up, and Elder Crosby rushed to the door where they were hammering to get in. He held it as well as he could, but in another moment they would have succeeded, had not Mrs. Shelton, who had been alarmed by the noise, come upon them unexpectedly with a lighted candle, and surprised them in the act. This frightened them, and alarmed lest they should be known, they fled with the rest that had been posted at the other parts of the house.

We were quiet after this for about an hour, and Justice Shelton, at whose house we were stopping, went to alarm the neighbors, and his son who lived some distance off, so that we might have assistance in case of the mob returning. The mob returned while he was gone, having recruited their spirits with whiskey. They made a second attack upon the house, trying another door this time. But Elder Crosby held the door, with an iron grasp, and the resolution of a lion, so they were again unsuccessful.

After drinking round, they tried a third time, and one of them managed to get his arm through the door opening, but while doing so he was caught round the waist in the arms of Mr. Shelton's son, who, with several others, entered the place at that moment. And thus the Lord delivered us out of their hands, for they were not long dispersing themselves after this. Several of them were recognized by our friends. These Mr. Shelton put under bonds, but they threatened to burn his house and barn, if he attempted to prosecute, and fearing that the government, from its dislike to the Saints, would refuse to back him up, he was compelled to let these mobbers go, and we remained without redress. In the foregoing recital, the reader will perceive how fully the word of the Lord, spoken in tongues by the youth, before we left Jefferson County, was fulfilled.

The next day, by the blessing of God, I recovered sufficiently to walk seventeen miles and preach, but my face was discolored, and I could only see with one eye. I took for my text Paul's words, "thrice have I been beaten with stripes, etc.," and, as may be supposed, my personal appearance furnished a very favorable evidence on behalf of my argument, that the same effects--violence and death, followed the preaching of the gospel in these days, as did anciently.

Notwithstanding the above, we did not leave the country, but continued to preach, fearless of opposition, until we had baptized about fifty, out of which we organized two branches. These were also visited abundantly with the signs following, and the Saints rejoiced greatly in the work. The persecution was a failure in Satan's calculation, it only excited curiosity, and awakened attention to our principles.

Many writers against the Latter-day Saints, not wishing to allow that it is God's providence that sustained and gave prosperity to them under the persecutions they have met with, have argued that it is the natural tendency of persecution to help rather than hinder those against whom it is directed. This is not disputed, for without doubt the Lord would not have permitted the Saints to have been persecuted had he not known that the "natural tendency" of it was for their good. Therefore, this argument only proves the Lord's providence to have been in their favor. But although persecution, in one view, may have benefitted the truth, it was not that that gave the Saints their love to Joseph Smith and his principles, and enabled the Saints to stand by him and his principles, even to the shedding of blood. Verily no! it was the individual knowledge the Saints had received by revelation from God, unto themselves, that gave them their strength and fortitude. For instance, was it persecution that made the narrator of the foregoing facts, firm to the cause of "Mormonism," through journeyings, hardships, and mobbings? No! all that persecution did for him was to establish still more firmly that which he already knew--that Satan was opposed to "Mormonism." For he naturally argued thus--"here is persecution, now as the Lord or his servants never persecute, my enemies must be influenced by some other power, which must come from beneath; I am opposed to that power, therefore I am on the Lord's side;" and he rejoiced accordingly, and felt to cling more closely to a people opposed from such a quarter. Here it will be seen that the mainstay of his attachment to this people did not lie in the "natural tendency" of persecution to bind the persecuted ones together, but in the "natural tendency" of revelation from God to give stability and firmness to the character, although he certainly gained additional testimony to the truths he believed in, by observing the fiendish source from which such opposition came.

CHAPTER IV

THE AUTHOR RETURNS TO NAUVOO--IS SENT TO JEFFERSON COUNTY ON A TITHING MISSION--
 RETURNS WITH A THOUSAND DOLLARS--SELLS HIS PROPERTY, AND MOVES WEST WITH THE CHURCH--
 STAYS AT "WINTER QUARTERS"-- IS ORDAINED BISHOP--SCURVY IN CAMP--HIRES HIMSELF IN
 MISSOURI-- MOVES OUT OF "WINTER QUARTERS"--ARRIVES IN SALT LAKE VALLEY-- DEARTH OF
 CLOTHES, GROCERIES, AND FARMING AND MECHANICAL IMPLEMENTS-- UNEXPECTED SUPPLY BY THE
 CALIFORNIA GOLD DIGGERS-- HE IS APPOINTED ON A MISSION TO ENGLAND-- TRAVELS OVER THE
 PLAINS AND OCEAN--ARRIVES IN ENGLAND.

The work in New Brunswick rolled on prosperously, but the time came when we had calculated to be at home. We had heard too that our beloved Prophet had been murdered in Carthage Jail, and we naturally felt anxious to know how things were with our families and friends at Nauvoo. Our parting with the Saints in New Brunswick was not very pleasant, as may be supposed. As we were leaving the place, while stopping by some water, waiting to cross by means of the ferry, we were overtaken by two persons, who requested us to baptize them. This we did, and confirmed them on the spot--such was the spirit of the work in that region. We returned by way of Boston, where I left Brother Crosby.

I arrived at Nauvoo safely, but I had scarcely been there three weeks before I was again sent to Jefferson County, this time on a tithing mission. I got back in about four months, carrying with me about a thousand dollars which the Saints donated towards building the temple of the Lord.

While I was on my mission to New Brunswick, the Church agreed with the mobs to leave Nauvoo by the next grass time--spring, so that when I returned the second time, the city was all in excitement. All that could were selling out, some were

disposing of their things by auction, for whatever could be got, while others would take cartloads of furniture out into the country, and as it was termed, "swap" it for money or cattle; for, ready or not ready, the mob meant to have the Saints out by the time stated.

My property was rather more pleasantly situated than many others, and I succeeded in getting the munificent sum of 250 dollars for my house and orchard, the nursery to which contained six thousand grafted young fruit trees, and was worth three thousand dollars, at least. Many of the Saints would have been glad to have got off with no greater sacrifice than myself, but as the time drew near, the prices offered for our property fell in proportion. Some of the Saints did not get half as much as I did, for property equally valuable. Others got nothing at all, but had to leave their houses just as they were, and those living in the outskirts of the city were saved the sacrifice of selling their houses for less than their worth, for the mob burned about three hundred of them down, and destroyed the property of the owners. The Saints were hard at work all the winter making wagons. The people that came into the city were astonished to see the hundreds and thousands of wagons that were turned out in a few months. In February, 1846, the authorities took the lead, crossed the river Mississippi with a large camp, and stopped some seven or eight miles from the water, on the other side, waiting for the snow to go off, which just then had fallen heavily. In consequence of this, they had no food for their cattle, and being at the end of regular settlements, had great difficulty in procuring any food, but as soon as possible they were on the move.

When the general emigration of the main body of the Church came on, it was pretty much all at once. On the Nauvoo side of the river, two or three hundred wagons were waiting at one time for the ferry. In these wagons the Saints had to sleep, cooking their food on the beach. Although all the boats and ferries that could be had were employed, this state of things continued for upwards of a month.

All the opposite shore was covered with wagons, in which the Saints were living, but multitudes were without any protection from the weather, except tents made with blankets, under one of which a whole family had to live. A scene of human suffering and endurance for the gospel's sake, on so large a scale, has seldom, if ever, before, been seen on earth. The sufferings of the Saints during their expulsion from Missouri, and their entrance to Nauvoo, were perhaps more intense, but not so many Saints endured them. Picture, dear reader, to yourself, the case of thousands--they had been mobbed and plundered in Missouri, had escaped only as fugitives, and had arrived at a new location, Nauvoo, only to see their families die off around them by the fever and ague of that place. After surviving these troubles, cheering up, beginning life afresh, and seeing this abode of death converted, by incessant toil, into a garden of health and prosperity, fancy to yourself the feelings of the Saints when called upon to resign these blessings, made doubly valuable by being so dearly paid for, and to exchange them for a barren wilderness, a prospect of a thousand miles journey across untracked plains and mountains, and the probability of death on the journey, or of starvation afterwards.

Will the annals of history present a similar case? The exodus of Moses and his bands was not equal to it, for he had a goodly land to promise his hosts, a land flowing with milk and honey, to cheer their spirits up. They only had to enter upon the already cultivated land of their enemies. But here were twenty thousand people, starting to locate a thousand miles beyond the borders of civilized life, over what had always been considered impassable mountains. Reports had arrived of Colonel Fremont's exploration, and the hardships he had suffered, but here were not only men, but thousands of women and children, starting on the same hazardous journey, not only temporarily to endure these difficulties, but proposing to make a settled home in those dreary wilds, and live where they were told not a spear of wheat could be raised. Notwithstanding all these things, the recollection of past hardships, and the prospect of those in the future, the Saints were not dispirited, but from their abodes ascended the sound of joy and of rejoicing, to think that they had at last a prospect of getting beyond the power of their enemies. For this deliverance, though at such a price, the Saints praised the Lord in the song and in the dance.

Shortly the first camp moved on, and the rest of the Saints came up to it in succession, but not until the first camp had crossed the Missouri River. Here the command was, "Stop and raise grain to go on with next year," for we had a thousand miles journey ahead, and not a settlement on the road; besides, unless we had wished to starve, we must have had grain to sow our lands when we had got there. So, at the word, a spot was selected, and, before many weeks had passed, lands in all directions were fenced in, and a city, composed of roughly-built houses and wagons, and called

"Winter Quarters," sprung up into existence. As the winter was, however, just coming on, of course we could not put in any grain until the next spring. We began, then, more than ever, to feel the destitution of our position, for want of vegetables had brought on the scurvy, the provisions of many became exhausted, and our prospects of a fresh supply seemed rather distant. The city was laid out in wards, over each of which a bishop was appointed. One of these wards was committed to me, and this of course entailed upon me the care of the poor--no trifling matter under such circumstances. It would take no small space to describe all the expedients to which I was often driven in fulfillment of this duty, for the little stock I had of my own was soon gone, and still the poor had not done eating. What was to be done? I went to President Young, and very pathetically told him "that all my grain was gone, and I had not the first shilling in my possession with which to get any more grain." All the consolation I got from him was some instruction to "feed them well, and take care they have enough to eat," and it would not do for a Saint to say he could not. So I had to scheme. I borrowed ten dollars from a sister who possessed a small store. I then crossed the Missouri River, and laid the money out in meal and some meat. But when this was gone I had to borrow of someone else to pay her, and then of someone else to pay him. I borrowed until I made my debt up to fifty dollars, and no more chance of payment appeared than at the first. Who would not have been a bishop then? Fortunately, just at this juncture, the lost cattle of one who had died in my ward came into my hands, and I sold them for fifty dollars. I paid my debt, and I was just right, and ready to commence borrowing again, with a clear conscience.

In those times, the bishops had plenty of work, if no one else had, and some of it sorrowful enough, for our graveyards began to fill up rapidly. Here our situation much resembled that of our entrance into Nauvoo at the first, for stagnant waters, that had been left on the banks through an overflow of the river, combined with the rotting of an overluxurious vegetation, impregnated the air with death. After a time, the blackleg scurvy, one of the diseases by which we were afflicted, began to cease, for we had obtained vegetables from Missouri, and as the spring came on we procured fresh fish, which further varied our diet.

The pioneers started for the mountains to seek out a resting place for the Saints, and the body of those that remained began to raise grain. I and many others left our families, went down into Missouri, and hired ourselves out to obtain means to buy teams, clothes, flour, etc., so that we might follow the pioneers' camp when the time arrived.

At this time we had an indistinct idea that, some day or other, after arriving at our new home, we should do something in the way of manufacturing things for ourselves. But it looked almost like a forlorn hope. Articles of diet, such as tea, coffee, sugar, with every species of clothing, were eagerly stored up as possibly the last we should ever see. We were instructed to use none but our old clothes, and save the best, as it was firmly believed that we should be driven to adorn ourselves in deer and sheepskins for want of better attire. This did not shake our faith and resolution--such matters were light work for men who had tried and proved the Divinity of the Church on whose behalf they suffered.

When the time arrived, the Saints moved out promiscuously, and, after crossing the Elk Horn River, they were organized into two large divisions called Brigham and Heber's companies. These were subdivided into smaller companies of hundreds, fifties, and tens, and in this way the Saints proceeded across the plains.

The particulars of this wonderful exodus are already in many forms before the public, therefore, it is only necessary to say that we travelled as above until we came to the last crossing of the Sweet Water River, where we waited for assistance from the pioneers and brethren already in the valley, by whose help we crossed the backbone of North America--the dividing ridge between the waters flowing to the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and after passing through several canyons and over two large mountains, we were safely brought into the valley.

In September, 1847, we found that the pioneers, and others of the Saints that had gone into the valley shortly after them, had been hard at work, sowing all the winter, for every wagon had taken two bushels of grain, consequently most of the wheat that the crickets had not harvested on their own account, the inhabitants had, and they had raised a considerable quantity of vegetables to boot. And, as it is well known, after we had been in the valley about a fortnight they prepared a splendid feast, composed mostly of the fruits of their labor, to which feast all the Saints and strangers in the valley were invited.

Such numbers, however, had arrived in the valley that the vegetables raised by our brethren went but a little way, and after the feast at their expense, it was a rarity to get any vegetables until the following June, fourteen months from the time we left Winter Quarters, when we partook of vegetables raised by ourselves. Our bread also became scarce before the wheat put in by the Saints generally was ready to harvest. Some persons lived for three months on their cattle, which they had to kill for food, and on roots which they dug up. Of course, after a time, our clothes and farming implements began to wear out, and we had the delightful prospect of realizing the ideas we had entertained at Winter Quarters, of wearing sheepskins, etc. Those who had habituated themselves to such luxuries as tea and coffee, found their stock exhausted, and no chance of getting anymore from any quarter, for the first shop was a thousand miles off, and some began to doubt, and wonder what would be the issue of all this. There we were, completely shut out from the world, with scarcely any knowledge of its proceedings, and it equally ignorant of ours. Our boots, shoes, hats, coats, vests, and material to make them of, were either fast going or altogether gone through wear. Our picks, shovels, spades, and other farming implements were also getting used up, broken, or destroyed. Our wagons were becoming scarce, many had been broken in the canyons, and we had no timber suitable for making more, and if there had been, from where were we to get the ironwork necessary for making them, or for making plows, shovels, etc., for cultivating the ground, without which, of course, food would cease, and starvation ensue. In fact, naturally speaking, things looked alarming, and just calculated to dry up our hopes, and fill us with fears. Matters were at this crisis, when one day Elder Heber C. Kimball stood up in the congregation of the Saints, and prophesied that "in a short time" we should be able to buy articles of clothing, and utensils, cheaper in the valley than we could purchase them in the states. I was present on the occasion, and, with others there, only hoped the case might be so, for many of the Saints felt like the man spoken of in the scriptures, who heard Elisha prophesy at the time of a hard famine in Samaria, "that before tomorrow, a measure of fine flour should be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel." We thought that "if the Lord would make windows in heaven, then might this thing be," but without an absolute miracle there seemed no human probability of its fulfillment.

However, Elder Kimball's prophecy was fulfilled in a few months. Information of the great discovery of gold in California had reached the states, and large companies were formed for the purpose of supplying the gold diggers with food and clothing, and implements of every kind for digging, etc. As these companies expected a most tremendous profit on their goods, no expense or outlay of any kind was spared. Numbers of substantial wagons were prepared, stored with wholesale quantities of clothing of every kind; spades, picks, shovels, and chests of carpenters' tools, were also provided to overflowing, and, to complete the list, tea, coffee, sugar, flour, fruits, etc., on the same scale. In fact, these persons procured just the things they would have done, had they been forming companies purposely for relieving the Saints, and had they determined to do it as handsomely as unlimited wealth would allow.

When these companies, after crossing the plains, arrived within a short distance of Salt Lake City, news reached them that ships had been despatched from many parts of the world, fitted out with goods for California. This threatened to flood the market. The companies feared that the sale of their goods would not repay the expense of conveyance. Here was a "fix"--the companies were too far from the states to take their goods back, and they would not pay to carry them through, and when to this was added the fact, that the companies were half crazy to leave trading, and turn gold diggers themselves, it will easily be seen how naturally the difficulty solved itself into the decision which they actually came to--"Oh here are these Mormons, let us sell the goods to them." Accordingly they brought them into the valley, and disposed of them for just what could be got--provisions, wagons, clothes, tools, almost for the taking away, at least half the price for which the goods could have been purchased in the states.

Many disposed of their wagons, because the teams gave out, and could not get on any further. Such sold almost all they had to purchase a mule or a horse to pack through with. Thus were the Saints amply provided, even to overflowing, with every one of the necessaries and many of the luxuries of which they had been so destitute, and thus was the prediction of the servant of the Lord fulfilled.

One of the worst deficiencies we had experienced was with respect to iron to manufacture or repair with, but as many of the "diggers" left their wagons on the other side of the ferries, or sold them to the ferrymen to burn up as fuel, or had done so themselves, tons and tons of iron, used in the manufacture of wagons, were brought into the valley, and used up

for every variety of purpose.

This was a miraculous providence, but not more so than those which it has been my lot to see the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints experience ever since my connection with it. In short, and, of necessity, compressed history of some of the testimonies I have witnessed and received, the reader, if his mind is open to conviction, may see that I have had much to establish me in the belief of the truths of "Mormonism." A review of its pretensions when I first joined the Church, placed side by side with some items of its subsequent career, will, I think, show most clearly that I have had enough to convince me that the Latter-day Saints are the people of God, and that Joseph Smith was His Prophet, even were I destitute of the first-mentioned proofs.

When the individual whose history is briefly sketched in the foregoing pages, first joined the Church, its numbers were very few, just a stray elder here and there, and those that had obeyed its principles were living just where the gospel found them, for as yet there was no place of gathering appointed. The elders carried about the Book of Mormon, containing a prophecy of a gathering of the Saints upon the continent of America, they could show that the Bible also spoke of a time when the "kingdoms should be gathered together, and the nations, "to serve the Lord;" that the Lord had caused it to be written that at some time or other he would "gather" all nations and tongues, and they should come and see his glory;" and could refer to a wondrous prophecy which had been given, apparently to stamp it with force, in similar words to two different prophets, declaring that it should come to pass in the last days that the Lord's house should be built upon the tops of the mountains, and all nations should flow unto it; and, after producing David's words that the Lord should utter his voice to the heavens above and to the earth beneath, saying, "Gather my Saints together, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice," could bring, by way of a climax, the testimony of St. John the Revelator, that the people of the Lord would have to come out of Babylon, lest they should partake of her plagues.

In connection with the stupendous gathering, spoken of in the foregoing scriptures, other great movements were associated--an ensign was to be set up on the mountains, to which the Gentiles were to seek. The Lord's house was also to be built on the same elevated position, and there also a feast of fat things was to be made for all people, preparatory to the "facts of the covering being destroyed from off all people," and "death being swallowed up in victory."

All this was very true, but where were the Saints to gather to? If they left Babylon where were they to go? At that time there was no place appointed, but still it was taught that the dispensation of the fullness of times, which should usher in and complete these glorious prophecies, was about to commence. But with what a prospect of fulfillment--a few poor countrymen preaching the gathering of all nations, without being able to tell them where to gather to! Yes, even under these circumstances, it was preached by Joseph and his associates, believed, and known to be true.

Under these strong appearances of improbability were the "pretensions" of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints launched upon the world. Not as speculative theories, nor after the fashion that doctors of divinity publish their impressions that certain portions of the prophecies of Daniel, or the Book of Revelations [Revelation], are about to receive their fulfillment, but based on the authority of the word of the Lord, given to His servant in this identical age.

It must be allowed on every hand, that to undertake the fulfillment of such grand and comprehensive prophecies as those quoted in the foregoing, was a most sublime conception, and worthy of a prophet's mission. Surely none but one who knew that Jehovah had sent him, unless deranged, would have put his hand to such an Almighty task, for without the concurrence and assistance of the providence of God, the work would most assuredly prove a failure and a disgrace, and exposure would follow at every step.

Such a work, however, did Joseph and his brethren undertake, with all the world crying delusion! delusion! before and behind. And it remains for us to see whether God has by his providence approbated or discountenanced these "pretensions," for he most assuredly would have discountenanced them if Joseph had been a false prophet, for it is written, he "frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad."--Isaiah, xlv, 25.

As a first step in fulfillment of the prophecies of Joseph, of the Bible, and of the Book of Mormon, a place was selected

to commence the work, and the Kirtland Saints, and other scattered ones, began to assemble there. The thing looked a little more reasonable then, but still Jackson County, Missouri, the place selected, was on the plains, and the Bible distinctly depicted a great portion of the work of the last days as being on the mountains, so that the Saints were still not in a position to fully carry out their work, and fulfill the scriptures. But how were the Saints put in a proper position?" Why, the mobs, in fulfillment of another prophecy of Joseph Smith, drove them from that part of Missouri to another, then to Nauvoo, and also from that place, until the Saints, satisfied that there was no home for them within the borders of "civilization," determined to retreat beyond it, and found for themselves a home, four thousand feet above the level of the sea, in the bosom of the Rocky Mountains, to which spot the gathering of the righteous among all nations is now going on, where an ensign is being lifted to the nations, that the Lord's house may be built on the top of the mountains, and all nations flow unto it, that they may learn the ways of the God of Jacob, and walk in His paths.

There, as Isaiah says, the "munition of rocks" is the defense of the Saints, there they "dwell on high, and are preparing for the coming of the "King in His beauty." God has blessed them abundantly in all their operations, and caused "the wilderness and the solitary place to be glad for them, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose."

Thus heaven and earth conspired to prove Joseph a true prophet, and the very attempts of the powers of hell to hinder his work were subverted, and brought to bear in pushing along the work they hated most.

After reviewing the foregoing facts, I ask did God "frustrate" Joseph Smith's "tokens," or "drive him mad;" by upsetting his endeavours to gather the Saints? Has not God, on the contrary, rolled that gathering gloriously along, and honored and approbated him by fulfilling, in the career of the Church he raised up, great and notable prophecies of scripture, and in causing the opposition of his enemies to result in demonstrating to the world that he was a servant of God, and that the great work of the last days was committed to his hands?

Remember the circumstances under which Joseph the plowboy came forth--friendless, and opposed on every hand, yet declaring that the Lord had sent him to gather his elect. Behold this young man, and the people he raised up, driven, scourged, mobbed, plundered, and himself and many of his adherents murdered, and see, after his body is laid in the dust, the work he commenced, rolling along, waxing stronger and mightier still, and every turn and move of Providence causing it to display some new point of resemblance, both in general features and detail, to prophetic declarations of the ancient seers; and, whilst bearing in mind Moses' rule if a man's words come to pass, know that the Lord has sent him, judge ye whether Joseph Smith was a Prophet of the Lord.

To resume. From the time of my entering the valley, I resided there four years, or until the August conference, 1852. At this conference, I and over a hundred others were called upon at a week's notice to leave our homes in the valley, and visit the nations of the earth, and preach the gospel to them. England was appointed to me as the place of my mission. Before starting, we were blessed by the Twelve Apostles and others of the authorities, who prophesied over our heads concerning many events that should happen on our journey. Amongst many other things, they told us that great blessings should accompany us, that the Spirit of the Lord should be greatly poured out, and that the elements should be controlled in our favor.

These promises we richly realized whilst journeying over the plains. Through the spirit of revelation, great intelligence and knowledge of the principles of eternity were bestowed upon us, such as we had never before received. At our evening meetings all had a privilege of speaking, and by the power of the Spirit many glorious truths were taught--the same things during the day having been frequently revealed to different brethren. As was promised, the elements were in our favor. There were storms before and behind, as we learned by meeting and overtaking parties that had suffered through their violence, but the weather was perfectly fine with us.

During our voyage from America to England, the winds were generally fair, and several times, when they were contrary, they were rebuked instantly, and changed right round, in answer to prayer, as many of my brethren, who were on board, and who are now in England, can testify. We arrived in England, January 5th, 1853, rejoicing in the mercies of our Heavenly Father.

Thus finishes, to the present time, this brief history of the principal features of my experience as an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Had the whole of my experience been given, it would have filled a volume many times the size of this; but this brief sketch has been drawn up as a selection of the main features, which must stand as representatives of the whole.

As an humble "testimony for the truth" as it is in Christ, this sketch is sent forth to the world, and it is humbly hoped that it may pioneer some to `faith in `the eternal attributes of Jehovah, and thus help to expedite the march of truth, whose mission is to disperse the gloom of nations, lift up the canopy of death that overhangs the world, and bring in endless life.

THE RAYS OF TRUTH

To Elder Benjamin Brown

By Elder W. G. Mills.

"He will send His Angel before thee."
 When God designs to bless mankind,
 And future purposes fulfil,
 A light beams o'er the honest mind
 That loves to learn and do His will,
 And seems a holy barbinger
 Sent for the great work to prepare.
 As when yon glorious orb of day,
 When night's dark veil enfolds the earth,
 Sheds round his mild and dawning ray,
 Ere he in majesty comes forth,
 So beams the Truth on many a soul
 In error's mazy dark control.
 Thus Simeon caught the living fire
 That issued from th' eternal throne;
 And Anna's soul it did inspire,
 When God sent here His only Son;
 And many in that favored land
 Felt then some great event at hand!
 And thus, "in these the latter days,"
 When Zion's ensign is unfurled,
 And God doth holy Prophets raise,
 To publish Truth to all the world,
 Thousands the Spirit has prepared,
 To hail the message now declared.
 When night had shed its calm repose,
 Sweet visions passed the dreamy sight,
 Or in the sacred Book disclosed
 Decrees that must be brought to light,
 The inklings of the Spirit told
 God would His purpose soon unfold.
 And thou, dear brother Brown, has, felt
 The signal favor of the Lord,
 When at the "throne of grace" thou'st knelt,
 Or pondered o'er the sacred word;
 The striving Spirit, from thy youth

Has led thee to obey the Truth.
 Through persecution's trying hour,
 Though death was near, thou stood'st unswerved
 God manifested thee His power,
 For nobler purposes preserved--
 Thou dost, far from thy native land,
 A heald in His cause, now stand.
 The faith and zeal of sanguine youth,
 T' ensure its fervent hope and vow,
 Thou dost display to spread the Truth,
 Though age is seated on thy brow:
 And dost fulfil what Prophet said
 In earlier years upon thy head.
 Long mayst thou, then, a father move
 Among the Saints within thy charge,
 God's dealings in thy writings prove
 A blessing to the world at large,
 And may that light in thee begun
 Darkness dispel like morning sun.

Newbury, Berks, July 28, 1853.

Printed by R. James, 39, South Castle Street, Liverpool.

CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT EVENTS BY DATE IN LIFE HISTORY OF BENJAMIN BROWN

[Note: This calendar was prepared from various sources found in research prepared by Helen Milligan and Mary Mays, Logan, Utah. If this book should come into the hands of anyone who can add anything further, or knows anything of his ancestry, please contact one of us!!]

30 September 1794: Born at Queensbury, Washington County, New York. Stated he worked with his father until 20 years old.

1799: Lived in Bolton, Washington County, New York, with father Asa. about 1809: Moved to Jefferson County, New York, where sects of the day had established churches; he heard their preaching and began to lose his simple beliefs in Bible and God. Speaks of Sackett's Harbor (Jefferson County) as the region where he lived for ten years when young man. Also lived in Lorraine, Jefferson County.

2 September 1819: Married at age 25 in Chautauqua County, New York to Sarah Mumford, who was born in Grandby, Connecticut, 20 April 1795.

17 January 1821: Daughter Cordelia born at Fredonia, Chatauqua, County, New York. (Also quite definite proof there was a twin, Cornelia, who died in infancy.)

2 February 1823: Son Lorenzo born in Pomfert [Pomfret], Chatauqua County, New York.

16 January 1828: Son Walter born in Pomfert [Pomfret] Township.

9 August 1830: Son Homer born in Pomfert [Pomfret] Township.

1828 or 1829: (About ten years after marriage) had a vision of brother (Asa) who died 14 or 15 years previous.

- 1830 or 1831: A year later (than vision) had a dream that he was called to preach in schoolhouse at Portland, New York, where his wife's mother lived (Sarah Thompson Mumford).
- 1834 or 1835: (Five years passed), revivals held nearby. He experienced gift of tongues, heard gospel, read Book of Mormon, was visited by two of the three Nephites.
- 15 May 1835: Baptized at Westfield, Jefferson County, by Elder William E. McLellin, (one of Twelve Apostles).
- August 1835: Ordained elder by Jared Carter (had been in church three months.)
- 25 November 1835: Received patriarchal blessing from Joseph Smith, Sr.
- 27 March 1836: Attended dedication of Kirtland Temple.
- 1836-1837: Preached at Portland, New York.
- Spring 1837: Prophet Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon stayed seven days at his home in Kirtland.
- 21 February 1837: Ordained seventy by President Aldrich at Kirtland, Ohio.
- 23 February 1837: Deed given to Benjamin and wife from Jacob and Abigail Bump, to land in Kirtland, Geauga County.
- 19 June 1838: Wife Sarah baptized.
- June 1839: Moved to Nauvoo (started for Missouri, but learned in Springfield, Illinois that Saints were moving to Nauvoo. Lived in Nauvoo seven years. During this time filled missions to (1) Albany (2) Eastern States (3) Nova Scotia.
- 18 July 1843: Benjamin and wife receive blessings from Hyrum Smith.
- 23 July 1843: Ordained a high priest.
- 1844: Returned from Nova Scotia to Nauvoo after death of Prophet. After three weeks sent back to Jefferson County, on tithing mission, back in four months with \$1000 for temple.
- 1846: Sold house, orchard nursery (6000 grafted fruit trees worth \$3000) for \$250.
- 1846-1848: Bishop at Winter Quarters.
- 25 May 1848: Left Winter Quarters in Brigham Young's Company.
- 21 September 1848: Arrived in Salt Lake Valley.
- 22 February 1849--until death in 1878, bishop of Fourth Ward in Salt Lake.
- August 1852: Called on mission to England. (Had been in valley four years.)
- 5 January 1853: Arrived in England. "Testimonies for Truth" published in England this year.
- 23 May 1878: Died, Salt Lake City, age 83 years, 3 months, 22 days.