

# Rays of Living Light

*By President Charles W. Penrose*

---

## FRUITS OF "MORMONISM"

12

---

### The Gathering

"Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?" So said the Savior of mankind. (Matt. vii:16.) The Latter-day Saints, or "Mormons," as they are commonly called, have been derided and persecuted, and all manner of evil has been spoken against them, even by people who call themselves Christians. That in this false witness has been borne against them, may be definitely proved if the criterion given by Christ is accepted. Having obeyed the Gospel as restored to earth by angelic visitations and administered by divine authority, large numbers of the Saints have congregated in the valleys of the Rocky Mountains in obedience to the command, "Gather my Saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psalm 1:5.) And also: "Come out of her (Babylon), my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev. xviii:4.)

### The Desert Shall Blossom as the Rose

In the year 1847 a company of Pioneers, led by the prophet Brigham Young, successor of the Martyr Joseph Smith, who was slain for the Gospel's sake,

## RAYS OF LIVING LIGHT

marched from the Missouri River across prairies and mountains, sand wastes and rivers, through the wilderness known as the Great American Desert, to the place in the mountains where they had been directed by Joseph Smith when living with them in Nauvoo. On July 24th of that year they halted in the valley of the Great Salt Lake, beheld by Brigham Young in vision before they commenced their weary journey. Not a human habitation was to be seen. The sun-baked land brought forth sagebrush and weeds. Rain was almost unknown and the melting snows from the mountain tops came down but in narrow and scanty streams. But they plowed the parched ground and turned upon it the trickling waters; they sowed in faith and trusted in God for the harvest which alone could save them from starvation. The little band was composed of but 148 persons who had left civilization more than a thousand miles behind. Today over five hundred thousand people, gathered from all parts of the world, dwell in peace and harmony in flourishing cities and towns or upon fruitful farms and luxuriant ranches, reaping the results of thrift and industry and the blessings of God upon the land and upon their labors. In the cities are fine residences, comfortable cottages, business establishments, manufacturing enterprises, railroads, telegraphs and telephones, broad streets lined with magnificent trees and with clear streamlets on either side, lighted by electricity and supplied with pure water from works owned by the people. Grand school houses have been erected, spacious places of worship, noble public buildings and splendid temples costing from one million to four million dollars each. All kinds of grains and fruits and flowers are produced in abundance; the rain-falls have wonderfully increased, springs have burst forth in dry spots, grass grows on the hillsides, and in the meadows, cattle and sheep graze on a thousand hills, and the face of nature smiles and shines with beauty.

### Fulfillment of Prophecy

This marvelous transformation has been brought about by the blessings of Almighty God upon the faith and works of his Saints gathered from afar. Zion that brought good tidings—the everlasting Gospel restored to earth—has gone up “into the high mountain.” The Spirit has been poured out from on high, and the wilderness has become a “fruitful field.”

“The people of the Lord dwell in peaceable habitations, in sure dwellings, in quiet resting places.” They are sowing “beside all waters.” “The wilderness and the solitary place is glad for them, the desert rejoices and blossoms abundantly.” They are the “ransomed of the Lord, and have come to Zion with songs of everlasting joy.” (See Isaiah xl:9; xxxii:15-20; xxxv:1-10.)

### Other Fruits

Every Sabbath day the children assemble in Sunday Schools under a system which is not excelled in any part of the world. In the afternoon and evening the Saints assemble in their tabernacles and meeting houses, and receive instruction by the voice of inspiration and the reading of holy writ. Societies are organized for the instruction of juveniles, of young men and young women, of ladies of mature age and for all classes of the community. To serve God and keep his commandments is held up as the first duty of his people. To labor for the salvation of the living and the redemption of the dead is placed above all earthly considerations. The Church has now in the mission fields eighteen hundred or more missionaries, traveling “without purse or scrip,” without pay of any kind, depending upon God and friends whom he may raise up to them for their daily sustenance. The Church organization revealed from heaven is recognized by all

who investigate as the grandest and most complete ever known on earth. The industry, order, devotion, unity and brotherly love displayed by the Latter-day Saints are the admiration and commendation of both friend and foe. The work they have performed under divine direction is a marvel to all who have visited the cities of the Saints or know of their achievements. What is the tree that has brought forth those excellent fruits? It is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Let the tree be judged by its fruits.

### **Must Suffer Persecution**

It is true that the "Mormons" are a people who have been "everywhere spoken against," but this was a characteristic of the Saints in the original Christian Church. Paul said: "They that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Jesus exclaimed, "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you." He prophesied of his disciples: "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." But there are a number of brave men who, after visiting Utah, have not been afraid to speak their honest sentiments concerning that despised people. Among them are the following, whose published remarks are but samples of others that might be adduced:

### **Brave, Honest Opinions**

Bishop D. S. Tuttle of the Episcopal Church, who resided many years in Salt Lake City, had the following in the New York Sun: "We of the East are accustomed to look upon the Mormons as either a licentious, arrogant, or rebellious mob, bent only on defying the United States government and deriding the faith of the Christians. That is not so. I know them to be honest, faithful, prayerful workers, and earnest in their faith

that heaven will bless the Church of Latter-day Saints. Another strong and admirable feature in the Mormon religion is the tenacious and efficient organization. They follow with the greatest care all the forms of the old Church."

Henry Edger says, in the New York Evolution: "Driven by mob violence from one State to another, despoiled of their legitimate possessions—fruits of honest toil—this despised and grossly wronged people found their way at last across the trackless desert and by an almost unexampled perseverance and industry created an oasis in the desert itself."

Elder Miles Grant, editor of the World's Crisis, says: "After a careful observation for some days we came to the settled conclusion that there is less licentiousness in Salt Lake City than in any other one of the same size in the United States; and were we to bring up a family of children in these last days of wickedness, we should have less fears of their moral corruption were they in that city than in any other."

Gov. Safford, of Arizona, wrote as follows: "They have no drones, and the work they have accomplished in so short a time is truly wonderful. All concede that we need an energetic, industrious, economical and self-relying people to subdue and bring into use the vast, unproductive lands of Arizona. These Mormons fill every one of the above requirements."

Gen. Thomas L. Kane, of Pennsylvania, after four years' experience with the Mormons, declared: "I have not heard a single charge made against them as a community, against their habitual purity of life, their willing integrity, their toleration of religious difference of opinion, their regard for the laws, their devotion to the constitutional government under which we live, that I do not from my own observation or upon the testimony of others know to be unfounded."

Chief Justice White, sent to Utah by the United States government, testified: "Industry, frugality, temperance, honesty are with them the common practices of life. This land they have redeemed from sterility and occupied its once barren solitudes with cities, villages, cultivated fields and farm-houses, and made it the habitation of a numerous people, where a beggar is never seen and almshouses are neither needed nor known."

The late Hon. Bayard Taylor, United States Minister to Germany, remarked: "We must admit that Salt Lake City is one of the most quiet, orderly and moral places in the world. \* \* \* The Mormons as a people are the most temperate of Americans. They are chaste, laborious and generally cheerful, and what they have accomplished in so short a time under every circumstance of discouragement, will always form one of the most remarkable chapters in our history."

### Persecution and Deliverance

Notwithstanding the facts set forth in the foregoing, the Congress of the United States was moved upon for several years by anti-Mormon preachers of different sects, and by petitions from good, pious, but deceived "Christian" people, also by adventurers who desired to profit by inroads upon the Mormons, to enact stringent and oppressive measures looking to the suppression of what they called "Mormonism." It was thought by the enemies of the Saints that they could be driven again from their possessions, as they had been driven by mob violence from the States of Missouri and Illinois, where their property became a prey to their so-called Christian persecutors, and where many of their number were brutally murdered in cold blood, their Prophet and Patriarch, Joseph and Hyrum Smith, being among that number. For some time these

efforts gave great promise of success. Much suffering was endured by the Saints, but they possessed their souls in patience, having faith in the promises of God made to them through their prophets and apostles, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit. The day of their deliverance from this injustice, sorrow, and tribulation has come. Their true character has been measurably recognized, and Utah has been admitted into the Union as a free and sovereign State, on an equal footing with the other States in the Federal compact.

### Court Investigation

There yet-remains in the world great ignorance concerning the Latter-day Saints, their purposes and works, their doctrines and teachings, and the spirit and power of their faith. To these they invite the investigation of every rational mind. They urge comparison of their principles, their Church and the ordinances, gifts, and spirit thereof with those set forth in the New Testament, in contrast with the contending and discordant religions of modern Christendom. They know that they have received the truth, and that God has revealed it in the present age. They have obtained a divine witness, every one for himself. They are building up Zion in the West. They are sending forth the Gospel into all the world as a witness to the nations before the end shall come.

### Day of Warning

This is a day of warning. It will be followed by a time of judgments. The Lord is about to shake terribly the kingdoms of this world. War, pestilence, famine, earthquake, whirlwind, and the devouring fire, with signs in the heavens and on the earth, will immediately precede the great consummation which is

close at hand. These are the last days. All that has been foretold by the Holy prophets concerning them is about to be literally fulfilled. The everlasting Gospel has been restored to the earth as one of the signs of the latter days. Israel is being gathered. The elect of God are assembling from the four quarters of the earth. The way is opening for the redemption of Judah. Soon all things will be in commotion: "men's hearts failing them for fear and looking for the things that are coming on the earth." The places of refuge appointed are in Zion and in Jerusalem. The Lord, even Jesus the Messiah, will come to His holy Temple. He will be glorified in his Saints, but will "take vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the Gospel." He will break in pieces the nations as a potter's vessel. He will sweep the earth as with a besom of destruction. He will establish righteousness upon it and give dominion to his people. "The meek shall inherit the earth and the wicked be cut off forever." Therefore, repent and turn unto him, all ye nations, and obey him, all ye people, for these words are true and faithful and are given by his Spirit! Salvation has come unto you; reject it not lest ye fall and perish. The time is at hand!

Published by the Missions of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints  
in America.

BUREAU OF INFORMATION—Temple Block, Salt Lake City, Utah.  
 CALIFORNIA MISSION—153 W. Adams St., Los Angeles, Calif.  
 CANADIAN MISSION—36 Ferndale Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.  
 CENTRAL STATES MISSION—302 S. Pleasant St., Independence, Mo.  
 EASTERN STATES MISSION—273 Gates Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.  
 HAWAIIAN MISSION—P. O. Box 3228, Honolulu, Hawaii.  
 MEXICAN MISSION—3531 Fort Blvd., El Paso, Texas, U. S. A.  
 NORTHERN STATES MISSION—2555 N. Sawyer Ave., Chicago, Ill.  
 NORTHCENTRAL STATES MISSION—3044 Elliot, Minneapolis, Minn.  
 NORTHWESTERN STATES MISSION—264 East 25th St., Portland, Ore.  
 SOUTHERN STATES MISSION—485 North Ave. N. E., Atlanta, Ga.  
 WESTERN STATES MISSION—538 E. Seventh Avenue, Denver, Colo.

Press of Zion's Printing and Publishing Company  
 Independence, Jackson County, Mo., U. S. A.