



dc 101.⁴⁶⁻⁵¹— meditation

⁴⁶Now, the servants of the nobleman went and did as their lord commanded them, and planted the olive-trees, and built a hedge round about, and set watchmen, and began to build a tower. ⁴⁷And while they were yet laying the foundation thereof, they began to say among themselves:

‘And what need hath my lord of this tower? ‘

⁴⁸And consulted for a long time, saying among themselves:

“What need hath my lord of this tower, seeing this is a time of peace?

⁴⁹Might not this money be given to the exchangers?

For there is no need of these things.’

⁵⁰And while they were at variance one with another they became very slothful, and they hearkened not unto the commandments of their lord. ⁵¹And the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; and the servants of the nobleman arose and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive-trees.

In 1833, Mormons were violently expelled from their homes in Jackson County Missouri, a location that doctrine had taught a Zion community was to be built. In response to this tragic expulsion, Joseph Smith received a revelation (DC 101). A portion of this revelation (vs. 44-62) is in the form of parable. This parable explains both the reasons for the expulsion and the promise that and means by which Zion would be “redeemed.”

The saints, the Lord reveals, were not innocent victims in their expulsion. They had contributed to it by abandoning divine principles and acting contrary to those principles. In rebelling against these divine imperatives, the parable’s servants had reasoned, “Might not this money be given to the exchangers?”

This justification for ignoring God’s directions is too often overlooked. If observed, it is too often ignored. If not ignored, it is dismissed as “symbolic.” The truth is, it ought to get more press. It should be made into a plaque, sold at Deseret Book Stores, and be placed on the wall of every Mormon’s comfortable living room.

While there is much that is symbolic in this parable—as is customary in all parables—the parable’s servants’ choice to seek profits through exchanges rather than follow the Lord’s directions is consistent with what we know of the historical reality and so should not be read as symbolic of something else. Earlier in this same revelation, the Lord had revealed that the saints themselves had “polluted their inheritance” through “jarrings” and “contentions,” and “envyings,” and “strifes,” and “lustful and covetous desires” (vs. 6). Money, profit, and the things of this world had been dearer to the saint’s hearts than Zion with its strict economic principles of redistribution.

Still today, money, profit, and the things of this world too often take priority over the things of God, including and especially God’s economic principles. The false economic principles we inherit from a fallen world keep us from establishing Zion here and from preparedness for the kingdom of God in the

hereafter. We might, as Satan claimed, “have anything in this world for money,” but we cannot abide the kingdom of God with money as a first, second, third, fourth, fifth... priority. It must be sacrificed on the altar of God so that we might avoid eternal expulsion from his kingdom.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

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