

## Review of God's Dealings With the Prophet Joseph—Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon—Gathering, Etc.

*Discourse by Elder Orson Pratt, delivered in the New Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday Afternoon, Sept. 22, 1872.*

Having been requested to address the congregation this afternoon, I do so with the greatest cheerfulness. There is one passage of Scripture I would like very much to take as a text, if I knew where to find it. It is somewhere in the book of Jeremiah or Ezekiel. I have not time now to look it up, and perhaps it would be better to take some other text having a bearing on the same subject. The text to which I would like to direct the attention of the people has reference to the colonization of this country by one of the descendants of Zedekiah, king of Judah. It reads something like this: "Thus saith the Lord God, I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: in the mountain of the height of Israel, will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar; and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell."

We read of the fulfillment of this prophecy in the Book of Mormon; but because I cannot direct your attention to the passage, I will read another text, which will be found in the 11th verse of the 85th Psalm: "Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven."

Forty-five years ago this morning this prophecy, so far as it relates to "truth springing out of the earth," was fulfilled. Forty-five years ago, early this morning, plates resembling gold were taken from the earth, the morning, if I recollect right, of the 22nd of September, 1827. Owing to that great event the Territory of Utah is now settled by the people called Latter-day Saints. Owing to the fulfillment of this prophecy this Tabernacle has been built here in these mountains; and had it not been for that event, it is probable that Utah Territory would still have been a desert, a barren, solitary, uninhabited district of country. Sometimes great things are accomplished and grow out of things that appear very small in their nature. It has been so in relation to this prophecy—"Truth shall spring out of the earth."

In order that the meaning of these words may be more fully understood, it may not be amiss to read the context or the passages preceding. The Psalmist commences—

Lord, thou hast been favorable unto thy land: thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob.

Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin. Selah.

Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: thou hast turned *thyself* from the fierceness of thine anger.

Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease.

Wilt thou be angry with us forever? wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?

Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?

Shew us thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us thy salvation.

I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.

Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land.

Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed *each other*.

Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

Yea, the Lord shall give *that which is* good; and our land shall yield her increase.

Righteousness shall go before him; and shall set *us* in the way of his steps.

Thus reads the 85th Psalm. It is very evident that the Psalmist David, being filled with the spirit of prophecy, saw the condition of the people of Israel, saw also that they would be under the displeasure of the Almighty for many generations, and he prays that the Lord would look upon them in compassion, and turn himself from the fierceness of his anger, that it might not be drawn out towards them to all generations, and he utters this prayer: "Turn us, O God of our salvation, and show unto us thy mercy," etc. The Lord, in answer to this prayer, promised to speak peace to his people, but said he, "Let them not turn again unto folly." And then he informs them how he would speak peace unto them, and how he would turn himself from the fierceness of his anger, that his anger might not be drawn out unto them to all generations. He informs them that he would commence this great work, that should result in peace and salvation to Israel, by causing truth to spring out of the earth, at which time righteousness should look down from heaven. Righteousness and truth and peace should kiss one another, and the Lord should cause the land of Israel again to yield its increase. We know how barren, sterile and uninhabitable is the land that was once promised to that chosen people. The Lord has not only cursed the people and made them a hiss and a byword among all the nations whither they have been driven, but his anger has also been upon their land. He has withheld the rains of heaven, and has cursed it with barrenness and sterility; and the cities which once covered its face and reared their lofty spires to heaven, now lie in ruins, and scarcely a vestige of some of them can be found. But when the Lord should cause truth to spring forth out of the earth, he would speak peace to his people and to their land, and it should yield its increase; and truth should go before him and should set them in the way of his steps.

We have been proclaiming for forty-two years this Book of Mormon, which we have declared has sprung forth from the earth by the power of the Almighty, for the benefit, first of the Gentile nations. The proclamation, according to the words of the book, must go forth to all people, nations and tongues under the whole heavens, called the Gentile nations, after which the Lord has promised in numerous places in this record that it should go to the remnants of the house of Israel. But that which the Lord intends to accomplish first by the bringing forth of this book, is the redemption of as many as will hearken to its words in all the Gentile nations of the earth, and to gather them together in one; for not only are the house of Israel and the house of Judah to be gathered back to their own lands, but all Christians throughout the whole earth are to be gathered in one in the latter days, according to a prophecy which you will find in the 43rd chapter of Isaiah: "I will bring them from the east, and gather them from the west. I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name." This has reference to the sons and daughters of the living God, to the people called Saints; not particularly to the literal seed of the house of Israel, but to all those who believe in him, and who are called by his name. All must be gathered; all must come from the ends of the earth. No Christians will be left, scattered abroad over the nations, as many suppose will be the case so long as time lasts. A complete and full gathering together of the people of God must take place in the latter days, called, by Paul, the dispensation of the fullness of times. You will find this prediction in the first chapter of his epistle to the Ephesians. Paul there declares that a new dispensation must come in, and he denominates it the dispensation of the fullness of times. He tells us that in that dispensation the Lord will gather together in one all things in Christ. Every person that believes in, and has put on Christ by baptism and by repentance of sin, must be gathered in one in that dispensation; not only those on earth, but those in heaven—all the congregations who are in Christ, who have dwelt on the earth in former ages, are to be united with those who are in the flesh on the earth. One great, vast, general assembly of all that are in Christ—the dead as well as the living—from the days of Adam down until the work is completed.

In order to commence this great work the Lord has brought forth truth out of the earth. He will speak peace to his people, and they are requested by the Psalmist, when the Lord undertakes to do this work, never to turn again unto folly.

Now I will attempt to give a brief account to my hearers of how Joseph Smith obtained the plates of the Book of Mormon from the earth. He was but a lad, a farmer's boy, when the Lord began to speak to him and send his angels to him, being not quite fifteen years of age. He was almost too young to be a brazen-faced impostor, was he

not? Cast your eyes around on this congregation for the youth of fifteen, and see if you think it would be possible for one of that early age to become one of the most barefaced impostors that the world ever heard of, for Joseph Smith was thus regarded by the world at large with few exceptions; and he must have been so, at a very early age, if this work be not true, for he could not be deceived, himself, in relation to it. There was no possible chance for any deception, so far as he himself was concerned. Why? Because the circumstances were of such a nature that he could not be deceived. God revealed to him that there were certain plates deposited about three miles from his father's house. He saw, in vision, the place of their deposit. He heard the holy angel declare to him in relation to these records. But first, about four years prior to this, the first vision that he had was in answer to prayer. Being but a youth, and anxious for the salvation of his soul, he secretly prayed, in the wilderness, that the Lord would show unto him what he should do, what church he should join. The Lord heard and answered this prayer. Do not be astonished, good Christians, because the Lord hears prayer in the 19th century. I know it is very popular to pray to the Lord in Christendom; but, when you talk about the Lord answering prayers, by giving revelations, visions, or sending angels, it is very unpopular. But unpopular as it was, this youth ventured to go and ask the Lord for wisdom, having, in the first place, read a passage in the New Testament, which says, "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given unto him." Joseph Smith was not so full of tradition that he could not lay hold of this promise. I do not know that he had been taught long enough, the idea that the Lord would not hear prayer. At any rate, having read this passage, he prayed, really believing in his heart that the Lord would answer him, for he wanted wisdom, he wanted to know which was the true Christian Church, that he might be united with it; and while pleading with and praying to the Lord for this information, which was a matter of great concern to him, the heavens were opened, and two personages clothed in light or fire descended and stood before him. As soon as this light surrounded him, and he was enclosed or enveloped in it, his mind was caught away from earthly objects and things, and he saw these two glorious personages, their countenances shining with exceeding great brilliancy. One of them, while pointing to the other, addressed him in this language, "Behold my beloved son, hear ye him." All fear was taken from this boy during the progress of this wonderful event, and he felt happy, but anxious to know concerning the things about which he had been praying, and he repeated his request, that he might be told which was the true Christian church. He was informed that there was no true Christian church on the earth, that there was no people established or organized according to the Apostolic order; that all had gone out of the way and had departed from the ancient order of things; that they had denied the power of Godliness, the gifts, miracles, the spirit of revelation and prophecy, visions, that all these things had been done away with by the unbelief of the children of men, and that there were no prophets or inspired men on the earth, as there always had been when there was a true Church upon the earth. He was strictly commanded to join none of them. The Lord also informed him that, at some future period of time, if he would be faithful in giving heed to the instructions which were then imparted to him, and in his prayers to the Lord, he would impart to him his own doctrine in plainness and simplicity.

Some four years passed away from this time, making this boy not quite nineteen years of age, and on one Sunday evening he returned to his bedroom, pondering upon the promise that had been given to him, and he began praying earnestly again that the Lord would show him the true Gospel of his son, according to the promise; and while he was thus praying in his father's house in his chamber, a light burst into the room, becoming brighter by degrees, shining and then partially withdrawing, so that fear did not take possession of his bosom to any great degree. As he continued praying the light became brighter and brighter, and finally a personage clothed in a white robe stood before him. This personage was a little above the size of common men at the present day, and his arms and feet were partially bare. His feet did not stand on the floor of the room, but a certain distance above, and his countenance shone like lightning. This Angel appeared so pleasant, beautiful and glorious, and his countenance radiated such happiness on the mind of this young lad that all fear was taken from him as on the former occasion. This personage told him that he was an Angel of God, and that he had been sent, in answer to his prayer, with a very important message to deliver to him; that God designed to accomplish a great work on the earth, and that he was to be a chosen instrument in laying the foundation of, and establishing this work. He commenced telling him about the ancient inhabitants of this continent. He told him that the present American Indians were the descendants of Israel; that their forefathers were brought here from Jerusalem about six centuries before Christ; that when they came they were a righteous people and had Prophets among them; that when they landed on this

continent they commenced, by the commandment of the Lord, keeping a record of their history, their prophecies and sacred doings upon metallic plates; that that nation, after having dwelt here about a thousand years, fell into great wickedness; that they divided themselves into two great nations; that the portion that had these plates, the Nephites, had so far apostatized from the Lord, that he threatened their overthrow, and to destroy them if they did not repent; that the Prophets went forth among them prophesying that if they did not repent, the other nation, called Lamanites, would destroy them from the face of the land. But they would not repent, and Mormon, a Prophet who lived at that time, was commanded of the Lord to take all the plates that were kept of the records of his fathers, and make an abridgment of them upon a new set of plates. So he commenced and abridged their history, from the time they left Jerusalem until that period, incorporating therein many of the prophecies and revelations given during that thousand years. After having made this abridgment he committed it into the hands of his son Moroni, knowing that his nation would be destroyed, and that Moroni, according to the revelations God had given him, would be spared to keep the records, and to behold the downfall of his nation. Mormon hid the records from which he made this abridgment in a hill, called the hill Cumorah, that being its ancient name, and this hill was about three miles from where this young man resided, in the town of Manchester, Ontario County, State of New York. There all the records were deposited, and according to the Book of Mormon they must have been very numerous indeed. The history of the ancient inhabitants of this land was kept by their kings, and the records became very voluminous; and they were all deposited by the Prophet Mormon in that hill; but the abridgment from which the Book of Mormon was taken was given into the hands of his son Moroni, to finish out the record. The last date given on these records was 420 years after Christ.

You may inquire how the people on this land knew about the birth of Christ. I will say that they understood Christianity on this western hemisphere as well as on the eastern hemisphere. They were not left in darkness here concerning the Savior of the world and his atonement. They knew all about it. How? Jesus, who is the God of the whole earth, appeared to them after his crucifixion, and resurrection from the dead. He showed them the wounds in his hands, feet and side, and delivered to them his Gospel in its plainness and fullness, and they were commanded to write it on plates. They knew also, of his birth, in the land of their forefathers, by the signs which God gave to them on this land. They were told that at the time of the birth of Jesus there should be two days and one night without any darkness at all; they should see the sun go down at night and rise in the morning, and that during the whole of that time it should be light as day. They commenced the reckoning of their time from that period. Previous to that time they had reckoned their time from the date of their leaving Jerusalem, precisely six hundred years before the birth of Christ. Four hundred and twenty years after that great event the Prophet Moroni informs us that he also was commanded to hide up this abridgment in the same hill, but in another part of it, in which his father Mormon hid up the sacred records. And the Lord made a promise to Moroni, also to Mormon, and to many other Prophets who dwelt on this land in previous generations, that these plates should never be destroyed, but that they should be preserved by his hand, and that they should be brought forth out of the earth in the latter days, for the purpose of bringing about the gathering of his people from the ends of the earth, and the bringing in of the fullness of the Gentiles and fulfilling their times, after which the translation of these records should go to all the remnants of the house of Israel, scattered abroad on the face of the whole earth; and that these records should be instrumental in the hands of God in gathering Israel from the four quarters of the earth.

These were the promises of God to the ancient Prophets of this continent, and the angel told Joseph Smith concerning these plates, and where they were deposited. At the same time, the vision of the Almighty was open to the mind of Joseph, and he saw the very spot. After the angel had conversed with him sometime on this subject, and had opened up to him the prophecies of the holy Prophets concerning the great work that was to be accomplished in the latter days, he withdrew, and Joseph continued praying. Some, perhaps, might think that this was a dream; but it was not, he was wide awake. As he continued praying, the angel came again the second time, and gave him still further information concerning the rise of the latter-day kingdom of God upon the earth, and the great work the Almighty intended to accomplish preparatory to the coming of his Son from the heavens with all his Saints. The angel then again withdrew, but in answer to Joseph's prayers he came the third time, and imparted to him still more information. After his withdrawal the third time Joseph arose, and it was early in the morning, he having been awake all night receiving instruction from the angel of God. In the morning he went out into the field to work with his father. He had not yet told his father of the remarkable things that he had seen during the night;

but his father noticed that he looked weak and feeble, and advised him to go to the house. He started to do so, and while on the way, the angel again appeared to him, and commanded him to return to his father and tell him all about it. He did so, and his father, on hearing it, burst into tears, and said, "My son, be not disobedient to this heavenly vision!" The angel, when he appeared to him in daylight, told him not only to tell his father, but also to go to the place shown him in vision the night previous, and see the plates. His father told him by all means to be obedient and faithful. He went according to the instruction of the angel and visited this hill. The hill runs north and south some three quarters of a mile, and on one end of it, or near the end of it, was where he saw the plates. The surface of the stone which covered the plates was bare; around its edges was a thick greensward of grass or turf. He knew the place as soon as he saw it, and procuring a lever he lifted off this principal or crowning stone, and found that it was cemented on the top of four stones that sat on edge, forming a stone box. After having lifted off the stone he saw the plates, just as he had seen them in vision the night before. These plates rested upon three little cement pillars that ran up from the bottom, and the stones that formed the sides of the box were cemented together at the corners.

With the plates was an instrument, called the Urim and Thummim, used by Seers in ancient times, and which enabled them to understand the things of God. The great High Priest used such an instrument in the midst of Israel on the other continent, and inquired of the Lord to receive sentence of judgment in difficult cases that were brought before him to be judged. Aaron had a Urim and Thummim in the center of his breastplate; and when the cases were brought before him, the breastplate of judgment, containing the Urim and Thummim, was consulted, and whatever sentence the Lord gave, Aaron gave to the people of Israel. The Prophets who deposited those plates in the hill Cumorah were commanded of the Lord to deposit the Urim and Thummim with them, so that when the time came for them to be brought forth, the individual who was entrusted with them might be able to translate them by the gift and power of God. Joseph put forth his hands to take the plates, but upon doing so the angel immediately appeared to him and said, "Joseph, the time has not yet come for you to take the plates; you must be taught and instructed, and you must give heed to my commandments and to the commandments of the Lord until you are fully prepared to be entrusted with them, for the Lord promised his ancient servants on this land that no one should have them for the purpose of speculation, and that they should be brought forth with an eye single to the glory of God; and now, if you will keep the commandments of God in all things, and prepare yourself, you will in due time be permitted to take these plates from their place of deposit." He would not suffer him to take them at that time. Four years from that day—on the morning of the 22nd of September, 1827—having been commanded of the Lord to come to that place at that special time, he went and was met by the angel. I will state, however, that during these four years he was often ministered to by the angels of God, and received instruction concerning the work that was to be performed in the latter days. But when the time had fully arrived he went to the hill Cumorah, according to appointment, and took the plates, and the Urim and Thummim with them, and took them to his father's house in a wagon, which he had brought near to the hill for that purpose. He was then nearly twenty-two years old—twenty-two the following December.

Soon after this a certain portion of the characters on these plates were copied off by the Prophet, and the manuscript sent, by the hands of Martin Harris, a farmer who lived in that neighborhood, to the city of New York, to show them to the learned, to see if they could translate them. Among those to whom they were presented was Professor Anthon—a man noted for his learning in languages—but he could not translate them.

You may here inquire, What was the particular character in which these plates were written? They inform us that they wrote in two separate characters. Some of their plates were written in Hebrew and some in the Egyptian; but both the Hebrew and the Egyptian, after they came from Jerusalem, were reformed by them. I mean the alphabets were altered or changed. If they had not done this by design, we know that in the course of a thousand years languages will greatly change, and sometimes new characters will be added to alphabets. We know that none of them, at the present time, are precisely as they were anciently; they have been added to from time to time. The Hebrew, on the eastern continent, had the points representing the vowels added to it after the Nephites left Jerusalem; and no doubt the Egyptian, understood when they left, has been greatly changed since. They wrote, therefore, in the reformed Egyptian—a language that the learned Professor Anthon did not understand. He requested Martin Harris, however, to bring the plates to him, telling him, if he would, that he could perhaps assist

him in the translation. Joseph translated the few characters that were sent to Professor Anthon, and when the translation and the original were shown to him, and he had compared them, he expressed the opinion that the translation was correct, and he gave a paper to that effect to Martin Harris. As Mr. Harris was leaving the room, Mr. Anthon said, "How did this young lad obtain the plates?" Said Martin Harris, "He obtained them by the ministration of an holy angel." Professor Anthon immediately requested him to return the paper that he had given him, and as soon as Mr. Harris had done so, he tore it to pieces, saying, "Angels do not appear in our day."

I do not know that Joseph Smith, at the time that he sent these words to the learned, knew anything about the prophecy that is contained in the 29th chapter of Isaiah, a few words of which I will read; but at any rate, whether he knew it or not, it was a literal fulfillment of it. Isaiah speaks of a time when deep sleep should be poured out upon the nations of the earth, and they should be drunken, but not with wine; they should stagger, but not with strong drink; and the Prophets and the Seers, &c., should be covered; in other words, they would not have any Prophets or Seers. Every one will bear me witness that that was the case at the time these plates were brought forth. Where was there a people who received revelation? Where were their Prophets and Seers? Gone, covered, "and the vision of all has become to you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, 'Read this I pray you;' and he saith, 'I cannot, for the book is sealed.' And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, 'Read this I pray thee,' and he saith, 'I am not learned.' Wherefore the Lord says, 'Inasmuch as this people'—the people to whom these words should be delivered—'draw near to me with their mouths and with their lips do honor me, but remove their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men, therefore I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder. For the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.'"

This prophecy was fulfilled in the transaction I have already related. The words of the book, Isaiah says, are to be delivered to the learned, not the book itself. I have had people rise up and say, "Why did not Joseph Smith send the plates to the learned?" Because that would have been a violation of this prophecy. The words of the book, not the book itself, were to be delivered to the learned, requesting him to read them—"Read this I pray thee." But he says, "I cannot, for it is sealed." Martin Harris told him a portion of these plates were sealed and were not to be translated during the present generation; but the portion that were unsealed were to be translated. He replied, "I cannot read a sealed book," thus fulfilling the words of Isaiah.

The book itself, we are informed in the next verse, is to be delivered to him that is not learned. Now in regard to Joseph Smith's qualifications or attainments in learning, they were very ordinary. He had received a little education in the common country schools in the vicinity in which he had lived. He could read a little, and could write, but it was in such an ordinary hand that he did not venture to act as his own scribe, but had to employ sometimes one and sometimes another to write as he translated. This unlearned man did not make the same reply that the learned man did. For when the book was delivered to this unlearned youth and he was requested to read it, he replied, "I am not learned." I suppose he felt his weakness when the Lord told him to read this book; for he thought it was a great work. But the Lord replied to Joseph in the very language of this prophecy—"Inasmuch as this people"—meaning the present generation—"draw near to me with their lips, &c., therefore I will proceed to do a marvelous work, even a marvelous work and a wonder."

Now, did the unlearned man read the book? Some might suppose, if they were to read no further, that the book was not read at all. Let us read what is prophesied in the 18th verse: "And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book." Indeed! Then it seems that the book must have been read, or they could not have heard its words. "And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness." Does this mean those who are spiritually deaf, and those who are spiritually blind? Or does it mean literally, those who are blind and cannot see and those who are deaf and cannot hear? It may mean either way, for it is well known by thousands and tens of thousands now on the earth that the eyes of the blind—those who have been born blind—have been opened, and that the ears of the deaf have been opened by the power of God, through the preaching of this book, so that the prophecy has had a literal fulfillment, for those who were physically and spiritually blind and deaf have been made to see and hear by the power of God, and they have gathered themselves from the nations.

Now let us read a little further in this prophecy, and see whether this corresponds with the words of our text. You recollect it refers particularly to the ingathering of the house of Israel, and when the Lord would cause the land of Palestine to yield its increase, that he would cause truth to spring out of the earth," and so on. Does this prophecy of Isaiah correspond with David; so far as the events predicted to transpire in the days when the book comes forth? We will see. "Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob; Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale." Why should they no longer be ashamed? Why should not their faces still wax pale? The reply is, "But when he seeth his children, the work of my hands in the midst of him, they shall sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and fear the God of Israel."

Do you not see how these two Prophets harmonize in their prophecies? One says, "Wilt thou not turn to us again, O Lord, and bring back again the captivity of thy people, Jacob, that we may rejoice in thee? How long, O Lord, will the fierceness of thy wrath continue? Will it continue to all generations?" And the answer is that he will bring truth out of the earth, that it should set them in the way of his steps; and the land of Israel or Jacob should again yield its increase. While the other says Jacob shall not be ashamed, neither shall his face wax pale. It seems then, that both these Prophets beheld that truth out of the earth, or a certain book, would bring about the gathering of that long-dispersed people.

We find also, other events described, of a very remarkable character. One is that the meek should increase their joy in the Lord. There have been a great many meek people among all the religious denominations, who have no doubt lived, with all the desire of faithfulness that we Latter-day Saints have, and some perhaps have been more faithful than some of us. "The meek, also, shall increase their joy in the Lord." When will they do this? In the day that the deaf should hear the words of the book. For what reason? Because of the instructions, counsel, perfect doctrine, and prophecies contained therein; because of the knowledge it gives to the children of men concerning the great work which is to be accomplished before the coming of the Son of Man. All this knowledge would cause the meek of the earth to have their joy increased.

"The poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." This is a very important item. When we wander over the nations of the earth, at the present day, what do we behold? Millions on millions groaning in worse than African slavery. Our American slavery here, never compared with the slavery of those millions in the old countries. They were very pointed there, against what they termed African slavery, but they did not look at the slaves at home—the millions of people who were obliged to work fourteen or sixteen hours a day for a sixpence, their bones sticking out of their skin, as it were, and they having the appearance as if famine had been gnawing at their vitals. This is the condition of millions now. But here is a book, the coming forth of which should make the poor among men rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

I would call upon this congregation, and upon the inhabitants of Utah Territory, I mean that portion called Latter-day Saints, and ask of them, Have you experienced the fulfillment of this prophecy, in the deliverance of yourselves and children from the oppressions that you endured in the mother country? If a response were given to this it would be a united affirmative from scores of thousands that this prophecy has been fulfilled to the very letter in their deliverance from the bondage which they and their fathers before them had been compelled to endure by the cruel hand of the oppressor.

Another event is spoken of in connection with the bringing forth of this book—"For the terrible one is brought to naught, the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off." Has that ever been fulfilled? No, but it will be in its time and in its season; but not until they have heard the words of the book, and have been thoroughly warned by the coming forth of truth out of the earth. When that has been sounded in their ears, if they hardened their hearts against it the decree of the Almighty is that all that watch for iniquity shall be cut off. All who persecute the Saints of the living God, all who would make a man an offender for a word, that will lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, that will turn aside the just for a thing of naught, are to be consumed.

Another very pleasing thing is mentioned, which you can bear me witness has been fulfilled. "They also who erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine." Oh, how my heart has been pained within me when I have seen the blindness of the Christian world, and I knew that many of them were

sincere! I knew they desired to know the truth, but they scarcely knew whether to turn to the right or to the left, so great were the errors that were taught in their midst, and so strong the traditions which they had imbibed, the fear of the Lord being taught them by the precepts of men instead of by inspiration and the power of the Holy Ghost. "They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding" when this book comes forth, and "they that murmur shall learn doctrine."

It would seem, then, that there is something connected with doctrine in the contents of this book, or the people could not learn doctrine therefrom and have their errors done away. But those who have read this book will bear me record that their minds have been forever set at rest in regard to doctrine, so far as the ordinances of the kingdom of God are concerned. Those who erred, and did not know whether sprinkling, pouring or immersion was the true method of baptism, now know? Why? Because the Book of Mormon reveals the mode as it was given to the ancient Nephites on this continent. So in regard to every other principle of the doctrine of Christ—it is set forth in such great plainness that it is impossible for any two persons to form different ideas in relation to it, after reading the Book of Mormon.

You may ask, Why this plainness? Because it was translated by the power and gift of God; because it came from a proper source—from him who is truth itself. God has brought it forth from the earth, and as the Psalmist David says, "It will set us in the way of his steps." If we have murmured because we did not understand doctrine, we now have a revelation that will show us the true Gospel, with all its ordinances, principles, gifts and blessings, and we may enjoy them inasmuch as we will seek them according to the promises of the Almighty.

I know that I am sometimes lengthy in my teachings, and may be tedious to some, but bear with me a few moments longer, for there are some other prophecies connected with the coming forth of this book that it seems to me should be understood by the people. I will refer you to one now, which will be found in the 37th chapter of the prophecies of Ezekiel. We there have a declaration of the means that God will use to gather the house of Israel from the four quarters of the earth. I have not time to turn to it, but I will repeat it. Speaking to the Prophet, the Lord says—"Therefore, son of man, take one stick and write upon it for Joseph, the stick of Ephraim; and then take another stick and write upon it for Judah, and join these two sticks together in thine hand, and hold them up before the Children of Israel in thine hands." Now here were two sticks. I have no doubt that they were literal sticks in Ezekiel's hands. The question is what did they mean? Two sticks written upon, one for Judah, and the other for Joseph, the stick of Ephraim. And after they were written upon, Ezekiel was to take the two sticks and join them into one, and then hold them up before the children of Israel as one stick. Then the Lord proceeds, "And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, What doest thou mean by this?" Now, notice the interpretation—"What dost thou mean by these two sticks that are written upon for Judah and for Joseph?" "Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, behold I will take the stick of Joseph, written upon for Joseph, and I will put it with the stick of Judah, written upon for Judah, and they shall be one in mine hand." The two sticks in Ezekiel's hands were a representation of what the Lord was going to do, when he would do it and what events should follow the joining of these two sticks together. In reading the next verse we see how it harmonizes with what David and Isaiah have said on the subject. "The sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes; and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen whither they be gone. I will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land upon the mountains of Israel. They shall no more be two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all. But they shall dwell in the land which I have given to Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt, and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children and their children's children forever, saith the Lord."

Has that been fulfilled? No. When will the work commence that will bring it about? When the Lord takes the stick of Joseph, written upon for Joseph, and puts it with the Jewish record, written upon for Judah, and makes them one in his own hand, and not until then. You might raise millions of dollars, and form missionary societies for the amelioration of the condition of the Jews; you might form Christian societies and raise funds until they are ever so great, and go to the nations of the earth and try to convert Israel, but you cannot do it. Why? Because God Almighty has decreed that that work shall be brought about after the union of the two records, and not till then. When he brings forth the record of the tribe of Joseph—his sacred writing and puts it with the record of the



Jews—the Bible then and not till then may we look for the restitution of the house of Israel; and not even then, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

Now let me say a few words about the times of the Gentiles. You know that Jesus predicted, in the 21st chapter of Luke, that Jerusalem should be trodden down by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled, and from the day of the dispersion of the Jew, seventy years after Christ, until the present year—1872—that land has been trodden down by the Gentiles, and the house of Israel have not enjoyed their former location, their beautiful city nor their land of promise, and they cannot enjoy it—God will not permit them until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

The question is, How will he bring about the fulfillment of the times of the Gentiles? I answer, by sending forth to them the stick of Joseph, written upon for Joseph, in connection with the Bible, by his servants who go forth to the nations of the earth. They will proclaim to all people, nations and tongues, to the Gentiles first, the fullness of the Gospel of the Son of God, contained in these two records. The testimony of two nations running together and growing into one is stronger than the testimony of one nation; and when the Lord makes the ancient continent of America bear record to the same great truths; when he unites the Bible of the Western hemisphere, with the Bible of the East, and sends it forth to the nations of the earth, it will be a witness, an evidence and a testimony sufficient to bring about what is termed the fullness of the Gentiles, or to fulfill their times.

This is the reason why, during forty-two years, God has restricted us to the Gentile nations, and would not suffer us to go with the Book of Mormon to the house of Israel until the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled. How much longer the Lord will bear with the Gentile nations I know not; but I do know that when they count themselves unworthy of eternal life, when the servants of God have thoroughly warned them by preaching to them the fullness of the Gospel of his Son, then the commandment will go forth from the Almighty to his servants—“Turn from the Gentile nations and go to the dispersed of Israel. Go, ye fishers and ye hunters, and fulfill that which I spake by the mouth of mine ancient Prophets, that Jacob may no longer be made ashamed, that his face may no longer wax pale. Go and say to the house of Israel in the four quarters of the earth that the God of Jacob has again spoken. Go and tell them that that which he spake by the mouths of their ancient Prophets is being fulfilled.” And they will go, and their proclamation will be to Israel the same as to the Gentiles, with the exception of gathering the Jews to old Jerusalem, instead of to the land of Zion.

I might quote many other passages that have a bearing on this subject, but let this suffice. The work is before the nations, and they can examine it. It has received its foundation and start, and there is no power beneath the heavens that can stay the hand of the Almighty. His work will roll forth, whatever the conduct of the unfaithful may be. The work of the Almighty is onward, and will progress in its majesty and power until every prophecy is fulfilled that has been spoken by the mouth of his ancient servants. It will come to pass, and the people will be gathered, for the powers of the earth cannot stay the hand of the Almighty. Amen.