

SERMON BY PRES. W. W. BLAIR,

At Lamoni, Iowa, January 22, 1893.

Subject, JOSEPH SMITH THE SEER.

THE speaker said: In order that we may add variety to the teaching that has been delivered from this stand of late, we have selected some matter that is rather out of the regular order, and still it lies at the very foundation of what we denominate the strange and wonderful work with which we have become identified as Latter Day Saints. It is probable that the subject matter, in its general features, will be more for the edification of Latter Day Saints than for others. To the latter class we may offer an apology if we present matters that to them are strange, that to them are seemingly out of place; and the apology is simply this, that the kind of doctrine they may desire to hear is being presented here Sunday after Sunday, in almost every sermon that is preached; whereas some matters that more immediately concern the Saints are but very seldom touched.

Now what I am going to talk about is the prophetic mission of Joseph the Seer and the relationship that he sustains to the Church of God, his recognized standing in the church, and, likewise, the relation that his labors sustain to the world. Probably before we get through with our remarks (and we don't expect to be very long about it) there will be no need of an apology. But we advise our hearers on the start so they may not be surprised if we fail to follow the line of thought and argument which to them would be the most entertaining.

It is a matter not to be disputed that we believe that Joseph Smith, Jr., born February 5, 1805, who founded what is known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, was a prophet of the most high God. Strange as it may appear to many the claim that we make we nevertheless believe and teach. We trust in its truthfulness, and from this source derive a great deal of comfort, a great deal of edification and downright satisfaction.

It is not improbable that I should derive a greater degree of satisfaction from

this than an ordinary Bible believer does; for I was once an infidel and cared nothing for matters of religion whatever, therefore was free from the religious prejudice of the world. When I entered into this church I believed the doctrine and received the evidences of the Holy Spirit bearing witness to me of its divinity. From that time onward it has always been a joy and satisfaction to study the character of the work, its ministerial characters, and the leading characteristics and work of Joseph Smith the Seer. We believe he was the best man that heaven could choose for the work. I believe that that was the reason why heaven chose him. Other people may have their views respecting these matters, but they must bear in mind that God does not see always as we do. We "see through a glass darkly," but he knows the end from the beginning. When he designs a work to be performed on earth he chooses his own instruments to accomplish that work, and graciously reveals the same through his servants the prophets that mankind may become instructed in the ways of the Lord. And thus the Latter Day Saints have been instructed in the work of the Lord and rest satisfied therein. It certainly will produce the same results to all who will carefully investigate the ministerial character of Joseph Smith the Seer. The more they examine it, the more they ponder it and get into the spirit of his work, the more they will be satisfied that it is of God.

Every now and again we receive letters from almost all parts of the world from people making inquiries about Joseph the Seer and his wonderful work. Some receive a communication from one direction, some from another, some by a passing tract or an article they see in a newspaper. It arouses an interest and leads them to make inquiry; and they want to know about that wonderful man, Joseph the Seer. In view of all this it is well for us that we be thoroughly instructed in regard to this man and his

work, so that we will be able to give a proper answer for the hope that is within us that Joseph the Seer was a prophet of the most high God.

When we go to the Bible we find all along from the earliest periods of history, from the opening of Genesis to the last of Revelation, that God never had a people on earth but what he had inspired persons among them. In proportion to their faith was their inspired endowments; in proportion to their faithfulness there were more inspired men and women among them and the more they walked in the light the more righteous and inspired they were. That is the history of the Bible.

When we turn to the historical testimony of the Bible, wherever it speaks of God's work in the latter days, it states that God will have an inspired people prior to the day of the coming of the Son of God. They are to have visions; and one that has visions is possessed of the seer's gift to some degree; such is the testimony of Holy Writ. There are to be prophets and prophetesses in the latter days prior to the second advent of Jesus Christ.

Why shall there not be prophets in our days? The Holy Scriptures warrant us in making the inquiry. The hurtful prejudices of professed Christians have darkened the minds of the people concerning these things. And inasmuch as the Scriptures declare that God will have an inspirational people, — will have "prophets" in the latter times, — why may he not have chosen Joseph Smith? "Well," says some one, "he did not have the reputation that he ought to have." Did you ever read of any prophet having a good reputation among his enemies? Jesus declared to the Jews that the Lord had raised up prophets and sent them unto their fathers, and he says unto them, "Which of them have they not persecuted and slain?" as though it was an exception if any prophet of God had escaped persecution, and even martyrdom. The fact that Joseph has a bad reputation given him by his enemies is rather an evidence in his favor than against him as a prophet of God.

I will now read from the Book of Mormon something of the prophetic character of Joseph Smith. Latter Day Saints admit it is inspired of God. In 2 Nephi 2:2 it reads: "For Joseph truly testi-

fied, saying: A seer shall the Lord my God raise up, who shall be a choice seer unto the fruit of my loins."

The Latter Day Saints believe this prophecy was delivered by Joseph of Egypt, away back, over sixteen hundred years before Christ. The fruit of the loins of Joseph, composed of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, were the most numerous—judging them by history and prophecy—of all the tribes of Israel.

Again he says: "Yea, Joseph truly said, thus saith the Lord unto me: a choice seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; and he shall be esteemed highly among the fruit of thy loins. And unto him will I give commandment, that he shall do a work for the fruit of thy loins, his brethren, which shall be of great worth unto them even to the bringing of them to the knowledge of the covenants which I have made with thy fathers."—*Ibid.*

Now bear in mind that the descendants of Joseph are not all to be found among the Lamanites, in the land of America; for that is not the teaching of the Book of Mormon, nor the teaching of Bible, nor is it the teaching of the church; but that only a considerable part of the seed of Joseph will be found among the Lamanites. The Lamanites are but "a branch," while the great body of the seed of Joseph, the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, when traced by prophecy and by history are found scattered abroad throughout Europe and parts of Asia, and without doubt are to be found there to-day, notably in the central parts of Europe, in Germany, Austria, parts of Russia, and in the states on the Bosphorus; also in Scandinavia, in France, in Spain, and largely in Great Britain, including Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and the adjacent regions of country. Bear in mind that Israel has become mixed and hidden largely among the nations of the earth, so far as the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh are concerned; and the Lamanites are but a small "branch."

When God commenced his marvelous work under the administration of the seer, the latter must be and would be identified of God as one of the seed of Joseph through the loins of Ephraim. And for similar reasons, when God established his church in these latter times many of the leading men and women therein were identified and denominated

children of Ephraim. God covenanted with Israel that he would gather them, and that his work would be established among them in the latter days, as you will find recorded in Jeremiah 31:1-14, where he promises that in the latter times he will gather them from all lands where he has scattered them and bring them back to the land of their fathers, saying, "For I am a father to Israel and Ephraim is *my first born*." That is, Ephraim is God's firstborn in that dispensation when the Lord sets his hand to gather Israel from the four quarters of the earth. I mention this in order that you may see the connection there is between the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah and the claims made in this book that Joseph the Seer was of the literal seed of the house of Joseph of Egypt.

I read further: "And I will give unto him a commandment that he shall do none other work save the work that I shall command him."

Go to the Book of Doctrine and Covenants sections 23:4; 87:5, and there you find that commandment, for the Seer's duty was to labor in and preside over the church all his life. Again: "And I will make him great in mine eyes."

I know there are some called Latter Day Saints who think that Joseph as a servant of God, a prophet and seer, was very defective. I don't believe a word of it—not one word of it! I believe that as an individual, a citizen, a member of the Church of God, in respect to his personal private duties, that he was somewhat like other men, and had to work out his salvation with "fear and trembling." But I believe that God directed that "seer," that "prophet like unto Moses" in all his official ways; that he would not permit him to lead Christ's church astray by official teaching, or a "Thus saith the Lord." I don't believe a word of it. I believe that God would have removed him out of the way before he would suffer him to do that. I am speaking of Joseph the "Seer." I speak of him in his *official* capacity as a minister of Jesus Christ, a servant ordained and sent of God to do the work of our heavenly Father. I do not speak of him as a private citizen. I do not speak of him as an individual among other men; but I speak of him in the light that these books speak of him, and that is in regard to his *ministerial* calling.

And God said further of that "seer," "I will make him great in mine eyes." Great in the Lord's eyes! What are we to gather from this? When I consider it in all its phases, as I have tried to do these many years, I have seen that as a minister of Christ, as a servant of the most high God, as a "seer," Joseph was "great" in his sight. Mark you, this is the teaching of this Book of Mormon we profess to believe. Note it well, that the Lord says, "I will make him great in *mine* eyes." Well, if he is great in the eyes of God, he ought to be great in the eyes of God's people as a prophet and minister for God. Are some of the Saints wiser in their judgment than God himself in regard to these matters? I prefer his judgment before that of man, for he "searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins;" consequently he knew who was the best instrument to accomplish his work. The judgment of God is just and safe in regard to these matters, therefore when I read that God says, "I will make him great in mine eyes," I believe it, and that seer is therefore great in mine eyes.

Joseph Smith, as a citizen who had the trying vicissitudes of life to encounter, had his own personal affairs, and such lie between him and his Maker.

Go back to the days of Moses and you do not find that God gave to Israel the privilege to sit in judgment upon the official acts of Moses. Men *assumed* this privilege under his administration, and these officious enemies went to work against Moses and he had to contend with persons who thought they knew more concerning his duty and calling than he did. Aaron and Miriam were a little defected in that direction, but not very long. Afterwards came Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and others with them. I may read you a little here so you may see the need of being very careful about such meddlesomeness, for our own peace, for the glory of God, and for the advancement of his work. We should be very careful about interfering with others' rights and responsibilities. Now Korah, Dathan, and Abiram proposed that they knew as much about the work of God, and the things of his kingdom, as Moses did, and therefore they wrought rebellion among the children of Israel. This was a painful thing for Moses, and he had sore trial because of it. These men, by

their acts, *forced the issue*. Then God wrought for his own name and for the welfare of Israel, and his condemnation fell upon the rebellious ones and the question was settled as to who was the Lord's servant: "And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of my own mind."—Numbers 16: 28.

These men, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, were men of experience; they were leading men in Israel, and had made the accusation that what Moses had done he had done in accordance with his own will, and that they had a right to act for themselves in regard to these matters—the dealing in reference to the judgment of Israel—just as well as Moses had. They claimed that, mark you, and there was the issue. And what was the result? God sent his judgments and these men perished from off the face of the earth. What Moses asked God to do in this instance was, that he would manifest these evidences to Israel that the works he had done thus far were ordained of God.

I will read a little further concerning Joseph the choice Seer:—

"I will give unto him a commandment that he shall do none other work save the work I shall command him. And I will make him great in mine eyes; for *he shall do my work.*"

There is a promise of God that whatever else Joseph might do, whatever else he might accomplish in his life's history, he would nevertheless do God's work, the work that God ordained him to do. That is the promise here, "for he shall do my work. And he shall be great like unto Moses, whom I have said I would raise up unto you, to deliver my people, O house of Israel."

Moses was the founder of a dispensation; he was an organizer of the work of God; he was a servant of God who directed the affairs of all the house of Israel, and so long as he remained among them, he stood at the *head* and *directed all their affairs*. I will show you further in regard to his work as a founder and organizer of God's work. We here read in regard to Jethro the priest of Midian who was a priest of God. The Book of Covenants, in section 83: 2, gives an account of his being a high priest, and tells us whence he derived his priesthood.

The Bible is silent in regard to that, except that in the eighteenth chapter of Exodus it reveals that he was a man of authority, a servant of God; that he was a priest of God; that he had such authority, and such knowledge, and such wisdom that he was qualified at the first to give Moses, the servant of God, good, sound, profitable advice in respect to the organization and government of Israel. We get from the Bible enough to prove that Jethro was a man of God though he was priest of Midian. He recognized God; he recognized the deliverance of Israel through Moses from the land of Egypt; he offered sacrifices and administered before the Lord; and Moses and Aaron, and all the elders of Israel, came to eat bread with him, which I presume without question was the partaking of the sacrament; any way they ate bread with him. I read:—

"When Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel his people, and that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt; then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back, and her two sons; of which the name of the one was Gershom; for he said, I have been an alien in a strange land: And the name of the other was Eliezer; for the God of my father, said he, was mine help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh: . . . And he said unto Moses, I thy father-in-law Jethro am come unto thee, and thy wife, and her two sons with her. And Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, and did obeisance, and kissed him; and they asked each other of their welfare; and they came into the tent. And Moses told his father-in-law all that the Lord had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, and all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and how the Lord delivered them. And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the Lord had done to Israel, whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians. And Jethro said, Blessed be the Lord, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh, who hath delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them. And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law,

took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God: and Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God. And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening. And when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? Why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even? And Moses said unto his father-in-law, Because the people come unto me to inquire of God: when they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws. And Moses' father-in-law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good. Thou wilt surely wear away both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people Godward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: and thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. [Here is the relationship of Moses to the people outlined plainly.] Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, and rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: And let them judge the people at all seasons; and it shall be, that every great matter they shall *bring unto thee*, but every *small* matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said."

I have read this testimony for practical purposes; many of them you will readily gather by my reading; and another one is to show you that Moses was an organizer of a dispensation; that he founded it, and what he did he did by commandment of God, assisted by the counsel of those who labored with him as God's

ministry. Now in after time, in a few days comparatively, as we have already seen, a spirit of unrest was raised in the midst of Israel; one after another started out and claimed that they too had authority equal with Moses. They were men of prominence in Israel and claimed that Moses was taking too much upon himself. But God stood by Moses and justified him in what he had done, and indorsed it by the fire of heaven, by the power of the Most High, and gave Israel to know for all subsequent generations that he had called Moses to the very office and work that he had been engaged in. And Paul says, "Moses was faithful in all his house."—Heb. 3:2. I want to make this apparent to you if I can, for Joseph the Seer stands in the same relation to the Church of God in these last days that Moses did in ancient times.

After the days of Moses there were a great many people, first and last, and oftentimes men of high standing in the priesthood that claimed they had a right to introduce new ideas, and interfere with the work of God's people, and this they did from time to time. You read in Jeremiah 6: 16 where the Lord corrects them in regard to this matter, exhorting them to "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the *old paths*, where is the good way, and walk therein, and you shall find rest to your souls." The same sentiment is found in Ezra 7: 10; Nehemiah 9: 16, 17, 26, 34; Daniel 9: 9-16, and in Malachi 2: 1-9; in Malachi, the last prophet before John the Baptist, where he says to them, "You have made void the law; you have corrupted the covenant of Levi." He further says the people should "receive the law" from the priest's mouth; "but you have corrupted the law of Levi, and caused many to stumble at the law."

Jesus indorsed the mission of Moses heartily, but at the same time he condemned the elders that had corrupted the institutions that Moses had given to Israel. God had established the economy, had founded it, built it up, and he told the children of Israel that as long as they kept the covenant they would be blessed, and if they did to the contrary God would chasten them. But they were led away from the law of the Lord, in one point and another, and that too by the errors of those whom God had called

to minister for Israel. Moses was right, but these innovators were wrong. In Isaiah 9: 16, the Lord says, "The leaders of this people cause them to err, and they that are led of them are destroyed." Why? Because they led them away from the covenant and its institutions that God had established by the hand of Moses the servant of God.

Now bear in mind that the Book of Mormon tells that Joseph the Seer was to sustain the same relation to God's people and was to be "like unto Moses." In what respect? If he was to be like Moses, he must be a dispensation founder; he must be a church builder; he must be an individual to whom God would commit the beginning of his work; to whom he would intrust the building up of his work as long as life should last. This may sound like pretty strong doctrine to some of you, but I have tried to walk around it and view it on all its sides in the light of the promises and prophecies of God; in the light of reason and wisdom. And, mark you, we should judge of this matter in the light of the testimonies God has given us in our sacred books in regard to the official character of Joseph the Seer instead of taking the reported doings and heeding the yarns and persecuting stories that come from the east, the west, the north, and the south, in regard to him. I tell you plainly, I take very little stock—to use a western phrase—in any man, in any person, that assumes to be wiser, that assumes to have better judgment, that assumes to have a better understanding and be a wiser counselor in the things of God in organizing and building the Church of Christ in these latter days than was that man whom God has so plainly pointed out as his "Choice Seer." I am afraid of all such parties, wherever they come from. I am afraid for their own good; I am afraid that they are entertaining ideas that will lead them

away from the foundation that God has laid down in the past.

It has been my fortune, it has been in my work, to be thrown in contact with the old members and ministers of the church, also with some of the leading ministers of the different factions of the church. I have listened to them, and pondered their claims; have listened to their objections to our claims, and I have seen their organizations all pass away with one or two exceptions like the morning cloud; have seen the hands of their builders palsied, have seen their work virtually ended; so that to-day there is but one or two organizations that claim to be the Church of Jesus Christ. And that great body in the West that has hitherto brought disgrace and reproach upon the work in which we are engaged, I am happy to tell you they are gradually, slowly coming back to the old foundations. They do not come back with a bound, but they are coming nevertheless; and many of them are going to come back. And in proportion as we abide upon the foundation that God has ordained and laid by his "Choice Seer," we shall continue to be blessed. But when we turn from the foundation that has been authoritatively laid by that great prophet, we are in danger and will suffer darkness, division, discord, and defeat. We should be admonished by the history of ancient Israel; by the history of the primitive Christian Church; by the history of the Jaredites; by the history of the Nephites; by the history of the church founded by the Choice Seer and by the history of the Reorganized Church up to the present time, and be careful to build upon the foundations ordained of God as taught and exemplified in the ministrations of his seers and prophets. Authentic history is necessarily joined to the law. "To the law and to the testimony," and let us be governed thereby.

[Reported by Bro. E. Stafford.]

JOSEPH the Seer said, January 22, 1843: "Some say the kingdom of God was not set up until the day of Pentecost, and that John did not preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; but I say, in the name of the Lord, that the kingdom of God was set up on the earth from the days of Adam to the present time.

"Whenever there has been a righteous man on earth unto whom God revealed his word, and gave power and authority to administer in his name, and where there is a priest of God, a minister who has power and authority from God to administer in the ordinances of the gospel and officiate in the priesthood of *God, there is the kingdom of God*; and in consequence of rejecting the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the prophets whom God hath sent, the judgments of God have rested upon the people, cities, and nations, in various ages of the world, which was the case with Sodom and Gomorrah, which were destroyed for rejecting the prophets. . . . Where did the kingdom of God begin? Where there is no kingdom of God there is no salvation. What constitutes the kingdom of God? Where there is a prophet, a priest, a *righteous man* unto whom God gives his oracles [revelations. —Ed.], *there is the kingdom of God*. And where the oracles of God are not, there the kingdom of God is not. . . . As touching the gospel and baptism that John preached, I would say that John came preaching the gospel for the remission of sins. He had his authority from God, and the oracles of God were with him, and the *kingdom of God* for a season seemed to rest *with John* alone. . . . There is a difference between the kingdom of God and the fruits and blessings that flow from that kingdom. Because there were more miracles, gifts, visions, healings, tongues, etc., in the days of Jesus Christ, and his apostles, and on the day of Pentecost, than under John's administration, it does not prove by any means that John had not the kingdom of God any more than it would that a woman had not a milk pan because she had not a pan of milk, for while the pan might be compared to the kingdom, the milk might be compared to the blessings of the kingdom.

"John was a priest after the order of Aaron, and [held] the keys of that priesthood, and came forth preaching repent-

ance and baptism for the remission of sins, but at the same time cries out, 'There cometh one after me more mighty than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose.'

"And Christ came according to the words of John, and he was greater than John, because he held the keys of the Melchizedek *priesthood and kingdom* of God, and had before revealed the priesthood to Moses; yet Christ was baptized by John to fulfill all righteousness. And Jesus in his teachings says, 'Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' What rock? Revelation! . . . John, at that time, was the only legal administrator in the affairs of the kingdom there was then on earth and holding the keys of power. The Jews had to obey his instruction or be damned by their own law, and Christ himself fulfilled all righteousness in becoming obedient to the law which he had given to Moses on the Mount, and thereby magnified it and made it honorable, instead of destroying it.

"The son of Zacharias wrested the keys, the glory, the kingdom, the power from the Jews, by the holy anointing and decree of heaven. . . . I know what I say; I understand my mission; . . . God Almighty is my shield; . . . I shall not be sacrificed until my time comes; then I shall be offered freely."—*Joseph the Prophet*, pps. 413–15.

JOSEPH the Seer said, May 16, 1841: "That Satan was generally blamed for the evils which we did; but if he was the cause of all our wickedness, men could not be condemned. The devil cannot compel mankind to evil—all was voluntary. Those who resist the Spirit of God, are liable to be led into temptation, and then the association of heaven is withdrawn from those who refuse to be partakers of such great glory—God would not exert any compulsory means, and the devil could not; and such ideas as were entertained by many were absurd. The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but Christ subjected the same in hope—we are all subject to vanity while we travel through the crooked paths and difficulties which surround us. Where is the man that is free from vanity?"

None ever were perfect but Jesus, and why was he perfect? Because he was the Son of God, and had the fulness of the Spirit, and greater power than any man. But notwithstanding our vanity, we look forward with hope (because 'we are subjected in hope') to the time of our deliverance. . . . Now we read that many of the bodies of the saints arose, at Christ's resurrection, probably all the Saints, but it seems that David did not. Why? because he had been a murderer. If the ministers of religion had a proper understanding of the doctrine of eternal judgment, they would not be found attending the man who had forfeited his life to the injured laws of his country by shedding innocent blood; for such characters cannot be forgiven, until they have paid the last farthing. The prayers of all the ministers in the world could never close the gates of hell against a murderer. . . . Why did God say to Pharaoh, 'For this cause I have raised thee up?' Because Pharaoh was a fit instrument—a wicked man, and had committed acts of cruelty of the most atrocious nature. . . . Unconditional election to eternal life was not taught by the apostles. God did elect or predestinate, that all those who would be saved, should be saved in Christ Jesus, and through obedience to the gospel; but he passes over no man's sins, but visits them with corrections, and if his children will not repent of their sins, he will discard them."—*Times and Seasons*, vol. 2. pp. 429–30.

OCTOBER 1, 1841, he said: "The proclamation of the first principles of the gospel was a means of salvation to men individually, and it was the *truth*, not *men*, that saved them; but men, by actively engaging in rites of salvation substitutionally, became instrumental in bringing multitudes of their kin into the kingdom of God. He explained a difference between *an angel* and a ministering spirit; the one a resurrected or a translated body, with its spirit, ministering to embodied spirits—the other a disembodied spirit, visiting and ministering to disembodied spirits. Jesus Christ became a ministering spirit, while his body laying in the sepulcher, to the spirits in prison, to fulfill an important part of his

mission, without which he could not have perfected his work or entered into his rest. After his resurrection, he appeared as *an angel* to his disciples. Translated bodies cannot enter into rest until they have undergone *a change equivalent to death*. Translated bodies are designed for future missions. The angel that appeared to John upon the Isle of Patmos was a translated or resurrected body. Jesus Christ went in body, after his resurrection, to minister to translated and resurrected bodies. There has been a chain of authority and power from Adam down to the present time. The only way to obtain truth and wisdom is not to ask it from books [alone—Ed.], but to go to God in prayer and obtain divine teaching."—*Times and Seasons*, vol. 2, p. 577.

"THERE are certain key-words and signs belonging to the priesthood, which must be observed in order to obtain the blessing. The sign of Peter was, to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, with the promise of the gift of the Holy Ghost, and in no other way is the gift of the Holy Ghost obtained. There is a difference between the Holy Ghost and a gift of the Holy Ghost. Cornelius received the Holy Ghost before he was baptized, which was the convincing power of God unto him of the truth of the gospel; but he could not receive the gift of the Holy Ghost until after he was baptized. Had he not taken this sign or ordinance upon him, the Holy Ghost which convinced him of the truth of God, would have left him. Until he obeyed these ordinances and received the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, according to the order of God, he could not have healed the sick, or commanded an evil spirit to come out of a man, and it obey him; for the spirits might say unto him as they did to the sons of Sceva—'Paul we know, and Jesus we know, but who are ye?' It matter not whether we live long or short on the earth after we come to a knowledge of these principles and obey them unto the end. I know that all men will be damned if they do not come in the way which he hath opened; and this is the way marked out by the word of the Lord.—*Times and Seasons*, vol. 3, pps. 751–753.