

is there a man on the face of the earth that ever had it confirmed to him by the administration of an angel? But here comes evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon such as any court of justice is obliged to receive.

But are we to receive the testimony of all individuals that may come and pretend to have heard the voice of God and to have seen angels? May not impostors come forth and say they have seen angels? I reply that there is this distinction to be made; a man that is sent of God, who has a true message, will always be able to present something connected with the nature of the message and the circumstances surrounding it which will prove it to be true. If there should be a thousand individuals bearing witness that they had heard the voice of God and seen angels, we shall always be able to detect the impostor from the servant of God by examining the doctrine. There are evidences distinguishing a true message from a false one, that the whole world may be enabled to discern between the two.

For instance, there is no individual upon the face of the earth who can directly prove that Joseph Smith did not see the angel of God and obtain the plates. No individual upon the face of this earth can prove that the three witnesses did not see the angel and the plates; consequently their evidence cannot be directly negated, unless they deny their own testimony, which they have not done. The only possible way to condemn these men as impostors is to examine the nature of their testimony to see whether it is reasonable and scriptural.

Is there anything unscriptural in hearing the voice of God? or in an angel's descending from heaven bearing testimony to a book in which all nations are interested? It is a book sent to prepare the way of the Lord for his second coming. Was it unreasonable for the Lord to send angels to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Was it unreasonable for them to take dinner with Abraham and for him to wash their feet?—for Lot to lodge them in his house?—for Joshua, Gideon, Daniel, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Peter, Paul, or the wise men and shepherds of Israel, or for Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Zechariah, or for various other holy men and women to see angels sent from heaven? It was neither unreasonable nor unscriptural.

Paul says, "are they (the angels) not all ministering spirits sent to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation?" If, then, they have this office assigned to them, to minister to the heirs of salvation, it is not an unscriptural doctrine that they should minister to those four men. It is just as reasonable that God should send an angel to four men in the last days and introduce his kingdom and preparatory work for the second advent of the Son of God, as it was for an angel to be sent to Zechariah in order that a messenger might be raised up to prepare the way for his first coming. The one is a little more reasonable than the other; for the latter-day coming is to far transcend in glory and power his first coming, when he appeared among the Jews. At his second coming the earth will tremble and roll to and fro like a drunken man; the mountains shall fall, the valleys be raised, the crooked places made straight and the rough places smooth, when the Lord is revealed in his glory and power.

If all these things are to be fulfilled: Israel gathered; the fullness of the Gentiles brought in, and Zion built up; if the great latter-day work, mentioned by the ancient prophets, has to be fulfilled, then it would not be unreasonable that an angel should be sent from heaven to begin a work of this magnitude.

But perhaps you may admit that it is perfectly scriptural and reasonable that an angel should be sent; but, then, you may ask if there may not be something connected with the Book of Mormon which would render it inconsistent and not entitled to credit, and which would prove that its pretences were an imposition.

In reply I ask, what is there about the Book of Mormon that is inconsistent? What does it profess to be? It professes to contain the history of part of the tribe of Joseph who came out of the land of Jerusalem 600 years before Christ and colonized the American continent. These Indian tribes are their descendants. When they first came here they were a righteous people and had with them the scriptures containing the law of Moses. When they came here they made plates of gold and on them they recorded their history, wars, contentions, etc. These plates were handed down among the ancient inhabitants of America for a thousand years after they came here. Their prophecies were recorded from generation to generation. Jesus Christ appeared to them on this land after his resurrection, just the same as he did to the people in Palestine, and showed them the wounds in his hands and in his feet. He descended before them in South America and put an end to the law of Moses, which they practiced on this continent, and he introduced the gospel in its stead, taught them faith and repentance, and baptism for the remission of sins, as in Jerusalem. He taught the people to come with broken hearts and contrite spirits and humble themselves and be baptized by immersion for the remission of their sins, and had his servants lay hands on them for the gift of the Holy Ghost, as Paul and Peter did.

The teachings of Jesus were recorded on these gold plates, and they were handed down until some 400 years after Christ. Many sacred revelations are recorded on them and prophecies that reach to our day, and down to the end of all things.

If you search this record from beginning to end you will find the historical part perfectly consistent. You cannot prove that Joseph Smith is an impostor from any inconsistencies in the historical part of the work.

If you search the discoveries of all the antiquarians that have written since the discovery

of America concerning the ancient inhabitants of this land, you cannot put your finger upon one particle of evidence from their researches that will come in contact with the Book of Mormon.

If you examine its prophecies you will find many that the Jewish records speak nothing of; prophecies that relate to the Indians and that relate to the rise of this Church, to the Millennium, and to many things that the other prophets have not touched upon; and also many of the events predicted in the Jewish Bible were delivered to the prophets in this land. Compare the prophecies of the Jewish records with those in the Book of Mormon and you will find no clashing or jarring, consequently you cannot condemn the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith, and these witnesses to be impostors from the prophetic declarations of that book.

Try its doctrine and you will find that the gospel taught in ancient America 1800 years ago is like that taught in ancient Judea and the regions round about. Did the ancient Apostles in Palestine teach faith in Jesus Christ, repentance and baptism for the remission of sins? So did the ancient apostles and prophets in America. Did the apostles in Judea practice the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost? So did the ancient Israelites of America. Did Jesus and his disciples organize the church in Asia with revelations and inspired men in it—with prophets and prophetesses, with dreams, visions and revelations? So did the ancient Israelites in America do the same thing. They, the ancient apostles, organized the church with miracles and gifts, with power to heal the sick, to cast out devils, to work miracles and with power over the elements. The Book of Mormon tells us that the Israelites on ancient America organized one after the same pattern; consequently if we examine the whole structure of the church in Palestine and the structure of the church in ancient America, we find no jar; so, no man upon the face of the earth can condemn Joseph Smith and these three witnesses from the inconsistency in their doctrine.

Compare the miracles that are recorded in the Book of Mormon with those recorded in the Bible, and you will find no unreasonable miracles in the one, more than in the other. There is no fish story in it; nothing about a man's being carried in a whale's belly three days and three nights; tho' if such a story was in it, we should believe it, the same as we do the Jewish history of Jonah. There is nothing said in this book about three men being put into a furnace of fire, heated seven times hotter than ever before, and yet the three men receiving no harm. We believe the Bible when it records this great miracle; but there is nothing which to the Atheist is so apparently inconsistent as that.

The miracles recorded in the Book of Mormon were of such a nature as to be worthy of the exertion of divine power. If the sick were healed, it was because Jesus had promised his servants they should lay their hands on them and they should be healed. If they prophesied, it was concerning future events, because the Lord wanted them to understand that which was to come.

Is there anything in this book that contradicts any scientific truth? You may ransack all the libraries in the world and gather together all the books of science and compare with this book and you will find no clashing; consequently where is your ground for condemnation? You cannot condemn it from its historical, prophetic and doctrinal writings, or because of any unreasonable miracles said to have been wrought among the ancient Israelites on these lands, or because it contradicts any scientific truth, or because it is unscriptural or unreasonable that people should see angels in these days.

We defy this whole generation to bring up any testimony to condemn the truth of this book. It will face this generation from this time until the second coming of Christ and then through the Millennium. And when this generation come up from their graves at the great and last day, the books will be opened, and by the word of God declared on this continent and on the eastern continent, the inhabitants of the earth will be judged.

You may bring all the lies and newspaper stories you can hatch up and all the misrepresentations you can conceive and use them against the divine truths of the Book of Mormon to save your crumbling apostate systems from utter ruin; you may pile up your falsehoods like mountains. You may fill your railroad carriages to the brim with them, or you may send them by the electric current the world round, and it will not stop the onward progress of the truths of Mormonism revealed from heaven; it cannot stay the arm of the Almighty from building up his kingdom in the last days, or hush the voice of his servants from warning the nations to repent and to turn away from their lyings, and whoredoms, and from all their wickedness and abominations which they continually practice before the Lord.

The word of God is something that cannot be destroyed; but it will appear in the day of judgment and you and I will be judged by it.

I believe the Book of Mormon; I believe it because I consider that I have, not only the testimony of these twelve witnesses, but a vast amount of other evidence and testimony such as you have not in relation to the things that are contained in the Jewish record.

For instance, what evidence and testimony have the present generation and the generations that have lived during the last seventeen centuries, that Jesus Christ, the great Redeemer of the world, arose from the dead? You have the testimony of four individuals, and no more, provided that their testimony has not

been corrupted, altered, and mutilated in the oldest manuscripts now known. Who are they? Matthew, John, Paul, and Peter; the other four writers of the New Testament have not said a word about seeing Jesus after his resurrection. The New Testament was written by eight men, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, James and Jude. Four of these men have given their testimony that they saw Jesus after his resurrection; the other four have told us nothing about it.

But, it may be asked, "does not the apostle Paul testify that Jesus was seen by upwards of five hundred brethren at once?"

But none of those five hundred brethren have spoken of this or handed down their testimony.

Perhaps it will be argued that the four witnesses that saw Jesus, viz., Matthew, John, Paul and Peter performed great miracles and thus established their testimony and consequently we are bound to believe them.

But how do you know that they performed miracles?

"They have told us so."

How do you know they tell us the truth?—Were you there to behold the miracles they wrought? Only six of the eight writers of the New Testament say anything about miracles; suppose they all testify that there were wonderful miracles wrought; have we not as good reason to believe eight men that testify to miracles in these days?

If all the men on this stand have kept journals—and some of them have for a quarter of a century—and if they have recorded what their eyes have seen and their ears have heard; and if the several hundred elders in this large assembly have done likewise and recorded all the miraculous things their eyes have seen and their ears heard; and if the generations to come should gather up our journals and manuscripts and entitle them *The Acts of the Apostles and Elders of the Nineteenth Century* they would find tens of thousands of miracles recorded in these journals where the sick have been healed, the eyes of the blind opened, the ears of the deaf unstopped; where the lame have been made to leap as an hart and where people have been raised up from the last stages of Cholera in the name of Jesus Christ, and where those who were born blind have had their eyes opened.

Would they not have as much reason to believe the journals and writings of the Latter Day Saints in relation to the miracles wrought, as you have to believe the testimony of the six writers of the New Testament on the same subject? Who are the New Testament writers? They are interested witnesses, every one of them.

"But the world saw their miracles."

How do you know.

"These six writers say so."

Have you the testimony of any of the world that they actually saw even one miracle wrought by the apostles of Jesus Christ? No you have not.

Perhaps you may say that when the lame man, at the beautiful gate of the temple, was healed, it was done publicly before the multitude.

How do you know this? Luke says so in the Acts of the Apostles and you believe it on his testimony alone. How do you know that Jesus Christ was transfigured on the mount?—that Moses and Elias appeared to Peter and James and John on that occasion? Have Peter, James and John given their testimony?—Not a word; but Matthew, Mark and Luke, three men who were not present, who did not see the transfiguration, and who did not see Moses and Elias, say so; but their testimony is second handed.

We believe that Peter, James and John actually did see holy angels, did behold Moses and Elias, and see Jesus transfigured upon second handed testimonies given on the subject.

Now we have the testimony of individuals themselves, concerning the Book of Mormon; not the testimony alone of Elders Richards and Woodruff, or of any of these Elders, but the testimonies of persons who beheld the angel and heard his voice.

Therefore, the testimony establishing the truth of the Book of Mormon is far superior to that establishing the Bible in its present form.

I do not know but I am wearing you, but I have endeavored in my simple way to lay before you the evidence and testimony you have for believing the Jewish record compared with the evidence and testimony you have for believing the ancient records of America, called the Book of Mormon; and any person who will carefully examine this subject will be obliged in their own hearts to say there is a hundred fold more evidence to prove the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon than what we have to prove the Palestine records.

But this is not all. We do not rest our evidence alone on the testimony of these twelve witnesses; our hopes are built upon a foundation surer than all these external testimonies. The Latter Day Saints are not that enthusiastic people who open their mouths and swallow down doctrines because they are popular, because their fathers believed them; but we believe a doctrine because we have evidence to substantiate it; and then in addition to this, we seek for more truth and knowledge.

The Book of Mormon informs us how we may not only have faith in that book because of the evidence and testimony accompanying it, but how we may obtain a knowledge concerning its truth. The Book of Mormon informs us as well as the Holy Scriptures, that if we will repent and be baptized, we shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

We have tried the experiment. We have repented of our sins, we have turned from our transgressions and humbled ourselves, like little children, before the Lord; we were buried

in the water and brought out of the water, then hands were laid upon us and we received the gift of the Holy Ghost and this gave us a knowledge of the truth.

What are the effects of the Holy Ghost?—Jesus says, in the last chapter of Mark, "these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name they shall cast out devils, speak with new tongues, take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover."

The promise of the signs was not to the apostles alone, but he said unto them, do you go and preach the word in all the world, and he that believes your testimony and is baptized shall receive salvation, and those that will not believe shall be damned, and these signs shall follow them that do believe. We have believed, repented, been baptized and received the gift of the Holy Ghost, and we found the promise verified. If it were not so, we would then know it to be an imposition. If we found that Jesus did not fulfil his promise after we fully obeyed his word we should then know the same to be false.

Let me say to this congregation that there would not have been a church of Latter Day Saints five years upon the earth, had he not fulfilled his promise after we had obeyed his word, because he made this promise not only in the Book of Mormon and the New Testament, but by direct revelation through the Prophet, that if the people would do thus and so, they should be blessed with such and such gifts. Now suppose the people, after having tried it, did not receive those gifts, the whole church would have apostatized and turned and declared it all false, Book of Mormon, Bible and everything else. Why? Because these books made a promise on certain conditions which was not fulfilled.

But when the people believed and were baptized for the remission of sins and filled with the Holy Ghost and the visions of the future were opened to them, and the spirit of prophecy rested upon them and they beheld the sick recovering, the blind receiving their sight and the deaf hearing, "surely," say they, "this must be of God; for the Lord never would have confirmed an imposition to us by granting the gifts of the gospel."

But may not the devil perform miracles? Satan was to come with all power, signs and living wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they had pleasure in unrighteousness. "Now how do you know but these are some of the strong delusions?"

But prove to us that we have had pleasure in anything contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ; that this people have not obeyed the scriptures of eternal truth. Those signs that were to come and these living wonders, &c., were to be practised by individuals that had pleasure in unrighteousness and who rejected the gospel of Jesus Christ; they were to go forth like the magicians in the days of Moses to withstand the power of Moses; we see them on one hand turning the water to blood, and Moses doing the same; in short, Moses performed numerous miracles by the power of God, and the magicians did the same. How are we to distinguish between the two? Moses believed and obeyed the words of the Most High God, and the magicians were fighting against him, and yet they did miracles, not in the name of God, but by their enchantments; and so it is with all wicked miracle workers from their day down to the second coming of Christ; they perform their lying wonders by the power of Satan—by the means of somnambulism, spirit-rapping, spirit-writing or whatever it may be. But when people repent and are baptized, and perform miracles in the name of the Lord, such miracles are designed to profit and benefit mankind; such as laying hands on the sick that they may be healed, speaking and interpreting tongues; hence you may know them to be of God; therefore, it is easily to be distinguished which of the two powers should be received and which should be rejected.

May God bless all those who love the truth, whether Jew or Gentile bond or free; whether it be those who have received the gospel and Book of Mormon, or those who are inquiring to know concerning its truth. If they desire to know the truth, may the God of heaven, who has sent forth his angel and confirmed the truth unto many, pour out his Holy Spirit upon them and enlighten their minds, inasmuch as they go before God with an honest heart, that they may know, as the Latter Day Saints know, that this work is a message from the Almighty, to be proclaimed to every nation, kindred and people upon the face of the whole earth. And when they know from God that this work is true, they will not be tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, but they will be built upon a foundation upon which they can rest secure, tho' the whirlwinds of persecution may beat upon them; tho' they may be hated, derided and suffer the loss of all things, time after time; though they may be driven to and fro and scattered from city to city and from synagogue to synagogue, and their Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles be put to death. Yet with all this distress and poverty, brought upon them by being robbed and plundered of their lawful possessions, and with all the injury they may sustain from year to year, they will have something in the midst of it all, that will give them joy, peace and happiness, and that something is: A KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH, not merely a faith that the foundation on which they are built is of God, but a knowledge that they are established upon a rock that cannot be moved, which is as firm as the throne of Jehovah and as secure as the eternal attributes of the Almighty.