

He had to tell the people that were living around him, that God had spoken. "And what has God said?" He has told me that because of your wickedness he will send the floods upon you. He will break up the foundations of the great deep; he will open the windows from on high and he will pour out the floods upon these nations and they will be swept away, root and branch, except a few that will believe in my message, and come into the ark that I am building. How many witnesses did God raise up then? I expect he must have revealed himself to the sons of Noah, as well as to Noah. That would be but four witnesses; but we have no account that the Lord revealed himself to these three sons. They, however, believed the testimony of their father; whether they knew it or not we do not know. At any rate their faith was sufficiently strong, to cause them to labor with the old man, and they labored along year after year, weary no doubt, in forming the timbers of this huge ark or vessel. Finally they got it fixed together, and the beasts of the field—that appeared to have more inspiration than the men and the women of that age—began to come from the forests towards the ark, and finally the door was closed. They must have been prophetic beasts, beasts that had revelations, beasts that were able to judge far better than the rest of the world of mankind in that age. The rains descended, and the earth was covered with the flood, and we read that Noah by his testimony condemned the whole world. What! One witness? One witness alone condemned the whole world, and they perished from off the face of the earth, because one witness was sent unto them! The Lord has done a little better with this generation. He sent four witnesses before he organized the church, and that was not all. There were other men that had great testimony and evidence given to them; but they did not see the angel; they did not see the plates in the hands of the angel; but what did they see? They saw this boy have these plates. They took the plates and handled them themselves. They saw the engravings upon these plates—eight other men, besides the four I have mentioned—and they testify to what they saw. They bear witness in words of soberness, that they did handle the plates with their own hands, that they did feel the weight of the plates, that they did observe the engravings thereon, that they had the appearance of ancient work and of curious workmanship, and they bear testimony to what their eyes saw and to what they handled with their hands. Their names, as also the names of the four that saw the angel, were attached to this record, when the first edition of this book was issued from the press. Twelve witnesses then did God condescend to raise up immediately before he organized this church. Are not twelve witnesses sufficient to condemn this world in this age, if one witness condemned the world in the days of Noah? I think that God has been very lenient, very kind and very merciful in beginning the work with so many witnesses.

But there seems to be other witnesses and evidences concerning the correctness and divinity of this book that are far greater than those I have named. There is a promise to all the human family, that is far better than the ministration of angels to others. What knowledge does it give to me, to you, to any other person, among all the nations and kindreds of the earth, concerning the divinity of the Book of Mormon, because four witnesses, that lived in some portion of our globe, state that an angel had come from heaven? Does that give me a knowledge? No. Did that impart a knowledge to any other creature on the face of the globe? No. Did we not need a knowledge as well as they? Yes. I have a soul as well as these four men, that must be saved or must be lost. If that be the case ought I not also to have a knowledge concerning my safety as well as they? I think so. Has the Lord made it impossible for me to obtain this knowledge? No. The very message itself in the Book, and in the New Testament, and in the modern revelations that are given through the Prophet, told me, told you, told all the people upon the face of this earth, how they also might obtain a knowledge of the truth of the Book of Mormon and of this work. How? By getting a vision or manifestation from that same God? No. That we should all have the ministration of angels? No.

To some is given one gift, and to some are given other gifts. To some it is given to know in one way, and to some it is given to know in some other way. The Lord has promised that if I will repent, if you will repent, if the people of the United States will repent, if the people of all the nations of the earth will repent, turn unto him and obey his commandments that they should receive the Holy Ghost. Will that give us a knowledge as clear, as definite, as pointed as could be revealed by the ministration of angels? Yes.

Supposing now that I were a natural man, never had received the Holy Ghost. Supposing that a person should come and testify to me that he had received the Holy Ghost, that he had received heavenly visions, that the Lord had sent angels to him, what would I know about it? What would I know about the Holy Spirit, if I never had received it? No man can discern the things of God, but by the spirit of God; so says the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians. It is impossible for the natural man to know the things of God, and if I were a natural man, and had never partaken of the Holy Ghost I might hear a cloud of witnesses testifying to what they had received. I might say "Well you seem a sincere people, you seem to be honest in your declarations, you say you have had the visitation of angels, you say you had heavenly visions, you say the Holy Ghost has been poured out upon you, but I have never received these things as a natural man." Now what reason would there be to condemn me on the great judgment day, if I rejected their testimony? They would tell me that I might be put in communication with the heavens the same as they. They might tell me that on certain conditions, I might obtain the Holy Ghost, as well as they, if I would only exercise sufficient faith, to repent of my sins and to be baptized for a remission of them, and to have the servants of God lay their hands upon my head for the reception of the Holy Ghost; that if I would enter into a covenant with the most High God, to obey his commandments and to call upon his name in faith, and to exercise faith before him—I expect if I did not do all these things, that all this cloud of witnesses that I

have named, would stand up on the day of judgment and would condemn me. But if I would exercise faith, though I had no knowledge, and would obey the commandments, would be obedient to the principles, and then I received for myself the testimony, I should then be dependent neither upon David Whitmer, Martin Harris nor Oliver Cowdery; Joseph Smith, nor any of the twelve witnesses that saw the plates, nor any other man living on the whole earth. I could then say "Oh Lord my God thou hast fulfilled thy promise which thou hast made. Thou hast said if I would repent and be baptized I would receive such and such blessings. They have been given unto me, and now I know that thy word is true." And from that forth I could be a witness myself, but before that I could not be a witness.

Are the ministers of the different denominations of this day, who have never had the Spirit of revelation upon them—are they competent witnesses of God to stand before this generation and declare the things of God? No. Can they stand up in the great judgment day and condemn any of this generation to whom they have preached? No. Why not? From the very fact that they are not witnesses. They can tell what the ancients say, how the ancients became witnesses, but they themselves have not an experience in these things, and therefore, God has not made them witnesses. They cannot condemn any man living on the face of the earth, by their preaching and their testimony.

We are living, then, in the great and last dispensation, in which God has provided a way that he might raise up scores of thousands of witnesses, a way that all might know as did Peter. Peter did not get his knowledge from seeing miracles wrought. He did not obtain his knowledge because some other man had received a knowledge. The Savior blessed him and said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." The Lord had revealed this knowledge unto Peter, consequently Peter was constituted a witness. And so the Lord, by having given revelation from the heavens to scores

of thousands of the Latter-day Saints, has made them witnesses of the divinity of this work.

Oh, how the Latter-day Saints ought to rejoice! How faithful we all ought to be! How frivolous are the things of this present life, compared with the knowledge of God, which you have received! Do you appreciate this, Latter-day Saints? Do you realize it as you ought to; or are your minds swayed to and fro by the frivolities and vanities of this present life? Do they absorb the greater portion of your attention? Do you forget your God, the greatness of your calling, and the knowledge which you have received? I hope not.

I believe that the Latter-day Saints are the very best people on the face of our globe. Why? Because they have been willing to endure hardships, persecutions all the day long. They have been willing to leave their houses, their lands, their possessions, have been willing to see all fall into the hands of their enemies and flee to a desert country for the sake of their religion. Has God forgotten all these things? Oh, ye children of Zion! do you suppose that the Lord has forgotten, because many years have passed away, your tribulation, your sacrifices—if they can be called such—your mobbings and persecutions in times that are past? No. They are written as it were on the palms of his hands, they are printed indelibly upon the thoughts of his heart. He has all these things in remembrance, and a day of controversy is coming, and it is not far in the future—a controversy for Zion; a controversy with all the persecutors of Zion—a controversy with all the nations of the earth that fight against Mount Zion—the Lord has all these things in his mind, and he will fulfil them in his own due time and season. But now is the day of our tribulation and has been for some 40 years and upwards that are past. Are there better days to come? Yes. How far in the future I am not prophet enough to know. All that I do know is that they are nigh, near at the very door, when the Lord will rise up and come forth out of his hiding place and fulfil that which he has spoken concerning Zion and the inhabitants of this land. Zion is not destined to be crushed down forever

into the dust. Zion is not destined to be overcome by the kingdoms of this world forever. The turning point will come, and that is nigh at hand. The days are coming—I know they are close at hand—when the young and the rising generation that are now sitting in this congregation, and who are spread forth upon the face of the land, throughout these mountains and valleys, will see the turning point for Zion. What will they see? They will see a man raised up like unto Moses in days of old—a man to whom the Lord will reveal himself, as he did to his servant Moses, by angels, by visions, by revelation from the heavens, and will give unto him commandments, and make him an instrument in his hands, to redeem the people and to establish them in their everlasting inheritance upon the face of this American continent. Will he show forth his power in that day as he did unto his servant Moses and to Israel? Yes, only more abundantly, more extensively than in the days of Moses, for there is a larger continent than the land of Egypt, in which the Lord will make manifest his power—a greater people than the Egyptians, among whom he will work. Consequently he will shew forth his power unto all the inhabitants of this land. He will fulfil the plain predictions of the Prophet Isaiah that the Lord shall make bare his arm in the eyes of all the nations, until all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God. What will be said then concerning this people and Zion? It will then be said by those that are spared in the midst of the terrible judgments that will fall upon these nations, "Surely the people called Latter-day Saints, the people of Zion, are the people of our God. God is there, his power is there, it is his power that delivers that people, it is his power that is over them as a cloud by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night. It is his power that protects their congregations, protects their settlements, protects their holy temple. Let us no longer fight against Zion or the people of God, let us enter into the everlasting covenant which has been revealed anew. We will join ourselves with the people of God." In that day will be fulfilled that which has been spoken by Isaiah in the second chapter, by the prophet

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