

must go down into the water and were each baptized as the same John baptized Jesus in Jordan more than 1800 years ago. How that Peter, James and John, apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, who were with Him in His ministry when on earth, and to whom He committed the keys and authority to build up His kingdom and administer in spiritual things, came and laid their hands upon Joseph and Oliver, and authorized them to administer in like blessings to the children of men, with authority to build up a like kingdom of righteousness among men in this day of men's need and God's power, conviction seized upon my soul as in transport of delight I witnessed the same hands that wrote the Book of Mormon, trace with pen and ink testimonies that can never be obliterated, of these holy ministrations, and the messages of salvation brought to earth from heaven, that these men had seen and heard both the Father and the Son, and were living witnesses of the fact that He who was put to death by wicked hands does live and is the Savior and Redeemer of men. And having seen and heard these things, I do most assuredly bear testimony of them, that I may share with them there the glory of the future, as I have here the unspeakable joys of the present.

With these evidences and testimonies before us, which only relate to the manner of the coming forth of the book, say nothing of the purity of the doctrines it inculcates, I am free to say and most confidently assert there is not another book on earth known to the Christian world that is entitled to the same faith, worthy of the same confidence, and so purely the Word of God, as the Book of Mormon. Every word of it has been written as it has come to us by the "gift and power of God;" by His direct divine interposition and for a holy purpose.

This declaration, these facts, should be enough to awaken an interest in every mind to learn what are its contents and what relation it sustains to the present and future welfare of mankind, or any portion of them. To read carefully its pages would be a direct way to satisfy that interest, but as many have not access to it, and many who do care less about it than some who do not, I shall briefly refer to some of its marvelous predictions and some of its historical revelations which are solving problems of scientific and geological controversy.

The many interesting incidents attending the coming forth and translation of this sacred and historical record, as related by these men in my hearing, would fill a volume, but they are not all pertinent to the object of this communication, which is to awaken a more lively interest in these things among the youth of Zion, who must bear not only the responsibilities of ministry but should possess the knowledge requisite to meet intelligently those antiquarian developments which have been and are continually coming to light to the astonishment of all who are ignorant of the contents of that book.

It is a key to the many mysteries of this land from the day that Jared and his brother with their families landed upon the shores from the tower of

Babel; or from the days when our Father Adam offered sacrifice for himself and his children when it was the garden of the whole earth; a land upon which mighty nations have lived and died, leaving behind them imperishable monuments of their day and race, their faith and civilization, which have been reserved for the admiration of their children, of whom it was long since decreed they should come to a knowledge of their fathers.

The discovery of ruined cities, wonderful for their architectural grandeur and durability, in Central America, Mexico, and to the land northward, the artificial mounds throughout the land which have been found to be the burial places of a race that has perished without our knowledge, the hundred mound caves in the centre of our land, which was the centre of their civilization; and where lie embalmed thousands of human skeletons of comparatively giant size, and away in the far north where sacred altars still remain so perfect, and so superior to our present knowledge of the craft of masonry as to ascribe the work to a "prehistoric past;" with hieroglyphics, and chiseled crescents and amphitheatres, which proclaim them the remains of a great people, "who must have communed with gods of high art, and enjoyed a civilization equal, if not superior, to our own"—all these, and much more, are no mystery to the careful student of the Book of Mormon.

That record not only links the past to the present, but penetrates the future with all the certainty of prophetic instinct that divine inspiration gives to man.

Nor are these material evidences alone corroborative of the book. Inspiration and prophecy blend their voices in harmony, demanding its coming forth as it has, the redeeming pledge of sacred promise.

It is an event that can be recognized as the fulfillment of David's prophecy, "Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven." Psalm 85, 11. A righteous angel revealed the hiding place of truth in the earth, and that which had long been hid came forth to the understanding of men.

Enoch in his days uttered a like prophecy, and declared that the "truth should come forth out of the earth," and it should bear testimony of the only begotten Son of God.

Jesus said He had other sheep that were not of the Jewish fold, "and they shall hear my voice." John 10, 16.

After His resurrection and ascension He visited the Nephites on this land as recorded by them in the Book of Mormon, organized His church and gave them the law of His Gospel.

Many other prophets have also spoken to the effect that the richer blessings were in store for the seed of Joseph through the loins of Ephraim; of whom the Nephites claimed to be literal descendants.

God promised the Jaredites that their language should not be confounded, that He would lead them to a land choice above all others, and that no nation should be greater than that of their seed. We may, therefore, reasonably expect as grand developments from the land of the Jaredites, as from the land of the Pharaohs.

But notwithstanding all the evidences of sacred and other testimonies, unbelief has usurped dominion over the minds of men until many Bible truths are as openly discarded by professed Christians as are those of the Book of Mormon.

When we come to examine the contents of the book we find it to be an abridgement of the records kept by the people who were the descendants of Nephi, who with his family and kindred left Jerusalem and came to this land about six hundred years before Christ; and also an abridgement of the records of the people of Jared, who were scattered at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people, when they were building a tower to get to heaven.

The Nephite records also furnish an abridged history of that part of the Nephite race, called Lamanites, who dissented from the faith and practice of their fathers, were cursed by a darkness of skin, and are now known as the American Indians.

For historical information of a large portion of the human family there is no other book on record that can compare with it. It accounts for the many wonderful discoveries which characterize and make famous the American continent, demonstrating the highest degree of civilization and culture in the arts and sciences, as developed in ruined cities, magnificent temples and mummified skeletons of the dead.

The book of Mormon is the most ancient and reliable history of America that is now extant. It treats of the peoples and their character, who lived and prospered exceedingly in the land for many hundreds of years, so long as they observed the precepts and lived in the faith Jesus Christ, who ministered to them in person after His resurrection, taught them the plan of salvation and organized His Church among them with Prophets and Apostles, as He had done among the Jews at Jerusalem.

For sacred history and doctrinal disquisition there is nothing to compare with it in all the realm of literature. No learned theologian has ever been able to so simplify with impressive language, the virtue and power of those eternal elements which we call Faith, Hope and Charity, that give character to a Christian's life as we find them delineated in this God-given, inspired book.

The necessity and virtue of the atonement of Jesus Christ was never but feebly emphasized until written in the simple, earnest and comprehensive language of Alma, Mosiah and others of the Book of Mormon Prophets.

No pen has so eloquently and consistently impressed the truth and glory of the doctrine of the resurrection as a cardinal point—the culmination of the Christian's hopes, as has been done by numbers of its inspired prophetic writers.

It challenges the literature of the world for its equal in earnest simplicity, its power of conviction and lasting impress, which takes hold of and fastens to the careful and honest reader. He feels the inspiration of divinity that subdues the carnal and sensual of humanity, and elevates him to an appreciation of the unselfish purity of those who wrote by command of God, and under His special supervision.