

world might have been better informed on many points of the earth's earlier history.

The transmission of intelligence in those earlier times, however, was far more difficult than in our day. Other histories inform us that Abraham spent several years of his earlier life with Noah, Shem and Eber, and that it was of them that he learned the Gospel, obtained the records and information concerning the creation, the planets, the genealogy of his ancestors, etc., as known and understood by the fathers. It was, as just stated, much more difficult to make records in the days of Abraham and of Shem and those that lived in their day than at present. How did they do it? They took dirt or clay and made nice tablets, and then they took something pointed and wrote on them the information they desired, after which the tablets were put into an oven or heated place and baked, making what we now call terra cotta. This is the way they did in those early times that take us back to the history of Shinar, Babylon and Nineveh. They piled up these terra cotta records, and now, centuries after the destruction of those cities, quantities of this literary matter, made of the dust of the earth, have been brought away and added to the collections in the British museum. You see they could not make records as easy then as now.

The Lord used stone on which to write the Ten Commandments to Israel.

Job wished his testimony might be written with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever. A remarkable specimen of this kind of record is the so-called Moabite stone now in the French Louvre. It was discovered in 1868 and contains the earliest inscription in the Phœnician alphabet known, relating some important events in the history of the Moabites during the reign of Mesha. The engravings date at least 900 years before our era.

For common use in Ezekiel's day the Law and the Prophecies were written on papyrus,—a material prepared from the finer bark of a reed or flag that grew in Egypt and other warm countries,—and rolled on and off of two round sticks as mentioned in the 37th chapter of his prophecy.

Lehi carried with him the Mosaic Law, the Prophets, and history of the creation on brass plates when he left Jerusalem six hundred years before Christ, and we find that the history of the forefathers of the American races on this continent were generally kept on metallic plates of various qualities, as witness the gold plates on which the Prophet inscribed his abridgment of those records entitled *The Book of Mormon*.

Before the art of printing was discovered it was the work of a man's lifetime almost to transcribe a copy of the Bible. But now almost everybody can get a tablet and pencil, and there is no excuse for us to fail in making records, unless dilatoriness or lack of comprehension of their importance be considered excuses. I wish the brethren would take hold of this matter and consider it more carefully. This to me is a very interesting work.

We are getting together a library of books, in which we hope soon to be able to render valuable assistance to the people in seeking out their genealogies from foreign countries as well as from the New England states. Having this

upon my mind, I would like to impress it upon those that hold the Priesthood particularly.

Look back to the time when Israel returned to Jerusalem from their captivity. How were they enabled to set in order the congregation, the singers, the priests in their courses, and the Levites? It was given to them by genealogy. The Lord had promised to Levi that the service of the Temple and the Sanctuary should belong to his tribe, his family and especially that the Priesthood should go to the descendants of Aaron. But when they returned from their captivity in Babylon and wanted to be reinstated in their places to officiate at the altar and to eat of the holy bread, the records were searched and those whose names were not found were put away from the Priesthood as polluted, until a Priest should rise up having the Urim and Thummim, who could declare their genealogy, their right and title to this holy Priesthood. The days are coming when the Priesthood of Aaron and Levi will have to be established again upon the earth, among the Jews in Palestine, and who knows but some of you, or your children will have this duty to perform? This is a matter that to many will be of vital concern as well as of general interest. I therefore present this for your consideration. The reason I feel to urge it is that keeping records is one of those things so easily put by. A man takes a piece of paper and writes upon it about the blessing of children, or that somebody was ordained, or a ward was organized, and he lays it away. He cannot record it today, and he goes on laying things away until he has an accumulation. We live in a time of increasing labor, and we should, as far as possible, perform every duty in the time and season thereof. These records ought to be kept at the time of the occurrence of the events that are to be handed down to posterity. When President Woodruff used to write the sermons of the Prophet, he brought the very spirit of his instructions into his reports, and we have them today with the spirit and the understanding thereof. When you are performing works that ought to be recorded, this should be done that same day while the spirit of the time and the labor rests on the one intrusted with the duty, for then it is likely to be done correctly. When an accumulation is found, this cannot be. In one of the stakes of Zion it is ascertained that there is a trunk nearly full of scattered papers containing most valuable information, and it needs a man to spend a month and put them properly on record. Record the work when it is done, immediately, so that if it happens that your records are wanted tomorrow, or next week, the historian can send for them and get whatever information is wanted.

Having referred you to the views and estimates of this subject as entertained by several of the Prophets and by the Lord himself, I must now refer you to and recommend a closer perusal of sections 127 and 128 of the Doctrine and Covenants in which our great Prophet Joseph Smith has elucidated the eternal principle of recording and sealing for the living and the dead. It is the most elaborate exposition of this subject found anywhere in the publications of the Church. Search these scriptures for they will add to your stock of knowledge

that leads to eternal life. May the Holy Spirit enable us to make such records, Church, family and individual, as shall be worthy of all acceptance when the books shall be opened and we judged according to the things written in the books. Amen.

NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE.

The Elders and Saints of the North Carolina conference had a very enjoyable time together in conference. The Spirit of God was poured out upon the people and our hearts were made to rejoice.

On the 24th of August, at 10 o'clock, the conference was called to order, and Elder Kimball was the first speaker. He began with the words of Paul, "Christ being a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things He suffered." The Elders leave all that is dear to them to preach the Gospel without purse or scrip. We are called upon to sacrifice earthly goods for the Gospel's sake. They are servants of God and the people cannot reject their testimony without coming under condemnation. Elder Douglass said that the Saints were looked upon as a peculiar people; so were the Saints and Apostles in the days of Christ. Christ and His Apostles were scoffed and ridiculed. Elder Stahl dwelt at some length upon the atonement. By general salvation was meant a salvation for the transgression of Adam and this was as universal as the race of man. All will be resurrected. Individual salvation depends upon the action of each person. Elder Blake dwelt upon the beauty of the sacrificing principle and Elder Wright spoke upon the subject of faith. Elder Holt said we are teaching the Gospel as taught by Peter, Paul and Christ and as they were scoffed, so are we. Elder Robinson of American Fork, felt that it was necessary to be humble and prayerful to teach the Gospel. Elder Harrington said we want to find out the true and living God. He is like us only immortalized—a God of body parts and passions. Jesus appeared to His disciples after His resurrection and told them to handle Him and see, "Hath a spirit flesh and bones as ye see Me have?" Stephen also saw Christ sitting on the right hand of God. Elder Jorgenson took pleasure in bearing testimony to the latter-day work. We preach Christ and Him crucified, and have the Gospel in its fullness.

At the afternoon session the speakers were as follows: Elder Leigh rejoiced in the Gospel, was proud that his name was cast out as evil for Christ's sake. "He that abideth in the doctrines of Christ hath God," Elder Freeman, "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only;" all are desirous of salvation, but few willing to live for it. Elder Robinson of Farmington read a passage from Acts xix as a text. Paul when he proclaimed the Gospel at Ephesus was met with the cry of "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." All truth has been rejected by the majority of mankind. Why sigh for the flesh pots of Egypt in lieu of the milk and honey of Canaan? Why look ever upon the setting and not upon the rising sun? Cannot a comet now appear, if once the heavens shone