

The Book of Mormon—Promises to the Lamanites—Objects of the Record—The Book of Abraham—Gifts to the Church—Benefit of Immediate Revelation—The Greater Things Shown to Those Who Receive the Record—The Vision of Moses—The Creation Etc.

Discourse by Elder Orson Pratt, delivered at the Thirteenth Ward Assembly Rooms, Sunday Evening, August 25, 1878.

There is a sentence in the Book of Mormon, (p. 510) that has come to my mind, which I will read, "And whoso receiveth this record, and shall not condemn it because of the imperfections which are in it, the same shall know of greater things than these." This passage from the Book of Mormon is one that I do not remember having chosen as a foundation of any special remarks. It is one that applies directly to the present generation—the people that should live on the earth at the time that the Lord our God should bring forth this record, and affording them the opportunity of reading its contents. They were written by the Prophet Moroni, who was the only man of his nation—the Nephites, who was righteous; his nation having been destroyed a few years before he penned this sentence. It is true a few of his nation had deserted and gone to the opposite nation—the Lamanites, and a few had fled at the general destruction; but they were hunted by the Lamanites, and were destroyed as a people. Moroni, being a Prophet of God, would not join that nation in their wickedness and idolatry, and the only way he could preserve his life was to keep himself secreted and hidden from the knowledge of the Lamanites. While concealing himself from his enemies, he finished the record of the Book of Mormon. The latest date which he gives in the record is 420 years after the birth of Christ, according to the signs that were given on this American continent, concerning his birth. Thirty-six years prior to this time his nation was destroyed in what we term the State of New York, around about a hill, called by that people the Hill of Cumorah, when many hundreds of thousands of the Nephites—men, women and children, fell, during the greatest battle that they had had with the Lamanites. For 36 years this prophet of God kept himself hid, and wrote as he was prompted by the spirit of inspiration, and finally hid up the plates of gold, containing the records in the hill of Cumorah, with the promise which the Lord gave him that these records should come to light in the last days, that He himself would bring them forth by his own wisdom and power. And he also tells us his object, namely, to benefit the Gentiles who should occupy this American continent—the Promised Land, as they term it; and also for the benefit of other nations of Gentiles to whom the book should afterwards be sent; and when they should reject it, the Lord would cause it to be published to the remnants of the Lamanites inhabiting this country, whom we call American Indians, which shall be the means of revealing to them the history of their forefathers, and also certain promises made to them as a branch of the house of Israel, setting forth that many of their descendants should believe the record when it should be made known to them, and that they should be instructed in the things of God, and the curse, which has degenerated them to their present low condition, should be removed, and that they should lay down their weapons of war, and that they should cease to war and commit murders, and thefts and robberies, and that they should become a peaceable, and also a white and delightsome people. These are the predictions given in the Book of Mormon as some of the objects of the bringing forth of that record in the last days. And among other objects that the Lord had in view was, that he might enlighten the minds of the people in regard to the Gospel in all its plainness and fulness, with all its promises, blessings, gifts and ordinances; so that the people, the Gentiles, to whom this record should be sent, might have no excuse for rejecting it, and also that the Gospel might be established in the earth in its purity, according to ancient prophecies. Another object was, that he might build up his church among the Gentiles, if they should believe in this record and in the preaching of His servants when they should be sent forth in the last days among them, testifying to its truthfulness. In speaking of this work which the Lord is doing in the earth, we sometimes call it the Church of God, and we also speak of it as the kingdom of God. It is both, God himself being the King; not a civil power, not a civil government in the earth, for we already have established here upon this choice land a government wherein all classes of religious people may worship God as they please; but the Lord intended among these various religions and ecclesiastic denominations, to have a peculiar denomination, a peculiar people, a peculiar church, which he denominates his kingdom, and himself as the great lawgiver in this kingdom. Another object was that men might have more faith than what they had been in

possession of in the former generations of apostasy and wickedness, and that the faith which the ancient Saints exercised might again dwell in the hearts of the children of men. For instance, a power of faith, through our repentance and through our obedience to the ordinances of baptism, to receive that greater and miraculous baptism of the Holy Ghost. And that this gift, this baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost which should be given to all the members of the Church of God, should put them in possession of certain gifts, which no other people on the face of the whole earth should have or know anything about, providing the members of the Church were worthy to possess them. I will name, in short, the various gifts that the Lord intended to be given to this people. In the latter days, when this record should be brought forth, he intended, in the first place, to raise up a great and mighty Prophet, to translate the divine book. This was fulfilled before the rise of the Church about 50 years ago. This Prophet who was raised up to perform this work was permitted to take these records out of the hill where Moroni had deposited them some 420 years after Christ. This Prophet was spoken of in the records, and the work that he should perform was also spoken of. And notwithstanding his youth and inexperience in regard to the learning and wisdom of the world, he proved himself a great and mighty man of God; he not only was the instrument in the hands of God of bringing to light the Book of Mormon, but also received numerous other revelations which are contained in this book called the Doctrine and Covenants, a book that contains nearly as much reading matter as the Book of Mormon; and besides these you will find that many of the revelations were given by him which are found in what is called the new edition of the Pearl of Great Price, published by the *Deseret News* Office, which gives a knowledge of things that took place in the creation much more fully than what is described in the book of Genesis, giving an account of a great many occurrences and events that transpired before the flood, also giving us much information of the Gospel that was taught in those early ages, and giving us some very important prophecies, reaching down to the present period of the world, and also prophecies that reach down still further, from the present day to the end of the world. These are not the only revelations, given through this great modern Prophet. The Lord brought to light sacred records from the Catacombs of Egypt. After several hundred men had wrought and toiled for many months in digging down one of these vast structures, they entered into its interior; they found a great number of mummies—the bodies of persons that had been preserved since the catacomb was built, and some eleven of these mummies, well preserved, were taken out by these men, and they finally fell into the hands of a person named M. H. Chandler. They were sent from Egypt to Ireland, where it was supposed he resided, but learning that he resided in America, they were sent to him. After receiving the mummies he began to take off some of the ancient covering or wrapping, and to his astonishment he found upon the breast of one of these mummies a record written upon ancient papyrus in plain characters, written both in black and red inks, or stains, or colors. And the mummies and the records were exhibited by Mr. Chandler, in New York, Philadelphia, and many of the Eastern States of our Union; and thousands of people saw them, and among them many learned men; and these characters were presented to them, and not infrequently was Mr. Chandler referred to “Joe” Smith as they used to term him, who, they said, pretended to have translated some records that he found in the western part of New York, and that if Mr. Chandler would go and see him perhaps he would translate those ancient characters. Many of these references were made with the intention of ridiculing Mr. Smith; but it so happened that in traveling through the country he visited Kirtland, Ohio, where the Prophet Joseph Smith resided, bringing the mummies and the ancient papyrus writings with him. Mr. C. had also obtained from learned men the best translation he could of some few characters, which however, was not a translation, but more in the shape of their ideas with regard to it, their acquaintance with the language not being sufficient to enable them to translate it literally. After some conversation with the Prophet Joseph, Mr. Chandler presented to him the ancient characters, asking him if he could translate them. The prophet took them and repaired to his room and inquired of the Lord concerning them. The Lord told him they were sacred records, containing the inspired writings of Abraham when he was in Egypt, and also those of Joseph, while he was in Egypt; and they had been deposited, with these mummies, which had been exhumed. And he also enquired of the Lord concerning some few characters which Mr. Chandler, gave him by way of a test, to see if he could translate them. The Prophet Joseph translated these characters and returned them, with the translation to Mr. Chandler; and who, in comparing it with the translation of the same few characters by learned men, that he had before obtained, found the two to agree. The Prophet Joseph having learned the value of these ancient writings was very anxious to obtain them, and expressed himself wishful to purchase them. But Mr. Chandler told him that he would not sell the writings, unless he could sell the mummies, for it would detract from the curiosity of his exhibition; Mr. Smith inquired of him the price which was a

considerable sum, and finally purchased the mummies and the writing, all of which he retained in his possession for many years; and they were seen by all the Church that saw proper to visit the house of the Prophet Joseph and also by hundreds of strangers.

The Prophet translated the part of these writings which, as I have said is contained in the Pearl of Great Price, and known as the Book of Abraham. Thus you see one of the first gifts bestowed by the Lord for the benefit of His people, was that of revelation—the gift to translate, by the aid of the Urim and Thummim, the gift of bringing to light old and ancient records. Have any of the other denominations got this gift among them? Go and inquire through all of Christendom and do not miss one denomination. Go and ask the oldest Christian associations that are extant; go to Italy, headquarters, and ask the man that holds the greatest power and authority in the Romish Church, “Can you translate ancient records written in a language that is lost to the knowledge of man?” “No,” he would say, “we cannot, it is out of my power to do it.” Go to Russia inquire of the heads of the church of the Greek Catholics, if they can do this; and they will give you, substantially, the same answer. Then try the later, the present day denominations, inquire of every one of them, beginning with the Lutherans and the Calvinists, and the Church of England, and then put the same question to all of the branches that have sprung from them; as well as to those that have come into existence by other means; and the universal reply of the Christian denominations, numbering some 400,000,000, would be that they have not the power to do it. Ask them if they pretend to possess supernatural power from God, to accomplish a work of this nature; and they will all tell you that God has never bestowed such power upon any of their ministers. And then, if it were possible, ask the 400,000,000 of Christians, scattered throughout Asia, Europe, America and the islands of the seas, if a man can be found among them endowed, as ancient seers were, with the gift to see, or as ancient revelators were who told future events, what should befall men and nations and their final destiny; and the universal reply will be, O, no, such things are all done away. Here then the very first gift that the Lord set in his church, is a peculiar gift so far as the religions of the world are concerned, not peculiar so far as the Church of Christ is concerned, but so far as the religious world in the four quarters of the earth is concerned, we have something which they have not got, and something that is in accordance with the Bible. What man, I would ask further, among all the religions of the earth, for the last seventeen centuries, that has possessed the Urim and Thummim, the gift that would constitute him a seer and a revelator? There may have been some seventeen thousand million of people that have passed off from our globe without such gifts being among them; and they were gifts given to the people of God before the advent of the Savior, and that were enjoyed by his servants that lived contemporary with him and with those who lived after he had performed his mission to the earth, and ascended to heaven. Then, in speaking to strangers, I would say, you must give us credit of at least professing to have these great and important gifts, gifts which all the other religions of the world do not even profess to be in possession of. Let me candidly enquire, which is the most pleasing in the sight of God, for people to obtain the great and precious things which come through the operation of the Holy Ghost, or for people to have no information, no instruction for some seventeen hundred years, only what they could glean out of the writings of some of the ancient Seers, or Prophets, or Revelators, or Apostles, who have lived and who have died centuries ago? Perhaps strangers might claim that they have the writings of those favored men of God, and that they need no more, and that all the generations of men since the days that such men of God fell asleep needed no further instruction than that which was given to former-day Saints. The strangers present will readily concede this to be the sentiment, the belief and testimony of all, or nearly all the religious people upon the face of the whole earth. You also know if you have read the history of Christendom for seventeen centuries past, that their belief and testimony in this respect have been similar to those entertained by Christianity of today. Now, I ask again, which is the more Godlike, which is the more in accordance with the Bible, for a people to enjoy the same gifts that were enjoyed by the people of God in earlier dispensations, or to be obliged to depend upon some one else’s gift who has long ago passed away? Now, any consistent religious man will give his testimony on religious affairs independent of the traditions of his fathers, and would say in his own mind, it is more consistent for us to have Revelators, Prophets, Seers and Translators inspired from heaven in our Church, it is more in accordance with the Bible to be in possession of those gifts ourselves than to depend upon Revelators and Seers of former ages. I do not suppose for a moment that there is any consistent person but that, if left to his own reasoning, would say that this is certainly the more reasonable and the more consistent; and especially when the Bible is referred to, in which there is nothing limiting the generations that have lived upon the earth for seventeen

centuries in regard to these gifts. It is more consistent then when God should raise up a Church he should have Prophets, Seers and Revelators in that Church, inspired men, men that can receive the word of the living God, upon all subjects that should come before them which might concern the people. How many millions of questions and matters of more or less magnitude might be cited for which no instruction could be found in the Bible that would be at all suitable to the circumstances. Take any one individual among the many of the human family, and you could find thousands of things, pertaining to his individual welfare and temporal circumstances, that he could never learn out of the Bible. The Lord guides and directs the temporal as well as the spiritual affairs of his people; he always has done so. How many thousands of things does a single head of a family need to know, in regard to his own temporal circumstances, what course he should take most pleasing to the Almighty, whether to pursue this course or that branch of business, or whether to pursue some other branch of business, wherein he might do the most good; and wherein he could glorify God most; and which would be the greatest blessing for his household and family, and wherein he could please the Lord and live more uprightly and more godly, and more consistently and honestly, by pursuing one branch of business rather than that of another. All these things concern every head of a family; therefore, if he had the spirit of revelation, if he could go and inquire of the Lord, if he found it to be the whisperings of his spirit which course to pursue in temporal matters, what a great blessing it would be for him; and then not for that one person only, but for all his sons as they grow up, and for his wives, if he have a number of wives. The Lord used to give revelation not only to the head of a family, but also to a man's wives. Read, for instance, what the Lord revealed to the wives of Jacob, how he used to reveal a great many things to Rachel, a great many things to Leah, a great many things to Bilhah, and a great many things to Zilpah. These four wives were revelators; they were prophetesses; they were individuals that could inquire of the Lord, and obtain an answer from him; and we have their revelations recorded in the Scriptures. We call their revelations the Word of God to them. What a benefit it would be for a man who had three or four or half a dozen wives, who could receive the word of the Lord in relation to their several duties; how calculated it would be to produce peace, and union, and salvation in the family and household. And what great comfort it would be for a man if he had several wives, and knew by the spirit of revelation how to deal in relation to all his domestic and temporal affairs, according to the mind and will of God. Again, how great would be the benefit to a body of people—to say nothing of households and families—located for instance, in one region of the country, a people who were united together according to the law of God, desiring to advance each other's welfare and happiness, and each man was required to love his neighbor as himself; a people who knew how to so conduct their, temporal affairs that each man's neighbor might be benefited as well as himself; and each one looking not only for his own welfare or that of his own household, but for the welfare of the whole community, with whom he was associated, producing at last that unity and oneness which the Lord requires in the numerous revelations which he has given.

It requires revelation then; it requires revelation for one single branch of the church located in one region of the country; how much more necessary, when there are numerous branches, and that those branches should know their duties in regard to one another, that they might not work against one another's interests in any way or manner, but on the contrary, labor for the mutual benefit of all the branches of the Church and Kingdom of God, and thus preserve means, even as Joseph did in Egypt. Joseph was a man that sought after riches, he advised King Pharaoh to seek after riches, by building storehouses, and procuring as much of the surplus grain as he could, during the seven years of plentiful harvests which he foretold, and to store it away for future use. Some people might have supposed, if they had lived in that day, that Joseph was a great speculator, and wanted to take advantage of the people, getting rich himself at their expense. But the Lord directed this; he gave a revelation, clearly showing what would be necessary for the salvation of the Egyptians and also the children of Israel who were sojourning in the land. Hence we perceive it was necessary to get revelation in regard to temporal matters, and that without it the famine would have come upon them unawares and destroyed hundreds of thousands of people, and they would have perished over all the land. Hence by a few words of revelation given through a Prophet of God, that lived in their midst, millions of people were saved alive.

If we trace the history of the people of God we shall find it a history of revelations of God to man given for the purpose of directing them as individuals, as families, as neighborhoods, as tribes and as peoples, directing them in regard to their temporal affairs, as well as concerning the great matters that pertain to a future state of existence.

I mention this in order to refer to the text which I have taken. He that receives this record, and shall not condemn it because of imperfections that are in it, the same shall know of greater things than these. That is, they shall know of greater things than what are contained in the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon contains some wonderful things about the colonization of this country soon after the flood, the history of a certain nation that lived here some sixteen or seventeen centuries; then of another nation that succeeded it, and that lived here some 600 years before Christ, and down to the time that the records were hid up. Great things, historically, are revealed in this book; great things are revealed in it concerning prophecies that are yet to take place, and that have already taken place—when this record was translated. Not only this, but it contains the Gospel of the Son of God. I mean the first principles of the Gospel—the principles of faith in God and in his Son Jesus Christ; repentance—turning away from sin, from all unrighteousness; baptism by immersion in water for the remission of sins; the gift and power of the Holy Ghost to be shed forth upon those who should receive this record—that is, receive its truths and obey them. It does not mean those who should read this record and not perform the things that are contained therein; the promise is not extended to them. “Whoso receiveth this record,” that is, receives the Gospel therein contained, will assuredly believe in Christ; will assuredly repent of his sins; will assuredly be baptized for the remission of his sins; and will assuredly be confirmed by the laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost. No man or woman that fails to comply with these things that I have named—believes and receives the record; they may pretend to believe the record, they may say it appears to be a very good record, and it speaks as if it might be true; but unless they do receive it, by obeying its ordinances, and its institutions, and complying with the principles of the Gospel, they would not be entitled to the promise recorded in the words of my text, “They shall know of greater things than these.” I would ask, if the Latter-day Saints know of anything, greater than that which is contained in the Book of Mormon. What a wonderful thing the Book of Mormon is, to be brought forth by an angel sent from heaven to be translated from the ancient languages of this country into our English language, to have the Urim and Thummim given to the translator by which the words were translated. What a great and wonderful thing the Book of Mormon is so far as its prophecies are concerned, so far as its history and its doctrine are concerned; and so far as its predictions of those things which are immediately in the future are concerned, what a great benefit it has been to us Latter-day Saints to read our own history before it comes to pass.

I might take up a whole discourse in showing how the Book of Mormon has been fulfilled since it has been translated up to the present time, in the bringing forth of the Gospel from among the Gentiles. The persecutions that they should endure are predicted in the Book of Mormon. It is a great thing, it is a wonderful thing. In fact it is just what Isaiah said it would be in prophesying of the Book; he said it should be a marvelous work and a wonder. But the people who should receive this record should know of greater things. What greater things have we learned? We might have searched the Book of Mormon from beginning to end, and we never could have learned the perfect organization of the Kingdom of God upon the earth, such as we now find it in the midst of this people. We might have read in the Book of Mormon about the Melchizedek priesthood, as it existed among the Nephites; we might have read of the Aaronic priesthood such as also existed in this land; and we might, too, have read about the first principles of the Gospel and about Twelve Apostles chosen among the ancient Nephites; but do we read of the manner in which the Nephites were organized after they were baptized and received the Holy Ghost? No. Why? Because the Lord saw proper to withhold this from us, deeming it proper to reveal it through the patriarch Joseph, whom he would raise up, as something greater than the Book of Mormon should contain; showing that there were to be Twelve Apostles in our day. Did the Book of Mormon inform us that we were to have Twelve Apostles? No. The Lord therefore gave greater things to this people who believed the record that had come unto us, by revealing directly that we were to have raised up in this dispensation twelve men, called Apostles, and that they should go forth and preach his Gospel, first to the Gentile nations, and, when the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled, they should go forth and preach His Gospel to the scattered remnants of the house of Israel. This was taught when the revelation was given soon after the last part of the Book of Mormon was translated; that the Lord would raise up a Church; that he would call twelve men and send them forth as Apostles, that he would build up his Church among the Gentiles first; that he would, when their times were fulfilled, send them to the house of Israel, to bring that people back to a knowledge of the Gospel.

Now this was new information to the people. They at first learned the Book of Mormon, and having learned it, having been taught concerning what God taught ancient Israel on this land, then the Lord revealed unto them

greater things according to the promise in our text by telling them what should be done directly in our midst.

Then again, what could we learn from either the Bible or Book of Mormon in regard to three glories—the celestial, the terrestrial and the telestial glories? What did we know concerning those that should inhabit these various worlds of glory? Nothing at all. It was merely referred to in Paul's writings, that there were three glories, "one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead." But Paul left us here; he did not tell us anything about the celestial, or anything about terrestrial, or telestial glories; he told us nothing about the inhabitants of these worlds, nor anything about the laws by which these different glorified worlds were governed, but merely referred to them in a few words and then dropped it. The people, to whom he was writing may have known all about the subject he so casually referred to, if they did, the knowledge they possessed was not handed down to us. But the Lord, on the 16th day of February, 1832, poured out His Spirit from on high while Joseph was engaged in the work of translating another record, and also upon his scribe, and they saw in vision the celestial world, and they were commanded to write a portion of the things which they saw; to write about the greatness and power and majesty and the knowledge of the people who inherit the celestial world. And they were also shown, in the same manner the terrestrial world and the inhabitants thereof and their glory, and what their condition would be in the eternal worlds; and then they descended also in their vision and beheld the lesser or telestial glory, and they saw the inhabitants that dwelt there and comprehended the laws by which they were governed. Some of these things they were commanded to write while there were things which they beheld which they were strictly commanded not to write, as the world was not worthy to receive them. Neither was the Church, at that time, prepared to receive a full knowledge concerning these things. But that portion which they were permitted to write they wrote, and it has been printed now some 40 years for the Saints and for the inhabitants of the world to learn concerning the future condition of all those that shall pass out of this state of existence behind the veil.

Here, then, were greater things made manifest than those in the Book of Mormon, or those in the Bible. Whoso receives this record and shall not condemn it because of imperfections, the same shall know of greater things. "But," says one, "what imperfections could there be in the writings of an inspired man?" I will tell you. Imperfections may creep in through the printing press, unless there was some expert person to examine the printing of the Book. There might be imperfections creep in through the persons that recorded these things—Moroni and the various prophets that preceded him who wrote upon the plates. Imperfections might occur through the omission of some words. But one of the Prophets says, he knew of no imperfection in the record; nevertheless, the Lord knew all, therefore, he said, judge not, lest ye be judged; judge not with harsh judgment, lest ye be judged harshly—that is unrighteously. Probably the individual in reading the first edition of the Book of Mormon from the hands of the printer, knew of no error so far as the printing was concerned. But when we came to examine the first edition, and even all the editions, we found some few little imperfections that were introduced chiefly of a typographical nature. Well, those who will not condemn the work of God because of such little things, have the promise that they shall know of greater things than these. The Latter-day Saints are witnesses. You have upon your shelves the Book of Covenants and Commandments, the revelations of heaven; you also are in possession of the Pearl of Great Price, containing the vision of Moses, that great and glorious vision which he received on the mount, revealing to him the history of the creation of the world. The Lord saw proper to descend upon a certain mountain before Moses, and showed himself to him, and the glory of God rested upon Moses so that he stood in the presence of the Lord; and the Lord showed unto Moses the works of his hands in relation to the various creations that he had made. And when Moses began to inquire of the Lord, the Lord said unto him, No man can behold all my works, except he behold all my glory; and no man can behold all my glory and afterwards remain in the flesh upon the earth. Here, then, Moses began to understand that it was not for him as a mortal personage to cast his eyes forth and behold all the infinite creations of the Almighty dispersed through boundless space; but the Lord was willing that he should know in part. And Moses, when he saw the glory of God, and the things with which he was surrounded, pertaining to the planetary system, he began to wonder and marvel, as you and I would do if we had the privilege of gazing in vision upon the works of God. And while he was marveling at what he had seen, the Lord for some reason, withdrew from him, probably to try him, to see if he would be faithful to him. And when the Spirit of the Lord was taken from him, and the glory of God had withdrawn from him and the Lord himself had departed from before him, Moses was left to himself. O how weak! He fell to the earth, and for the space of

many hours he did not receive his natural strength. And when in this weak, fallen condition he exclaimed, I know now that man is nothing; and he began to call upon the Lord to restore his strength. And Satan, we learn, took advantage of Moses on this occasion, while thus left to himself, and came and stood before him, and said Moses, son of man, I am the Only Begotten, worship me. Moses looked upon Satan and perceived the difference at once, between the glorious personage that had appeared to him a short time before, and the personage of Satan. And Moses in looking upon this strange visitor said, Where is thy glory that I should worship thee? Behold, I could not look upon God save his glory were upon me; but I can look upon thee in my natural state. Having said so much to him, he commanded him to depart; but being so weak his faith was not strong enough to prevail against Satan, hence he did not leave at his bidding. Moses then called upon God, and Satan began to tremble and the earth began to shake; and Satan went upon the earth, and commanded Moses, saying, I am the Only Begotten, worship me. But Moses still called upon God for strength, and the Lord heard and answered his prayers; and he then commanded Satan, in the name of the Only Begotten Son, to depart; and he was rebuked from his presence. And again Moses lifted up his voice to heaven and cried to the Lord, and the glory of God began to come upon him; and the Lord stood in his presence again, and Moses was again filled with his glory. And while he was filled with the glory of the Lord he beheld all the earth and the inhabitants thereof, and there was not a particle of the earth withheld from his vision; he saw every particle of it. He beheld it not by the natural vision, but by the Spirit of the living God.

Moses not only saw the whole of this beautiful creation in its entirety, but he doubtless beheld the laws by which every particle is governed by the law of gravitation or electricity or heat, Moses comprehended it. He was then desirous to know how the Lord created the earth, as well as other heavenly bodies; but would the Lord grant his desires in full? No; because it was not for mortal man to know so much. But Moses still plead with the Lord in this language: "Be merciful unto thy servant, O God, and tell me concerning this earth, and the inhabitants thereof, and also the heavens, and then thy servant will be content." He thought that if he could not behold other worlds, if he had not the privilege granted to him of looking upon more glorious creations, it would be a satisfaction for him to look upon this earth and also the heavens. But what was the Lord's answer to him? "The heavens, they are many, and they cannot be numbered unto man; but they are numbered unto me, for they are mine, and as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof, even so shall another come; and there is no end to my works, neither to my words." But, said the Lord, "I will reveal to you concerning this earth upon which thou standest, and also the heaven belonging to the earth, and you shall write the words which I speak to you." This is the way that Moses obtained what is now called the book of Genesis, which gives an account of the creation. How did we learn of these things? By way of fulfillment of this promise, contained in the words of our text: "Whoso shall believe in this record and shall not condemn it because of its imperfection, the same shall know of greater things than these." Here then we have come to a knowledge of the great and grand vision given to the Revelator Moses. God communicated to Moses concerning the creation of the heavens and this little earth upon which we dwell. He tells us that darkness came upon the face of the great deep, after the earth was created. What was there before this darkness came upon the face of the great deep, after the earth was created? What was there before this darkness came, can anyone tell us? A great many religious people, without any reflection, have supposed there was no light, from all eternity, until about six thousand years ago; that then the Lord created the sun, moon and stars, they really think that that was the first time from all the endless durations of past eternity that there was any light. I mean a great many ignorant people. But according to the revelation given to Moses, there was light before the foundations of this world were laid, before God caused darkness to come over this great deep; after he created the heavens and the earth, then God spake and said, let there be light and there was light. And as we are told, the evening and the morning was the first day. Why does it begin with the evening and not with the morning? Because darkness reigned, the Lord having caused darkness to reign over the whole face of the earth. How he did it, in what way he produced it is not revealed. At any rate, it is not said in the book of Genesis that the sun was permitted to shine forth, or that the moon gave its light on the first day; but that was something which was permitted to take place on the fourth day instead of on the first day. What then was it that existed before darkness came over the face of the deep? Was it sunshine? I think not. It was that probably which is connected with all creations in their first formation—self-luminous matter. Darkness was then made, but how we know not; it might have been by causing the light associated with those materials to become latent in the substance—not permitted to shine forth. How long

this darkness continued is not revealed. How long it was before the Lord said again, "Let there be light; and there was light," is not revealed.

Again, we find that the solid portions of the earth were entirely covered with water, for the Lord commanded the waters to be gathered together to one place; and commanded the dry land to appear. The dry land he called earth; the gathering together of the waters called he seas. How did he do this? He may have done it by a direct miracle, or he may have done it according to certain laws which he controlled, and which were always under his control. How easy it would be for him to take this globe of ours that was entirely covered by water, and set it in motion, and cause it to rotate upon its axis. Would not this cause the waters to be gathered together from the equatorial regions to the two polar regions—the Arctic and the antarctic seas, and in the intermediate regions, and thus leave the dry land in the equatorial regions?

Then again how easy it would be for him to compress the solid portions of the earth at the poles and cause the same to bulge out above the equator. Or in other words, to do this also by law, by causing the earth to turn more swiftly than it does at the present time, which would give a greater diameter through the equator than at the poles.

There are many things in the new translation besides the vision and revelation in regard to the creation, written by Joseph Smith, which are far greater than anything contained in the Bible, or in the Book of Mormon, or in the Doctrine and Covenants. I bring up these things in order to show you that God has fulfilled his promises to the present time, by giving us greater knowledge concerning the creation of our globe.

The Prophet Joseph Smith revealed to us that all the materials of our globe, and all the materials of the universe, are eternal in their nature, that their substance is eternal, not created out of nothing, according to the vagaries and foolish ideas of the religious world. The Lord told us that he created the earth out of materials that previously existed; he told us that these materials were eternal in their nature, and of everlasting duration. In what condition have these materials been for the last, say millions of ages—for instance, as many millions of years as there are sands upon the seashore? Have they been lying dormant without any control of law? Were there no electric principles or laws to govern them, was there no heat connected with them, or was there no latent principle called light, neither a gravitating power in connection with these materials? I have no doubt in my own mind but what there have been laws from all eternity—or if you do not wish to call them laws, call them forces, call them powers, call them by any name which may suit you—that have controlled these materials; and then again these laws or forces have also been under the control of a wise, supreme intelligence from all eternity to the present time. How many organizations the materials of our earth have undergone before they were organized according to the revelations given to Moses, are not revealed. How many worlds they had entered into prior to that time; how many conditions existed through the millions of ages of past duration are nowhere revealed. A great many learned men are beginning to see that the materials of our globe have been in existence, as they say, for millions of ages. Some of them have made calculations in regard to how many millions of years since such and such phenomena took place, in regard to certain materials of which our earth is composed; and because they have discovered some of these things, they have, in the weakness and foolishness of their minds, began to doubt the Mosaic history, concerning the creation. I presume if I had never heard of the Book of Mormon, or Doctrine and Covenants, or the revelations of which I am speaking, I suppose I should have been probably an infidel, so far as regards the religious sects; I could not have believed them, if I had suffered my mind to reflect. But when I come to learn and understand that God has nowhere spoken in all the revelations that he has given, that he ever made so much as one particle of this earth out of nothing; and when I found that God has never hinted or revealed any such thing; but, on the contrary, that he organized the world out of pre-existent materials that were eternal in their nature, then I could reflect back with our learned philosophers and suffer my mind to go back just as far as they dare go in their theories, and then go back to all eternity beyond that which they go, and say, these materials were in organization, and say worlds were being organized, and different conditions were taking place, and laws were being given for all these vast ages of the past, and still reconcile it with the revelations God has given in these latter times. Science and true religion never can possibly contradict each other. There never was any truth in science that would contradict any principle of revelation that God ever revealed to man. Why? Because true

science is founded upon a true understanding of the laws and forces of nature. But who ordained from time to time these laws of nature in connection with the universe as we now behold them? It was the Lord whom we serve, the great Supreme Ruler of the universe, who organizes and disorganizes according to his own will and pleasure. He garnishes the heavens in his wisdom and builds the vast superstructure of the universe, as a very handiwork. He brings into life and being new worlds and disorganizes them, scattering the elements, and again brings them together by his power or by the laws he has ordained, and by his laws makes new creations, new worlds, and new universes, and inhabits them with myriads and myriads of intelligent beings. This is the work of the great Supreme Ruler of all things.

This we find out by reading the first two chapters of Genesis, as revealed anew, and many other things, of which we were profoundly ignorant, until God raised up this youth, this unlearned Prophet of the nineteenth century, to bring these things to light. By revelations given in ancient days, and renewed through this young Prophet of God, we learn that we, ourselves, did not begin to exist when we were born into this state of existence; we learn that we are of higher origin than that assigned by poor, unbelieving man. Contrast the ideas of the last few centuries with the ideas that God has revealed from heaven. They would make man look for his origin down to the very reptile and the worm that crawls upon the earth, and to the fish of the sea—as the first father, the first origin, the first oyster. Such is the reason of the learned of the last few centuries—the evolution theory; in other words, that which you learn from books, the creation of man’s folly and foolishness. But when we learn through the revelations of God that instead of man’s coming up from the poor worm of the dirt, he descended from that being who controls the universe by his power; that he descended from that being who is the fullness of all knowledge, and who sways his scepter over more planetary systems than there are sands upon the seashore. We are his offspring, we are his sons and his daughters, we are his children, he has begotten us, and we existed before the foundation of the world. Who among the wise, and the great, and those who have studied as far as human wisdom can at present reach; who among them can tell the origin of life? Who among them can tell the origin of this intelligence in man, this reasoning power, and this perceptive faculty, that enables man to grasp not only a great many things pertaining to the laws connected with their own little earth, but enables him to launch out into the regions of space for hundreds of millions of miles and find out and understand many things that govern worlds afar off. Is there no man that can tell the origin of this Intelligence? Let the trained collegiate mind, whose lifetime has been occupied in study, come forth and tell us how man obtains the first principle of knowledge, how came knowledge to be connected with matter, how came knowledge connected with flesh and bones, and blood, and skin, and sinew? That knowledge—that intelligence is Godlike; God is the author, he is father of our spirits, and we were begotten before this world rolled into existence. Once we dwelt in the presence of our Father; once we were enabled to lift our songs of praise in the celestial world, from which we emigrated; once we dwelt in the society of an innumerable convention of angels, upon a world that had passed through its stages, its ordeals, the same as this world is passing through its various mutations. That celestial world from whence we came, is more perfect than this earth, it is organized after a celestial order, a higher order and glorified by the presence of immortal, glorified, celestial beings. That is our home, from that world we came. Here is our dwelling place for a season; to that world we will return, to that being by whom we were begotten we will render an account; he who is our Father will require us to give an account of our doings in this probation. We must meet him, and behold him, in all his glory, in all his power, in all his majesty, and greatness, and superior excellency and with that infinite knowledge of which he is in possession; we must appear before him to give an account of our doings while shut out from his presence on this little world.

Here then is another thing in which the Lord has fulfilled our text. He has told us of our pre-existence; he has told us of the glory and the greatness of our ancestor, even the Supreme Being; he has told us when we existed, that it was before this world was brought into existence. Are not these greater things than are contained and explained in the Book of Mormon or the Bible? It is true the Book of Mormon barely alludes to the pre-existence of man, without explaining it. Jesus, before he appeared in the flesh, showed his spiritual form to the brother of Jared; it was not a body of flesh and bones; but a spiritual form, like the image of man. He said unto the brother of Jared, Seest thou, that thou art created after mine image? And he further says, All men in the beginning have I created after the image of the body of my Spirit; that is the spiritual form occupied by him. All men and women in the beginning were created by Him, and there never was a person, there is not anyone now living, and there never will be a man

or woman, but what was in the beginning created in his image.

I do not know but what I am occupying too much time, I will briefly say, however, before closing, that certain records which God has promised to bring to light in his own due time, will far exceed anything that has been revealed through the Book of Mormon or the Bible, or that which has come to us through the Abrahamic record taken from Egyptian papyrus, or that which is contained in the vision of Moses, revealing to him the history of the creation of the world. All these will be as a drop in the bucket in comparison with the eternal knowledge that will yet flow down from heaven upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints before this generation shall pass away. The earth will be filled with the knowledge of God, as the waters cover the great deep, and the things of all nations will be revealed. The records of old that were kept by the people of Asia, who have since dwindled into savages by reason of the transgressions of their fathers; and those that have been kept by the ten tribes of the north countries, where they have lived for over 25 centuries; and those records that have been kept by the people of the City of Enoch, giving an account of the dealings of God with ancient Zion, will all come forth to help fill the earth with the knowledge of God, as the waters cover the great deep. And John, when upon the Isle of Patmos, saw things in vision, which were commanded to be sealed up, and they are yet to be unsealed; and in this way we shall receive knowledge upon knowledge, revelation upon revelation, concerning not only the six or seven thousand years of the earth's temporal existence, but concerning the materials of the earth before it was made, and the elements and materials, and all things pertaining to the future earth that is to be created when the elements of this earth shall be dissolved and pass away into space. There is nothing too great to be withheld from the Saints of God in the last dispensation of the fulness of times. Hear what the Prophet Joseph Smith said, when confined in Liberty Jail. As well may the puny arm of man attempt to stop the waters of the Missouri River as to try to prevent the Almighty from pouring down knowledge upon the Latter-day Saints. It will come; it will come like a mighty flood, it will come like a mighty ocean, and there will be no mental darkness upon the whole face of the earth. The laws by which the earth is governed, by which the materials were governed, by which intelligence produces intelligence, by which one material cleaves to another, and by which all the various mechanisms are performed, will be revealed in their times and in their seasons. And then the Lord will not stop there; but he will unfold other systems and heavens that shall come into connection with ours. How, I know not; in what way, I know not. There will be telescopes, microscopes and other instruments discovered in these systems, that will so far outstretch the discoveries made at the present time, that all these things will dwindle into insignificance, and when the inhabitants of one system can converse with those of another, and when there shall be communication between all the creations that God has made with the present creation we inhabit, and when the Lord shall bring forth Zion out of all the creations he has made; then, I think, we shall begin to look back in astonishment at the littleness of the discoveries of the learned of the 19th century. Amen.