

Nephite America—The Day of God's Power—The Shepherd of Israel

Discourse by Elder Orson Pratt, delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday Afternoon, February 11, 1872.

It is quite unexpected to me to be called upon this afternoon to address this congregation; but inasmuch as I have been solicited so to do I cheerfully comply with the request. It has also been suggested that there would be several strangers present this afternoon who would desire to hear some of the evidences in relation to the Book of Mormon, and although it is a subject on which we have spoken during the week just passed, and have set forth many evidences in support of the divine authenticity of this book, still it may not be amiss to repeat some of these evidences and give some reasons to those who are present why this people receive this book as a part and portion of the revelations of the Most High. Our traditions, which we received from our fathers, have naturally inclined us to reject all revelations, or all pretended Scripture except that which happened to be compiled in the Old and New Testament. I had this tradition in common with the rest of mankind who profess to believe the Bible; but when I came to examine this tradition which I, as well as millions, had imbibed, I found it to be only tradition and without any substantial foundation. I cannot possibly imagine how to reconcile the supreme goodness, wisdom and mercy of the Almighty with the idea that a few of the inhabitants of our globe, dwelling in one small region called Palestine, should be the favored few to whom revelation should be vouchsafed. I cannot reconcile this idea with the view that we take of the character of the great Being whom we worship and serve. When I contemplate the vast number of millions that must have swarmed over this great western hemisphere in times of old, building large cities, towns and villages, and spreading themselves forth from shore to shore from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the frozen regions of the north to the uttermost extremity of South America—when I contemplate all these people as human beings, beings that have immortal souls and form part of the brotherhood of all nations, descending from the same parents, created by the same Creator, I cannot believe that all these nations have been left in darkness, deprived of the light of revelation from Heaven, and having no knowledge concerning God; but I must believe that God, who is an impartial Being and presiding over all the inhabitants of the earth, would have respect to the people of ancient America as well as of ancient Asia. Consequently, in accordance with the views that we would naturally entertain concerning the attributes of the Great Jehovah, we believe that he has in these latter times, in the generation in which we are permitted to live, condescended to bring to the knowledge of the people another book, another divine revelation containing the history of his dealings with the generations that are past and gone on this western hemisphere. The book which I hold in my hand (the Book of Mormon) contains nearly as much information as the Old Testament. It is a book of five or six hundred closely printed pages. This book, the Latter-day Saints believe to be the Bible of the western hemisphere; a compilation of sacred books, books delivered by divine inspiration in ancient times to prophets, revelators and inspired men who dwelt upon this continent, both in North and South America. We believe that it was written, mostly by a branch of the house of Israel, a part and portion of the chosen seed, the descendants of Abraham who were led forth to this continent some six hundred years before Christ from the city of Jerusalem, brought by the special providence, miracles and goodness of the Almighty. A colony with whom there were several prophets; a colony of Israelites who believed in the law of Moses, and to whom the Lord manifested himself in a peculiar manner. They were brought forth from the land of Jerusalem in the first year of Zedekiah, King of Judah, six hundred years before the birth of our Lord and Savior. By revelation from the Lord they traveled southwest from the city of Jerusalem, and after reaching the Red Sea they continued along its eastern borders and afterwards bent their course eastward, arriving at the Indian Ocean. There they were commanded by the Almighty to build a vessel, the pattern of which was given to them by revelation, building it as Noah built the Ark—under the direction of the Almighty. On board this vessel they embarked, and were guided by the Almighty across the great Indian Ocean. Passing among the islands, how far south of Japan I do not know, they came round our globe, crossing not only the Indian Ocean, but what we term the great Pacific Ocean, landing on the western coast of what is now called South America. As near as we can judge from the description of the country contained in this record the first landing place was in Chile, not far from where the city of Valparaiso now stands.

After landing on the western coast of South America, they divided into two colonies, one colony called Lamanites, the other called Nephites. These names originated from two brothers, the name of one being Laman, the name of the other Nephi. The Lamanites became a very wicked and corrupt people. The Nephites believed in the law of

Moses, in God, in the spirit of revelation and prophecy; they believed in visions, in the ministration of angels, and they sought to serve the Lord with all their hearts, and they were exceedingly persecuted by the Lamanites. The Nephites, by the command of the Almighty, made sacred records on gold plates, and on these plates they were commanded to engrave their history, their prophecies, the dealings of the Lord with them from generation to generation.

Being so severely persecuted by the Lamanites, the Nephites were commanded of the Lord to depart from their midst, that is to leave the first place of colonization in the country which the Spanish now call Chile. They came northward from their first landing place traveling, according to the record, as near as I can judge, some two thousand miles. The Lamanites remained in possession of the country on the South. The Nephites formed a colony not far from the head waters of the river Amazon, and they dwelt there some four centuries, increasing and spreading forth in the land. The Lamanites, in the South and in the middle portions of South America, also spread forth and multiplied, and became a very strong and powerful nation. Many wars existed between the two nations, in which hundreds of thousands were destroyed. Finally, in the course of generations, the Nephites fell into wickedness; they departed in a great measure from the law of Moses and from the precepts of truth which had been taught to them by the prophets in their midst. A certain portion of them who still believed were commanded of the Lord to leave their brethren in consequence of their wickedness; they did so, and those who still remained faithful, under the guidance of prophets and revelators, came still further northward, emigrating from the head waters of what we now term the river Amazon, upon the western coast, or not far from the western coast, until they came on the waters of the river which we call the Magdalena. On this river, not a great distance from the mouth thereof, in what is now termed the United States of Columbia, they built their great capital city. They also discovered another nation that already possessed that country called the people of Zarahemla. They also were a branch of Israel who came out from the city of Jerusalem five hundred and eighty-nine years before the coming of Christ, in the eleventh year of the reign of Zedekiah, at the time he was taken captive, and the Jews were carried into Babylon. One of the sons of Zedekiah, King of Judah, being commanded of the Lord, left the city of Jerusalem with a colony, who were brought forth and landed north of the Isthmus and journeyed southward, passed through the narrow neck of land which we term the Isthmus into the United States of Columbia, and formed their settlements there, and when discovered by the Nephites had dwelt there near four hundred years.

The Nephites and the people of Zarahemla united together and formed a great and powerful nation, occupying the lands south of the Isthmus for many hundreds of miles, and also from the Pacific on the west to the Atlantic on the east, spreading all through the country. The Lamanites about this time also occupied South America, the middle or southern portion of it, and were exceedingly numerous. I will here observe, that from the time the Nephites consolidated themselves with the people of Zarahemla, they had numerous wars with the great nation of the Lamanites, in which many hundreds of thousands perished on both sides.

About fifty-four years before Christ, five thousand four hundred men, with their wives and children, left the northern portion of South America, passed through the Isthmus, came into this north country, the north wing of the continent, and began to settle up North America, and from that time a great emigration of the Nephites and the people of Zarahemla took place year by year. I will here mention one thing which perhaps may be startling to individuals who are unacquainted with the antiquities of this country, that the Nephite nation about this time commenced the art of shipbuilding. They built many ships, launching them forth into the western ocean. The place of the building of these ships was near the Isthmus of Darien. Scores of thousands entered these ships year after year, and passed along on the western coast northward, and began to settle the western coast on the north wing of the continent. I will observe another thing—when they came into North America they found all this country covered with the ruins of cities, villages and towns, the inhabitants having been cut off and destroyed. The timber had also been cut off, insomuch that in many places there was no timber by which they could construct their dwellings, hence the Nephites and the people of Zarahemla had to build their houses of cement, others had to dwell in tents. Vast quantities of timber were shipped from the south to the people on the western coast, enabling them to build many towns, cities and villages. The latter also planted groves of timber, and in process of time they raised great quantities, which furnished them with sufficient for building and other purposes. Forty-five years

before the coming of Christ there was a vast colony came out of South America, and it is said in the Book of Mormon that they went an exceeding great distance, until they came to large bodies of water and to many rivers and fountains, and when we come to read more fully the description of the country it answers to the great Mississippi Valley. There they formed a colony. We know that to be the region of country from the fact that these plates were taken from a hill in the interior of the State of New York, being the descendants of those same colonists that settled in the valley of the Mississippi. When we speak of the valley of the Mississippi, let me say a few words to inform the minds of my brethren and sisters from foreign countries who may not be so fully acquainted with the geography of our land. The valley of the Mississippi does not mean a small valley like these valleys here in the Rocky Mountains, but it means a vast area of territory some fifteen hundred thousand square miles in extent, enough to accommodate several hundred millions of inhabitants, almost a world of itself. There the Nephites became a great and powerful people. In process of time they spread forth on the right and on the left, and the whole face of the North American continent was covered by cities, towns and villages and population.

But we will hasten on. They having kept the law of Moses, I mean the Nephites, looked forward, according to the testimony of their law, for the coming of the Messiah, that is the great Prophet of Israel which Moses had told them the Lord would raise up unto them. They looked for that great Prophet to come and shed his blood, for their sacrifices and burnt offerings pointed to a great and last sacrifice, the sacrifice of the Son of God. The Nephite nation, therefore, had a testimony given to them concerning that future Messiah that was to come; a sign was given to them on this American continent that they might know the very day on which he was born. The night before Jesus was born this continent had no darkness. There was one day, and then a night and then a day without any darkness at all—it was as light as day during the period which is generally called night. This was prophesied or predicted by their Prophets as a sign that they might no longer be in suspense about the coming of their great Prophet. After the birth of Christ there were signs given to the people concerning his crucifixion. The inhabitants of this land were not in ignorance about the great atonement that was wrought out on Mount Calvary. It was not in vain that they kept the law of Moses, and offered up their burnt offerings and the shedding of the blood of beasts and fowls, pointing forward to the atoning blood of Jesus, they knew when the great and last sacrifice was offered here on this land. However, it was a day of sorrow to them, for most of the people at that time had become very wicked. They had stoned and killed the Prophets and persecuted them exceedingly, and had become so corrupt and had deviated so far from the law of Moses and from the prophecies that God had given to them, and the righteous precepts that had been taught them by their Prophets, that the Lord in his anger destroyed many hundreds of thousands of the people at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus. The Prophets told the people that when Jesus should be hung on the cross there should be a terrible convulsion and great earthquake on this continent, that many of their towns, cities and villages should be totally destroyed, some of their cities should be sunk and buried in the depths of the earth, that mountains should rise up and come over and fall on certain cities, that other cities should be sunk and waters come up in the place thereof, that other cities should be destroyed by tempest and whirlwind, that others should be burned by fire. Another great sign was given to them concerning the period during which Jesus was to remain in the tomb—that from the period of the crucifixion until the time of the resurrection thick darkness should spread over all the face of this continent, darkness like that of Egypt, that could be felt by the people. No sun, nor moon, nor stars were permitted to shine on that occasion, not a glimmer of light, three days and three nights of darkness.

All this took place at the crucifixion of Christ. The judgments came as predicted by the prophets. The rocks upon nearly all the face of this continent, prior to that event, were not found disrupted as at the present day. Those who have traveled through these mountainous regions and looked at the various strata of rocks find many of them turned up edgeways. This must have been caused by some terrible convulsion. You will see it on every hand in these mountains. It is not something peculiar to our vicinity, but the same thing occurs throughout all the vast region called the Rocky Mountains. From the frozen regions of the north until you penetrate through the Isthmus into the Andes, and then on to the end of this continent in the south, we find these disruptions, seams and cracks among the various strata of rock. Before the coming of Christ this was not so. Many mountains existed after the crucifixion where there were deep valleys before, and the whole face of the land was changed. No wonder then that our miners here in these rocky regions, and in various portions of Montana, California, and Nevada, occasionally, after digging several hundred feet, find remains of human arts. They find these things, and they have

published descriptions of them in the papers in California and elsewhere, and in consequence of these discoveries they begin to calculate that the earth must be so many hundred thousand years old, and some of them conclude that it must be millions, in order to account for the phenomena which have been observed. But geologists should leave these things out of the question and should begin to inquire what has produced these terrible convulsions of nature, what has thrown up these vast ridges of mountains, what has sunk down valleys? What is it that has disrupted and apparently thrown the western continent into such terrible convulsion as to place the rocks on edge and rend them asunder? If they would inquire into these things it would be no marvel to them to find the remains of the ancient arts of men sunk far beneath the surface of the earth. I would say to them that, peradventure, they may yet find, when the Lord shall again convulse this continent, as he assuredly will do, throwing down the mountains and raising up the valleys, at the time of his second coming, for then, says the prophet Isaiah, the mountains shall flow down at his presence. Then, says the prophet David, the hills and the mountains shall melt like wax before the presence of the Lord. I say when this great and terrible convulsion shall come we may find cities rising, as it were, from the bowels of the earth, disgorged and brought to the surface. It need not surprise the inhabitants who then live to see cities brought up from the depths of the lakes and from the depths of great waters; to see mountains removed from their places and uncovering ancient cities that have been covered up for generations. All it needs then is a convulsion, a terrible catastrophe of nature to produce the effects that are sometimes ascribed to long ages of the slow working of the elements. But to go back to the history.

At the time of the crucifixion the Nephites dwelt in North America and also occupied a portion of South America; and after that event, the more righteous portion of those among them who were spared and also those among the Lamanites who had not altogether forsaken the truth, began to remember the prophecies, recorded upon their plates of gold, that after the crucifixion, and after all these terrible judgments had come upon them, their Messiah, of whom Moses had spoken, should render himself visible to the inhabitants of this continent. They tell us that they assembled themselves around a certain temple that the Lord had preserved in the northern part of South America, and were wondering about the great convulsions of nature that had taken place.

While they were thus conversing, pointing out and explaining to each other what had taken place, both in the north and in the south as far as they had explored, while they were thus conversing in all humility about Jesus, who had been crucified in the land of their fathers, they heard a voice coming out of the heavens. At first they could not comprehend it; but it excited their attention—the attention of about twenty-five hundred men, women and children, and they all gazed steadfastly towards the heavens, and while they were thus engaged the voice spoke again the second time and the third time, saying unto them, “Behold my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,” and they saw Jesus descending out of the heavens clothed in a white robe, and he came and stood in the midst of that large assembly of people and he said unto them, “Behold, I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of the heavens and the earth, the God of the whole earth.” After he had thus spoken to them he told them how he had come in the land of their fathers, and how he had been crucified by the Jewish nation. He then called the multitude to come and see the wounds in his hands, in his feet and in his side, and they saw these wounds, and heard the voice of their Redeemer, and they knew of a surety that he was the Son of God, of whom their prophets had so long prophesied. Jesus commanded them no longer to kill sacrifices and shed the blood of beasts and fowls, for he himself had been offered as a last final sacrifice according to the types that were given in the law of Moses, and that he had shed his blood for the remission of sins; and then he introduced among them the gospel in all its fulness and plainness. Oftentimes has my heart been filled with joy inexpressible when I have read the words of Jesus on that occasion, declaring to them his gospel, and unfolding to them that they must have faith in him as the only Redeemer, as the only being who could atone for the sins of mankind; that they must repent of their sins and become as little children, and be baptized by immersion for the remission of their sins; that if they would do this they should be baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and when they should receive the Holy Ghost it should impart unto them special gifts in order that they, through the exercise of these gifts, might be perfected and prepared to return into the presence of their Father and their God.

Jesus chose twelve disciples on the American continent. They are not called apostles in the Book of Mormon, but disciples. I have no doubt, however, in my own mind, that they held the office of the apostleship, for they exercised all the functions of apostles. They had power not only to baptize with water, but to lay on hands for the baptism of

the Holy Ghost, which latter was one of the functions granted, in ancient days, unto the office of an apostle. These twelve Nephites who were called by the personal ministry of Jesus, were commanded to go forth and preach the Gospel on all the face of the North and South American continent. They were to build up his Church; they were to teach the people that they should no more worship God by the ordinances of the law of Moses, but according to the words which that prophet had delivered to them, even Jesus who appeared in their midst.

After Jesus had administered unto them the first day he withdrew and ascended into heaven, saying unto the people, "Behold I will visit you again on the morrow." The people who were present on that occasion spread the news of the Savior's visit as far as they possibly could during the remainder of the day and through the night, and people gathered from all quarters as far as they possibly could, so as to be at the place where Jesus should appear to them. On the next day he came again, and the next day the disciples separated the vast multitudes that came together into twelve bodies, and they taught them, for they could not be assembled in one body and all be able to hear the sound of one man's voice. For this reason they were separated into twelve bodies and the Twelve taught them. They taught them the words of Jesus about being baptized by immersion for the remission of sins, and about the gift or reception of fire and the Holy Ghost. After they had taught the people the Twelve went forth, being commissioned of the Almighty, into the water and baptized great numbers. After this Jesus came again and ministered to them and blessed them, and taught them still further concerning his doctrines, and also prophesied many things that should take place during that generation, and for many generations to come. Many times after this Jesus showed himself to the Nephite nation. These twelve disciples went forth, according to the commandment of the Lord and ordained others, and these ministers thus ordained went forth on all the face of the continent, and so great were the witnesses, so powerful the manifestations of healing the sick, opening the eyes of the blind and the power that was displayed among the American Israelites that the greater portion of both Nephites and Lamanites were converted, indeed—in process of time they were all converted—and they dwelt in righteousness nearly three centuries. We have but a very short history, however, in the Book of Mormon of the righteousness of the Nephites and Lamanites during those three centuries. We are merely informed that they had all their property in common, that there were no rich nor poor among them, during all that period of time, that they were a humble people and worshiped the Lord their God in the name of Jesus, and they were a people who sought diligently to comply with every commandment and revelation from heaven. After about three generations had passed away they began to apostatize, not to dwindle in unbelief, but to reject, willfully, the principles that had been revealed to them, which were very great indeed; for during that period of time, according to the little information that we have, the Lord gave them many precious revelations, which were recorded on their plates which were not permitted to come forth in this record, being too great for us or for any people to receive who dwell not in righteousness. But the people began to apostatize and turn away from such great light, and their condemnation, of course, was greater than that which would have come upon them if they had been in darkness and ignorance. Sinning against so great light they speedily ripened themselves for destruction. They began to separate again into Lamanites and Nephites, and they made two great, grand divisions.

About three hundred and seventy-five years after the birth of Christ, the Nephites occupying North America, the Lamanites South America, and wars having existed between them for nearly fifty years, the Lamanites began to overpower the Nephites, and they drove them northward from the narrow neck of land which we call the Isthmus of Darien, burning, destroying and desolating every city, town and village through which they passed. The Nephites continued to flee before their conquerors until they came into the interior of the State of New York. There, the king or commander of the Nephites wrote an epistle to the Lamanites and requested an armistice for four years, for the purpose of gathering in all the Nephite nation into that one place. The king of the Lamanites granted this armistice, and during these four years they had no battles, but were occupied very diligently in gathering the whole Nephite nation into that one region, and the Lamanites gathering the whole Lamanite nation into the same region of country. Many millions on both sides were here gathered together, and when the four years had expired, hostilities were renewed, many battles were fought and the Nephites were overpowered, men, women and children being hewn down. The great and last battle, in which several hundred thousand Nephites perished was on the hill Cumorah, the same hill from which the plates were taken by Joseph Smith, the boy about whom I spoke to you the other evening. A few Nephites dissented over to the Lamanites and joined them, and a few escaped into the south country. Mormon, one of the prophets of the Nephites, who had the records in his possession, being commanded

of the Lord, hid up the records in the hill Cumorah before the battles commenced. I mean all the records except an abridgment. The gold plates from which the Book of Mormon was taken are only an abridgment from vast numbers of other plates which were hidden up by Mormon in that hill. This abridgment, reserved and not hid up by Mormon, he gave to his son Moroni. He and Moroni both surveyed the destruction of their nation; they fell, wounded among the vast numbers on that hill, but their wounds were not fatal and they survived and for a short time kept themselves hid. Mormon, however, was afterwards discovered and destroyed by the Lamanites. Moroni continued from three hundred and eighty-four years, the date of the destruction of his nation, until four hundred and twenty years after Christ, that is the last date given in this record. Moroni tells us, as a prophet of God, that he was commanded of the Lord to hide up these records in the hill Cumorah, not in the same place where the other records had been hidden by his father Mormon, but in another place, for the Lord had promised the prophet Moroni that he would bring these records to light in the latter days, when he should bring forth a great and powerful nation upon this land. The Lord showed all these things to these ancient prophets, and they understood our history and wrote about it before ever Columbus discovered America. Moroni informs us that after the Lord should establish in the latter days a great and powerful nation of the Gentiles on the face of this land, and should deliver them by his power out of the hands of all other nations, then the Lord would bring forth this abridgment, these plates which Moroni was commanded to hide up; that the records should be revealed, that the individual who should discover them should, by the aid of the Urim and Thummim, be able to translate the records from the language in which they were written into our language, that these records should be brought forth expressly to accomplish the great purposes of the Lord in the last days in regard to warning all the nations of the Gentiles first, and that they might have the Gospel preached unto them in its ancient purity, as it was preached on this great western hemisphere, in order that the fulness of the Gentiles might be brought in, then their times should be fulfilled. After the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled by the coming forth of these records, the prophet informs us that the records should be sent to all the scattered remnants of the house of Israel in the four quarters of the earth, and that then the Lord would set his hand in power to deliver his people Israel from all the nations and kingdoms under the whole heaven, and that he would bring them back to the land of their fathers.

But before Israel can be gathered, these records, according to the predictions contained in them, must be sounded abroad, not only to the great and powerful nation, the Republic of the United States, and the Canadas, but to all the nations of the Gentiles, that all may be left without excuse. Already the time has far gone by for this warning to the Gentiles. Forty-two years out of the generation has already passed, and the same generation to whom these records were revealed shall not pass away until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled. When that period shall arrive, as I said in my lecture during the week, there will come a day of the Lord's especial power, the day of power spoken of by the psalmist David where he addresses the Lord, saying: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Israel have never been willing to receive Jesus from the day that they were cut off as bitter branches that brought forth no good fruit, until the present period. Generation after generation has passed away, and they still remain in unbelief, and they still remain in their scattered condition among all the nations and countries of the earth. But when the day of the Lord's power shall come, when he shall send forth his servants with the power of the priesthood and apostleship to the nations and to the scattered remnants of the house of Israel that dwell in the islands of the sea afar off, he will show forth his power in that day in such a conspicuous manner that all Israel, as it were, will be saved. As it is written by the Apostle Paul, "Blindness in part hath happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved." All Israel in that day will hear the voice of the Lord and the voice of his servants; all Israel, in that day, will see the arm of the Lord made bare in signs and mighty wonders in effecting the restoration of his chosen people to their own land. Then will be fulfilled that which is spoken of in the 20th chapter of Ezekiel concerning their restoration: "For with a mighty hand, saith the Lord, and with fury poured out will I rule over you, and I will gather you out of the nations and from the countries wherein you were driven with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God." That has never been fulfilled, but it will be fulfilled when scattered Israel return to their own land. A similar scenery is to be enacted to that which was enacted when Israel were brought forth out of the land of Egypt, while they were in the wilderness. Go back to that period and behold the Lord descending upon Mount Sinai, speaking with the voice of a trumpet in the ears of twenty-

five hundred thousand people, the thunders rolling, the lightnings flashing and the voice of Jehovah heard by a whole nation. You marvel at this, it was great and wonderful; but another day is to come when those sceneries enacted in the wilderness of the land of Egypt will be almost entirely forgotten, swallowed up in the greater manifestations of his power, not alone on Mount Sinai, but among all the nations of the earth. Wherever Israel is scattered there will the servants of God be, and his power working wonders, signs and miracles for the gathering of that people and restoring them to their own land. And when they are gathered together in a vast body the Lord intends to take that multitude into the wilderness before he permits them to go into the land of their fathers, and when he gets them into that wilderness, he says, "I will plead with you face to face, like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt." Yet we are told by the present generation there is to be no more revelation, no more miracles, no more manifestations of the power of the Almighty, no more the voice of God speaking from the heavens, no more of the manifestations of his glory, or the showing of himself personally to his people. How wonderfully this generation of Christendom will be mistaken in that day when Israel will go again to their own land, and when the Lord God shall stretch forth his hand to the nations of the Gentiles, saying, "Your times are fulfilled, my servants have been sent forth in your midst, they have declared the word of the Lord to you all the day long, but you would not hear or receive their testimony, now the summer is ended and your times are fulfilled. Now will I gather my people Israel from the four quarters of the earth."

Here let me say again, according to the Book of Mormon, many of those great islands that are found in the Indian Ocean, also in the great Pacific Sea, have been planted with colonies of Israelites. Do they not resemble each other? Go to the Sandwich Islands, to the South Sea Islands, to Japan—go to the various islands of the Pacific Ocean, and you find a general resemblance in the characters and countenances of the people. Who are they? According to the Book of Mormon, Israelites were scattered forth from time to time, and colonies planted on these islands of the ocean. In that day the isles will sing with joy; in that day the isles of the sea will wait for the Lord's law; in that day the isles of the sea will rejoice, for they will give up their inhabitants, and they will be wafted in ships to their promised land, and God will show forth his power and gather millions of people from these numerous isles of the ocean, and he will bring them back to the land of their fathers. These poor degraded Lamanites, or American Indians, that are now so far sunk beneath humanity, are to be lifted up by the power of the Almighty when the day shall come for Israel to be restored, for God will not forget them. They are descendants of the tribe of Joseph, and consequently they are numbered with the people of the covenant. God will remember the covenant which he made with our ancient fathers. These Lamanites, these American Indians, will come to the knowledge of the covenant, and they will arise and will build upon the face of this land a magnificent city called Jerusalem after the pattern and in the same manner that the Jews will build old Jerusalem. That is what the Lamanites will do, and we will go and help them too, for it is predicted in the Book of Mormon that when this work should come forth, when the time fully arrives for the redemption of this small remnant of the house of Joseph, "As many of the Gentiles as will believe, they shall assist my people, who are a remnant of the house of Israel, that they may build up on the face of this land a city that shall be called the New Jerusalem, and then, behold, the powers of heaven shall come down and be in the midst of this people, and I also will be in your midst."

That is what the Lord intends to fulfil on this land. Jesus is coming here as well as to many other places. When the New Jerusalem is built on this land, Jesus will visit that city. His glory will be upon its dwelling places. Isaiah the Prophet has declared that upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion there shall be a cloud and smoke by day, and a shining, flaming fire by night. This will not only be on the New Jerusalem, but on the Holy City that is built up on the land of Palestine; and when the people have repented and become sufficiently righteous, and made preparation for the coming of the Lord Jesus, he will come, and they will behold the Shepherd that is promised to them.

Did you not know that the house of Joseph had a Shepherd promised them? He was promised by the old Patriarch Jacob, as you will find in the blessing which he pronounced on his twelve sons. He called them up one by one, beginning with the firstborn, and blessed each one in his turn, until he came to Joseph, upon whom he pronounced a special blessing. "Joseph," said Jacob, "is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, shot at him, hated him, but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob. From thence is the Shepherd or Stone of Israel."

Notice now, Jesus was not born of the tribe of Joseph, he was a descendant of Judah according to the flesh, but still the promise of a Shepherd or stone of Israel is from the house of Joseph. The same Jesus that was born of the tribe of Judah is to come, in the latter days, in the capacity of a Shepherd for the restoration of the remnants of the tribe of Joseph. This agrees with what is contained in one of the Psalms of David: "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock. Stir up thy strength and come and save us." Yes he will come and save them, and he will come in the character of a Shepherd too. "I also will be in your midst." The powers of heaven shall come down then, and be in the midst of this people. This agrees with what I have already quoted, only I did not quote it in full: "Blindness in part hath happened to Israel, until the times of the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved. As it is written, Behold the Deliverer shall come out of Zion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

Did Jesus, when he came of the tribe of Judah, turn ungodliness away from Jacob? He tried to do so, but they would not hear him, and instead of turning them away from their ungodliness they put him to death, and brought upon themselves and their children for many generations the curse of the Almighty. Not so when this prophecy of Paul is fulfilled, when in the latter days, after the fulness of the Gentiles is come in, the Redeemer comes in the character of a Shepherd, he will turn away ungodliness from Jacob, for so great will be his power and so wonderful his administration in that day, that Jacob will rejoice and Israel will be glad, and the Lord will bring forth deliverance, as he says in the Psalms of David, out of the midst of Zion. "Oh," says David, "that the salvation of Israel was come out of Zion, when he bringeth back the captivity of his people! When he shall do this, Israel shall be glad and Jacob shall rejoice." He will accomplish this work in his own way, in his own time, and according to his own purposes, fulfilling every jot and tittle of that which has been spoken by the mouths of his ancient Prophets.

I thought when I rose to my feet I would bring forth some of the evidences of the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon, but I have been led otherwise, and I find I have not time to do so this afternoon. I have given you a statement, however, of the arrival on this great continent of a colony of Israelites, and have given you a very brief outline of their history from six hundred years before Christ to four hundred and twenty years after him. I have told you that they worshiped according to the law of Moses until they were taught and received the Gospel. I have told you concerning three generations of righteousness, concerning the destruction of the Nephite nation in the interior of the State of New York. I have told you a few of the purposes that God designs to fulfil and accomplish by bringing forth this record. I have told you that it must go forth to the Gentiles, and fulfil their times and bring in their fulness. I have told you that the servants of God would then be sent forth to the islands of the sea, and bring Israel from the four quarters of the earth. I have told you that that would be a day of the Lord's special power, in which he would plead with Israel as he pleaded with their fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt. All these great events must come to pass, according to the predictions of the prophets, in order to prepare the way for the glorious advent of the Son of God from the heavens.

If time would permit, we would be glad to enter into the evidences of the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon; but, no doubt opportunities to dwell upon this subject will present themselves hereafter. In the meantime, may the blessing of the Almighty God rest upon all the Latter-day Saints throughout these mountain vales, and throughout the whole earth! And shall we confine our blessing to the Latter-day Saints? No. May the blessing of Almighty God rest upon the honest-hearted among all nations, kindreds, tongues and people upon the two great continents of our globe, and the four quarters of our earth, that they may come to the knowledge of the truth and be prepared for the great and wonderful events that are to take place in the last days, preparatory to the coming of the Son of Man. Amen.