

degree of felicity. Jesus Christ, on the other hand, departed from the spirit world on the third day, and reentered his fleshly tabernacle, in which he ascended, and was crowned at the right hand of the Father. Jesus Christ then, and the thief on the cross, have not dwelt together in the same kingdom or place, for this eighteen hundred years, nor have we proof that they have seen each other during that time.

To say that Jesus Christ dwells in the world of spirits, with those whose bodies are dead, would not be the truth. He is not there. He only stayed there till the third day. He then returned to his tabernacle, and ministered among the sons of earth for forty days, where he ate, drank, talked, preached, reasoned out of the Scriptures, commissioned, commanded, blessed, &c. Why did he do this? Because he had ascended on high, and been crowned with all power in heaven and on earth, therefore he had authority to do all these things.

So much then for that wonderful question that has been asked by our Christian neighbors, so many thousand times, in the abundance of their charity for those who, like the thief on the cross, die in their sins, or without baptism, and the other Gospel ordinances.

The question naturally arises—Do all the people who die without the Gospel hear it as soon as they arrive in the world of spirits? To illustrate this, let us look at the dealings of God with the people of this world. "*What can we reason but from what we know?*" We know and understand the things of this world, in some degree, because they are visible, and we are daily conversant with them. Do all the people in this world hear the Gospel as soon as they are capable of understanding? No, indeed, but very few in comparison have heard it at all.

Ask the poor Lamanites who have, with their fathers before them, inhabited these mountains for a thousand years, whether they have ever heard the Gospel, and they will tell you nay. But why not? Is it not preached on the earth? Yea, verily, but the earth is wide, and circumstances differ very greatly among its different inhabitants. The Jews once had the Gospel, with its Apostleship, powers, and blessings offered unto them, but they rejected it as a people, and for this reason it was taken from them, and thus many generations of them have been born, and have lived and died without it. So with the Gentiles, and so with the Lamanites. God has seen proper to offer the Gospel, with its Priesthood and powers, in different ages and countries, but it has been as often rejected, and therefore withdrawn from the earth. The consequence is that the generations of men have, for many ages, come and gone in ignorance of its principles, and the glorious hopes they inspire.

Now these blessings would have continued on the earth, and would have been enjoyed in all the ages and nations of man, but for the agency of the people. They chose their own forms of government, laws, institutions, religions, rulers, and priests, instead of yielding to the influence and guidance of the chosen vessels of the Lord, who were appointed to instruct and govern them.

Now, how are they situated in the spirit world? If we reason from analogy, we should at once conclude that things exist there after the same pattern. I have not the least doubt but there are spirits there who have dwelt there a thousand years, who, if we could converse with them face to face, would be found as ignorant of the truths, the ordinances, powers, keys, Priesthood, resurrection, and eternal life of the body, in short, as ignorant of the fullness of the Gospel,