

Smith the plates containing the record from which the Book of Mormon was translated, in which is recorded the history of the ancient inhabitants of this country. Joseph Smith was a man of humble birth, and in one sense of the word he was poor and illiterate; and to look at things naturally, it looked strange that the Lord should undertake to build up his Church and kingdom with such a feeble instrument. To some this may look a very small matter, but the work was great, and here was an honest soul, and the Lord made choice of that soul to give unto him the knowledge, the blessings, and the glory associated with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, which should lay the foundation of the Church and kingdom of God in these last days.

What did that angel tell Joseph Smith when he gave him the plates? The vision of his mind was opened, and the angel showed unto him the condition of the nations of the earth, and said, "This record which I now commit unto your hand contains the words of life—the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the Lord is now about to establish his kingdom upon the earth. The world are in darkness; the Gentiles have departed from the Gospel of Jesus Christ; they have forsaken the light, the glory, and the power of the Priesthood of the Son of God, which was given to and enjoyed by the Gentile nations when Israel was cut off."

The Lord promised Joseph Smith, at this early age, that if he would obey his commandments and hearken to the voice of the Holy Spirit, he would make him an instrument of bringing about this great work, that the Church may be brought out of the wilderness of darkness and error, and my name glorified among men.

The words that this record contains shall be preached to every kingdom,

tongue, and people; and whenever this doctrine is preached, your name shall be had in honorable remembrance among the virtuous, the holy, the righteous, and those who desire to do good: but the ungodly will vilify your character—hold up your name to ridicule and scorn, wherever the sound of this Gospel goes, even to all nations.

The Lord also told Joseph Smith, in the commencement of this work, as you will see by the revelations contained in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, that he was laying the foundation of a great and mighty work and kingdom, which should be the kingdom of God, and it should not be thrown down, but stand forever: but you cannot now comprehend the extent of it. The mind of the Prophet was opened by the spirit of revelation, so that he could see and comprehend a great deal; but he required the Spirit of the living God—the inspiration of the Almighty to rest upon him continually to qualify him for the great duties that were constantly increasing upon him; and the same Spirit is required by any man in this kingdom, whether he be old or young, rich or poor, to enable him to bring about the work of God, or to do anything that is of as much consequence as the upbuilding of this kingdom.

The Prophet was repeatedly told of the importance of the work in which he was engaged, and was commanded to obey the voice of God in all things; and then he was told that all that had been promised should be fulfilled. The Prophet saw the chains of darkness that were binding the souls of men; and although at that time he had not received the Priesthood, yet the Lord manifested himself to him in various ways and at many times before he was ordained, or before there were any baptized into the Church. In process of time—namely, on the