

It is true mankind have not at all times been susceptible of receiving and appreciating the same degree of light, truth, and intelligence that they have at other times. God has in certain instances withdrawn the light of his countenance—his Holy Spirit—the light and intelligence that proceeds from him, in a certain degree, from the human family; but his laws are immutable, and he is the same eternal, unchangeable Being.

The truth does not change. What was true 1,800, 4,000, or 6,000 years ago, is true today; and what was false in any age of the world is false today. Truth, like the great Eloheim, is eternal and unchangeable, and it is for us to learn its principles, to know how to appreciate it, and govern ourselves accordingly.

As the Gospel is a principle that emanates from God, like its Author, it is “the same yesterday, today, and forever”—eternal and unchangeable. God ordained it before the morning stars sang together for joy, or ere this world rolled into existence, for the salvation of the human race. It has been in the mind of God, and as often as developed it has been manifested as an eternal, unchangeable, undeviating plan by which to save, bless, exalt, and dignify man, and to accomplish this end by one certain, unalterable method of salvation, according to its degree or manifestation.

I speak of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in its fulness and of the blessings associated therewith. It is perfect folly to entertain the idea that the Gospel has only existed about 1,800 years, and yet this foolish idea is strongly entertained and almost universally believed throughout Christendom. This mistake is for want of calm reflection and correct information upon that subject.

It may here be necessary to inquire what the Gospel is. Commentators tell us it means good tidings of great

joy. This language had particular reference to the announcement of the birth of the Savior to the shepherds of Galilee, by the angel of God. “And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them (the shepherds), and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.” This was simply the announcement of the birth of Christ. As to its referring to the Gospel, it might certainly admit of an argument. The birth of our Savior and the message he came to deliver are two different things.

I do not think the message Jesus came to communicate was at all joyful to the Pharisees and hypocrites of his day, for he told them they could not escape the damnation of hell; nor to those individuals whom he proclaimed to be “like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness.” They looked upon him as an impostor, who said to them, “He that believeth and is baptized shalt be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned.” It is not to be supposed for a moment that those men would receive such an announcement as good tidings of great joy, which was to be to all people.

Again: We are told the Gospel is the New Testament. I do not find any such declaration even in the New Testament itself. There are certain records in the New Testament giving an account of the birth, life, suffering, and death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It contains also an account of the doctrines he taught, the discourses he delivered, and the moral sentiments he inculcated. It gives us an account of the organization of his Church, and of the teach-