

an eternity before me. Has it bounds? Whether it has or not, neither we nor any other finite beings can comprehend it.

I will leave this subject, because I am not capable of understanding it. You leave it, and do not contend about things that are beyond our reach—that are too great for you to know at present. And when you go into the spirit world you will not understand it; and when you have lived in the spirit world until you again receive your bodies, you still cannot understand it; but you can continue to learn more and more about it, in the same manner as we learn here. I can teach many things about the future existence of man; but it is more directly our business to pay attention to those duties that more immediately concern us while we are here.

Brother Spencer says that we can tell a little about God the Father by his handiwork. It is very little. What does the world know? A wicked man may pray from this time to all eternity, and he will not be able to discern the print of his footsteps. It takes a spiritually-minded wise man to discern the hand of God in all things, and to be ready to acknowledge it, to discern that he rules among the armies of heaven, and that he is dictating, ruling, managing, and turning the hearts of the people on the earth to the right and to the left. He grants this and takes away that at his pleasure, but the people do not know it; they cannot discern it. One may here say, "What am I to do? If God dictates and guides the hearts of the people, they cease then to be responsible?" He gives to all men their agency to act, reserving to himself the right to control the results of their acts. The Lord does not dictate to do wrong; but when men are disposed to do wrong, he brings out the results in accordance with his

own pleasure. You may plant and water, but can you make a kernel of grain or a spear of grass? This is not in the power of man to do; but God in his providences produces this. Let the Lord send an angel through this valley to cause certain properties in the air and water to depart, and your grain crops fall, or your fruit is cut off. He says to you, "Go and do a piece of work." You do it, and by means of this he causes your enemies to stumble. Say that you are tilling the soil, and the Lord says to an angel, Do thus and so. What do you receive for your labor? Perhaps fifty, sixty, or a hundred bushels of wheat to an acre, when another year, perhaps, in the same place and with like labor, you do not receive more than five, ten, or fifteen bushels. Do you know the cause of this? No. No man can know, unless he enjoys the revelations of the Almighty. I make these remarks that you may understand that our Father controls the results of our acts at his own pleasure, and we cannot prevent it. Man can produce and control his own acts, but he has no control over their results. God causes even the wrath of man to praise him, to resound to his glory and the salvation of his children.

Israel were slaves in Egypt four hundred years; they were treated harshly and cruelly, and their children were slain. Then the Lord took them out from Egypt to wander in the wilderness forty years, traveling about as far as from here to Nauvoo—a distance that we can travel and back again in a season. This was to produce a result. They could not understand why they wandered thus in the wilderness; but God knew. They could not understand why he said to Jacob that they should wander in a strange land four hundred years; but the result was for the salvation of the children of men. God had promised to save that seed; but their wicked-