

# Journal of Discourses



## HISTORICAL DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BY ELDER GEORGE A. SMITH, IN THE TABERNACLE,  
OGDEN CITY, ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1864

Reported by G. D. Watt

When the Lord appeared to Joseph Smith and manifested unto him a knowledge pertaining to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the work of the last days, Satan came also with his power and tempted Joseph. It is written in the book of Job, “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.” In the very commencement of this Work, the Prophet Joseph Smith was called upon to contend face to face with the powers of darkness by spiritual manifestations, and open visions, as well as with men in the flesh, stirred up by the same spirit of the adversary to edge up his way and destroy him from the earth, and annihilate the work which he was about to commence. He thus describes the incident:

“In the spring of 1820, after I had retired into the place where I had previously designed to go, having looked around me, and finding myself alone, I kneeled down and

began to offer up the desires of my heart to God. I had scarcely done so, when immediately I was seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me, and had such astonishing influence over me as to bind my tongue so that I could not speak. Thick darkness gathered around me, and it seemed to me for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction. But, exerting all my powers to call upon God to deliver me out of the power of this enemy which had seized upon me, and at the very moment when I was ready to sink into despair and abandon myself to destruction—not to an imaginary ruin, but to the power of some actual being from the unseen world, who has such marvelous power as I had never before felt in any being—just at this moment of great alarm, I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me. It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound.