

whisperings, and rappings of low, foul, degraded spirits, who delight to lead astray rather than to guide to the truth. They “Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?” Unless we are willing to be guided by the revelations of the spirit of the Almighty, by obeying and living up to the principles of His gospel, we are as apt to believe one thing as another, and to be influenced by, and follow the dictations of a bad spirit as a good one. We have the same testimony as the faithful followers of the Lord Jesus had anciently.

The scriptures made use of by Elder George A. Smith this morning, show the way in which the former Saints became the sons of God. “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” Who did receive Him and believe on His name? Did the Jews as a nation? No. Did the Gentiles as nations? No. A few Jews and a few Gentiles only received Him and believed on His name. When the gospel was preached to the Jews and to the Gentiles, a few had ears to hear, eyes to see, and hearts that understood by the spirit of revelation; they believed the sayings of the Savior, and received the Lord Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah. It is written, “The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth.” Again, it is written, “For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me.” The disciples believed the words of the Savior, and proved to Him and to

His apostles that they were sincere and honest in their belief. Thus they were entitled to the spirit of revelation through their obedience. They asked and they did receive, “not the spirit of bondage again to fear; but the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” While the same Holy Spirit, or comforter, becomes the testimony of Jesus to all true believers, “He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment;” for in the days of the Savior many who did not receive the gospel were pricked in their hearts, and they did perish, although convinced of its truth. And so it is today; wherever the gospel is preached by the Elders of this Church many are pricked in their hearts, and they testify in their own conscience that it is from heaven, and yet they will not receive the gospel, and perish in their sins. They smother the spirit of conviction within them, and go into greater darkness than before. “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.” When a man or woman anciently renounced the Jewish religion, or any of the sects of it that then existed among the Jews, forsaking every mode of worship excepting that which Jesus introduced, it was regarded as a sufficient testimony that they were honest—that they were born of God—and all the sincere and honest believers received the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy, and received power to become His sons.

I think, however, that the rendering of this Scripture is not so true as the following, namely: “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to *continue* to be the sons of God.” Instead of receiving the gospel to become the sons of