and when this is pretty general it is called a
revival of religion. But when the excite-
ment subsides and the converts have ob-
tained what is termed “a hope,” then the
sects who may have united in bringing
about such results begin to scramble to se-
cure the converts. It was so at the time to
which I have referred in western New York.
The Baptists wanted their share, and the
Methodists and Presbyterians theirs; and
the scramble ended in a very unpleasant
and unchristian state of feeling.

Joseph Smith had attended these meet-
ings, and when this result was reached he
saw clearly that something was wrong. He
had read the Bible and had found that pas-
sage in James which says, “If any of you
lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that
giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth
not,” and taking this literally, he went
humbly before the Lord and inquired of
Him, and the Lord answered his prayer,
and revealed to Joseph, by the ministration
of angels, the true condition of the reli-
gious world. When the holy angel ap-
peared, Joseph inquired which of all these
denominations was right and which he
should join, and was told they were all
wrong—they had all gone astray, trans-
gressed the laws, changed the ordinances
and broken the everlasting covenant, and
that the Lord was about to restore the
priesthood and establish His Church,
which would be the only true and living
Church on the face of the whole earth.

Joseph, feeling that to make known
such a vision would be to subject himself
to the ridicule of all around him, knew
not what to do. But the vision was re-
peated several times, and in these repeti-
tions he was instructed to communicate
that which he had seen to his father. His
father was not a member of any church,
but was a man of exemplary life. His
mother and bro. Hyrum were members of
the Presbyterian church. Joseph communi-
cated what he had seen to his father, who
believed his testimony, and told him to ob-
serve the instructions that had been given
him.

These visits led, in a short time, to the
bringing forth of the record known as the
Book of Mormon, which contained the
fullness of the Gospel as it had been
preached by the Savior and his apostles to
the inhabitants of this land; also a history
of the falling away of the people who dwelt
on this continent and the dealings of God
with them.

A great many of us can recollect that
when we read the Bible in our young days
it was like a sealed book; and we were
taught, and the sentiment had been im-
pressed upon us, that its contents had a
two or threefold spiritual meaning, and
that it required a man who had studied di-
vinity to explain these hidden meanings.
Yet we found in the New Testament that
“no prophecy of the scripture is of any pri-
vate interpretation, but holy men of God
spake as they were moved by the Holy
Ghost.” When we read the Book of Mor-
mon it was a key to unlock the scriptures
to our understandings; while perusing its
pages, light burst upon our minds, and in
this way the Book of Mormon revealed to
us the light of the Gospel which before had
seemed obscure.

The Gospel has connected with it cer-
tain ordinances, such for instance as the or-
dinance of baptism. Who has authority to
administer this ordinance?

If we make the inquiry among the sects,
the Baptists will say, “We have.” Where did
you get it? “One Peter Waldo, a merchant,
translated the four gospels and he established