

He said his name was John, the same who came to prepare the way of our Savior at His first coming, and that he was sent to confer this lesser priesthood upon His servants in answer to their prayers in order that there might be authority on the earth to baptize, saying to them further, while his hands were still upon their heads, that "this authority which I now confer upon you shall not be taken from the earth until the Lord shall come."

Let me here inquire if there is anything in the scriptures that will warrant us in believing that the priesthood of Levi is again to be restored to the earth. Hitherto I have given you a history of the rise of this Church, without appealing to many passages of scripture; but now let me for a few moments cite your minds to the nature of that priesthood which John the Baptist held, and whether or not it is to be on the earth in the latter times.

In the first place you may go to all the religious sects and societies throughout all Christendom and inquire if they have the Levitical priesthood among them, and they will tell you they have not. The Church of England, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists or any of all these societies do not even pretend to any such priesthood; neither does the Roman Catholic, or the Greek Church. You inquire, furthermore, of all these Christian societies if the Jews, themselves, have the Aaronic priesthood, and they will tell you that the Jews lost that authority by their apostasy, and that the Kingdom of God was taken from them and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. Consequently, according to the testimony of all Christendom, there is neither Jew nor Gentile now upon the face of the earth who has the priesthood after

the order of Levi, or the Levitical priesthood. If that be the case, if it ever returns to the earth, it must be restored. Now the question is will it return to the earth? Is there a promise in the scriptures of the restoration of such a priesthood to the children of men? If so it must come from Heaven, for according to the testimony of all Christendom neither they nor the Jews possess it.

There is not time on the present occasion to turn particularly to the passages referring to this subject, but I think I can direct your minds to a few. In the testimony given in the 40th chapter of Exodus, verse 15, we find that this priesthood was to be confirmed upon the heads of the children of Levi unto the end, throughout all their generations. Again we find another testimony in the case of the grandson of Aaron, Phinehas. In consequence of a certain work he did in the midst of the congregation of Israel, an everlasting priesthood was confirmed upon him and his seed throughout all their generations, Numbers 25:13; that is, they were entitled to it. They might lose it through apostasy; but they were entitled to it throughout all their generations. Again, when we refer to the last chapter of Isaiah we find a prophecy that has not yet been fulfilled only in part, where the Lord says, "I will set a sign among the people, and I will gather the children of Israel from all nations upon horses, upon mules, in litters, upon swift beasts, back to my holy mountain Jerusalem, and I will take of them for priests and Levites, saith the Lord." Indeed! Is the Lord going to have priests and Levites after gathering Israel from all nations? Yes. "I will take of them for priests and Levites, saith the Lord."

Here, then, is a restitution or restoration predicted in the last chapter