

persecuted those who believe in receiving any new communication.

Some two or three centuries ago there was a great reformation in Europe—a protestation against this wicked, corrupt and abominable power that had held sway under the name of Christian.

They did reform from many of their corrupt practices, and they had power given to them, although perhaps they did not understand it fully, and the God of heaven did give power to these reformers to bring about more liberal principles; but they had to do it through great persecution. They succeeded, however, in building up denominations which they called Christian, that had forsaken, in some measure the corruption of the mother church. These reformers followed the mother church in regard to limiting their faith to ancient Scripture; they would tell the people that there was to be no more revelation. John Calvin and Martin Luther held the view, that there was to be no more revelation from heaven; that the canon of Scripture was full. They received this false dogma from the mother church; they could not find it in the New Testament; but it was a tradition handed down by the mother church that such was the fact.

Now, the devil did not particularly care how many good principles people retained, so long as they should deny one of the most important principles of heaven. Cut off communication from the Lord, shut up the heavens, keep angels out of the question concerning any more new communication to be given to the children of men, and the devil has accomplished his object. These falsehoods were handed down, after the reformers came out, in all the various denominations until the present day, until the time when the Lord, by the mouth of his holy angels, called Joseph Smith and gave

unto him a knowledge by vision of the place where the ancient records of a portion of the Israelitish nation were deposited. At that period of time there was scarcely a people on the face of the whole earth but what were more or less under the delusion of this apostate doctrine. Mr. Smith, however, was uncontaminated by these traditions, as he was not a member of any church; this is manifest in the prayer offered by this young man at the time when the Lord first revealed himself to him.

He went out to pray, being then a little over fourteen years of age, in a little grove not far from his father's house. The great object which he had in praying was to learn some few principles, which he saw were absolutely necessary to know, according to his understanding, in order to serve the true and living God. He desired to know which, among all the denominations with which he was surrounded, was the true church.

It is not often that boys of this age would be so exercised, but this was the fact in regard to Joseph Smith. He was uneducated; he had not been to college; he was not trained in the vices of all large cities; but merely a country boy accustomed to hard work with his father. Probably one reason why his mind was thus exercised was in consequence of the religious excitement existing in that neighborhood at the time; some of his own relatives had joined the Presbyterian Church, and he was earnestly sought after to join himself with some church, and his mind being somewhat wrought upon, seeing many of his young acquaintances turn to the Lord, he greatly desired to know which was the true church. It was a great question; he knew not how to satisfy his mind, for he had not read the Bible much. He heard a great many different doctrines advocated by