

language can make it, "Gospel was preached also to them that are dead," &c., confirming what the Apostle had said in the previous chapter, that Jesus was engaged in preaching the Gospel to the spirits in prison while, as I have said, his body slumbered in the tomb.

Now do you see and comprehend anything of the long-suffering and mercy of God unto the millions who have been born and died on our earth in ignorance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Do you comprehend the great plan of salvation, or a portion of that great plan which God our heavenly Father has devised for the redemption of all his children? Shall we say that God's work is confined to this short probation of ours, that his labor for the salvation of his children and the plan that he has devised are confined to this brief space that we call time, or shall we say that God's plan of salvation extends over all his creatures and throughout all his creations, and that if men don't have opportunities here of understanding it, they will have that opportunity hereafter? This is set forth in these chapters with great plainness, and so as to leave no doubt upon the minds of those who are disposed to accept the Scriptures as they read. Of course, where men have traditions and preconceived views and ideas concerning these matters they are likely to cling to them and reject the truth. They would rather believe that nine-tenths of the human family would be consigned to endless torment than accept the idea that God is a God of mercy, and that the plan of salvation which he has devised is all-sufficient and extends to all grades, conditions and circumstances, in which his creatures are found.

This doctrine was revealed to the Latter-day Saints through the Prophet Joseph Smith. We were as ignorant of it and of the meaning of

these passages as anybody else previous to the establishment of this Church. Among other doctrines that were taught to the Prophet Joseph, was this which I have endeavored to set forth briefly before you. I have not dwelt upon it at length, but it was taught in great plainness to the Prophet, and he taught it to the people. The Prophet Malachi, you recollect, predicts that before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes, the Lord will send Elijah, the Prophet, and he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers, lest the Lord come and smite the earth with a curse. You can read this in Malachi; and when the Latter-day Saints heard this Gospel, and became acquainted with the fact that it was necessary for men and women to be baptized for the remission of their sins, their hearts immediately yearned for their ancestors. I have heard hundreds of persons who have joined this Church say, "Oh, that my father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, children, grandfather or grandmother had heard this doctrine as the Elders teach it! How gladly they would have embraced it! How their hearts would have warmed towards this Gospel! They lived in anticipation of some such doctrine as this; they were not satisfied with the creeds of men, or with Christianity as taught. They wanted the gifts, graces and blessings of the Gospel. Oh, that they could have lived and heard the teachings that we now hear, that God has revealed from the heavens, the ancient and pure Gospel, with the Holy Ghost and the gifts thereof! Oh, how their hearts would have been gladdened to have heard these glad tidings! Thus were the hearts of the children turned towards the fathers, and I doubt not the hearts of the fathers were turned towards the children.