

same colonists that settled in the valley of the Mississippi. When we speak of the valley of the Mississippi, let me say a few words to inform the minds of my brethren and sisters from foreign countries who may not be so fully acquainted with the geography of our land. The valley of the Mississippi does not mean a small valley like these valleys here in the Rocky Mountains, but it means a vast area of territory some fifteen hundred thousand square miles in extent, enough to accommodate several hundred millions of inhabitants, almost a world of itself. There the Nephites became a great and powerful people. In process of time they spread forth on the right and on the left, and the whole face of the North American continent was covered by cities, towns and villages and population.

But we will hasten on. They having kept the law of Moses, I mean the Nephites, looked forward, according to the testimony of their law, for the coming of the Messiah, that is the great Prophet of Israel which Moses had told them the Lord would raise up unto them. They looked for that great Prophet to come and shed his blood, for their sacrifices and burnt offerings pointed to a great and last sacrifice, the sacrifice of the Son of God. The Nephite nation, therefore, had a testimony given to them concerning that future Messiah that was to come; a sign was given to them on this American continent that they might know the very day on which he was born. The night before Jesus was born this continent had no darkness. There was one day, and then a night and then a day without any darkness at all—it was as light as day during the period which is generally called night. This was prophesied or predicted by their Prophets as a sign that they might no longer be in sus-

pense about the coming of their great Prophet. After the birth of Christ there were signs given to the people concerning his crucifixion. The inhabitants of this land were not in ignorance about the great atonement that was wrought out on Mount Calvary. It was not in vain that they kept the law of Moses, and offered up their burnt offerings and the shedding of the blood of beasts and fowls, pointing forward to the atoning blood of Jesus, they knew when the great and last sacrifice was offered here on this land. However, it was a day of sorrow to them, for most of the people at that time had become very wicked. They had stoned and killed the Prophets and persecuted them exceedingly, and had become so corrupt and had deviated so far from the law of Moses and from the prophecies that God had given to them, and the righteous precepts that had been taught them by their Prophets, that the Lord in his anger destroyed many hundreds of thousands of the people at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus. The Prophets told the people that when Jesus should be hung on the cross there should be a terrible convulsion and great earthquake on this continent, that many of their towns, cities and villages should be totally destroyed, some of their cities should be sunk and buried in the depths of the earth, that mountains should rise up and come over and fall on certain cities, that other cities should be sunk and waters come up in the place thereof, that other cities should be destroyed by tempest and whirlwind, that others should be burned by fire. Another great sign was given to them concerning the period during which Jesus was to remain in the tomb—that from the period of the crucifixion until the time of the resurrection thick darkness should spread over all the face