

for Joseph Smith was thus regarded by the world at large with few exceptions; and he must have been so, at a very early age, if this work be not true, for he could not be deceived, himself, in relation to it. There was no possible chance for any deception, so far as he himself was concerned. Why? Because the circumstances were of such a nature that he could not be deceived. God revealed to him that there were certain plates deposited about three miles from his father's house. He saw, in vision, the place of their deposit. He heard the holy angel declare to him in relation to these records. But first, about four years prior to this, the first vision that he had was in answer to prayer. Being but a youth, and anxious for the salvation of his soul, he secretly prayed, in the wilderness, that the Lord would show unto him what he should do, what church he should join. The Lord heard and answered this prayer. Do not be astonished, good Christians, because the Lord hears prayer in the 19th century. I know it is very popular to pray to the Lord in Christendom; but, when you talk about the Lord answering prayers, by giving revelations, visions, or sending angels, it is very unpopular. But unpopular as it was, this youth ventured to go and ask the Lord for wisdom, having, in the first place, read a passage in the New Testament, which says, "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given unto him." Joseph Smith was not so full of tradition that he could not lay hold of this promise. I do not know that he had been taught long enough, the idea that the Lord would not hear prayer. At any rate, having read this passage, he prayed, really believing in his heart that the Lord would answer him, for he

wanted wisdom, he wanted to know which was the true Christian Church, that he might be united with it; and while pleading with and praying to the Lord for this information, which was a matter of great concern to him, the heavens were opened, and two personages clothed in light or fire descended and stood before him. As soon as this light surrounded him, and he was enclosed or enveloped in it, his mind was caught away from earthly objects and things, and he saw these two glorious personages, their countenances shining with exceeding great brilliancy. One of them, while pointing to the other, addressed him in this language, "Behold my beloved son, hear ye him." All fear was taken from this boy during the progress of this wonderful event, and he felt happy, but anxious to know concerning the things about which he had been praying, and he repeated his request, that he might be told which was the true Christian church. He was informed that there was no true Christian church on the earth, that there was no people established or organized according to the Apostolic order; that all had gone out of the way and had departed from the ancient order of things; that they had denied the power of Godliness, the gifts, miracles, the spirit of revelation and prophecy, visions, that all these things had been done away with by the unbelief of the children of men, and that there were no prophets or inspired men on the earth, as there always had been when there was a true Church upon the earth. He was strictly commanded to join none of them. The Lord also informed him that, at some future period of time, if he would be faithful in giving heed to the instructions which were then imparted to him, and in his prayers to the Lord, he would impart