

Joseph Smith, a man of no education or learning, comparatively speaking, was commanded to translate the Bible by inspiration. He commenced the work, and the first and second chapters of Genesis containing the history of the creation are very plain and full. In the first chapter the Lord speaks about the spiritual creation of all things before they were made temporally. In the second chapter he goes on to state that there was not yet a man to till the ground, "for in heaven created I them." That explains the mystery about the work previously spoken of in the first chapter, and shows that it had reference to the great work which God had performed in the heavens before he made this earth temporally. This same doctrine is inculcated in some small degree in the Book of Mormon. However, I do not think that I should have ever discerned it in that book had it not been for the new translation of the Scriptures, that throwing so much light and information on the subject, I searched the Book of Mormon to see if there were indications in it that related to the pre-existence of man. I found them in a great revelation that was given to the prophet who led the first colony to this country from the Tower of Babel at the time the language was confounded. This great prophet had a remarkable vision before he arrived on this continent. In this vision he saw the spiritual personage of our Savior as he existed before he came to take upon him flesh and bones; and Jesus, in talking to this great man of God, informed him that as he appeared to him in the spirit so would he appear to his brethren in the flesh in future generations, and said he, "I am he that was prepared from before the foundation of the world, to redeem my people." He furthermore addressed himself to

this great man saying, "Seest then that thou art created in mine own image?" That is, man here on the earth is in the image of that spiritual body or personage of Jesus, so far as we are not deformed. "Seest thou that thou art created in mine own image, yea even in the beginning created I all men after mine own image." This is about the only place that refers pointedly to the pre-existence of man in the Book of Mormon. I think there are one or two other passages in which it is just referred to.

Now admit, as the Latter-day Saints do, that we had a previous existence, and that when we die we shall return to God and our former habitation, where we shall behold the face of our Father, and the question immediately arises, shall we have our memories so increased by the Spirit of the living God that we shall ever remember our previous existence? I think we shall. Jesus seems to have gained this even here in this world, otherwise he would not have prayed, saying, "Father, glorify then me with that glory which I had with thee before the world was," showing plainly that he had obtained by revelation a knowledge from his Father of something about the glory that he had before the world was. This being the case with Jesus, why not his younger brethren also obtain this information by revelation? And when we do return back into the presence of our Father, will we not there also have our memories so quickened that we will remember his face, having dwelt in His presence for thousands of years? It will not be like going to visit strangers that we have never seen before. Is not this a comfort to persons who expect to depart this life, like all the rest of the human family? They have a consolation that they are going