

not among strangers, not to a being whose face they never saw, but to one whom they will recognize, and will remember, having dwelt with him for ages before the world was. Looking upon it in the light of reason, independent of revelation, if a person were to form a system of religion according to the best light that he had, would it not be more happifying and calculated more in its nature to give joy and peace to the mind to suppose that we were going back to a personage we were well acquainted with, rather than to one we had no idea of? I think I should prefer, so far as reason is concerned, to be well acquainted with people I am going among.

These are the expectations of the Latter-day Saints: we do not expect to go among strangers. When we get back there we expect this place to be familiar to us, and when we meet this, that and the other one of all the human family that have been here on the earth, we shall recognize them as those with whom we have dwelt thousands of years in the presence of our Father and God. This renewing of old friendships and acquaintances, and again enjoying all the glory we once possessed, will be a great satisfaction to all who are privileged to do so.

If we ever dwelt there, it is altogether likely that God made some promises to us when there. He would converse with us, and cheer us up. Being his offspring—his sons and daughters, he would not be austere and unwilling to converse with his own children, but he would teach them a great many things. And all this will be familiar to us. We read in the New Testament that God did make promises to us before this world was made. I recollect one passage in one of the epistles of Paul, either to Timothy or Titus, the Apos-

tle says, "In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began." To whom did he make that promise? I contend that we had the promise of eternal life before the world began on certain conditions—if we would comply with the gospel of the Son of God, by repenting of our sins and being faithful in keeping the commandments of God.

There are many Scriptures in the New Testament that have relation to the previous existence of man, which I do not at this time feel disposed to quote. They can be searched up by the Latter-day Saints, and by all who are curious enough to enquire into these things. There are some other things, however, which I feel anxious to bring forth in connection with the pre-existence of man. One thing is our origin more fully. I have already stated that the spirits of the children of men were born unto their parents. Now who are the parents of these children?

There are certain promises made to the Latter-day Saints, one of them being that when we take a wife here in this world, it is our privilege by obedience to the ordinances of heaven, to have that wife married to us for time and for all eternity. This is a promise which God has made by revelation to his Church, hence the Latter-day Saints believe in the eternity of the marriage covenant. This is one of our fundamental doctrines. We consider that a marriage for time alone is after the old Gentile order, and they have lost all knowledge of the true ordinances and order of heaven. They marry until death separates them. I believe that almost every religious society, in their marriage ceremony, use this phrase, "I pronounce you man and wife until death shall part you!" This sort of a marriage never origi-