

Roman Catholic festival. The boys and girls all look forward with great anticipations to Christmas. Many of them, it is true, do not know the meaning of it, or why it is celebrated; but when we come to reflect on the matter, it is all nonsense to celebrate the 25th day of December as the birthday of Jesus. It will do for a holiday, so you might select any other day for that purpose. It is generally believed and conceded by the learned, who have investigated the matter, that Christ was born in April. I have seen several accounts—some of them published in our periodicals—of learned men in different nations, in which it is stated that, according to the best of their judgment from the researches they have made, Christ was crucified on the 6th of April. That is, the day on which this church was organized. But when these learned men go back from the day of his crucifixion to the day of his birth, they are at a loss, having no certain evidence or testimony by which they can determine it. I intend this afternoon to give light on this subject from new revelation, which we, as Latter-day Saints, can depend upon. I will read to you from the Book of Mormon, some things that happened, at the time of the crucifixion, on this great western hemisphere, and I will say we have a date given there in connection with these events, showing how old Jesus was at the time of his crucifixion. It may not be amiss, however, for me to make a few remarks before I commence reading, to inform strangers who may be present, that the inhabitants of ancient America, and those who wrote the Book of Mormon were Israelites! That when they came from the city of Jerusalem, 600 years before Christ, they were a righteous people, and had prophets among them, and that they kept the law of Moses. Now the

sacrifices and burnt offerings of that law were typical of the great offering that was to be made by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The ancient inhabitants of this continent, to whom I have referred, understood the nature of these ordinances, and they looked forward to the coming of the true Messiah and celebrated it by these ordinances, the same as we look backward and celebrate his death and sufferings by partaking of the symbols of, as we have done this afternoon.

Now if God led a company of Israelites from Palestine to colonize this continent, and taught them to keep the law of Moses with its sacrifices and burnt offerings, typical of the great sacrifice that was to be made at Jerusalem, it would not be at all strange for him to give to them a sign concerning Jesus, when he should be born, and when he should die. He did this by the mouths of prophets. Numerous prophets were raised up on this land, and they prophesied to the inhabitants thereof, and taught them about the coming of Jesus, and what signs should be given at the time he should come. They taught them that the night before Jesus should be born there would be no darkness on this land, but that it would be perfectly light. They would see the sun set in the evening, and that, during the night, until it should rise the next morning, there would be no darkness; that great signs and lights would appear in the heavens, and that they were to be to them indications of the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. These signs were given, and by them the people on this continent knew the very day that Jesus was born.

Some years after this, before the crucifixion of Jesus, they fell into great wickedness. They persecuted the prophets, shed their blood, stoned