

pears again, a great battle fought between the Priesthood and the powers of darkness. The wicked do not comprehend this. They witness various manifestations of unseen powers operating in the human family, but whether they are good and truthful or vile and deceptive they are unable to comprehend satisfactorily, because they have not applied to the fountain of light, truth and knowledge. The Saints, on the other hand, can comprehend these manifestations and judge this wicked world by the light of the Holy Ghost. We shall see the manifestations of the powers of darkness in an increased degree in the future, deceiving the children of men. So far as this generation is concerned it has been since the Prophet Joseph came forth and declared his belief in revelations, visions and angels that the powers of darkness have operated by external and supernatural manifestations, and as the power of God increased with the people and extended throughout the earth and was felt by other nations besides this, the Evil One manifested his power among men to a greater extent. When the Prophet Joseph appeared, announcing his belief in these things, there was a general unbelief among religious sects in regard to them. Professed Christians disclaimed any belief in manifestations from heaven, had no faith in visions or angels, and considered the claims of any man to be absurd who professed to have communication with the unseen world. Those who had faith in visions and dreams were looked upon as superstitious beings. Joseph's professions were viewed as inconsistent with the spirit and enlightenment of the age. But how great is the change! We find men and women seeking communication with the unseen world, with spirits of departed friends, and receiving spiritual man-

ifestations in various forms. In the days of the Prophet Joseph there were only a few who entertained any faith in such manifestations, but now they are numbered by millions. What has all this effected? Has it produced any more unity in the world than existed before? Is there an increase of happiness or aught that is praiseworthy? The effect it has produced is evident, to the reflecting mind. Infidelity has increased as the powers of darkness have spread their influence over the minds of men.

I do not expect many of the Latter-day Saints to be able to fully contemplate the subject, not having mingled with the world since these great changes have occurred, but there are some who possess a general knowledge of such things by seeing, hearing and reading. The testimony of the Elders is that the world is almost universally infidel—priests and people. Religion is used as a cloak with the great majority of professing Christians. There appears to prevail an almost general disbelief in Jesus and his Apostles. The Bible is counted unworthy of credence or attention, and religion is deemed a farce. This general tendency to infidelity is also the result of men's efforts to put down Mormonism. The world rejected the power of God made manifest by the visitation of holy angels, but when the devil manifested his power through the visitation of evil spirits, assuming all sorts of fantastic shapes, the people eagerly ran after them and became blind, bewildered and stupefied. Such persons would rather "believe a lie and be damned;" they willingly follow after the "strong delusions" that the Apostle Paul referred to. These powers of darkness will continue to come upon them and spread over the earth, as we advance in truth and righteousness.