

HOW A KNOWLEDGE OF GOD IS OBTAINED—THE GOSPEL TO  
THE DEAD—VARIOUS DISPENSATIONS OF THE MOST HIGH TO  
MANKIND—POWER OF THE PRIESTHOOD—RESTORATION OF  
THE GOSPEL THROUGH JOSEPH SMITH—FAILINGS OF THE  
SAINTS—CORRUPTIONS OF THE WICKED

DISCOURSE BY PRESIDENT JOHN TAYLOR, DELIVERED IN THE 14TH WARD  
MEETINGHOUSE, SUNDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 7, 1879

Reported by John Irvine

We meet together from time to time to speak, to hear, to reflect, to converse, and to exchange views in regard to the worship of Almighty God. There is something associated with these matters that has generally attracted the attention of the human family in all ages, among all peoples, and under almost all circumstances. There is and always has been a feeling of reverence existing among the human family for a Divine Being of some kind and of some form, even amongst the most low and debased people of the earth. The position that we occupy in the world, our ideas of the mutability of affairs of time and sense, the continuous departure of one after another from this stage of existence to another, leads us, as well as other portions of the human family generally, more or less to reflect upon those things pertaining to the future. Various ideas and theories have existed amongst different peoples. Some have worshipped a great variety of Gods of their own making, while others have followed the notions and theories of men in regard to certain doctrines, formulas, theories and ideas that have been

promulgated among what would be termed the wise, the prudent, and the intelligent of the earth. But in relation to religious matters there is no one can have any true or correct conception of a hereafter unless it has been revealed by the Almighty, who alone is able to comprehend the end from the beginning and is acquainted with the position and destinies of men and of the world.

We have had revealed to us from time to time, as manifested in the Scriptures, developed therein, many ideas pertaining to God and to futurity; but any intelligence in regard to these matters was generally obtained directly from the Lord, or through the ministering of angels, or by the Spirit of prophecy and revelation given to them by the Almighty. And it is emphatically stated in the Scriptures that, “the things of God knoweth no man, but by the Spirit of God,” and hence when men assume to comprehend principles pertaining to futurity, predicated upon the learning, the wisdom, the intelligence or the science of the world, they are always very much at fault. Who can comprehend the Almighty or under-