

God had to give to men he has given, and that they are embodied in the Old and New Testament. We have, as I have said, any number of churches which make this statement, teach these doctrines and train the children and the grown people in the belief that God had ceased to speak, that he has ceased to communicate his mind and will unto his children; that the channel of revelation which was once opened and by which all who were his true children were distinguished—that that is forever closed. But, as I have said, if it were not for the existence of these organizations; if it were not for the fact that these are the teachings that mankind receive; if we were to read the Book itself, and rely upon its statements, the natural conclusion would be that it would be the privilege of every man and of every woman who belonged to the Church of Christ to have communications from him, for the reason, as I have already stated, that it was the distinguishing characteristic of the organization known as the Church of Christ in the Messianic dispensation. It was the distinguishing characteristic also of the men who were the servants of God anterior to the days of Jesus. It would be a most singular idea—if it were not for the existence of those traditions to which I have referred—that God, our eternal Father, our Great Creator, should cut off his children from all communication with him, and leave them to grope in the dark, wandering hither and thither without any certain means of knowing his divine mind, of comprehending his divine will concerning themselves and the affairs of the earth. I can join with Brother Nicholson, who gave expression to his joy and gratification that we live in a day when God has once

more broken the silence which has reigned for ages, and has revealed his mind and made known the plan of salvation in its old plainness and purity to the inhabitants of the earth. And if there is one thing that causes my joy to be greater than another, it is the fact that this knowledge, as he has stated, is not confined to one man, nor to three men, nor to twelve men, but that it is communicated unto every humble soul who seeks for it in a spirit which is acceptable unto God. It is a constant cause of thanksgiving to me that a people have been gathered together who are relieved, to a very great extent, from the uncertainty, and from the strifes, contentions and divisions upon points of doctrine that prevail throughout Christendom. There is in every human heart a desire to know something concerning God. I think it is Bancroft who says that the natural man, the barbarian, believes in God naturally; but skepticism and unbelief are the attendants of civilization, of enlightenment so called. There is no man who has not stifled that portion of the spirit of God which is born in him, who does not desire to know something concerning God; concerning his purposes, concerning the plan of salvation, concerning the object of his creation and of his being placed on the earth, and also concerning his future destiny. And because this knowledge does not come in the way in which men would like it to come, because God does not conform to men's ideas and to men's expectations, a great many deny the existence of God, and say that if there be a God, he certainly would reveal something to those who seek earnestly to comprehend him. But there is one saying recorded by an ancient Prophet, that experience proves to be true, even the