

THE PREACHING AND PRACTICE OF THE GOSPEL—VISITATIONS OF ANGELS, ETC.

DISCOURSE BY ELDER H. W. NAISBITT, DELIVERED IN THE TABERNACLE, SALT LAKE
CITY, SUNDAY AFTERNOON, MAY 15TH, 1881.

REPORTED BY JOHN IRVINE.

However disagreeable it may be to my personal feeling to stand before a congregation, the consciousness which the Elders of this Church possess that they have had committed to them the authority of the Holy Priesthood, and that they are entitled to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and that they possess the faith and prayers of the Saints who are their associates in the Church—those who understand their needs—is enough, I think, to buoy up an individual when he is called upon suddenly to address the people; indeed it is these thoughts alone which give me courage at the present time; I count upon a measure of the Holy Spirit; I count upon the faith and prayers of the Saints; and while I take up a little time I hope that that which may be said will be profitable and advantageous to all who listen and to the speaker himself.

Numerous have been the methods and channels through which the human family from time to time have received intelligence. Preaching is as old as history. Men have learned from each other. The results of individual experience have been transmitted to those who had less opportunity, and in this way knowledge has been increased in one from the resources of another.

But Christians believe, I think, as a rule, that men have not always been dependent upon those who dwell in the flesh for the intelligence which they have acquired. Those who have accepted the Bible, the Old and New Testament, will understand that there have been in past ages other methods by which intelligence was communicated than simply through men who dwelt in the flesh. Spiritual communication is one of the cornerstones of the old book. It is filled with instances where intelligences not directly of earth have visited members of the human family and communicated with them from time to time. Abraham, whom Christians look upon as "the father of the faithful," was one who was privileged to receive angelic visitations. Lot was another of those who had experience of this character; and so were many of the ancients, from the beginning down to the time of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, whose divine mission was announced by the visitations and communications of the angelic hosts. Whatever the character of these angels might have been, whether they were resurrected beings who had dwelt upon the earth—whether they were those of higher grades—archangels, as they are called—or whether they were de-