

which is evil and loved it, rather than that which is good; therefore, they have not been led upward to the Source of Light, or been able to communicate with Him.

When our Heavenly Father commenced this work with which you and I are identified, the world was in darkness and without knowledge concerning God. There was a little glimmering of light among them concerning some things pertaining to God which men had read about in the Bible; and there were some individuals in other generations who, searching after truth, obtained some comprehension of the principles of truth, but they knew not God nor the ways of God. There was no definite knowledge in this age concerning Deity until God manifested himself to the Prophet Joseph Smith in His own person and by His Son. Joseph saw the Lord, and heard the heavenly voice saying, "This is my Beloved Son, hear ye Him:" and he was instructed by the ministration of personages direct from the presence of Deity, in regard to the things of God. So that when he came to lay the foundation of this work, he did not attempt to lay it according to his own notions and ideas, or according to that which he had read in books or that which he had pondered over or that which he or other men had invented; but he made known to others what God had revealed to him. And when he bore testimony that God lived, that Jesus who died on Calvary was the Son of God, he testified of that which he knew because these Divine beings had manifested themselves to him.

Joseph Smith was given to understand of the existence of a certain record written by men who, in former times, in like manner had received the word of God upon this

continent. The place of its existence was also shown to him, and he was inspired of God to translate that record into the English language. Now, Joseph Smith in performing that great work received, continually, evidence of the divine origin of what he wrote or caused others to write. It was not the emanation of his own brain, or something that he had concocted, but was the work of the Lord as written by the servants of God in ancient times, revealed to him by the power of the Lord God that he might translate it into our language. So in regard to the revelations given to this Church, and concerning every doctrine and principle pertaining to our faith. They did not spring from his thoughts, they were not the product of his mind; but they were revealed to him by the ministration of holy angels, and by the inspiration of that Spirit which gives light to the understanding. For he received blessings to a greater degree than are poured out commonly upon the children of men, as was the case with other men anciently who were called to perform a special work; his mind was enlightened far beyond the condition of his fellow men, for God bestowed upon him at the proper time the gift of the Holy Ghost, by which he, as well as men anciently, understood and spoke and wrote the mind and will of God. And Joseph Smith learned how to obtain that glorious and heavenly gift not only for himself but for others, and he was enabled to instruct the inhabitants of the earth how they could obtain it, how they could come to a knowledge of the truth for themselves, and commune with God for themselves; how they could obtain a knowledge of His existence through this heavenly gift,