

authorized them to administer the ordinance of baptism for the remission of sins. When Joseph received that authority he administered the ordinance of baptism unto Oliver, and then Oliver unto him.

They afterwards received the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood, under the hands of those who last held the keys of that Priesthood upon the earth. When Jesus, you will remember, took His three disciples into the mount, He was transfigured before them, and Moses and Elias administered unto them; and at that time Peter was ordained to hold the keys of that dispensation. He held the keys in conjunction with his brethren, James and John. They came and unitedly laid their hands upon the heads of Joseph and Oliver, and ordained them to the authority that they themselves held, namely, that of the Apostleship. In this way they received the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and could administer in the ordinances that belong to that Priesthood; one of which is the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. Until that time they had not received that ordinance. Some might think it strange that a man like Joseph, so gifted of the Lord, should deem it necessary to be administered to by a man or men holding the holy Priesthood, in order to receive the Holy Ghost. But it is upon the same principle that the Son of God had to be baptized in order to fulfill all righteousness; and yet He was a pure and holy being. And when John said to him, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" Jesus said to him, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness:" and John then administered the ordinance of baptism to the Son

of God, pure and holy as He was. Our Savior could not, and did not, refuse to comply with any of the ordinances which are placed in the Church for the salvation of God's children; on the contrary, He set the example by going down into the water and being baptized by John, given as the most humble of his followers did. In like manner it was as necessary that Joseph should be baptized, and have hands laid upon him for the reception of the Holy Ghost—for there is no doubt in my mind that Joseph Smith was called just as the Son of God, our Lord and Redeemer was called, before the foundation of the earth, as Jeremiah in his record says he was—and was ordained to be a Prophet, Seer and Revelator, and to stand at the head of this last dispensation. Although this was the case, it was still necessary that he should be baptized and have hands laid upon him for the reception of the Holy Ghost, and also be ordained to the Priesthood of Aaron and Melchizedek. You remember reading in the Book of Mormon that the Twelve on this continent, whom the Savior chose after His resurrection, are to be judged by the Twelve Apostles that were at Jerusalem. It was with Peter, who was the senior Apostle there, that the keys rested. He was at the head of that dispensation; therefore, those that received the Apostleship on this land were to be judged by the Twelve at Jerusalem. There the keys were; and it was right and proper that Peter, with James and John, should come and bestow them upon him who was to be the head of this dispensation, namely, Joseph Smith.

In addition to this the Prophet Joseph informs us in his letter, addressed to the Saints when he fled