

We have labored upon this principle for 50 years. You cast your eyes and you see a tabernacle in the desert; you see a city; and you may travel for a thousand miles and you will find this Territory filled with cities, towns and villages. By what power have these things been accomplished? I came here on the 24th of July, 1847, with a little handful of men as pioneers. What did we find? A barren desert, as barren as the desert Sahara. No mark of the white man here. No outward sign that a white man could live here. How has this desert been made to blossom as the rose? Why this body of people from almost every nation? I will tell you. We carried the Gospel to Europe, the Islands of the sea, and the different nations of the earth; we offered them the Gospel, and a class of men and women—two of a family, and sometimes a dozen of a city—received our testimony, and when we laid hands upon them they received the Holy Ghost. That Holy Ghost has remained with them: it has instructed them and inspired their hearts, and today you see Utah as it is. If the Lord Almighty had not backed up the testimony of the Elders of Israel as He has done, Utah today would have been as when we found it 36 years ago.

This is the condition of the Latter-day Saints. Joseph Smith received these keys, this Priesthood, this power, this Gospel by the administration of angels from God, and this testimony is true. He also received a record called the Book of Mormon, which is a record of the ancient inhabitants of this continent. That record is true; as also the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, a code of revelations given through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

These revelations are true and faithful, and they are being fulfilled as fast as time will admit. I bear my testimony of these things to the world, for I know they are true.

I traveled thousands of miles with Joseph Smith. I knew his spirit. Many of the revelations given through him have been fulfilled. I myself wrote the revelation that was given through him concerning the war that would take place in this country between the north and south. That revelation was published to the world for twenty years before the war. It broke out just as predicted, and I refer to it because it is one of the revelations that is fulfilled. Today we are still preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Lord Almighty has set His hand to establish His Church and kingdom on the earth, to build up Zion in the mountains of Israel.

Now with regard to the Priesthood. We have been found fault with sometimes because we profess to have the Priesthood. Let me say to this congregation that our Heavenly Father performs all His works—the creation of worlds, the redemption of worlds—by the power of the Eternal Priesthood. And no man on the earth, from the days of Father Adam to the present time, has ever had power to administer in any of the ordinances of life and salvation only by the power of the Holy Priesthood. You will find this to be the case in the whole history of the Prophets of God. When Aaron was given the Priesthood he was called by revelation. “No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.” Jesus Christ himself had to be called of God. He was a High Priest. He left the Priesthood on the earth with his