

visited by three glorious personages, among whom was the Prophet Elijah. These are the words that they have left on record:

“After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us; for Elijah the prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death, stood before us, and said:

“Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi—testifying that he [Elijah] should be sent, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come—

“To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse—

“Therefore, the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands; and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors.”

Now, I can imagine how those who are opposed to this work might say, “Why, it is a very easy thing for Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery to make such a statement as that, because it seems to correspond with what Malachi has said, and their making the statement is merely in anticipation of that which the Bible has said would be the case.”

But there is this that is remarkable in connection with this statement: the coming of the prophet Elijah was to be attended with certain results—it was to turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest the Lord should come and smite the earth with a curse.

The question arises, after the visitation of Elijah to those two men, were the hearts of the fathers turned to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers? The very fact that we are building temples to the Most High God, is evi-

dence of it. There never was a greater proof of the truth of any statement than that which is furnished in the acts of the Latter-day Saints upon this point. The people that comprise this church, before joining it, knew nothing about the plan of salvation, except that which they had derived from their teachers, who themselves were very ignorant; but God in His mercy has restored to us certain principles and knowledge concerning the dead. He has informed us that during the time the body of Jesus slept in the tomb, that the Savior went and preached to the spirits that were in prison. I refer now to what Peter says, that while His body lay in the tomb, “He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah.” He preached the Gospel to them. Isaiah says that one of the objects of his mission should be to unlock the doors of the prison to them that were bound, and He undoubtedly did so on this occasion. I believe the Episcopalian catechism admits that Jesus descended into hell. He certainly did, and visited those spirits that were in prison. After His resurrection, when Mary came forward to salute her Lord, and to embrace Him, He said: “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” During the interval between His death and resurrection He had been engaged in preaching to the spirits in prison. He had unlocked the prison doors to them that were bound; thus showing that though the punishment of the wicked may be eternal punishment—God’s punishment being eternal punishment—the Lord does not subject