

the Apostle to the Gentiles, warned them strongly and faithfully to take heed and be cautious lest they should fall through the same example of unbelief. "For if God spare not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee." But all the Prophets and Apostles understood by vision and revelation that there was to be a falling away. There has been a falling away. I can say of a truth—whether the world believe it or not—that from the day the apostles and disciples and those holding the Priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ were put to death, there has not been a man on the face of God's footstool who has had the power to administer the ordinances of the Gospel so as to have power after death. I understand perfectly well the world does not believe this, nevertheless it is true. There never was a man breathed the breath of life in any age of the world, who had power to go forth and administer the ordinances of the Gospel of Christ, only by the power of that eternal and everlasting Priesthood which Melchizedek held, which Adam, Abraham, Moses, and Elias, and all the ancient Patriarchs and Prophets held. Jesus Christ held it. He was a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, and has entered into the presence of God to plead for His brethren. The Apostles held it. No man in any age of the world had power to administer the ordinances of the Gospel without it. God himself, who has created worlds upon worlds, has created all these worlds and all those that have been saved have been redeemed by the power of that eternal and everlasting Priesthood. But as I said before, when the Prophets and Apostles and all men who held the Priesthood were put to death, the ordinances of the Gospel became

without effect, and in consequence of this, the whole world has been filled with sects and parties, with false religions, and principles, until it would almost appear that there are the six hundred, three-score and six, which John the Revelator saw in his vision. And this has been the condition of the whole Christian world from the days of Jesus Christ and His Apostles until the Lord raised up Joseph Smith, and commanded him to organize this Church and Kingdom. Did he attempt to do this until he received the Priesthood? He did not. He did not attempt to administer any one of the ordinances until he received the Holy Priesthood from under the hands of the holy men who were sent unto him from God out of heaven. The first man that ordained Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery to the Priesthood was John the Baptist, who was beheaded for the word of God and testimony of Jesus. Thus they were ordained to the Aaronic Priesthood. Joseph afterwards received the Apostleship under the hands of Peter, James and John, who held the keys of the Apostleship. God Almighty could not establish His Kingdom, His Church, His Zion—which the Holy Bible declares from Genesis almost to Revelation should be established in the latter days—without men bearing that Priesthood. God had to raise up such a man as Joseph Smith, and establish His Church, by which to prepare a people for the coming of the Son of Man. To this end Joseph was brought forth. He received these oracles from God. He laid the foundation of this Church and Kingdom in his boyhood, and he, like the Savior, and many of God's other servants, spent but a short time in the flesh after he commenced his ministry. The Savior