

spirit which exists in and through and round about all things, and is the law by which all things are governed, never had a beginning and will never have an end. There was no beginning and there will be no end to its operations. And therefore we are told that “the works of God are one eternal round.” There was no beginning to the works of God, and there will be no end. The Priesthood, as I have quoted to you, is without beginning of days or end of years. It was always existent and always active. And therefore there was never a first world or being, neither will there be a last one. We are here to learn those principles that pertain to this lower sphere; to learn how to raise ourselves from this groveling mortal condition, and make ourselves like God, that we may dwell with him, come into perfect harmony with that spirit of which I have been speaking, be one with the Father and participate with him in the power which he wields, in the midst of eternity.

Now, my brethren and sisters, will we walk in this way? Will we fit ourselves to enter into our next estate with honor? We have come down from God as his offspring. That part of us which is spirit was with him in the eternal world. We have come down here in our time and season, and God “determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of our habitation.” We are here to learn the laws that govern this lower world; to learn to grapple with evil and to understand what darkness is. We came from an abode of bliss to understand the pain and sorrow incident to this probation. We came here to comprehend what death is. We existed in our first estate among the sons of God in the presence of our Father,

“When the morning sears sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy.” The knowledge of our former state has fled from us. Like Jesus, “in our humiliation our judgment is taken away,” and the veil is drawn between us and our former habitation. This is for our trial. If we could see the things of eternity, and comprehend ourselves as we are; if we could penetrate the mists and clouds that shut out eternal realities from our gaze, the fleeting things of time would be no trial to us, and one of the great objects of our earthly probation or testing would be lost. But the past has gone from our memory, the future is shut out from our vision and we are living here in time, to learn little by little, line upon line, precept upon precept. Here in the darkness, in the sorrow, in the trial, in the pain, in the adversity, we have to learn what is right and distinguish it from what is wrong, and lay hold of right and truth and learn to live it. For it is not only the learning of it that is needful, but we must live it, being guided and governed by it in all things. If we have any evil propensities—inherited from progenitors who for ages have gone astray from God—we have to grapple with them and overcome them. Each individual must find out his own nature, and what there is in it that is wrong, and bring it into subjection to the will and righteousness of God. He must work with it until he is master of it; until he can say to this mortal flesh which is continually warring against the spirit, “I am your master by the grace of God.” Every passion, every inclination, every desire must be controlled and made subject to the will of God. Though we mingle with the world, yet we must not pattern after their evil ways nor “touch the unclean