

earth, but God has moved heaven and earth for the accomplishment of that object. Men in most instances have been blinded by the adversary who leads them captive at his will, but they do not know it. And he operates very frequently among us trying to lead us astray, and we do not know it. It is a very difficult thing for us to comprehend the position that we occupy to God and to His Church and Kingdom.

God desires our welfare, and He has instituted laws for that purpose; He has introduced the everlasting Gospel for that purpose; and He has restored the Holy Priesthood that existed anciently, together with all the principles, blessings, powers, rites, ordinances, and privileges that have graced the earth from the commencement of time. We can hardly realize this important fact, but when you reflect you will see some peculiar features associated with this work.

We all look upon Joseph Smith as being a Prophet of God. God called him to occupy the position that he did. How long ago? Thousands of years ago before this world was formed. The Prophets prophesied about his coming, that a man should arise whose name should be Joseph, and that his father's name should be Joseph, and also that he should be a descendant of that Joseph who was sold into Egypt. This prophecy you will find recorded in the Book of Mormon. He had very great and precious promises made to him by the Lord. I have heard him say on certain occasions, "You do not know who I am." The world did not like him. The world did not like either the Savior, or the Prophets; they have never liked revealed truth; and it is as much as a bargain for the Saints even to bear the truth.

In the commencement of the work, the Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith. And when they appeared to him, the Father, pointing to the Son, said, "This is my beloved Son, hear him." As much as to say, "I have not come to teach and instruct you; but I refer you to my Only Begotten, who is the Mediator of the New Covenant, the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world; I refer you to Him as your Redeemer, your High Priest and Teacher. Hear Him."

What next? Then came men who had held the Priesthood before. Who were they? Moroni, an ancient Prophet who had lived upon this continent and who had charge of the records from which the Book of Mormon was translated—a fitting person to introduce the same principles again. Afterwards it was necessary that the Priesthood should be conferred; and John the Baptist came and laid his hands upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, saying, "Upon you, my fellow servants, I lay my hands, and confer upon you the Aaronic Priesthood, which shall never be taken from the earth again until the sons of Levi offer an acceptable offering before me." That was the Lesser Priesthood—the Aaronic—appertaining to the bishopric. And why was John the Baptist chosen to confer this Priesthood? Because he was the last that held this holy Priesthood upon the earth. And why did he come? Because the Priesthood administers in time and eternity; both the Aaronic and Melchizedek. And he, holding the keys of that Priesthood, came and conferred it upon Joseph Smith. When he had conferred this Priesthood upon Joseph Smith, other things had to be conferred; that is, what is called the Melchizedek Priesthood. But you understand