

like it in the history of our race where a man was so highly favored of God, endowed with such authority, such power and had such manifestations of the mind and will of God as he received without having the Holy Priesthood. But it accords with the ideas so frequently expressed by the brethren respecting the Prophet Joseph and many others, that they were ordained before the foundations of the world were laid to come forth and accomplish the labor and the work that they did. There is no room for doubt in regard to the truth of this statement that is so frequently made. In the early boyhood of the Prophet Joseph, he was moved upon in a mysterious manner to seek unto God. By the exercise of a faith that was uncommon, and in fact it may be said unknown upon the earth, he was able to receive the ministrations of God the Father, and of His Son Jesus Christ; thus showing in the very beginning of his career, that he was a man or a spirit that was highly favored of God—a man to whom God desired to give particular manifestations of his kindness and goodness and power, and this was followed up from that time until his death by continued manifestations of the favor and the will and the power of God unto him. But it is a remarkable fact—and I wish to impress it, I think it is worthy of remembrance by all of us—that notwithstanding the Prophet Joseph had all these manifestations, and was, as I have said, a prophet and seer and revelator, he never attempted—notwithstanding the ideas that were so prevalent among mankind, and especially in the region where he lived and where he received his education—to officiate in any of the ordinances of the house of God, or of the Gospel of salvation, until

he received the everlasting Priesthood. When that was bestowed upon him; when he received the Priesthood after the order of Aaron, and was ordained by the angel who alone held the keys, who was a literal descendant of Aaron, and by virtue of that descent entitled to the keys of that Priesthood, having exercised the authority thereof while in the flesh—then and not till then did he administer the ordinance of baptism for the remission of sins. And then he refrained from acting in ordinances belonging to the Melchizedek Priesthood, that higher Priesthood, by the authority of which the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost is administered unto the children of men. Having authority to baptize in water given unto him, he did not go any further, until the Lord in His kindness and mercy bestowed upon him, through the administration of those apostles who held the keys after the death of our Savior, the authority to administer in those higher ordinances and to exercise the power and authority of this higher Priesthood. This illustrates most perfectly how careful men ought to be in acting in the name of God, not to overstep the bounds of the authority conferred upon them, but to carefully keep within those limits that are assigned to them in which to exercise authority. It is a lesson unto us as a people. We should be particular ourselves and should impress every man with the great care that he should exercise to confine his acts to the authority which he has received from the Almighty.

Jesus himself, no doubt, was equally careful in regard to the authority which He held. He was called to be a Priest after the order of Melchizedek—that is, this higher Priesthood. He exercised the authority thereof among the children