

LATTER DAY SAINTS' MESSENGER AND ADVOCATE.

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COMMUNICATIONS.

LETTER No. 4.

Liberty, Mo. Christmas, 1834.

DEAR BROTHER:—

Your letter from Norton (O.) dated Sept. 7, 1834, came to me by mail, last week, through the medium of the Messenger and Advocate. I am glad you "have thought that a full history of the rise of the church of Latter Day Saints, and the most interesting part of its progress, to the present time, would be worthy the perusal of the saints." The history of the saints, according to sacred writ, is the only record which has stood the test and ravages of time from the beginning; and a true account of the revival of the Lord's church, so near the great Sabbath of creation, must be a source and subject of holy joy to the pure in heart; and an interesting preface of things to come, that might arrest the attention of the world, before the Lord shows his naked arm to the nations, if the children of men would read and understand.

I pray our heavenly Father to assist you, so that you may be enabled to spread the truth before the eyes of this generation, ere destruction comes as a whirl-wind upon the ungodly. Strive, with your might, to be simple, plain, easy and unaffected in your style, showing the shining world, that though many may continue to run after one that is able to give gold to his friends, and lead to his enemies, you, with the Israel of God, will rejoice in having light enough to follow HIM who has power to give eternal life to his friends, and will overcome his enemies.

There are some items in your letter which are great, and revive old thoughts that, long since, were left to float down the gulf of departed things, into the maze of forgetfulness. The first one is where you sat day after day and wrote the history of the second race that inhabited this continent, as the words were repeated to you by the Lord's prophet, through the aid of the "Urim and Thumim," "Nephite Interpreters," or Divine Spectacles. I mean when you wrote the book of Mormon,

containing the fulness of the gospel to the world, and the covenant to gather Israel, for the last time, as well as the history of the Indians, who, till then, had neither origin among men, nor records amid the light and knowledge of the great 19th century.

Fresh comes a story into my mind, that, in 1823, before the book of Mormon was known among us, a sacred record, or, as I had it, another bible, written or engraved upon thin gold leaves, containing more plainness than the one we had, but agreeing with it, had been found near Canandaigua, N. Y. The characters in which it was written, were of a language once used upon the eastern continent, but obsolete and unknown then. I was somewhat surprised at the remarkable discovery, or news, though I never knew to this day, how I came by it. Like Paul, who did not know whether he was in the body, or out of it, at a certain time, I cannot tell whether I dreamed; or whether some person told me; or whether an angel whispered such *strange tidings*. I mentioned it a few times, but was rather laughed at, and so I said adieu to Canandaigua, when the book of Mormon was published.

At that day, or, in fact, I always believed the scriptures, and believed that there was such a sacred thing as *pure religion*; but I never believed that any of the sects of the day, *had it*, and so I was ever ready to argue up, or down, any church; and that, too, by evidence from the good old book, an intimacy with which I had formed in infancy and cherished in age. When the story related above, first found a resting place in my tabernacle, I rejoiced that there was something coming to *point the right way to heaven*. So it was, and, thank God, so it is.

In the history you are writing, you cannot be too plain and minute in particulars. There is majesty from man to Messiah; from the angels to the Almighty, and from the *sublimity* to sublimity. Out of small things, and the mind, a shadow of greatness on earth, or a glimpse of glory from heaven, when a volume of nonsense may be forgotten