

John and others appeared to Joseph Smith.

In speaking with the Prophet Joseph once on this subject, he traced it from the first down to the last, until he got to the Ancient of Days. He wished me to write something for him on this subject, but I found it a very difficult thing to do. He had to correct me several times. We are told that the "judgment shall sit and the books be opened." He spoke of the various dispensations and of those holding the keys thereof, and said there would then be a general giving up or accounting for. I wrote that each one holding the keys of the several dispensations would deliver them up to his predecessor, from one to another, until the whole kingdom should be delivered up to the Father, and then God would be "all in all." Said he, "That is not right." I wrote it again, and again he said it was not right. It is very difficult to find language suitable to convey the meaning of spiritual things. The idea was that they should deliver up or give an account of their administrations, in their several dispensations, but that they would all retain their several positions and Priesthood. The Bible and Doctrine and Covenants speaks about certain books which should be opened; and another book would be opened, called the Book of Life, and out of the things written in these books would men be judged at the last day.

To continue. We find Satan getting great power. Enoch there appears, who is commissioned to go forth and preach the Gospel, as we are doing in this our age. He succeeded in converting people, and they gathered together and built up a city, and they were three hundred and sixty-five years in becoming fully established in the truth. By

the time we shall have had a little more experience we perhaps shall have become a little more prudent, realizing the position we occupy to the authority of the Priesthood and power of God, and our dependence upon Jehovah, realizing too our own failings and weaknesses, and learning to lean upon God and go forth as his servants in his holy fear, and developing within us those nobler attributes that exalt man to the presence and image of his Creator. This the Gospel will do for us if we will only let it. It will bring us into communication with God, and through it we shall know and understand him and his laws, and the principles of eternal truth.

What next? God had to destroy the world. People then were like the corrupt of our age; they are crumbling to pieces, and they will continue to decay, for the seeds of dissolution are rooted in them, and they in their present condition can no more be united than you can make a rope out of sand—the materials are not cohesive and this nation will go down. Not only our nation but other nations will crumble. Thrones will be cast down and empires will be no more. The whole earth will be shaken and men's hearts will fail them, in consequence of the things that are coming upon the earth. Why? Because of all their sins and iniquities, and further because they reject God in rejecting the Gospel of the Son of God, which is being preached among them, loving darkness rather than light.

Did God punish the people anciently who thus rejected him and his servants? Yes, he cut them off from the face of the earth, and planted another seed. Why? Because it was just and proper and right that he should do so. What, just to destroy a whole people?