

but to think that an angel came, shocks me, and it is more than I can believe. It is fanatical, and none but fanatics believe angels come to earth; there is deception in the idea."

Oh, foolish generation! How could the power of God be restored from heaven, how could the world be united again, how could men be brought into one fold, and how could these dissensions and divisions be healed and removed unless God exerted his power? When the Lord does exercise power it is in his own way. If he chooses to send an angel, he will do so, and will not ask you or me whether we will accept and are suited with it or not. He sent an angel on this occasion to restore to earth the authority to baptize for the remission of sins, and that messenger laid his hands on the heads of Joseph and Oliver and gave them that authority, and they commenced to baptize.

But there was the authority to baptize with the Holy Ghost, or laying on of the hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost, yet remaining to be restored. All of you who are familiar with the experience of Philip who baptized the eunuch, and who went to Samaria and preached the Gospel, know that we have no account of him laying on hands for the Holy Ghost. When the Apostles at Jerusalem heard that the Samaritans had been baptized by Philip, they sent two of their number to lay on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost. These two had authority to baptize, and they also had authority to lay on hands; and when they came to Samaria they laid hands on the baptized believers, and they received the Holy Ghost, and they spake with tongues and prophesied. Philip had the same authority as John had—namely, the authority to baptize; but it appears from the record that he had not authority to lay on hands.

This was the position of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery after having been ordained to this priesthood. They had authority to baptize, but there was something still lacking. They were men who would not run before they were sent; they would not claim authority that had not been bestowed upon them. They waited the good pleasure of the Lord and he sent to them Peter, James and John. You recollect that Jesus, on one occasion, asked Peter whom men said he, the Son of Man, was. They said some said one thing and some another. Then said Jesus to them, "But whom say ye that I am?" and Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." That is, he had not received that knowledge from man, but from God; and said Jesus, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." What rock? "Oh," says the Catholic, "upon Peter, he was a rock, and the Church was built upon him." "No," say the Protestants, "not upon Peter, but upon Jesus." "Now," says Jesus, "upon this rock." What rock? The rock of revelation—the principle upon which he was talking. He had spoken to Peter and told him that flesh and blood had not imparted to him certain knowledge which he possessed, but "my Father which is in heaven; and upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." They never can prevail against a Church built on the rock of revelation. "Upon this rock will I build my church; and I will give unto thee, Peter, the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."