

Jesus. He had great knowledge before he was born into this world—sufficient to create the heavens and the earth, hence we read in the Hebrews that God, by his Son, made the worlds. This was before Jesus came here, and he must then have been the possessor of great knowledge to have been able to do that; but when he took upon himself flesh and bones did he forget this knowledge? We read in the Scriptures, speaking of Jesus coming here and taking a body of flesh and bones, that "In his humiliation his judgment was taken away." What humiliation? His descending from the presence of God his Father and descending below all things, his judgment was taken away, that is, his remembrance of things that were past, and that knowledge which, while in the presence of his Father, enabled him to make worlds, and he had to begin at the first principles of knowledge, just the same as all his brethren who came here in the flesh. We read that Jesus, as he grew in stature, grew also in wisdom and knowledge. If he had possessed all wisdom, and had not forgotten that which he formerly possessed, how was it that he could increase in wisdom as he increased in stature? It shows clearly that the wisdom which he had possessed thousands of years before, had for a wise purpose been taken from him. "His judgment was taken away," and he was left, as it were, in the very depth of humility, beginning at the very first principles of knowledge and growing up from grace to grace, as the Scriptures say, from one degree to another, until he received a fullness from his Father. Then when he did regain all his previous knowledge and wisdom, he had the fullness of the Father within him, in other words, "in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."

Now if his knowledge was forgotten, and his judgment taken away, why not ours? We find this to be the case. What person among all the human family can comprehend what took place in his first existence? No one, it is blotted from the memory, and I think there is great wisdom manifested in withholding the knowledge of our previous existence. Why? Because we could not, if we had all our pre-existent knowledge accompanying us into this world, show to our Father in the heavens and to the heavenly host that we would be in all things obedient; in other words, we could not be tried as the Lord designs to try us here in this state of existence, to qualify us for a higher state hereafter. In order to try the children of men, there must be a degree of knowledge withheld from them, for it would be no temptation to them if they could understand from the beginning the consequences of their acts, and the nature and results of this and that temptation. But in order that we may prove ourselves before the heavens obedient and faithful in all things, we have to begin at the very first principles of knowledge, and be tried from knowledge to knowledge, and from grace to grace, until, like our elder brother, we finally overcome and triumph over all our imperfections, and receive with him the same glory that he inherits, which glory he had before the world was.

This is the way that we as a people look upon our previous existence. There is something truly cheering in contemplating the previous existence of man, much more so than in the old idea of the sectarian world—that God is constantly creating, that he did not finish his work some five or six thousand years ago, but that he is creating all the time. They will tell you that they have spirits in