

EVIDENCES, RELATING TO THE DIVINE AUTHENTICITY OF THE BIBLE AND BOOK OF MORMON, COMPARED.

DISCOURSE BY ELDER ORSON PRATT, DELIVERED IN THE NEW TABERNACLE, SALT LAKE CITY, SUNDAY AFTERNOON, SEPT. 28, 1873.

REPORTED BY DAVID W. EVANS.

It is written somewhere in this book—the Bible—that "In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established." These words were recorded in the law of Moses, and referred to by our Savior, but in what part of the Evangelists they are recorded I do not remember. They occurred to my mind just as I rose to my feet. It seems to have been the method in which God has dealt with the children of men, ever since they have had an existence on the earth, to reveal certain principles, and to confirm them by as many witnesses as seemed proper to him.

Our Father, the Creator of this earth, has power, if he saw proper to do so, to give a vast amount of evidence to the children of men, concerning the divinity of a message which he might at any time offer to them. It would be a very easy matter, if he saw proper to do so, to inscribe, in the very heavens, in letters of light, testimony and evidence which would be so conspicuous, and powerful, and plain, and easy to be understood, that all the nations, languages, kindreds and tongues upon our globe would know the truth at once, and have no misgivings about the matter. But the Lord has not seen proper thus to deal with the hu-

man family. He seems to require, in the first place, faith on good, sound, substantial evidence, instead of imparting knowledge at once.

There is a great difference between faith and knowledge. I am told that there is such a country as China on the eastern borders of Asia; but I never have been there; I never have seen that country; I cannot say, most positively, that such a country exists, only on the testimony of others I am informed that such is the case. I believe that testimony, but it is not a perfect knowledge to my own mind, obtained by my own experience. And so in regard to ten thousand other facts or events. We are in many, indeed in almost all, instances required to believe without a knowledge. The judge who sits in a court of justice to decide upon the liberties and lives of his fellow beings, does not decide from a knowledge; but from the testimony and evidence presented before him he pronounces sentence of imprisonment or death, because the evidence is sufficient to bear him out in passing such a sentence.

A person cannot be a witness to that which he merely believes. God requires mankind, or certain individuals among mankind, to be wit-