

who administered its ordinances must have authority from God, or their administrations were illegal. These Baptists had to be rebaptized: there was no other way to get into this Church. There is not a person now in full fellowship with this people, but what has come in by baptism, whether he formerly belonged to the Baptist or any other Church. Indeed it would be impossible for a Church to be reorganized upon the earth, unless God had bestowed the authority upon men to act in his name, that is, had spoken from on high and called them by revelation.

I will come still closer. Here is the Book of Mormon. When Joseph Smith obtained the plates from which this book was translated, when he came to the history of how baptism was administered among the Israelites of ancient America, and learned that it was by immersion, he felt very anxious to be baptized, not having been baptized in any Church in existence, and not understanding fully about this matter, he and a young man, who was acting as his scribe, went out and called upon the Lord, desiring to know what they should do in relation to their baptism. They read that those who dwelt on this Continent eighteen hundred years ago were baptized by immersion and that the ordinance had to be administered by men holding the authority to do so from God. In answer to their prayers, the Lord sent an angel to them on the 15th day of May, 1829, nearly a year before the Church was organized, and this angel laid his hands upon the heads of these two individuals, and ordained them to the holy Priesthood, that is, the Priesthood which John the Baptist held, which had the right to baptize, but not to confirm by the laying on of hands; and when he had ordained them he commanded

them to baptize each other, and they did so. Here then was a commencement of the restoration of authority to the earth. Prior to that time, for hundreds and hundreds of years, no man had authority to baptize, from the very fact that they all denied new revelation, and hence none of them could have been called as Aaron was.

After Joseph and his scribe had been baptized for the remission of their sins, they sought after authority in order that they might have hands laid upon them for the Holy Ghost. The lesser Priesthood could not do this, the Priesthood that John the Baptist held was not authorized to lay on hands; he could only baptize believers in water. But John, when upon the earth, said there was one coming after him mightier than he, who held a greater Priesthood and authority than he—the Priesthood and authority of Melchizedek—and he would bestow upon them the higher baptism—the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery sought after this higher authority, and the Lord gave it to them, before the rise of this Church, sending to them Peter, James and John. What for? To bestow upon them the Apostleship. Now, who would be likely to have better authority than Peter, James and John, the three foremost of the ancient Apostles when they died? When Peter was crucified with his head downwards, and James was martyred, their Priesthood was not taken from them; their Priesthood remained with them after their bodies were laid in the tomb, and they will hold it until their bodies are resurrected; and when they reign on the earth, they will reign as kings and priests; and, as we read in the New Testament, these twelve Apostles will eat and drink at the table, and in the