

the New Testament we read that God is the Father of all our spirits, that we were begotten sons and daughters unto God. The vision given in 1832 to our Prophet, Joseph Smith, shows this matter more clearly. Besides showing the vast number of worlds that the Lord had created, the voice of the Lord, in that vision, declares that all the inhabitants of all those worlds were begotten sons and daughters unto God. The Book of "Mormon" bears testimony to the same great doctrine. You who are familiar with that book will recollect reading in the book of Ether how that the brother of Jared fell to the earth with fear when he saw the finger of the Lord, after the veil fell from his natural eyes. And the Lord spoke to him, saying, "Why hast thou fallen?" Then the brother of Jared answered, "I saw the finger of the Lord, and I knew not that the Lord had flesh and bones." It did resemble flesh and bone, but he, doubtless, thought it was so in reality, whereas it was the body of his Spirit. Then said the Lord, "I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people; I am Jesus Christ; I am the Father and the Son, and the body which thou now beholdest is the body of my spirit. Seest thou not that thou art created after the body of my spirit, and all men," says Jesus to the brother of Jared, "have I created in the beginning after the image of the body of my spirit." This, I believe, is the only passage in the Book of "Mormon" that directly teaches the pre-existence of man.

Well, that body—the body of the Lord—that the brother of Jared saw, was a personal body. It had fingers, a face, eyes, arms, hands, and all the various parts which the human body has, so much so that

he thought, it was really flesh and bones, until he was corrected and found that it was the spirit of Jesus, that same spirit, says Jesus, which, in the meridian of time, should come and take a body, and die for the sins of the world. These beings, who, in the beginning, were created after the image of the spirit of Jesus, had a probation; they had law; they had intelligence. It was called their first estate. They were agents there just as much as you and I are here. They could obey the law that was given to them, or they could disobey that law. I have already alluded to a third part of the great family, who did not keep their first estate. What became of them? They were thrust down, and thus came the devil and his angels. Jude says they were reserved in chains of darkness, until the judgment at the great day. That was their doom; their transgressions were so great—sinning against God the Father, whom they could behold, and against the person of his Son, whom they could also see—disobeying the most sacred of all laws—seeking to dethrone the Almighty, and to take the power from that Being who had begotten them, into their own hands. For this they were thrust down, and were called Perdition, and the heavens wept over them. I do not know how faithful the remainder of the spirits were; that is not for me to say. I do not know whether they transgressed any of the laws of God, or not in their first estate. If they did, one thing I do know, and that is, that they understand about Jesus and his atonement; for he was as a Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world, and inasmuch as he suffered in spirit as well as in body, I do not know but his sufferings in spirit would redeem them in their first estate as well as us who sin here