

than ours. We had a long experience, I suppose, in that world; at least, we know from that which our Father has revealed to us, that we were born there; that this intelligent being that has power to discern, power to reflect, power to reason—that this intelligent being was born in that previous estate.

These were some of the first revelations given in this last dispensation. The Lord did not wait several years, before he revealed unto us, in some measure, concerning our condition before we came here. Hence, it was away back in the year 1830, that this doctrine of the pre-existence of man was revealed, in greater fullness, than it was given in the Book of Mormon. There are two or three places in the Book of Mormon that reveal the pre-existence of man; but not in such great plainness, as was given soon after the publication of that Book, through the Prophet Joseph Smith, before the Saints began to gather, informing us that we were in reality the children of our Father and God; that we had a pre-existence in which we had learned many very important principles, connected with spiritual existence, before taking bodies of flesh and bones, which was also necessary to afford us a still greater experience. Now, in this plan that God has devised for the advancement of these intelligent beings—by passing them through various stages of existence, under different circumstances, and in different conditions—he gives them experience that they never could have gained, had they remained in the presence of the Father, in that world which was celestial; in other words, we were his offspring in that world, our spiritual bodies not having flesh and bones, but being in the image of the Father and Son—his own sons and daughters. He

had a great desire that we should be educated and taught. He could teach us a great many things in that world as we teach our children; he could impart to us a great many things—for there were as many truths in existence in that day as are in existence now; but truths were taught to us, as we were capable of understanding them. The Lord felt anxious that we might come up and eventually be made like him, as it is written in the New Testament, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." I have no doubt before we came into this world, we had a great anxiety, that we might be brought up in the same way he was instructed and taught, and led along, passing through different conditions of existence, that we finally might be counted worthy to be exalted at his right hand, and receive the fullness of his celestial glory the same that he is in possession of and that we might have all his attributes, dwelling within us, as separate individuals and personages, that he might exalt us like unto himself. Now, there is a great deal to be comprehended, when we are told that we are children who will become like our Father; that we were like him in our first stage and condition of existence. We were there, as it were, children without a fullness of knowledge; many experiences had not yet been given to us; but we were like him in our general outline—the outline of our persons; our general form was like him, "after his image" etc. It is thus written in the Book of Mormon, in that great vision to the brother of Jared, in which the Lord condescended to take the veil off his eyes. The brother of Jared had gone up into the mountain, and had moulden out of a rock sixteen small stones,