

**THE CHURCH OF CHRIST ORGANIZED ANCIENTLY ON
THIS CONTINENT—PROPHECY FULFILLED AND
FULFILLING—PREPARATORY WORK FOR THE
GATHERING OF ALL ISRAEL COMMENCED—PRESENT
CONDITION OF THE NATIONS
FORETOLD—EXHORTATION TO RIGHTEOUSNESS AND
THE AVOIDANCE OF HYPOCRISY AND IDOLATRY.**

DISCOURSE BY ELDER JOHN NICHOLSON, DELIVERED IN THE SALT LAKE ASSEMBLY
HALL, SUNDAY AFTERNOON, FEBRUARY 6, 1881.

REPORTED BY JOHN IRVINE.

Having been called from the midst of the congregation to address this assemblage this afternoon, I feel my inability personally to do justice in the performance of this duty, unless I am aided by the spirit of the living God. I earnestly solicit that you will exercise faith for me while I shall occupy this position, that I may be able to speak through the influence of that power, and truthfully present the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which the Latter-day Saints have embraced in their faith and practice, so far as they understand them.

There are a great many subjects connected with the plan of redemption that are of interest to all who are seeking for salvation in the kingdom of God. The field is so wide, in fact, that there is sometimes great difficulty in selecting the class of matter best suited to the circumstances that immediately surround us. There is, however, one phase of this work that I think is specially interesting in connection with it.

I hold in my hand a volume which is known for good or evil throughout the entire civilized world—the Book of Mormon. The Latter-day Saints claim that this book is a record of peoples that dwelt anciently on the face of this continent, and that it was brought forth in this generation, through the instrumentality of a great Prophet, namely: Joseph Smith. This book has not been generally received in this light; in other words, it has been, so far as the great bulk of the world is concerned, repudiated as not properly authenticated, not what it claims to be. In my travels in the world, however, I have found very few people who could give an intelligent reason for the repudiative stand they have taken in reference to this record. I have asked a great many of them—and I presume that numbers of the Elders besides myself have done the same thing—whether they had perused this book and endeavored to make themselves acquainted with its contents, and also to make