

pared with the riches of eternal salvation, the blessings of the everlasting Gospel, the new covenant which we have embraced, the great work which the Lord our God is performing by his mighty hand in the age in which you and I live. I trust and verily believe that that which has had so conspicuous a place in my understanding, in my thoughts, in my meditations, in my mind, will continue to hold the same position with me so long as the Lord shall permit me to tarry here in this probation. Fifty-one years ago tomorrow, as I have said, I entered this Church, the Church then being confined to a small district of country in the State of New York. The knowledge of the Gospel, and the doctrines which we have taught, had not spread forth except within a very small limit of country. What a contrast between then and the present! Tomorrow—if I live till tomorrow—I shall be 70 years of age, which is said to be the average old age of man. They are the years appointed to man. So says one of the inspired writers, and if man, peradventure, should reach a few years beyond three score and ten, it is said that it is filled up with afflictions and sorrow and infirmities of old age. I trust, however, that if I am permitted to tarry still longer than this appointed time, or rather this period of time, I trust that my days may not be those of suffering. At any rate, so far as my mind is concerned, my understanding, that is at rest, that is at peace. I know what my hopes are. I know the plan of salvation. I have had the communications of the spirit of the Lord God, to teach me more or less all the days of my life, and this has given me great consolation. Hence, if I live past seventy, I do not expect to have sorrow of mind. I

may have afflictions; I may encounter them; I may not to any great extent.

I wish to call your attention for a few moments to a subject closely connected with those days that I have been speaking of—the rise of the Church. It will be next Thursday night, 54 years since the Prophet Joseph Smith, then but a lad, was permitted by the angel of the Lord to take the gold plates of the Book of Mormon from the hill Cumorah, as it was called in ancient times, located in the State of New York. This I consider one of the most marvelous occurrences which has taken place for the past eighteen centuries—to be permitted to observe the face of an holy angel, and then be permitted, in addition to that, to take out of the ground, in fulfillment of ancient prophecy, a record of one-half of our globe, giving a history of the peoples and nations that occupied this great western hemisphere—more marvelous than anything that has transpired during that long period. What makes it still more marvelous is, that it is connected with revelation, with something that comes from heaven, with divine authority. God permitted this record to be taken from its place of ancient deposit. He it was that sent the angel to deliver those records into the hands of this boy. It was God. And what object did the Lord have in performing this marvelous thing? It was to establish on this earth that kingdom predicted by the ancient Prophet Daniel, that should be set up in the last days, which should stand forever, and should finally become a great mountain and fill the whole earth. What could be of more importance? Such an event was predicted to happen, that such a kingdom should arise, that God should be the autho-