From Joseph Smith

The Wentworth Letter (1842)

On the evening on the 21st of September, A.D. 1823, while I was praying unto God, and endeavoring to exercise faith in the precious promises of Scripture, on a sudden a light like that of day, only of a far purer and more glorious appearance and brightness, burst into the room indeed the first sight was as though the house was filled with consuming fire; the appearance produced a shock that affected the whole body; in a moment a personage stood before me surrounded with a glory yet greater than that with which I was already surrounded. This messenger proclaimed himself to be an angel of God, sent to bring the joyful tidings that the covenant which God made with ancient Israel was at hand to be fulfilled, that the preparatory work for the second coming of the Messiah was speedily to commence; that the time was at hand for the Gospel in all its fullness to be preached in power, unto all nations that a people might be prepared for the Millennial reign. I was informed that I was chosen to be an instrument in the hands of God to bring about some of His purposes in this glorious dispensation." (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith [2007], 439)

Joseph Smith–History (1838)

36 After telling me these things, he commenced quoting the prophecies of the Old Testament. He first quoted part of the third chapter of Malachi; and he quoted also the fourth or last chapter of the same prophecy, though with a little variation from the way it reads in our Bibles. Instead of quoting the first verse as it reads in our books, he quoted it thus:

37 For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall burn as stubble; for they that come shall burn them, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them
neither root nor branch.

38 And again, he quoted the fifth verse thus: Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

[Original Malachi 4:5– Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:]

39 He also quoted the next verse differently: And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers. If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming.

[Original Malachi 4:6–And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.]

From Oliver Cowdery

Letter IV

Moroni: “This cannot be brought about until first certain preparatory things are accomplished, for so has the Lord purposed in his own mind. He has therefore chosen you as an instrument in his hand to bring to light that which shall perform his act, his strange act, and bring to pass a marvelous work and a wonder. Wherever the sound shall go it shall cause the ears of men to tingle, and wherever it shall be proclaimed, the pure in heart shall rejoice, while those who draw near to God with their mouths, and honor him with their lips, while their hearts are far from him, will seek its overthrow, and the destruction of those by whose hands it is carried. Therefore, marvel not if your name is made a derision, and had as a by-word among such, if you are the instrument in bringing it, by the gift of God, to the knowledge of the people.”

He then proceeded and gave a general account of the promises made to the fathers . . . . (Messenger and Advocate, Vol. 1, No. 5, February, 1835, p. 79)
Letter V

The great plan of redemption being prepared before the fall of man, and the salvation of the human family being as precious in the sight of the Lord at one time as at another, before the Messiah came in the flesh and was crucified, as after the gospel was preached, and many were found obedient to the same. **This gospel being the same from the beginning, its ordinances were also unchangeable.** Men were commanded to repent and be baptized by water in the name of the Lord: and were then blessed with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit being thus given; men were enabled to look forward to the time of the coming of the Son of Man, and to rejoice in that day, because through that sacrifice they looked for a remission of their sins, and for their redemption.

Had it not been for this plan of salvation, which God devised before the fall, **man must have remained miserable forever**, after transgressing the first commandment, because in consequence of that transgression he had rendered himself unworthy the presence of his Maker. **He being therefore cast out, the gospel was preached, and this hope of eternal life was set before Him, by the ministering of angels who delivered it as they were commanded.**

Not only did the ancients look forward to the time of the coming of the Messiah in the flesh, with delight, but there was another day for which they sought and for which they prayed. Knowing, as they did, that the fall had brought upon them death, and that man was sensual and evil, the longed for a day when the earth might again rest, and appear as in the beginning when evil might be unknown upon its face, and all creation enjoy one undisturbed peace for a thousand years.

**This being sought for in faith, it pleased the Lord to covenant with them to roll on his purposes until he should bring it to pass—and though many generations were to be gathered to their fathers, yet the righteous, those who should, in their lives, embrace the gospel, and live obedient to its requirements, rise and inherit it during this reign of peace.**

From time to time the faithful servants of the Lord have endeavored to raise up a people who should be found worthy to inherit this rest, (for
it was called the rest of the righteous or the day of the Lord’s rest, prepared for the righteous;) but were not able to sanctify them that they could endure the presence of the Lord, excepting Enoch, who, with his people, for their righteousness, were taken into heaven, with a promise that they should yet see that day when the whole earth should be covered with glory.

Moses labored diligently to effect this object, but in consequence of the transgressions and rebellions of the children of Israel, God swore in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest; and in consequence of this decree, and their transgressions since, they have been scattered to the four winds, and are thus to remain till the Lord gathers them in by his own power.

To a remnant of them the gospel was preached by the Messiah in person, but they rejected his voice, though it was raised daily among them. The apostles continued to hold forth the same; after the crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord Jesus until they would bear it no longer; and then they were commanded to turn to the Gentiles.

They however labored faithfully to turn that people from error; that they might be the happy partakers of mercy, and save themselves from the impending storm that hung over them. They were commanded to preach Jesus Christ night and day to preach through him the resurrection from the dead—to declare that all who would embrace the gospel, repent, and be baptized for the remission of their sins, should be saved—to declare that this was the only sure foundation on which they could build and be safe—that God had again visited his people in consequence of his covenant with their fathers, and that if they would they might be the first who should receive these glad things, and have the unspeakable joy of carrying the same to all people; for before the day of rest comes, it must go to all nations, kindreds and tongues.

But in consequence of their rejecting the gospel, the Lord suffered them to be again scattered; their land to be wasted and their beautiful city to be trodden down of the Gentiles, until their time should be fulfilled.

In the last days, to fulfill the promises to the ancient prophets, when the Lord is to pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, he has determined to bring to light his gospel, to the Gentiles, that it may go to the house of Israel. This
gospel has been perverted and men have wandered in darkness. That commission given to the apostles at Jerusalem, so easy to be understood, has been hid from the world, because of evil, and the honest have been lead by the designing, till there are none to be found who are practicing the ordinances of the gospel, as they were ancienly delivered.

But the time has now arrived, in which, according to his covenants, the Lord will manifest to the faithful that he is the same today and forever, and that the cup of suffering of his people, the house of Israel, is nearly fulfilled; and that the way may be prepared before their face he will bring to the knowledge of the people the gospel as it was preached by his servants on this land, and manifest to the obedient the truth of the same, by the power of the Holy Spirit; for the time is near when his sons and daughters will prophesy, old men dream dreams, and young men see visions, and those who are thus favored will be such as embrace the gospel as it was delivered in old times; and they shall be blessed with signs following. (Messenger and Advocate, vol. 1 (October 1834-September 1835), Vol. 1 March, 1835 No. 6, p. 96)