

Part 2

Joseph Smith and the Recovery of Past Worlds

Almost beyond measure, Joseph Smith was spiritually and intellectually occupied with the past. He worked insatiably from 1828 to 1835 on his translations of the Book of Mormon, the Book of Moses, the Old and New Testaments, and the Book of Abraham. He drew great knowledge and strength from the revelations received by past prophets and patriarchs, and he sought to see as they had seen and to know as they had known. In considering Joseph Smith's recovery of past worlds, the following chapters address several questions. What are modern scholars to make of Joseph Smith's efforts to recover past worlds? In what ways were ideas, figures, and practices from the past important to him? What was his intention in bringing to pass the restoration of all things? Joseph Smith's encounters with the past not only permeated his teachings about past worlds but also informed such matters as his current understandings of faith, priesthood, church organization, temple worship, and the family.