

he heard one of these personages say, pointing to the other, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him." This occurred before this young man was fifteen years of age; and it was a startling announcement to make in the midst of a generation so completely given up to the traditions of their fathers; and when this was proclaimed by this young, unlettered boy to the priests and the religious societies in the State of New York, they laughed him to scorn. "What!" said they, "visions and revelations in our day! God speaking to men in our day!" They looked upon him as deluded; they pointed the finger of scorn at him and warned their congregations against him. "The canon of Scripture is closed up; no more communications are to be expected from Heaven. The ancients saw heavenly visions and personages; they heard the voice of the Lord; they were inspired by the Holy Ghost to receive revelations, but behold no such thing is to be given to man in our day, neither has there been for many generations past." This was the style of the remarks made by religionists forty years ago.

This young man, some four years afterwards, was visited again by a holy angel. It was not merely something speaking in the dark; it was not something wrapped up in mystery, with no glory attending it, but a glorious angel whose countenance shone like a vivid flash of lightning, and who was arrayed in a white robe, and stood before him. This young man saw the countenance of the angel; he saw his person and his glory and rejoiced therein. This angel revealed to him some great realities; not mysterious or dark sayings, covered up without any particular information, light or knowledge, but certain realities were made manifest to him concerning the ancient inhabitants of

this land. This angel told him that they were a branch of the House of Israel; that they kept sacred and holy records; that those records were kept by prophets and inspired men; that they were deposited, some fourteen centuries ago, after the nation had fallen into wickedness, by one of their last prophets, and that the time was at hand for this record to be brought forth by the gift and power of God.

Here, then, was a reality—something great and glorious, and after having received from time to time, visits from these glorious personages, and talking with them, as one man would talk with another, face to face, beholding their glory, he was permitted to go and take these plates from the place of their deposit—plates of gold—records, some of which were made nearly six hundred years before Christ. And then, to show still further a reality, something tangible, the Urim and Thummim, a glorious instrument, used by ancient seers, was also obtained with the record, through which, by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost and by the commandment of Almighty God, he translated that record into our language, and the book was published in the fore part of the year 1830.

During the translation, before the book was published, when the prophet came towards the latter part of the record, he discovered that the ancient inhabitants of this continent were baptized in a certain way, by those having authority from Almighty God. He felt anxious to know how he, in connection with his scribe, Oliver Cowdery, might participate in the blessings of this holy ordinance. They very well knew, from what God had revealed to them, and from what they had understood by translating the main portion of the record, that there was no man in all Christendom