

the Prophets and the Seers, etc., should be covered; in other words, they would not have any Prophets or Seers. Every one will bear me witness that that was the case at the time these plates were brought forth. Where was there a people who received revelation? Where were their Prophets and Seers? Gone, covered, "And the vision of all has become to you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, 'Read this I pray you: and he saith, I cannot; for the book is sealed: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord says, Inasmuch as this people—the people to whom these words should be delivered—draw near to me with their mouths, and with their lips do honor me, but remove their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men. Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.'"

This prophecy was fulfilled in the transaction I have already related. The words of the book, Isaiah says, are to be delivered to the learned, not the book itself. I have had people rise up and say, "Why did not Joseph Smith send the plates to the learned?" Because that would have been a violation of this prophecy. The words of the book, not the book itself, were to be delivered to the learned, requesting him to read them—"Read this, I pray thee." But he says, "I cannot; for it is sealed." Martin Harris told him a portion of these plates were sealed and were not to be translated during the present

generation; but the portion that were unsealed were to be translated. He replied, "I cannot read a sealed book," thus fulfilling the words of Isaiah.

The book itself, we are informed in the next verse, is to be delivered to him that is not learned. Now in regard to Joseph Smith's qualifications or attainments in learning, they were very ordinary. He had received a little education in the common country schools in the vicinity in which he had lived. He could read a little, and could write, but it was in such an ordinary hand that he did not venture to act as his own scribe, but had to employ sometimes one and sometimes another to write as he translated. This unlearned man did not make the same reply that the learned man did. For when the book was delivered to this unlearned youth and he was requested to read it, he replied, "I am not learned." I suppose he felt his weakness when the Lord told him to read this book; for he thought it was a great work. But the Lord replied to Joseph in the very language of this prophecy—"Inasmuch as this people"—meaning the present generation—"draw near to me with their lips, etc., Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work, even a marvelous work and a wonder."

Now, did the unlearned man read the book? Some might suppose, if they were to read no further, that the book was not read at all. Let us read what is prophesied in the 18th verse: "And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book." Indeed! Then it seems that the book must have been read, or they could not have heard its words. "And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness." Does this mean those who are spiritually deaf, and those who are spiritually