

books, may object, and say that we have no right to call the Book of Mormon a bible, unless we can bring such evidence to substantiate its divinity as we can concerning the Jewish record. But supposing that we are in possession of similar evidences concerning this book in relation to ancient America, as you are in regard to the Bible, the history of the people of Palestine; supposing that we can bring forth as many evidences and substantial testimonies to prove the divinity of the Book of Mormon, as you can to prove the divinity of the Jewish record, then why should we not include it among the sacred books, and denominate it a bible, as well as call the Jewish record such? I will, this afternoon, by the assistance of the Spirit of God, endeavor to lay before you, Latter-day Saints, and strangers who may be present, some of the evidences that we have concerning the divinity of this book which we esteem so highly—the Book of Mormon.

In the first place, I will give you a very brief statement concerning the manner in which the Book of Mormon was found. In the year 1827, a young man, a farmer's boy, by the name of Joseph Smith, was visited by an holy angel, as he had been for several years prior to this time. But on this occasion, in the fall of 1827, he was permitted to take into his possession the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated—the angel gave them into his hands, permitted him to take them from the place of their deposit, which was discovered to Mr. Smith by the angel of God. With this book, called the Book of Mormon, was a very curious instrument, such a one, probably, as no person had seen for many generations; it was called by the angel of God, the Urim and Thummim. We know that such an

instrument existed in ancient times among the Jews, and among the Israelites in the wilderness, and that it was used to inquire of the Lord, and so sacred was that instrument in the days of Moses, that Aaron, the chief priest of the whole house of Israel, was commanded to place it within his breastplate, that when he should judge the tribes of the house of Israel, he should not judge by his own wisdom, but should inquire of the Lord by means of this instrument, and whatever decision the Lord, by aid of the Urim and Thummim, should give, all Israel should give heed to it. The same instrument was in use, many hundred years after the days of Aaron, by the Prophets of Israel. David inquired by means of an instrument of that kind, concerning his enemies, who pursued him from city to city, asking the Lord certain questions—whether his enemies would come to the city where he happened to be, and whether he would be delivered up to them by the people of that city; and the Lord gave him all necessary instruction, and by this means he was delivered out of the hands of his enemies from time to time.

But it seems that, before the coming of Christ, for some reason, probably through wickedness, the Urim and Thummim were taken away from the children of Israel, and a prophecy was uttered by one of the ancient Prophets, before Christ, that they should be many days without a Priest, without the Urim and Thummim, without the ephod, and without many things that God blessed them with in the days of their righteousness; but that in the latter days God would again restore all his blessings to the people of Israel, including their counselors and their judges as at the first.

With these plates that Joseph