

of being a Seer, a Revelator, a Prophet, an inspired man. Not only to receive revelation from God, but to interpret revelations given to other Prophets who lived in times before, bringing to light knowledge, and intelligence, and wisdom, and the dealings of God with the human family, among more ancient people. This gift is more fully explained in the Book of Mormon than in the Jewish record. We have in the Jewish record, the Bible, some information in relation to the instrument here called interpreter, but which is called in that record by another name, namely, Urim and Thummim.

It was a gift that was exercised in the days of Moses, among the house of Israel: it was a gift specially given to Aaron, the brother of Moses, who was appointed the chief priest over all the tribes of Israel. The Lord saw proper to give him instructions in relation to the duties of his office and calling, how he should be clad, what kind of priestly garments he should wear, what he should perform in administering certain ordinances and how he should perform them; and also gave unto him some instruction in regard to the breastplate, that was called the breastplate of judgment. The reason of this was that Aaron was appointed to be a judge among the children of Israel, occupying a similar place among that people that the President of the Bishopric occupies in the Church. But he was blessed above those who have been ordained to the same calling in this dispensation, for he was in possession of the Urim and Thummim, and by virtue of this instrument he could inquire of the Lord in relation to every case that should be brought before him for adjudication. The judgment of man is nat-

urally very weak and imperfect, and inasmuch as Aaron was required to judge the people of God, it was of the utmost importance that all his decisions should be given in righteousness, that there should be no imperfections connected with them, and for that reason the Lord gave express instructions to Aaron, through his brother Moses, to have a breastplate. In this breastplate were twelve stones, representing the Twelve Tribes of Israel, and in the center of these rows of stones the Urim and Thummim was placed, and when he was required to render judgment upon any matter, he inquired of the Lord through it, and was enabled to give decisions according to the word of the Lord.

We have other accounts given in the Bible concerning the exercise of this same gift. David was blessed with this gift, and when Saul was pursuing him from place to place, seeking his life, he would inquire of the Lord, by means of a similar instrument, and receive revelations. The nature of his inquiries was—Would Saul go to such a city seeking him? Would the people of such a city deliver him into his hands? And the Lord would answer him, and he of course would govern himself accordingly. This gift seems to have been of frequent occurrence among the Israelites in their several generations, down to a few centuries before the coming of Christ. Then it seems that Israel so far transgressed the law of heaven, and so far strayed from the Lord that the Urim and Thummim was taken from their midst, as you will find mentioned by one of the Prophets in the Jewish Bible; it was taken from them, and they were to abide many days without this instrument, also without a king and without sacrifices, and eventually the ordinances of God were to be taken from them. In