

does the Lord give us knowledge in our day by seeking unto him in prayer?" Why not? Did he not anciently, in every dispensation from the beginning down to the closing up of the first century of the Christian era, impart a knowledge concerning the truth? He did; and that same God that gave a knowledge to his people anciently, will give a knowledge to you, provided you will comply with his will. "But," you may say, "in order that we may put such a question to the Lord, we would like to have some testimony, sufficient at least to encourage us in making this inquiry." I do not know how much you want. So far as external evidence is concerned, he gave abundance of it before this Church arose. The Lord did not suffer the Book of Mormon to be sent forth to the nations to be published to all people, until he gave a testimony to certain individual witnesses. How many? Four persons at least—the translator of the book, Joseph Smith, and three other persons, Martin Harris, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer. They knew of a surety, and have given their testimony in the beginning of this record. Here, then, are four witnesses. What does Jesus say? "That in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established." He saw proper, however, to give four. "But," inquires one, "may not these four witnesses have been mistaken?" Let us examine into the nature of their testimony, to see if there is any possibility of their being mistaken. Joseph Smith, one of these witnesses, testifies that the angel came down from heaven, and that his countenance was like lightning, and the glory of God shone round about him. And the angel told him to go to a certain hill, not far from his father's house, in the town of Manchester, Ontario County,

in the State of New York, where he should find these ancient records—plates of gold, containing the everlasting Gospel, which was anciently preached among the inhabitants of this continent. He obeyed; he went and found the records in the very place which had been shown him in vision by the angel. Was there any possibility of Joseph's having been deceived? We say, No; the circumstances were such as to preclude the possibility of any such deception. The angel also told him that with these plates there was an instrument called the Urim and Thummim, which would enable him to translate the records into our language. Joseph accomplished the work of translation between the years 1827 and 1830, through the use of this instrument, which had been hidden up with the plates. Could he be deceived, when he got the plates before him, intently looking upon the peculiar characters engraved upon them, and also upon that most singular instrument, the Urim and Thummim? Every man of common sense, possessing the least degree of judgment, will at once say that it was not possible, under these circumstances, for him to be deceived; that the testimony given is true, and the message divine, or else he was a bold impostor, a man that came forth purposely to deceive the people.

Now in regard to the other three witnesses. They testify that in the year 1829, after the plates had been translated, that an angel of God appeared unto them, clothed in light and glory, and holding these plates in his hands, turned them over leaf after leaf, showing them the characters engraved thereon. And they also say that while they stood gazing upon this heavenly being, clothed in his glory, in the act of showing them these gold plates, they heard a voice out of the heavens proclaiming to