

colleges and theological institutions; indeed, he was a farmer's boy, unacquainted with the arguments, and the tenets, and the creeds, and the institutions of religion that existed around him, except what he had heard from time to time, in the neighborhood where his father resided; a young man not versed in the Scriptures any more than most of the common lads of that age. And we all know that there are but a very few among farmers that have the opportunity of informing their minds at so early a period—at the age of twenty-one—in regard to the doctrines and prophecies contained in the Scriptures.

You may, some of you, wonder, perhaps, why the Lord should select an instrument of this kind; why he did not take a person more qualified by education, more experienced in the doctrines taught among the human family, more conversant with the Bible. You perhaps, may think in your own mind that if you had had the selection of the individual to begin the work of the establishment of the kingdom of God on the earth in the last days, and you had followed the best wisdom you had on the subject, that you certainly would have selected a person well trained and skilled in the different doctrines of the day. But the Lord does not see as man sees, his thoughts are not like our thoughts, neither are his ways like our ways. Hence he chose a man unconnected with any of the religious societies of the day—untaught in the Scriptures and doctrines of the different religious denominations—he selected a man of his own choice, as he had frequently done in former ages of the world.

We all recollect the selection that the Lord made in relation to David, when he was called to be king of the House of Israel, and anointed for

that purpose. There were, I think, seven brethren older than David—men of fair appearance, men of experience—men that probably their neighbors, their acquaintances, would have selected either one of them in preference to the youth that was tending the sheep. But Samuel, being a prophet of the Lord, when these certain brethren came up before him, said: "The Lord hath not chosen him," and continued to say so until all the seven had passed by, and then the inquiry was made, "Is there not another?" "Why, yes, there is a boy; but he is keeping his father's sheep." "Send and fetch him," said the Prophet Samuel. He was brought in—he was goodly to look upon, but he was simply a youth, untrammelled with the traditions around him, but yet an honest-hearted boy. The Lord chose him, the anointing oil was poured upon his head, and he was appointed to be the future king of Israel.

Now, the Lord did not have any prophets in the year 1827 on all the face of the earth. There was no Samuel existing, no person who had the spirit of prophecy; consequently the Lord, instead of sending a Samuel, sent an angel to make the selection. This angel committed, as I have always said, the plates of the Book of Mormon, together with the Urim and Thummim, into the hands of this youth, and also gave him many instructions informing him that he must be very strict in keeping the commandments of God, and that he must do with these plates as he was counseled from time to time, not to shew them to everybody that might wish to see them, but was strictly forbidden, by the angel, to shew them unto any person until the Lord should give him commandment so to do. He translated these plates unlearned as he was. And now let me