

of the Son of God should be revealed to him. While he lay thus praying, all at once the chamber was lighted up; this light continued to grow brighter and brighter until he saw a glorious personage, and this personage revealed to him the condition of the world, the apostasy of the Christian nations, and the darkness that reigned; also revealed to him what the Lord intended to accomplish upon the face of the whole earth preparatory to his coming. He informed him that this continent had once been occupied by a religious people, who understood the law of Moses and the Gospel; that they kept sacred records among them, and wrote them upon plates of gold, which were deposited in a certain hill about three miles from his father's house. At the same time this angel was telling him about these plates, the vision of his mind was opened so that he could see the place of their deposit. After the angel had given many instructions he withdrew. Joseph Smith continued to pray; the angel came a second time, related the same things over again, and gave him the same view of the plates, and still further information concerning the work of the last days, and then withdrew a second time. He continued to pray; the angel came the third time, gave him some further knowledge and information, opening still further the prophecies concerning the grand events that must be fulfilled in the latter days. When the angel withdrew from him the third time, instead of going to sleep, he arose and it was daybreak. He had been conversing with this angel nearly the whole night.

He went out in the morning, as usual, with his father to labor in the field, and his father, observing that he looked pale, asked him if he was ill. He replied that he did not feel very well. His father advised him

to go to the house. He started to go home, and after going a certain distance from his father, and before he reached the house, the angel again appeared to him—this was in daylight—and told him to turn back and tell his father what he had seen. He did so; he was also commanded by the angel in this fourth vision that he should go to the place where these plates were deposited. After relating to his father what he had seen, his father declared that it was a heavenly vision, and told him to be faithful to what had been revealed to him. He, therefore, on the morning of the 22nd of September, 1823, repaired to, and saw the place where these plates were deposited, just as he had seen in the night vision. They were deposited in a stone box not far from the summit of the hill Cumorah. The crowning stone that covered the box was oval; by taking away the turf from its edges he succeeded, by the use of a lever, in raising it from the box. When he saw the plates, he also saw an instrument that was called by the ancient prophets a Urim and Thummim. While he was thus gazing upon the plates, the angel came again to him, and as he was about to put forth his hand to take them, forbade him, saying that he needed further experience; that they could not be entrusted with anyone only with those having an eye single to the glory of God; that they were sacred records, and that no person could have them for speculative purposes; and gave him certain commandments to keep, and told him to visit that place again one year from that time when he would again meet with him. He did so at the expiration of the year, and did so until four years had passed away; and on the morning of the 22nd of September, 1827, the angel permitted him to take the plates, and also the Urim and Thummim.