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AK-BINDING AND PAPER-BULING

GEORGE Q. CANNON,
BIGHAM YOUNG,
Editors and Publishers.

DISCOURSE
REACHED BY
DER ORSON PRATT

at the 12th Ward Meeting House,
on Sunday Afternoon,
Dec. 9th, 1877.

REPORTED BY GEORGE F. GIBBS
Since coming to this land I have
seen records of many valuable passages
contained in the Book of Mormon
commencing on page 161, which
will read.

"Now, as soon as Ammon had
told the record, the king inquired
of him to know if he could interpret
languages, and Ammon told
him that he could. And the king
said unto him, being grieved
at the afflictions of my people, I
need that you should take a journey
into the wilderness, that thereby they
might appear unto our brethren to deliver us out of bondage;
and they were lost in the wilderness
many days, yet they were
sullen, and found not the land of
Jeshemah, but returned to this land
and having traveled in a land
which was covered with water, they
drew a hand which was covered
with the bones of men, and of
beasts, &c., and was also covered
with ruins of buildings of every
kind; having discovered a land
which had been peopled with a
nation who were as numerous as
the stars of heaven; and for testimony
of that which they have said, they
have brought twenty-four plates, which
are filled with engravings, and they are
of gold. And, behold, also, they
have brought breast-plate, which
is large, and they are of brass,
and again, the hills thereof have per-
ished, and the blades thereof were
covered with rust; and there is no
land in the land that is able to in-
tercept the language, or the engrav-
ings that are upon the plates. There-
fore, as I am told, can you trans-
late them? And I say unto them
again, know that any one
can translate? For I am de-
sirous that these records should
be translated into our language; for,
perhaps, they will give us a knowl-
edge of the remnant of the house
of Israel, who have scattered
from whence these records came; or, per-
haps, they will give us a knowledge
of this very people who have been
destroyed; and I am desirous to
know the cause of their destruction."

"Now Ammon said unto him, I
am assuredly tell thee, O King, of
man that can translate the records;
but he will be with me, and I will
translate all records that are of
scriptural date; and it is a gift from
God. And the things are called in-
terpreters and no man can look in
them, except he be commanded, and he should look for that he ought
to, and he should speak what he
wishes to say. And I command you
to look in them, the same is called in-
terpretation. And when Ammon had
said this, he gave the king a gift
from God, which was a great
treasure, and he said unto the king,
Behold, this is a gift from God,
which is greater than any man can
have, except he should possess the
power of God, which no man can;
for a man may have great power
in his hands; but, O King, thou
knowest of things which have
been, and also of things which will
come, and by them shall all
things be revealed, or, rather, shall
all things be made manifest, and
things which shall come to light,
and things which are known
shall be made known to them; and
things which otherwise could not
be known. These God has provided
a man, through faith, right work
mighty miracles; therefore he
becomes of great benefit to
those who desire that he should
rule over them. Yes, they
are wild flocks which feed
from the shepherds, and scattereth,
and driveth them about, and devoureth
the beasts of the flocks."

The instructions that are im-
parted here, which I have just read,
are of importance to the children
of men. We are here taught about

a very great, and precious, and high
gift that cometh from God—the gift
of being a true revelator, a prophet,
and inspired man. Not only
to receive revelation from God, but
to interpret the revelations given to
other prophets who lived before
him, bringing to light knowledge
and intelligence, and wisdom, and
the dealings of God with the hu-
man family, among more ancient
people. This gift is more fully ex-
plained in the Book of Mormon
in the Jewish record. We have
in the Jewish record, the same
some information in relation to
the instrument called inter-
preter, but which is called in that
record by another name, namely,
Urim and Thummim.

It was a gift that was exercised
in the land of Jeshemah, among the
house of Israel; and it was given
to Jacob, 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 proceed—what kind of
service he should perform in admin-
istering certain ordinances, and how
he should perform them; and also
gave unto him some instruction in
regard to the breast-plate, that was
called the breast-plate of judgment.
The reason of this was, that Aaron
had been ordained to be a judge among
the children of Israel, and he was
similarly placed among that people
that the president of the bishopric
occupied in his church. But he
was blessed above those who have
been ordained to the same calling
that he did, inasmuch as he was in
possession of the Urim and Thum-
mim, and by virtue of this instru-
ment he could inquire of the Lord
in relation to every case that should
be brought before him for adjudication.
The judgment of man is
necessarily very weak and imperfect,
and incapable of being sufficient
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 special instructions
to Aaron, a high priest, to teach
him to have a Urim and Thum-
mim, to have a breast-plate. In this
breast-plate were twelve stones,
representing the Twelve Tribes of
Israel, and in the centre of these
stones was the Urim and Thum-
mim, and when he was bringing
them to the Lord, and the decree
was that if they or their de-
scendants should fall into wickedness
and become fully ripened in
iniquity that the Lord would ut-
terly destroy them, and bring forth
another people to possess the land
in their stead. Accordingly the
twelve stones mentioned their
overthrow, how they were destroyed
because of great wickedness, to ful-
fill a prophecy and decree which
was made when he was bringing
them to the Lord. And the decree
was that if they or their de-
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