

Joseph's Three Sacred Artifacts for Translation

The Prophet Joseph Smith stated, "On the west side of this hill not far from the top, under a stone of considerable size, lay the plates, deposited in a stone box." "Having removed the earth, I obtained a lever, which I got fixed under the edge of the stone, and with a little exertion raised it up. I looked in, and there indeed did I behold the plates, the Urim and Thummim, and the breastplate..." *Joseph Smith-History 1:51-52*

1- The Key

On the night of Sept 22, 1837, after Joseph returned from the Hill Cumorah (End of 4th year of Moroni's instructions), Lucy Mack Smith said, "I trembled so much with fear lest all might be lost again by some small failure in keeping the commandments, that I was under the necessity of leaving the room to conceal my feelings. Joseph saw this and followed me. "Mother," said he. "Do not be uneasy. All is right. See here," said he, "I have got the key."

I knew not what he meant, but took the article in my hands and, examining it with no covering but a silk handkerchief, found that **it consisted of two smooth three-cornered diamonds set in glass, and the glasses were set in silver bows connected with each other in much the same way that old-fashioned spectacles are made.** He took them again and left me but did not tell me anything of the record....

That of which I spoke, which Joseph termed a key, was indeed nothing more nor less than a Urim and Thummim by which the angel manifested those things to him that were shown him in vision; by which also he could at any time ascertain the approach of danger, either to himself or the record, and for this cause he kept these things constantly about his person." *History of Joseph Smith, by Lucy Mack Smith*

Joseph loved this "Key", as through it he could see all things as prophets of old have as well. "After breakfast [on the day he received the plates and the Urim and Thummim] Joseph [Smith] called me into the other room and he set his foot on the bed and leaned his head on his hand and says... "it is ten times better than I expected." Then he went on to tell the length and width and thickness of the plates, and said he, "they appear to be gold." **But he seemed to think more of the glasses or the Urim and Thummim than he did of the plates, for, says he, "I can see anything; they are marvelous."** *Joseph Knight's Recollection of Early Mormon History, BYU Studies, Vol. 17, No. 1; spelling modernized*

2- Breastplate

"After bringing home the plates, Joseph now commenced work with his father on the farm in order to be as near as possible the treasure that was committed to his care.

Soon after this, he came in from work one afternoon, and after remaining a short time, **he put on his greatcoat** and left the house. I was engaged at the time in an upper room in preparing some oilcloths for painting. When he returned, he requested me to come downstairs. I told him that I could not leave my work just then, yet upon his urgent request, I finally concluded to go down and see what he wanted, upon which **he handed me the breastplate spoken of in his history. It was wrapped in a thin muslin handkerchief, so thin that I could see the glistening metal and ascertain its proportions without any difficulty.**

It was concave on one side and convex on the other and extended from the neck downwards as far as the center of the stomach of a man of extraordinary size. It had four straps of the same material for the purpose of fastening it to the breast, two of which ran back to go over the shoulders, and the other two were designed to fasten to the hips. They were just the width of two of my fingers (for I measured them), and they had holes in the end of them to be convenient in fastening. The whole plate was worth at least five hundred dollars. After I had examined it, Joseph placed it in the chest with the Urim and Thummim." *History of Joseph Smith, by Lucy Mack Smith*

3- Gold Plates

"I have myself seen and handled the golden plates; they are about eight inches long, and six wide; some of them are sealed together and are not to be opened, and some of them are loose. They are all connected by a ring which passes through a hole at the end of each plate and are covered with letters beautifully engraved. **I have seen and felt also the Urim and Thummim.** They resemble two large bright diamonds set in a bow like a pair of spectacles. My son puts these over his eyes when he reads unknown languages, and they enable him to interpret them in English. **I have likewise carried in my hands the sacred breastplate.** It is composed of pure gold and **is made to fit the breast very exactly."**

Lucy Mack Smith (in Henry Caswall, *The City of the Mormons; or, Three Days at Nauvoo, in 1842, 2nd ed. revised and enlarged, London: J. G. F. & J. Rivington, 1843*)

Interpreters

Joseph's "Key" is certainly not a seer stone. It is the spectacles acting as a key to unlock the breastplate for a connected view of revealing "by the Gift and Power of God."

"And behold, these two stones will I give unto thee, and ye shall seal them up also with the things which ye shall write" *Ether 3:23*. We will call the Key with the Breastplate, "Interpreters" as Moroni first said, **"I have sealed up the interpreters, according to the commandment of th**Today, I spoke from my heart to the Saints in what is often referred to as the heartland of the United States. I shared with my brothers and sisters in Oklahoma and Kansas that their geographic location is a metaphor for how, and where, the Lord wants us to live—in the center of His covenant path and in the center of our temple covenants. He also wants us to understand the central core of His doctrine and message, which is why He has given us the gift of the Book of Mormon.

The Book of Mormon centers on Jesus Christ. It contains the very heart of His message. It was written for us, in our day, for our lives. As we study, ponder, and apply the principles taught within its pages, we will receive strength to center our lives in Jesus Christ and enjoy the joyful blessings that He promises us, now and forever.

e Lord" *Ether 4:5*.

As you read the Book of Mormon there is only one word that describes what to call the breastplate with the two stones in the rims of a bow." **INTERPRETERS**. Nowhere in the entire Book of Mormon will you hear the term Urim and Thummim or seer stone or single stone. It also mentions Interpreters once in the PGP in JSH 1:75* That means whenever we say the word **"Interpreters" we mean the breastplate with the spectacles as one unit.**

There are thousands of Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that believe the Interpreters are the instrument that Joseph Smith found with the gold plates buried in the hill of Cumorah. These Interpreters began their journey near hill Ramah in upstate New York as the Lord touched these two stones and asked the Brother of Jared to seal these stones up with the interpreters to come forth at a later date to be translated and as we know Joseph Smith was that person.

"Again, he told me, that when I got those plates of which he had spoken—for the time that they should be obtained was not yet fulfilled—I **should not show them to any person; neither the breastplate with the Urim and Thummim;** only to those to whom I should be commanded to show them; if I did I should be destroyed."(Joseph Smith History 1:35,42)

Prepared from the Beginning

"And now he translated them by the means of those two stones which were fastened into the two rims of a bow. **Now these things were prepared from the beginning, and were handed down from generation to generation, for the purpose of interpreting languages;** And they have been kept and preserved by the hand of the Lord, that he should discover to every creature who should possess the land the iniquities and abominations of his people; And whosoever has these things is called seer, after the manner of old times." Mosiah 28: 13-16



Conclusion

If the seer stone was used it would contradict all the scriptures, which we find that are the "true word of the Lord", and that is what I rely upon when understanding the proper method of translation. This is the **scripture** that sums up the "Proper Translation" in my opinion. **"He said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of**

the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fulness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants; Also, that there were two stones in silver bows—and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted “seers” in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book.” JSH 1:34-35. No Stone in a hat is mentioned! Joseph’s Three Sacred Artifacts for Translation by Rian Nelson