

## Comments on Doctrine & Covenants 5

This section deals with Martin Harris' standing with the Lord after the loss of the 116 pages of the translated manuscript. Harris had repented somewhat of events, but it is plain from the Lord's comments that he had not repented sufficiently (v. 24) and was still in a precarious position spiritually (v. 32).

Permitted to speculate on the historical context, it is safe to assume Harris' judgement was clouded by concerns over his commitment to financially support the publication of the Book of Mormon, as well as the ongoing conflict with his wife over related matters. From v. 23-26 it seems Harris wanted additional proof that the plates were real. Whether the pressure is from his wife or in himself is unknown.

1 Behold, I say unto you, that as my servant Martin Harris has desired a witness at my hand, that you, my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., have got the plates of which you have testified and borne record that you have received of me; 2 And now, behold, this shall you say unto him--he who spake unto you, said unto you: I, the Lord, am God, and have given these things unto you, my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and have commanded you that you should stand as a witness of these things; 3 And I have caused you that you should enter into a covenant with me, that you should not show them except to those persons to whom I commanded you; and you have no power over them except I grant it unto you. 4 And you have a gift to translate the plates; and this is the first gift that I bestowed upon you; and I have commanded that you should pretend to no other gift until my purpose is fulfilled in this; for I will grant unto you no other gift until it is finished.

v1-4 Message to Martin Harris, with v. 2-4 apparently containing material Smith is to communicate to Harris.

v4 "pretend to no other gift", "pretend" here is using an archaic meaning, no longer in use in modern English. It means, "to lay claim to", or "to aspire to as a suitor or candidate" following the Latin "praetendere" meaning "to stretch forth, put forward". Basically, the Lord is informing Smith that his calling now is to translate and no additional calling will be extended until the current one is fulfilled.

5 Verily, I say unto you, that woe shall come unto the inhabitants of the earth if they will not hearken unto my words; 6 For hereafter you shall be ordained and go forth and deliver my words unto the children of men. 7 Behold, if they will not

believe my words, they would not believe you, my servant Joseph, if it were possible that you should show them all these things which I have committed unto you. 8 Oh, this unbelieving and stiffnecked generation--mine anger is kindled against them. 9 Behold, verily I say unto you, I have reserved those things which I have entrusted unto you, my servant Joseph, for a wise purpose in me, and it shall be made known unto future generations; 10 But this generation shall have my word through you; 11 And in addition to your testimony, the testimony of three of my servants, whom I shall call and ordain, unto whom I will show these things, and they shall go forth with my words that are given through you. 12 Yea, they shall know of a surety that these things are true, for from heaven will I declare it unto them. 13 I will give them power that they may behold and view these things as they are; 14 And to none else will I grant this power, to receive this same testimony among this generation, in this the beginning of the rising up and the coming forth of my church out of the wilderness--clear as the moon, and fair as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. 15 And the testimony of three witnesses will I send forth of my word. 16 And behold, whosoever believeth on my words, them will I visit with the manifestation of my Spirit; and they shall be born of me, even of water and of the Spirit-- 17 And you must wait yet a little while, for ye are not yet ordained-- 18 And their testimony shall also go forth unto the condemnation of this generation if they harden their hearts against them; 19 For a desolating scourge shall go forth among the inhabitants of the earth, and shall continue to be poured out from time to time, if they repent not, until the earth is empty, and the inhabitants thereof are consumed away and utterly destroyed by the brightness of my coming. 20 Behold, I tell you these things, even as I also told the people of the destruction of Jerusalem; and my word shall be verified at this time as it hath hitherto been verified.

v5-20 Predictions of and warnings about Smith's upcoming callings after the translation of the record is finished. The Lord describes the upcoming mission of Smith as him being generally rejected (v. 5-8), but some accepting his message (v. 16).

v7 Smith is warned people who will not receive the Lord will not receive the testimony of the Lord's servant either, cp. Matt. 5:10-12, John 5:46-47, John 15:18-21, John 16:1-3.

The Lord also tells Smith that no matter what he shows the people they will not believe, cf. Mark 8:1-21, John 4:48, Acts 2:22. If people are not humble, then the signs will not convert them, just as the people who were following Jesus because of the signs he performed at the beginning of John 6 nearly all end up

abandoning him by the end of John 6. If the people are humble, then they don't need signs to convert them.

The Lord is probably subtly referring to Smith's desire to persuade people by releasing the 116 pages of text to Harris, cf. D&C 3:7.

v14 "clear as the moon, fair as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners", a quote from Song of Solomon 6:10 following the KJV. The Jewish Publication Society (JPS) version, a translation straight from Hebrew to English, renders it:

Who is she that shines through like the dawn,  
Beautiful as the moon,  
Radiant as the sun  
Awesome as bannered hosts?

The JPS indicates the Hebrew of the last line is obscure. The general intent of the present text is to describe the ecclesia as rising up and becoming fair maiden Zion, the bride of the Lord, as described in Isa. 52:1-2, Isa. 62:1-5, and see also JS-H 1:40 and Isa. 11:10.

v18 "their testimony", i.e., the testimony of the three witnesses referenced in v. 11-12.

v19 "desolating scourge", aside from those passages indicated in the footnotes, see also D&C 45:31. This verse presents more of a covenant malediction type curse poured out on the inhabitants of the earth when they deserve it (cf. Lev. 26, Deut. 28) as opposed to the final Day of the Lord. The Lord is saying that unless he afflicts the people of the earth, they will get so bad that they would all have to be destroyed at the Second Coming.

v20 For the account referred to by the Lord concerning his telling the people of the destruction of Jerusalem see Matt. 24, Luke 21. There, the material is presented as a set of signs and events to warn the faithful.

**21 And now I command you, my servant Joseph, to repent and walk more uprightly before me, and to yield to the persuasions of men no more; 22 And that you be firm in keeping the commandments wherewith I have commanded you; and if you do this, behold I grant unto you eternal life, even if you should be slain.**

v21-22 Personal message to Smith.

23 And now, again, I speak unto you, my servant Joseph, concerning the man that desires the witness-- 24 Behold, I say unto him, he exalts himself and does not humble himself sufficiently before me; but if he will bow down before me, and humble himself in mighty prayer and faith, in the sincerity of his heart, then will I grant unto him a view of the things which he desires to see. 25 And then he shall say unto the people of this generation: Behold, I have seen the things which the Lord hath shown unto Joseph Smith, Jun., and I know of a surety that they are true, for I have seen them, for they have been shown unto me by the power of God and not of man. 26 And I the Lord command him, my servant Martin Harris, that he shall say no more unto them concerning these things, except he shall say: I have seen them, and they have been shown unto me by the power of God; and these are the words which he shall say. 27 But if he deny this he will break the covenant which he has before covenanted with me, and behold, he is condemned. 28 And now, except he humble himself and acknowledge unto me the things that he has done which are wrong, and covenant with me that he will keep my commandments, and exercise faith in me, behold, I say unto him, he shall have no such views, for I will grant unto him no views of the things of which I have spoken.

v23-28 Personal message to Harris.

29 And if this be the case, I command you, my servant Joseph, that you shall say unto him, that he shall do no more, nor trouble me any more concerning this matter. 30 And if this be the case, behold, I say unto thee Joseph, when thou hast translated a few more pages thou shalt stop for a season, even until I command thee again; then thou mayest translate again. 31 And except thou do this, behold, thou shalt have no more gift, and I will take away the things which I have entrusted with thee. 32 And now, because I foresee the lying in wait to destroy thee, yea, I foresee that if my servant Martin Harris humbleth not himself and receive a witness from my hand, that he will fall into transgression; 33 And there are many that lie in wait to destroy thee from off the face of the earth; and for this cause, that thy days may be prolonged, I have given unto thee these commandments. 34 Yea, for this cause I have said: Stop, and stand still until I command thee, and I will provide means whereby thou mayest accomplish the thing which I have commanded thee. 35 And if thou art faithful in keeping my commandments, thou shalt be lifted up at the last day. Amen.

v29-35 More personal material to Smith on how to deal with Harris and some general admonitions as well.

v33 The Lord indicates the preceding warnings and admonitions are for Smith's protection against those that would destroy him.

The Lord uses many means at his disposal to protect His servants, from simple warnings to divine intervention.

## **Historical Material Pertaining to Doctrine & Covenants 5**

The first excerpt is a historical overview, and the second is a very brief comment by Smith indicating the revelation was given at Harris' request. The third is a lengthy excerpt from Lucy Mack Smith's History of the Prophet Joseph Smith by His Mother, detailing the difficulties Joseph faced from Lucy Harris in ch. 24-25, and Martin Harris' failure to keep the promises concerning the 116 pages in ch. 26.

The first publication of the text was in the Book of Commandments in 1833, then in the 1835 Kirtland edition of the Doctrine & Covenants.

The text has been emended over the early publications:

There are several reasons why Section 5 has had so many changes made in its text. One of the major ones is found in the Book of Commandments and Manuscript #1, wherein Joseph Smith and Martin Harris are referred to in the third person. In all other copies they are in the second person. A second major variation is the addition of verses six and seventeen, which tell of the proposed ordination of Martin Harris to the Priesthood. Also, verses eighteen, nineteen, and twenty-nine reflect major changes from the way they are found in the Book of Commandments and Manuscript #1. (Robert J. Woodford, *The Historical Development of the Doctrine & Covenants*, PhD Thesis, April 1974, Vol. 1, page 153)

The reference to Manuscript #1 above is referring to an undated handwritten text that was part of Newel K. Whitney's personal collection. A comparison of the texts of the 1833 and 1835 editions follows below.

### **Excerpt from The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith**

Shortly after the visit of the Prophet's parents in February 1829 (see section 4), Martin Harris came to Harmony, Pennsylvania, to see Joseph Smith. Apparently humbled and repentant for having lost the 116 pages of manuscript, yet desiring to ascertain if Joseph Smith was in possession of the gold plates, Martin Harris sought out the Prophet [footnote states: Harris's concern over the plates was undoubtedly connected with his previous, yet still binding, agreement to

assist in financing the printing of the Book of Mormon.]. The revelation instructed Joseph Smith to stop translating the Book of Mormon for a time. (Lyndon W. Cook, The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith, page 11)

**Excerpt from History of the Church**

The following I applied for and obtained, at the request of the aforementioned Martin Harris:

[text of D&C 5 follows]

(Joseph Smith, History of the Church, page 28)

**Excerpt from History of Joseph Smith, by his Mother**

With the view of commencing the work of translation and carrying it forward as speedily as circumstances would permit, Joseph came to me one afternoon and requested me to go to this Mr. Harris and inform him that he had got the plates and that he desired to see Mr. Harris concerning the matter. This, indeed, was an errand which I much disliked as Mr. Harris' wife was a very peculiar woman, one that was naturally of a very jealous disposition; besides this, she was rather dull of hearing and when anything was said that she did not hear distinctly she suspected that it was some secret which was designedly kept from her. So I told Joseph that I would rather not go, unless I could have the privilege of speaking to her first upon the subject. To this he consented and I went according to his request.

On arriving at Mr. Harris', I cautiously detailed the particulars with regard to Joseph's finding the plates, so far as wisdom dictated and necessity demanded in order to satisfy Mrs. Harris' curiosity. However, she did not wait for me to get through with my story before she commenced urging upon me a considerable amount of money that she had at her command. Her husband always allowed her to keep a private purse in order to satisfy her singular disposition, and it was this private money that she wished me to receive. She also had a sister living with her who desired me to receive an amount of money, I think some seventy-five dollars, to assist in getting the Record translated.

I told her that I came on no such business, that I did not want her money and that Joseph would attend to his own affairs; but, that I would like to talk to Mr. Harris a moment and then return home, as my family would soon be expecting me. Yet, notwithstanding all this, she was determined to assist in the business, for she said she knew that we should want money and

she could spare two hundred dollars as well as not.

After detaining me a few minutes she went with me to her husband and I told him that I wished to speak to him. He replied that he was not going to stop his work, for he was just laying the last brick in his hearth.

"You see," said he, "this is the last work I have to do on the house, and it is the last work I shall do about the house, or on the farm, in one year. And when this is done I am going to hire a hand to work a year for me, as I shall travel that length of time before I shall settle myself at home again."

After completing the work in which he was engaged, he left the house, but was absent only a short time. On returning, he came to me and said, "Now I am a free man--my hands are altogether untied--I can come and go and do as I please."

I related, in short, the errand on which I had come. He said that he would see Joseph in the course of a few days. At this his wife exclaimed, "Yes, and I am coming to see him, too, and I will be there on Tuesday afternoon, and will stop over night."

Accordingly, when Tuesday afternoon arrived, Mrs. Harris made her appearance and as soon as she was well seated she began to importune my son relative to the truth of what he had said concerning the Record, declaring that if he really had any plates, she would see them, and that she was determined to help him publish them.

He told her she was mistaken--that she could not see them, for he was not permitted to exhibit them to any one except those whom the Lord should appoint to testify of them. "And, in relation to assistance," he observed, "I always prefer dealing with men, rather than their wives."

This highly displeased Mrs. Harris, for she considered herself altogether superior to her husband and she continued her importunities. She would say, "Now, Joseph, are you not telling me a lie? Can you look full in my eye and say before God that you have in reality found a Record, as you pretend?"

To this Joseph replied, rather indifferently, "Why, yes, Mrs. Harris, I would as soon look you in the face and say so as not, if that will be any gratification to you."

Then said she, "Joseph, I will tell you what I will do, if I can get a witness that you speak the truth, I will believe all you say about the matter and I shall want to do something about the translation--I mean to help you any way."

This closed the evening's conversation. The next morning, soon after she arose, she related a very remarkable dream which she said she had had during the night. It ran about as follows:



She said that a personage appeared to her who told her that as she had disputed the servant of the Lord, and said his word was not to be believed, and had also asked him many improper questions, she had done that which was not right in the sight of God. After which he said to her, "Behold, here are the plates, look upon them and believe."

After giving us an account of her dream, she described the Record very minutely, then told us that she had made up her mind in relation to the course which she intended to pursue; namely, that she had in her possession twenty-eight dollars which she received from her mother just before she died, while she was on her death bed, and that Joseph should accept of it. If he would, he might give his note, but he should certainly take it upon some terms.

The last proposal Joseph accepted in order to get rid of further importunity upon the subject.

Soon afterwards, Alva Hale, Joseph's brother-in-law, came to our house from Pennsylvania, for the purpose of moving Joseph to his father-in-law's, as word had been sent to them that Joseph desired to move there as soon as he could settle up his business. During the short interval of Alva's stay with us, he and Joseph were one day in Palmyra, at a public-house, transacting some business. As they were thus engaged, Mr. Harris came in: he stepped immediately up to my son and taking him by the hand, said, "How do you do, Mr. Smith." After which he took a bag of silver from his pocket and said again, "Here, Mr. Smith, is fifty dollars; I give this to you to do the Lord's work with; no, I give it to the Lord for his own work."

"No," said Joseph, "We will give you a note, Mr. Hale, I presume, will sign it with me." "Yes," said Alva, "I will sign it."

Mr. Harris, however, insisted that he would give the money to the Lord, and called those present to witness the fact that he gave it freely and did not demand any compensation, that it was for the purpose of helping Mr. Smith to do the Lord's work. And as I have been informed, many were present on that occasion who witnessed the same circumstance.

Joseph in a short time arranged his affairs and was ready for the journey. The Record and breast-plate, for security, he nailed up in a box and then put them into a strong cask; and after filling the cask with beans, headed it up again.

When it became generally known that Joseph was about moving to Pennsylvania, a mob of fifty men collected themselves together, and they went to Dr. McIntyre and requested him to take the command of the company, stating that they were resolved

on following "Joe Smith" and taking his "Gold Bible" from him. The doctor's ideas and feelings did not altogether harmonize with theirs, and he told them they were a pack of devilish fools, and to go home and mind their own business; that if Joseph Smith had any business of that sort to attend to, he was capable of doing it, and that it would be better for them to busy themselves about that which more concerned them.

After this a quarrel arose among them respecting who should be captain, and it ran so high that it broke up the expedition.

When Joseph had had a sufficient time to accomplish the journey and transcribe some of the Egyptian characters, it was agreed that Martin Harris should follow him--and that he (Martin) should take the characters to the East, and, on his way, he was to call on all the professed linguists, in order to give them an opportunity to display their talents in giving a translation of the characters.

When Mrs. Harris heard of what her husband had in contemplation, she resolved to accompany him; but he, concluding that it would be better to go without her, left quite suddenly without her knowledge, in company with my son Hyrum.

Mrs. Harris soon missed her husband, and came to me for the purpose of ascertaining if I knew where he was. I told her what he had said concerning his leaving, suppressing, however, his remarks pertaining to herself.

On hearing this, she became highly exasperated, and charged me with planning the whole affair. I protested against it, asserting that I had nothing to do with the plan, nor the execution of it. Furthermore, that the business of a house, which was the natural cares of a woman, was all that I attempted to dictate, or interfere with, unless it was by my husband's or son's request.

Mrs. Harris then observed that she had property, and knew how to take care of it, which she would convince me of.

"Now, stop" said I, "do you know that we have never asked you for money or property? and that if we had been disposed to take advantage of your liberality, could we not have obtained at least, two hundred and seventy dollars of your cash?" She answered in the affirmative, notwithstanding she went home in a great rage, determined to have satisfaction for the treatment which she had received.

In a short time Mr. Harris returned, and his wife's anger kindled afresh at his presence, insomuch that she prepared a separate bed and room for him, which room she refused to enter.

A young man by the name of Dikes, had been paying some attention to Miss Lucy, Martin Harris' oldest daughter. To this

young man Mr. Harris was quite attached, and his daughter Lucy was by no means opposed to him; but Mrs. Harris, of course, was decidedly upon the negative. However, just at this crisis, a scheme entered her brain which materially changed her deportment to Mr. Dikes. She told him, if he would manage to get the Egyptian characters from Mr. Harris' possession, and procure a room in Palmyra for the purpose of transcribing them, and then bring her the transcript, that she would consent to his marriage with her daughter Lucy.

To this, Mr. Dikes cheerfully consented, and suffice it to say he succeeded to her satisfaction, and thus received the promised reward.

When Mr. Harris began to make preparations to start for Pennsylvania the second time, with the view of writing for Joseph, his wife told him that she had fully decreed in her heart to accompany him. Mr. Harris, having no particular objections, informed her that she might do so; that she might go and stay one or two weeks, and then he would bring her home again, after which he would return, and resume his writing for Joseph. To this she cheerfully agreed. But Mr. Harris little suspected what he had to encounter by this move. The first time he exhibited the characters before named, she took out of her pocket an exact copy of the same; and told those present, that "Joe Smith" was not the only one who was in possession of this great curiosity, that she had the same characters, and, they were quite as genuine as those shown by Mr. Harris. This course she continued to pursue, until they arrived at Joseph's.

As soon as she arrived there, she informed him that her object in coming, was to see the plates, and that she would never leave until she had accomplished it. Accordingly, without delay, she commenced ransacking every nook and corner about the house--chests, trunks, cupboards, etc.; consequently, Joseph was under the necessity of removing both the breast-plate and the Record from the house, and secreting them elsewhere. Not finding them in the house, she concluded that Joseph had buried them, and the next day she commenced searching out of doors, which she continued to do until about two o'clock p.m. She then came in rather ill-natured; after warming herself a little, she asked Joseph's wife if there were snakes in that country in the winter. She replied in the negative. Mrs. Harris then said, "I have been walking round in the woods to look at the situation of your place, and as I turned round to come home, a tremendous black snake stuck up his head before me, and commenced hissing at me."

The woman was so perplexed and disappointed in all her

undertakings, that she left the house and took lodgings during her stay in Pennsylvania with a near neighbor, to whom she stated that the day previous she had been hunting for the plates, and that, after a tedious search, she at length came to a spot where she judged, from the appearance of things, they must be buried; but upon stooping down to scrape away the snow and leaves, in order to ascertain the fact, she encountered a horrible black snake which gave her a terrible fright, and she ran with all possible speed to the house.

While this woman remained in the neighborhood, she did all that lay in her power to injure Joseph in the estimation of his neighbors--telling them that he was a grand imposter, and, that by his specious pretensions, he had seduced her husband into the belief that he (Joseph Smith) was some great one, merely through a design upon her husband's property.

When she returned home, being about two weeks after her arrival in Harmony, the place where Joseph resided, she endeavored to dissuade her husband from taking any further part in the publication of the Record; however, Mr. Harris paid no attention to her, but returned and continued writing.

Immediately after Martin Harris left home for Pennsylvania, his wife went from place to place, and from house to house, telling her grievances, and declaring that Joseph Smith was practicing a deception upon the people, which was about to strip her of all that she possessed, and that she was compelled to deposit a few things away from home in order to secure them. So she carried away her furniture, linen, and bedding; also other moveable articles, until she nearly stripped the premises of everything that could conduce either to comfort or convenience, depositing them with those of her friends and acquaintances, in whom she reposed sufficient confidence to assure her of their future safety.

## Chapter 24

Martin Harris, having written some one hundred and sixteen pages for Joseph, asked permission of my son to carry the manuscript home with him, in order to let his wife read it, as he hoped it might have a salutary effect upon her feelings.

Joseph was willing to gratify his friend as far as he could consistently, and he inquired of the Lord to know if he might do as Martin Harris had requested, but was refused. With this, Mr. Harris was not altogether satisfied, and, at his urgent request, Joseph inquired again, but received a second refusal. Still, Martin Harris persisted as before, and Joseph applied again, but

the last answer was not like the two former ones. In this, the Lord permitted Martin Harris to take the manuscript home with him, on condition that he would exhibit it to none, save five individuals whom he had mentioned, and who belonged to his own family.

Mr. Harris was delighted with this, and bound himself in a written covenant of the most solemn nature, that he would strictly comply with the injunctions which he had received. Which being done, he took the manuscript and went home.

Joseph did not suspect but that his friend would keep his faith, consequently, he gave himself no uneasiness with regard to the matter.

Shortly after Mr. Harris left, Joseph's wife became the mother of a son, which, however, remained with her but a short time before it was snatched from her arms by the hand of death. And the mother seemed, for some time, more like sinking with her infant into the mansion of the dead, than remaining with her husband among the living. Her situation was such for two weeks, that Joseph slept not an hour in undisturbed quiet. At the expiration of this time she began to recover, but as Joseph's anxiety about her began to subside, another cause of trouble forced itself upon his mind. Mr. Harris had been absent nearly three weeks, and Joseph had received no intelligence whatever from him, which was altogether aside of the arrangement when they separated. But Joseph kept his feelings from his wife, fearing that if she became acquainted with them it might agitate her too much.

In a few days, however, she mentioned the subject herself, and desired her husband to go and get her mother to stay with her, while he should repair to Palmyra, for the purpose of learning the cause of Mr. Harris' absence as well as silence. At first Joseph objected, but seeing her so cheerful, and so willing to have him leave home, he finally consented.

He set out in the first stage that passed for Palmyra, and, when he was left to himself, he began to contemplate the course which Martin had taken, and the risk which he (Joseph) had run in letting the manuscript go out of his hands--for it could not be obtained again, in case Martin had lost it through transgression, except by the power of God, which was something Joseph could hardly hope for--and that, by persisting in his entreaties to the Lord, he had perhaps fallen into transgression, and thereby lost the manuscript. When, I say, he began to contemplate these things, they troubled his spirit, and his soul was moved with fearful apprehensions. And, although he was now nearly worn out, sleep fled from his eyes, neither had

he any desire for food, for he felt that he had done wrong, and how great his condemnation was he did not know.

Only one passenger was in the stage besides himself: this man observing Joseph's gloomy appearance, inquired the cause of his affliction, and offered to assist him if his services would be acceptable. Joseph thanked him for his kindness, and mentioned that he had been watching some time with a sick wife and child, that the child had died, and that his wife was still very low; but refrained from giving any further explanation. Nothing more passed between them upon this subject, until Joseph was about leaving the stage; at which time he remarked, that he still had twenty miles further to travel on foot that night, it being then about ten o'clock. To this the stranger objected, saying, "I have watched you since you first entered the stage, and I know that you have neither slept nor eaten since that time, and you shall not go on foot twenty miles alone this night; for, if you must go, I will be your company. Now tell me what can be the trouble that makes you thus dispirited?"

Joseph replied, about as before--that he had left his wife in so low a state of health, that he feared he should not find her alive when he returned; besides, he had buried his first and only child but a few days previous. This was true, though there was another trouble lying at his heart, which he dared not to mention.

The stranger then observed, "I feel to sympathize with you, and I fear that your constitution, which is evidently not strong, will be inadequate to support you. You will be in danger of falling asleep in the forest, and of meeting with some awful disaster."

Joseph again thanked the gentleman for his kindness, and, leaving the stage, they proceeded together. When they reached our house it was nearly daylight. The stranger said he was under the necessity of leading Joseph the last four miles by the arm; for nature was too much exhausted to support him any longer, and he would fall asleep as he was walking along, every few minutes, towards the last of this distance.

On entering our house, the stranger remarked that he had brought our son through the forest, because he had insisted on coming, that he was sick, and needed rest, as well as refreshment, and that he ought to have some pepper tea to warm his stomach. After thus directing us, relative to our son, he said, that when we had attended to Joseph he would thank us for a little breakfast for himself, as he was in a haste to be on his journey again.

When Joseph had taken a little nourishment, according to

the directions of the stranger, he requested us to send immediately for Mr. Harris. This we did without delay. And when we had given the stranger his breakfast, we commenced preparing breakfast for the family; and we supposed that Mr. Harris would be there, as soon as it was ready, to eat with us, for he generally came in such haste when he was sent for. At eight o'clock we set the victuals on the table, as we were expecting him every moment. We waited till nine, and he came not--till ten, and he was not there--till eleven, still he did not make his appearance. But at half past twelve we saw him walking with a slow and measured tread towards the house, his eyes fixed thoughtfully upon the ground. On coming to the gate, he stopped, instead of passing through, and got upon the fence, and sat there some time with his hat drawn over his eyes. At length he entered the house. Soon after which we sat down to the table, Mr. Harris with the rest. He took up his knife and fork as if he were going to use them, but immediately dropped them. Hyrum, observing this, said "Martin, why do you not eat; are you sick?" Upon which Mr. Harris pressed his hands upon his temples, and cried out in a tone of deep anguish, "Oh, I have lost my soul! I have lost my soul!"

Joseph who had not expressed his fears till now, sprang from the table, exclaiming, "Martin, have you lost that manuscript? Have you broken your oath, and brought down condemnation upon my head as well as your own?"

"Yes; it is gone," replied Martin, "and I know not where."

"Oh, my God!" said Joseph, clinching his hands. "All is lost! all is lost! What shall I do? I have sinned--it is I who tempted the wrath of God. I should have been satisfied with the first answer which I received from the Lord; for he told me that it was not safe to let the writing go out of my possession." He wept and groaned, and walked the floor continually.

At length he told Martin to go back and search again.

"No"; said Martin, "it is all in vain; for I have ripped open beds and pillows; and I know it is not there."

"Then must I," said Joseph, "return with such a tale as this? I dare not do it. And how shall I appear before the Lord? Of what rebuke am I not worthy from the angel of the Most High?"

I besought him not to mourn so, for perhaps the Lord would forgive him, after a short season of humiliation and repentance. But what could I do to comfort him, when he saw all the family in the same situation of mind as himself; for sobs and groans, and the most bitter lamentations filled the house. However, Joseph was more distressed than the rest, as he better understood the consequences of disobedience. And he continued

pacing back and forth, meantime weeping and grieving, until about sunset, when, by persuasion, he took a little nourishment.

The next morning, he set out for home. We parted with heavy hearts, for it now appeared that all which we had so fondly anticipated, and which had been the source of so much secret gratification, had in a moment fled, and fled forever.

## Chapter 25

I will now give you a sketch of the proceedings of Martin Harris during the time he was absent from Joseph.

After leaving Joseph, he arrived at home with the manuscript in safety. Soon after, he exhibited the manuscript to his wife and family. His wife was so pleased with it, that she gave him the privilege of locking it up in her own set of drawers, which was a special favor, for she had never before this allowed him even the privilege of looking into them. After he had shown the manuscript to those who had a right, according to his oath, to see it, he went with his wife to visit one of her relatives, who lived some ten or fifteen miles distant.

After remaining with them a short time, he returned home, but his wife declined accompanying him back. Soon after his return, a very particular friend of his made him a visit, to whom he related all that he knew concerning the Record. The man's curiosity was much excited, and, as might be expected, he earnestly desired to see the manuscript. Martin was so anxious to gratify his friend, that, although it was contrary to his obligation, he went to the drawer to get the manuscript, but the key was gone. He sought for it some time, but could not find it. Resolved, however, to carry his purpose into execution, he picked the lock, and, in so doing, considerably injured his wife's bureau. He then took out the manuscript, and, after showing it to this friend, he removed it to his own set of drawers, where he could have it at his command. Passing by his oath, he showed it to any good friend that happened to call on him.

When Mrs. Harris returned, and discovered the marred state of her bureau, her irascible temper was excited to the utmost pitch, and an intolerable storm ensued, which descended with the greatest violence upon the devoted head of her husband.

Having once made a sacrifice of his conscience, Mr. Harris no longer regarded its scruples; so he continued to exhibit the writings, until a short time before Joseph arrived, to any one whom he regarded as prudent enough to keep the secret, except our family, but we were not allowed to set our eyes upon them.



For a short time previous to Joseph's arrival, Mr. Harris had been otherwise engaged, and thought but little about the manuscript. When Joseph sent for him, he went immediately to the drawer where he had left it, but, behold it was gone! He asked his wife where it was. She solemnly averred that she did not know anything respecting it. He then made a faithful search throughout the house, as before related.

The manuscript has never been found; and there is no doubt but Mrs. Harris took it from the drawer, with the view of retaining it until another translation should be given, then to alter the original translation, for the purpose of showing a discrepancy between them, and thus make the whole appear to be a deception.

It seemed as though Martin Harris, for his transgression, suffered temporally as well as spiritually. The same day on which the foregoing circumstances took place, a dense fog spread itself over his fields, and blighted his wheat while in the blow, so that he lost about two-thirds of his crop, whilst those fields which lay only on the opposite side of the road, received no injury whatever.

I well remember that day of darkness, both within and without. To us, at least, the heavens seemed clothed with blackness, and the earth shrouded with gloom. I have often said within myself, that if a continual punishment, as severe as that which we experienced on that occasion, were to be inflicted upon the most wicked characters who ever stood upon the footstool of the Almighty--if even their punishment were no greater than that, I should feel to pity their condition.

## Chapter 26

For nearly two months after Joseph returned to his family, in Pennsylvania, we heard nothing from him, and becoming anxious about him, Mr. Smith and myself set off to make him a visit. When we came within three-quarters of a mile of the house, Joseph started to meet us, telling his wife, as he left, that father and mother were coming. When he met us, his countenance wore so pleasant an aspect, that I was convinced he had something agreeable to communicate with regard to the work in which he was engaged. When I entered, the first thing which attracted my attention was a red morocco trunk, lying on Emma's bureau, which Joseph shortly informed me contained the Urim and Thummim, and the plates. And, in the evening, he gave us the following relation of what had transpired since our separation:

"On leaving you," said Joseph, "I returned immediately home. Soon after my arrival, I commenced humbling myself in mighty prayer before the Lord, and, as I was pouring out my soul in supplication to God, that if possible I might obtain mercy at his hands and be forgiven of all that I had done contrary to his will, an angel stood before me, and answered me, saying, that I had sinned in delivering the manuscript into the hands of a wicked man, and, as I had ventured to become responsible for his faithfulness, I would of necessity have to suffer the consequences of his indiscretion, and I must now give up the Urim and Thummim into his (the angel's) hands.

"This I did as I was directed, and as I handed them to him, he remarked, 'If you are very humble and penitent, it may be you will receive them again; if so, it will be on the twenty-second of next September.'" "

Joseph then related a revelation which he received soon after the angel visited him. A part of which is as follows:

[text of D&C 3:5-15 quoted]

For the sake of brevity, I have omitted part of this revelation, but the reader will find it in the Doctrine and Covenants, section 3:5-16.

I will now return to Joseph's recital.

"After the angel left me," said he, "I continued my supplications to God, without cessation, and on the twenty-second of September, I had the joy and satisfaction of again receiving the Urim and Thummim, with which I have again commenced translating, and Emma writes for me, but the angel said that the Lord would send me a scribe, and I trust his promise will be verified. The angel seemed pleased with me when he gave me back the Urim and Thummim, and he told me that the Lord loved me, for my faithfulness and humility."

A few months after Joseph received them, he inquired of the Lord, and obtained the following revelation:

[quotes text of D&C 10:1-13]

While on this visit, we became acquainted with Emma's father, whose name was Isaac Hale; also his family, which consisted of his wife, Elizabeth; his sons, Jesse, David, Alva, Isaac Ward, and Reuben; and his daughters, Phebe and Elizabeth.

They were an intelligent and highly respectable family. They were pleasantly situated, and lived in good style, in the town of Harmony, on the Susquehannah river, within a short distance of the place where Joseph resided.

The time of our visit with them, we passed very agreeably, and returned home relieved of a burden which was almost insupportable, and our present joy far overbalanced all our former grief. (Lucy Mack Smith, History of Joseph Smith by his Mother, pages 114-137)

(This text available as a scanned book at <https://archive.org/details/HistoryOfTheProphetJosephSmithByHisMotherLucyMackSmith/page/n125/mode/2up> and as HTML at

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/45619/45619-h/45619-h.htm>

## Comparison of Original 1833 Text with Emended 1835 Version

The 1835 version clarifies some ambiguities by making the intended target explicit. As Smith had finished translating the BofM, the statements referring specifically to that work were emended. The 1833 version also removes specific accusations and replaces them with more detailed judgements instead (cf. v. 18-20 in the 1835 version). This could be the result of the generally poor reception the BofM had received among the Gentiles as well as the attack on the press that resulted in the thwarted printing of the BofC, so the warning in the 1833 version was abandoned for the judgement of 1835.

### 1833 Book of Commandments

1 Behold, I say unto you,  
that my servant  
Martin  
has desired a witness  
from my hand,  
that my servant  
Joseph  
has got the things  
of which he has testified,  
and borne record  
that he has received of me.  
2 And now, behold  
this shall you say unto him:--

I the Lord am God, and  
I have given these things  
unto my servant  
Joseph, and  
I have commanded him that  
he should stand as a witness  
of these things,  
nevertheless I have caused him  
that he should enter into  
a covenant with me,  
that he should not show them  
except  
I command him  
and he has no power over them

### 1835 Doctrine & Covenants

1 Behold, I say unto you,  
that as my servant  
Martin Harris  
has desired a witness  
at my hand,  
that you, my servant  
Joseph Smith, Jun.,  
have got the plates  
of which you have testified  
and borne record  
that you have received of me;  
2 And now, behold,  
this shall you say unto him--  
he who spake unto you,  
said unto you:  
I, the Lord, am God, and  
have given these things  
unto you, my servant  
Joseph Smith, Jun., and  
have commanded you that  
you should stand as a witness  
of these things;  
3 And I have caused you  
that you should enter into  
a covenant with me,  
that you should not show them  
except to those persons to whom  
I commanded you;  
and you have no power over them

except I grant it unto him;  
and he has a gift  
to translate the book and

I have commanded him that  
he shall pretend  
to no other gift,

for I will grant him  
no other gift.

3 And verily I say unto you,  
that woe shall come unto  
the inhabitants of the earth,  
if they will not  
hearken unto my words,

for behold,  
if they will not believe  
my words,  
they would not believe  
my servant Joseph,  
if it were possible  
that he show them  
all things.

O ye unbelieving,  
ye stiffnecked generation,  
mine anger is kindled  
against you!

4 Behold, verily I say,

I have reserved the things  
of which I have spoken,  
which I have intrusted  
to my servant,  
for a wise purpose in me,  
and it shall be made known  
in future generations:

except I grant it unto you.  
4 And you have a gift  
to translate the plates; and  
this is the first gift that  
I bestowed upon you; and  
I have commanded that you  
should pretend  
to no other gift  
until my purpose is  
fulfilled in this;  
for I will grant unto you  
no other gift  
until it is finished.

5 Verily, I say unto you,  
that woe shall come unto  
the inhabitants of the earth  
if they will not  
hearken unto my words;

6 For hereafter  
you shall be ordained and  
go forth and deliver  
my words unto  
the children of men.

7 Behold,  
if they will not believe  
my words,  
they would not believe you,  
my servant Joseph,  
if it were possible  
that you should show them  
all these things which  
I have committed unto you.

8 Oh, this unbelieving and  
stiffnecked generation--  
mine anger is kindled  
against them.

9 Behold, verily I say  
unto you,

I have reserved those things  
which I have entrusted  
unto you, my servant Joseph,  
for a wise purpose in me,  
and it shall be made known  
unto future generations;

But this generation  
shall have my words,

yea and the testimony  
of three of my servants

shall go forth  
with my words  
unto this generation;

yea, three shall know  
of a surety that  
these things are true,

for I will give them power,  
that they may behold  
and view these things  
as they are,  
and to none else  
will I grant this power,  
to receive this same testimony  
among this generation.

And the testimony of  
three witnesses  
will I send forth  
and my word,  
and behold,  
whosoever believeth  
in my word,  
them will I visit with  
the manifestation of my Spirit,  
and they shall be born of me,

10 But this generation  
shall have my word  
through you;

11 And in addition  
to your testimony,  
the testimony  
of three of my servants,  
whom I shall call and ordain,  
unto whom I will  
show these things,  
and they shall go forth  
with my words

that are given through you.

12 Yea, they shall know  
of a surety that  
these things are true,  
for from heaven will I  
declare it unto them.

13 I will give them power  
that they may behold  
and view these things  
as they are;

14 And to none else  
will I grant this power,  
to receive this same testimony  
among this generation,  
in this the beginning of  
the rising up and  
the coming forth of my church  
out of the wilderness--  
clear as the moon, and  
fair as the sun, and  
terrible as an army  
with banners.

15 And the testimony of  
three witnesses  
will I send forth  
of my word.

16 And behold,  
whosoever believeth  
on my words,  
them will I visit with  
the manifestation of my Spirit;  
and they shall be born of me,

and their testimony  
shall also go forth.

5 And thus,  
if the people of  
this generation  
harden not their hearts,  
I will work a  
reformation among them, and  
I will put down all  
lyings, and  
deceivings, and  
priestcrafts, and  
envyings, and  
strifes, and  
idolatries, and  
sorceries, and  
all manner of iniquities, and  
I will establish my church,  
like unto the church  
which was taught  
by my disciples  
in the days of old.

6 And now if this generation  
do harden their hearts  
against my word,  
behold I will deliver them  
up unto Satan,  
for he reigneth and  
hath power at this time,  
for he hath got  
great hold upon the hearts  
of the people  
of this generation: and  
not far from the  
iniquities of  
Sodom and Gomorrah,  
do they come at this time: and  
behold the sword of justice  
hangeth over their heads, and

even of water and  
of the Spirit--  
17 And you must wait yet  
a little while,  
for ye are not yet ordained--  
18 And their testimony  
shall also go forth

unto the condemnation of  
this generation if they  
harden their hearts  
against them;



if they persist in  
the hardness of their hearts,  
the time cometh that  
it must fall upon them.

Behold  
I tell you these things  
even as I also told  
the people of  
the destruction of Jerusalem,  
and my word shall be verified  
at this time as it hath  
hitherto been verified.  
7 And now I command  
my servant, Joseph  
to repent, and  
walk more uprightly before me,  
and yield to the persuasions  
of men no more; and  
that he be firm  
in keeping the commandments  
wherewith I have commanded him;  
and if he doeth this,  
behold I grant unto him  
eternal life,  
even if he should be slain.  
8 And now  
I speak again

concerning the man that  
desireth a witness:  
behold I say unto him,  
he exalteth himself and  
doth not humble himself  
sufficiently before me,  
but if he will go out and

19 For a desolating scourge  
shall go forth among  
the inhabitants of the earth,  
and  
shall continue to be poured out  
from time to time,  
if they repent not,

until the earth is empty, and  
the inhabitants thereof  
are consumed away and  
utterly destroyed  
by the brightness of my coming.

20 Behold,  
I tell you these things,  
even as I also told  
the people of  
the destruction of Jerusalem;  
and my word shall be verified  
at this time as it hath  
hitherto been verified.  
21 And now I command you,  
my servant Joseph,  
to repent and  
walk more uprightly before me,  
and to yield to the persuasions  
of men no more;  
22 And that you be firm  
in keeping the commandments  
wherewith I have commanded you;  
and if you do this,  
behold I grant unto you  
eternal life,  
even if you should be slain.

23 And now, again,  
I speak unto you,  
my servant Joseph,  
concerning the man that  
desires the witness--  
24 Behold, I say unto him,  
he exalts himself and  
does not humble himself  
sufficiently before me;

bow down before me, and  
humble himself  
in mighty prayer and faith,  
in the sincerity of his heart,  
then I will grant unto him  
a view of the things  
which he desireth to know:  
and then he shall say  
unto the people  
of this generation,  
behold I have seen  
the things

and I know of a surety that  
they are true,  
for I have seen, and  
they have been shown unto me  
by the power of God and  
not of man.  
And I command him

that he shall say no more  
unto them,  
concerning these things,  
except he shall say,  
I have seen them, and  
they have been shown unto me  
by the power of God.  
9 And these are the words  
which he shall say.--  
But if he deny this,  
he will break the covenant  
which he has before covenanted  
with me, and behold he is  
condemned.  
And now except he  
humble himself and  
acknowledge unto me  
the things that he has done,  
which are wrong, and  
covenant with me that  
he will keep my commandments,  
and exercise faith in me,  
behold I say unto him,

but if he will  
bow down before me, and  
humble himself  
in mighty prayer and faith,  
in the sincerity of his heart,  
then will I grant unto him a  
view of the things  
which he desires to see.  
25 And then he shall say  
unto the people  
of this generation:  
Behold, I have seen  
the things  
which the Lord hath shown  
unto Joseph Smith, Jun.,  
and I know of a surety that  
they are true,  
for I have seen them, for  
they have been shown unto me  
by the power of God and  
not of man.  
26 And I the Lord command him,  
my servant Martin Harris,  
that he shall say no more  
unto them  
concerning these things,  
except he shall say:  
I have seen them, and  
they have been shown unto me  
by the power of God;  
and these are the words which  
he shall say.  
27 But if he deny this  
he will break the covenant  
which he has before covenanted  
with me, and behold, he is  
condemned.  
28 And now, except he  
humble himself and  
acknowledge unto me  
the things that he has done  
which are wrong, and  
covenant with me that  
he will keep my commandments,  
and exercise faith in me,

he shall have no such views,  
for I will grant unto him  
no views of the things  
which I have spoken.  
And if this be the case,  
I command him that

he shall do no more,  
nor trouble me any more  
concerning this matter.  
10 And if this be the case,  
behold I say unto you, Joseph,  
when thou hast translated  
a few more pages,  
thou shalt stop for a season,  
even until I command thee  
again:  
then thou mayest  
translate again.  
And except thou do this,  
behold thou shalt have  
no more gift, and  
I will take away  
the things which I  
have intrusted with thee.  
11 And now, because I foresee  
the lying in wait  
to destroy thee:  
Yea, I foresee that if my  
servant

humbleth not himself, and  
receive a witness from my hand,  
that he will fall  
into transgression;  
and there are many that  
lie in wait to destroy thee  
from off the face of the earth:  
And for this cause,  
that thy days may be prolonged,  
I have given unto thee  
these commandments;  
yea, for this cause  
I have said,

behold, I say unto him,  
he shall have no such views,  
for I will grant unto him  
no views of the things  
of which I have spoken.  
29 And if this be the case,  
I command you,  
my servant Joseph,  
that you shall say unto him,  
that he shall do no more,  
nor trouble me any more  
concerning this matter.  
30 And if this be the case,  
behold, I say unto thee Joseph,  
when thou hast translated  
a few more pages  
thou shalt stop for a season,  
even until I command thee  
again;  
then thou mayest  
translate again.  
31 And except thou do this,  
behold, thou shalt have  
no more gift, and  
I will take away  
the things which I  
have entrusted with thee.  
32 And now, because I foresee  
the lying in wait  
to destroy thee,  
yea, I foresee that if my  
servant Martin Harris  
humbleth not himself and  
receive a witness from my hand,  
that he will fall  
into transgression;  
33 And there are many that  
lie in wait to destroy thee  
from off the face of the earth;  
and for this cause,  
that thy days may be prolonged,  
I have given unto thee  
these commandments.  
34 Yea, for this cause  
I have said:

stop and stand still  
until I command thee, and  
I will provide means  
whereby thou mayest  
accomplish the thing  
which I have commanded thee;  
and if thou art faithful  
in keeping my commandments,  
thou shalt be lifted up  
at the last day:--  
Amen.

Stop, and stand still  
until I command thee, and  
I will provide means  
whereby thou mayest  
accomplish the thing  
which I have commanded thee.  
35 And if thou art faithful  
in keeping my commandments,  
thou shalt be lifted up  
at the last day.  
Amen.

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