

## Comments on Doctrine & Covenants 18

This revelation is primarily aimed at Oliver Cowdery. He is directly addressed in v. 1-25 and then he and David Whitmer are addressed in v. 26-47.

When reading this section it is common to focus mainly on the calling of the Twelve Apostles. However, this is not the main theme. They, including Cowdery and Whitmer and the Twelve, are called to proclaim repentance to "all men everywhere" (v. 9), "both unto Gentile and unto Jew" (v. 26). This is the underlying reason why the Twelve are called, and therefore the primary subject of this revelation.

This revelation preceded the formation of the Church by some nine months, and the formation of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles by almost six years. It is clear from the beginning the Lord had every intention of reconstituting the original structure of ancient Church, and it was only a matter of man fulfilling the Lord's intentions. To us it seems the Church should be organized before the Twelve are called, but if we recall the ancient Church, Jesus called the Twelve well before the Church was organized as an entity after His crucifixion.

Joseph and Oliver had received the Melchizedek Priesthood by this point, as the available documentary evidence points to them receiving it before they left Harmony, PA for the Whitmer's house at Waterloo, NY late in March. As such, reconstituting the Quorum of the Twelve would have been within the realm of the possible from the point of view of having the necessary Priesthood keys.

1 Now, behold, because of the thing which you, my servant Oliver Cowdery, have desired to know of me, I give unto you these words: 2 Behold, I have manifested unto you, by my Spirit in many instances, that the things which you have written are true; wherefore you know that they are true. 3 And if you know that they are true, behold, I give unto you a commandment, that you rely upon the things which are written; 4 For in them are all things written concerning the foundation of my church, my gospel, and my rock. 5 Wherefore, if you shall build up my church, upon the foundation of my gospel and my rock, the gates of hell shall not prevail against you.

v1-5 Knowledge of the veracity of the text requires the recipient to adhere to it. If you know something is true, you must act accordingly.

v2 Those being addressed have gone beyond faith regarding the revelations they have received, they therefore "know" they are

true, Alma 32:34.

v3 The logical conclusion of knowing something is true requires the one with the knowledge to adhere to it and act accordingly.

In matters of religion, morality and ethics this requires one develop a godly walk, keep the commandments and so forth.

v5 This verse is derivative of the Matt. 7:24-27 parable and paraphrases Jesus' comments to Simon Peter in Matt. 16:18. Given the subsequent commissions documented in this section it is not surprising a similar statement given to a person in the same position historically (i.e., one of the Twelve) is repeated.

6 Behold, the world is ripening in iniquity; and it must needs be that the children of men are stirred up unto repentance, both the Gentiles and also the house of Israel. 7 Wherefore, as thou hast been baptized by the hands of my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., according to that which I have commanded him, he hath fulfilled the thing which I commanded him.

8 And now, marvel not that I have called him unto mine own purpose, which purpose is known in me; wherefore, if he shall be diligent in keeping my commandments he shall be blessed unto eternal life; and his name is Joseph.

9 And now, Oliver Cowdery, I speak unto you, and also unto David Whitmer, by the way of commandment; for, behold, I command all men everywhere to repent, and I speak unto you, even as unto Paul mine apostle, for you are called even with that same calling with which he was called. 10 Remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God; 11 For, behold, the Lord your Redeemer suffered death in the flesh; wherefore he suffered the pain of all men, that all men might repent and come unto him. 12 And he hath risen again from the dead, that he might bring all men unto him, on conditions of repentance. 13 And how great is his joy in the soul that repenteth! 14 Wherefore, you are called to cry repentance unto this people. 15 And if it so be that you should labor all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring, save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father! 16 And now, if your joy will be great with one soul that you have brought unto me into the kingdom of my Father, how great will be your joy if you should bring many souls unto me!

v6-16 Cowdery is called and commissioned to preach repentance (v. 6-7) to the world as Paul did anciently (v. 9-16).

v7-8 These verses appear to be a rather odd paraphrase on Smith's calling and obedience, indicating to Cowdery their callings at this point in time were different. It suggests Cowdery was envious of Smith's position and/or activities, or questioned Smith's presentation of his calling.

v8 "his name is Joseph", the significance of which is explained in 2 Ne. 3:14-15.

v9 Being called to the same calling as Paul is pretty overwhelming. Considering Paul's ministry spanned the rest of his life, wherein he traveled a great deal, endured significant persecution and opposition, many of the congregations he helped established fell apart and was likely executed in Rome. Both Oliver and David would have recognized this and were likely stunned at such a commission. David's commission is apparently withdrawn in D&C 30:4.

v15-16 Repetition and emphasis on "great joy" over the repentant. Those who labor in bringing people to repentance share in the Father's joy.

17 Behold, you have my gospel before you, and my rock, and my salvation. 18 Ask the Father in my name, in faith believing that you shall receive, and you shall have the Holy Ghost, which manifesteth all things which are expedient unto the children of men. 19 And if you have not faith, hope, and charity, you can do nothing. 20 Contend against no church, save it be the church of the devil. 21 Take upon you the name of Christ, and speak the truth in soberness. 22 And as many as repent and are baptized in my name, which is Jesus Christ, and endure to the end, the same shall be saved. 23 Behold, Jesus Christ is the name which is given of the Father, and there is none other name given whereby man can be saved; 24 Wherefore, all men must take upon them the name which is given of the Father, for in that name shall they be called at the last day; 25 Wherefore, if they know not the name by which they are called, they cannot have place in the kingdom of my Father.

v17-25 A general exhortation to Cowdery attendant to the commission of v. 6-16.

v17 They have the "rock", they understand the gospel per v. 1-5.

v18 They are counseled to consult in prayer to receive guidance through the Holy Spirit, cp. D&C 46:28-30.

v19 Contrast this statement with that of D&C 4:5. These are essential qualities, and the individual lacking them will have no success in the ministry.

v20 "Contend", contention is prohibited and shown to be antithesis to the Lord's message and intent in D&C 10:63, 19:30. Also cp. 3 Ne. 11:29.

"no church, save it be the church of the devil", they are not to attack any Christian sect in specific, but rather the evil things of the devil. Attacking any church in specific

leads to nothing but contention, and the devil profits thereby. However, preaching against sin is an attack on the adversary's kingdom, which is permissible.

The manner in which the adversary weakens Christianity is by promoting sin within its ranks, encouraging division based upon doctrinal differences, and by fostering contention between the various groups. We are to do away with sin and avoid contention. What defines a disciple of Christ is your walk (cf. John 13:35, John 15:8, Acts 11:26), not your doctrinal definitions or creedal statements. The Lord wants an ecumenical Church, united under Himself.

v21-22 The messenger and the listener are to take the name of Jesus Christ upon them. With messengers this requires them to speak truth in soberness, and the listener is required to repent, be baptized and endure.

v23-25 These verses form a parenthesis which answers the question, "Why must we take Jesus' name upon us?"

26 And now, behold, there are others who are called to declare my gospel, both unto Gentile and unto Jew; 27 Yea, even twelve; and the Twelve shall be my disciples, and they shall take upon them my name; and the Twelve are they who shall desire to take upon them my name with full purpose of heart. 28 And if they desire to take upon them my name with full purpose of heart, they are called to go into all the world to preach my gospel unto every creature.

29 And they are they who are ordained of me to baptize in my name, according to that which is written; 30 And you have that which is written before you; wherefore, you must perform it according to the words which are written.

31 And now I speak unto you, the Twelve--Behold, my grace is sufficient for you; you must walk uprightly before me and sin not. 32 And, behold, you are they who are ordained of me to ordain priests and teachers; to declare my gospel, according to the power of the Holy Ghost which is in you, and according to the callings and gifts of God unto men; 33 And I, Jesus Christ, your Lord and your God, have spoken it. 34 These words are not of men nor of man, but of me; wherefore, you shall testify they are of me and not of man; 35 For it is my voice which speaketh them unto you; for they are given by my Spirit unto you, and by my power you can read them one to another; and save it were by my power you could not have them; 36 Wherefore, you can testify that you have heard my voice, and know my words.

v26-36 The commission of the Twelve. Similar in content to the New Testament accounts of the ancient apostle's commissions.

v26 Note the present tense used in this verse. The Lord is letting this tiny group of people, who could not put together twelve men amongst themselves at present, that He has twelve men already in mind to fulfil the calling of the Twelve Apostles.

Smith is infamous among the local population, with relatively few supporters. The Lord is letting Joseph, and Oliver and David, know there are others who will be joining them to support them in the calling as the ecclesia grows. Oliver and David are called to help find them.

v31 "my grace is sufficient for you", this phrase is always used in conjunction with statements dealing with the weaknesses of a person either by self-confession or by divine observation, cp. 2 Cor. 12:9, Ether 12:26-27, Moroni 10:32, D&C 18:31. The general intent is for the Lord to indicate that the person's weaknesses are not such that their salvation is jeopardized by them at present. However, note after this statement is made, the Lord indicates that despite their weaknesses they are to maintain godly walks and to not deliberately sin.

v34 The Lord states plainly that these words are His own and not Smith's or any man's. This seems redundant given the Lord is speaking in the first-person. However, given the attitude among many contemporary Bible scholars, and even among some members of the Church, to assume the text is not what it presents itself to be, we can see it is necessary for the Lord to clarify His position. Such a statement forces any other conclusion to flatly contradict what the Lord Himself says on the matter.

37 And now, behold, I give unto you, Oliver Cowdery, and also unto David Whitmer, that you shall search out the Twelve, who shall have the desires of which I have spoken; 38 And by their desires and their works you shall know them. 39 And when you have found them you shall show these things unto them. 40 And you shall fall down and worship the Father in my name.

v37-40 Cowdery and Whitmer are commissioned to find and assemble the Twelve.

v38 The ancient formula for the means of obtaining a righteous judgement, cp. Matt. 7:16-20.

41 And you must preach unto the world, saying: You must repent and be baptized, in the name of Jesus Christ; 42 For all men must repent and be baptized, and not only men, but women, and children who have arrived at the years of accountability. 43 And now, after that you have received this, you must keep my commandments in all things;

44 And by your hands I will work a marvelous work among the children of men, unto the convincing of many of their sins, that they may come unto repentance, and that they may come unto the kingdom of my Father. 45 Wherefore, the blessings which I give unto you are above all

things. 46 And after that you have received this, if you keep not my commandments you cannot be saved in the kingdom of my Father.

47 Behold, I, Jesus Christ, your Lord and your God, and your Redeemer, by the power of my Spirit have spoken it. Amen.

v41-46 These verses close off the section with a general exhortation aimed at the newly called Cowdery and Whitmer, and presumably to the Twelve as well. The text is arranged as a double repetition of the themes from the preceding text:

A - (v. 41-42) Preach repentance, repeats v. 6-16.

B - (v. 43) Keep my commandments, repeats v. 1-5

A - (v. 44-45) Bring them to repentance.

B - (v. 46) Keep my commandments.

v47 An emphatic authority statement repeating and emphasizing the idea of v. 34.

## **Historical Material Pertaining to Doctrine & Covenants 18**

After this revelation about nine months pass before the next documented revelation is given, cf. D&C 19. During these nine months, between June 1829 and March 1830, printing of the Book of Mormon is undertaken and completed. While Smith comments very little on the events of these nine months in his History, his mother comments on some of the more noteworthy events in chapters 31-32 of her History of Joseph Smith by His Mother.

This section was first published in the Book of Commandments in 1833 on pages 34-39, then in the Doctrine & Covenants in 1835 on pages 172-174. It was published in Times & Seasons, volume 3, number 22, pages 915-917, dated September 15, 1842 and in The Millennial Star, volume 4, number 7, pages 100-101, dated November, 1843.

### **Excerpt from History of the Church**

We now became anxious to have that promise realized to us, which the angel that conferred upon us the Aaronic Priesthood had given us, viz., that provided we continued faithful, we should also have the Melchizedek Priesthood, which holds the authority of the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. We had for some time made this matter a subject of humble prayer, and at length we got together in the chamber of Mr. Whitmer's house, in order more particularly to seek of the Lord what we now so earnestly desired; and here, to our unspeakable satisfaction, did we realize the truth of the Savior's promise—"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you"—for we had not long been engaged in solemn and fervent prayer, when the word of the Lord came unto us in the chamber, commanding us that I should ordain Oliver Cowdery to be an Elder in the Church of Jesus Christ; and that he also should ordain me to the same office; and then to ordain others, as it should be made known unto us from time to time. We were, however, commanded to defer this our ordination until such times as it should be practicable to have our brethren, who had been and who should be baptized, assembled together, when we must have their sanction to our thus proceeding to ordain each other, and have them decide by vote whether they were willing to accept us as spiritual teachers or not; when also we were commanded to bless bread and break it with them, and to take wine, bless it, and drink it with them;

afterward proceed to ordain each other according to commandment; then call out such men as the Spirit should dictate, and ordain them; and then attend to the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, upon all those whom we had previously baptized, doing all things in the name of the Lord. The following commandment will further illustrate the nature of our calling to this Priesthood, as well as that of others who were yet to be sought after:

[text of D&C 18 follows]

(Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Vol. 1, pages 60-62)

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

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE PLATES ARE SHOWN TO TWELVE WITNESSES—JOSEPH MAKES  
ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRINTING THE BOOK OF MORMON.

As soon as the Book of Mormon was translated, Joseph despatched a messenger to Mr. Smith, bearing intelligence of the completion of the work, and a request that Mr. Smith and myself should come immediately to Waterloo.

The same evening, we conveyed this intelligence to Martin Harris, for we loved the man, although his weakness had cost us much trouble. Hearing this, he greatly rejoiced, and determined to go straightway to Waterloo to congratulate Joseph upon his success. Accordingly, the next morning, we all set off together, and before sunset met Joseph and Oliver at Mr. Whitmer's.

The evening was spent in reading the manuscript, and it would be superfluous for me to say, to one who has read the foregoing pages, that we rejoiced exceedingly. It then appeared to those of us who did not realize the magnitude of the work, as if the greatest difficulty was then surmounted; but Joseph better understood the nature of the dispensation of the Gospel which was committed unto him.

The next morning, after attending to the usual services, namely, reading, singing and praying, Joseph arose from his knees, and approaching Martin Harris with a solemnity that thrills through my veins to this day, when it occurs to my recollection, said, "Martin Harris, you have got to humble yourself before God this day, that you may obtain a forgiveness of your sins. If you do, it is the will of God that you should look upon the plates, in company with Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer."



In a few minutes after this, Joseph, Martin, Oliver and David, repaired to a grove, a short distance from the house, where they commenced calling upon the Lord, and continued in earnest supplication, until he permitted an angel to come down from his presence, and declare to them, that all which Joseph had testified of concerning the plates was true.

When they returned to the house it was between three and four o'clock p.m. Mrs. Whitmer, Mr. Smith and myself, were sitting in a bedroom at the time. On coming in, Joseph threw himself down beside me, and exclaimed, "Father, mother, you do not know how happy I am: the Lord has now caused the plates to be shown to three more besides myself. They have seen an angel, who has testified to them, and they will have to bear witness to the truth of what I have said, for now they know for themselves, that I do not go about to deceive the people, and I feel as if I was relieved of a burden which was almost too heavy for me to bear, and it rejoices my soul, that I am not any longer to be entirely alone in the world." Upon this, Martin Harris came in: he seemed almost overcome with joy, and testified boldly to what he had both seen and heard. And so did David and Oliver, adding, that no tongue could express the joy of their hearts, and the greatness of the things which they had both seen and heard.

Their written testimony, which is contained in the Book of Mormon, is as follows:-

#### THE TESTIMONY OF THREE WITNESSES.

Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this Record, which is a Record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower, of which hath been spoken; and we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare, with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates,

and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true; and it is marvelous in our eyes, nevertheless, the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment-seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, Martin Harris.

The following day, we returned, a cheerful, happy company. In a few days, we were followed by Joseph, Oliver and the Whitmers, who came to make us a visit, and make some arrangements about getting the book printed. Soon after they came, all the male part of the company, with my husband, Samuel and Hyrum, retired to a place where the family were in the habit of offering up their secret devotions to God. They went to this place, because it had been revealed to Joseph that the plates would be carried thither by one of the ancient Nephites. Here it was, that those eight witnesses, whose names are recorded in the Book of Mormon, looked upon them and handled them. Of which they bear record in the following words:—

#### THE TESTIMONY OF EIGHT WITNESSES.

Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that Joseph Smith, Jr., the translator of this work, has shown unto us the plates of which hath been spoken, which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated, we did handle with our hands; and we also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship. And this we bear record, with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shown unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety, that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world, to witness unto the world that which we have seen; and we lie not, God bearing witness of it.

Christian Whitmer, Hiram Page,  
Jacob Whitmer, Joseph Smith, Sen.,  
Peter Whitmer, Jun., Hyrum Smith,  
John Whitmer, Samuel H. Smith.

After these witnesses returned to the house, the angel again made his appearance to Joseph, at which time Joseph delivered up the plates into the angel's hands. That evening, we held a meeting, in which all the witnesses bore testimony to the facts, as stated above; and all of our family, even to Don Carlos, who was but fourteen years of age, testified of the truth of the Latter-day Dispensation—that it was then ushered in. In a few days, the whole company from Waterloo, went to Palmyra to make arrangements for getting the book printed; and they succeeded in making a contract with one E. B. Grandin, but did not draw the writings at that time. The next day, the company from Waterloo returned home, excepting Joseph, and Peter Whitmer, Joseph remaining to draw writings in regard to the printing of the manuscript, which was to be done on the day following.

When Joseph was about starting for Palmyra, where the writings were to be executed, Dr. M'Intyre came in and informed us, that forty men were collected in the capacity of a mob, with the view of waylaying Joseph on his way thither; that they requested him (Dr. M'Intyre) as they had done once before, to take command of the company, and, that upon his refusing to do so, one Mr. Huzzy, a hatter of Palmyra, proffered his services, and was chosen as their leader.

On hearing this, I besought Joseph not to go; but he smiled at my fears, saying, "Never mind, mother, just put your trust in God, and nothing will hurt me today." In a short time he set out for Palmyra. On his way thither, lay a heavy strip of timber, about half a mile in width, and, beyond it, on the right side of the road, lay a field belonging to David Jacaway. When he came to this field, he found the mob seated on the string of fence running along the road. Coming to Mr. Huzzy first, he took off his hat, and good-naturedly saying, "Good morning, Mr. Huzzy," passed on to the next, whom he saluted in like manner, and the next, and so on till he came to the last.

This struck them with confusion, and while they were pondering

in amazement, he passed on, leaving them perched upon the fence, like so many roosting chickens, and arrived at Palmyra without being molested. Here he met Mr. Grandin, and writings were drawn up between them to this effect: That half of the price for printing was to be paid by Martin Harris, and the residue by my two sons, Joseph and Hyrum. These writings were afterwards signed by all the parties concerned.

When Joseph returned from Palmyra he said, "Well, mother, the Lord has been on my side today, the devil has not overpowered me in any of my proceedings. Did I not tell you that I should be delivered from the hands of all my enemies! They thought they were going to perform great feats; they have done wonders to prevent me from getting the book printed; they mustered themselves together, and got upon the fence, made me a low bow, and went home, and I'll warrant you they wish they had stayed there in the first place. Mother, there is a God in heaven, and I know it."

Soon after this, Joseph secured the copyright; and before he returned to Pennsylvania, where he had left his wife, he received a commandment, which was in substance as follows:-

First, that Oliver Cowdery should transcribe the whole manuscript. Second, that he should take but one copy at a time to the office, so that if one copy should get destroyed, there would still be a copy remaining. Third, that in going to and from the office, he should always have a guard to attend him, for the purpose of protecting the manuscript. Fourth, that a guard should be kept constantly on the watch, both night and day, about the house, to protect the manuscript from malicious persons, who would infest the house for the purpose of destroying the manuscript. All these things were strictly attended to, as the Lord commanded Joseph. After giving these instructions, Joseph returned to Pennsylvania.

#### CHAPTER XXXII.

#### THE PRINTING IS BEGUN—A MEETING OF THE CITIZENS HELD IN REFERENCE TO THE BOOK.

Oliver Cowdery commenced the work immediately after Joseph left, and the printing went on very well for a season, but the clouds of persecution again began to gather. The rabble, and a party of restless religionists, began to counsel together, as to the most efficient means of putting a stop to our proceedings.

About the first council of this kind was held in a room adjoining that in which Oliver and a young man by the name of Robinson were printing. Mr. Robinson being curious to know what they were doing in the next room, applied his ear to a hole in the partition wall, and by this means overheard several persons expressing their fears in reference to the Book of Mormon. One said, "it was destined to break down everything before it, if not put a stop to," and, "that it was likely to injure the prospects of their ministers," and then inquired, whether they should endure it. "No, no," was the unanimous reply. It was then asked "How shall we prevent the printing of this book?" Upon which it was resolved by the meeting, that three of their company should be appointed to go to the house of Mr. Smith, on the following Tuesday or Wednesday, while the men were gone to their work, and request Mrs. Smith to read the manuscript to them; that, after she had done reading it, two of the company should endeavor to divert her attention from it to some other object, while the third, seizing the opportunity, should snatch it from the drawer, or where-ever it should be kept, and commit it immediately to the flames.

"Again," said the speaker, "suppose we fail in this, and the book be printed in defiance of all that we can do to the contrary, what means shall we then adopt? Shall we buy their books and allow our families to read them?" They all responded, "No." They then entered into a solemn covenant, never to purchase even a single copy of the work, or permit one member of their families to buy or read one, that they might thus avert the awful calamity which threatened them.

Oliver Cowdery came home that evening, and, after relating the whole affair with much solemnity, he said, "Mother, what shall I do with the manuscript? where shall I put it to keep it away from them?"

"Oliver," said I, "I do not think the matter so serious after all, for there is a watch kept constantly about the house, and I need not take out the manuscript to read it to them unless I choose, and for its present safety I can have it deposited in a chest, under the head of my bed, in such a way that it never will be disturbed." I then placed it in a chest, which was so high that when placed under the bed, the whole weight of the bedstead rested upon the lid. Having made this arrangement, we felt quite at rest, and that night, the family retired to rest

at the usual hour, all save Peter Whitmer, who spent the night on guard. But as for myself, soon after I went to bed I fell into a train of reflections which occupied my mind, and which caused sleep to forsake my eyelids till the day dawned, for, when I meditated upon the days of toil, and nights of anxiety, through which we had all passed for years previous, in order to obtain the treasure that then lay beneath my head; when I thought upon the hours of fearful apprehensions which we had all suffered on the same account, and that the object was at last accomplished, I could truly say that my soul did magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiced in God my Savior. I felt that the heavens were moved in our behalf, and that the angels who had power to put down the mighty from their seats, and to exalt those who were of low degree, were watching over us; that those would be filled who hungered and thirsted after righteousness, when the rich would be sent empty away; that God had helped his servant Israel in remembrance of his promised mercy, and in bringing forth a Record, by which is made known the seed of Abraham, our father. Therefore, we could safely put our trust in him, as he was able to help in every time of need.

On the fourth day subsequent to the afore-mentioned council, soon after my husband left the house to go to his work, those three delegates appointed by the council, came to accomplish the work assigned to them. Soon after they entered, one of them began thus:—

"Mrs. Smith, we hear that you have a gold bible; we have come to see if you will be so kind as to show it to us?"

"No, gentlemen," said I, "we have no gold bible, but we have a translation of some gold plates, which have been brought forth for the purpose of making known to the world the plainness of the gospel, and also to give a history of the people which formerly inhabited this continent." I then proceeded to relate the substance of what is contained in the Book of Mormon, dwelling particularly upon the principles of religion therein contained. I endeavored to show them the similarity between these principles, and the simplicity of the gospel taught by Jesus Christ in the New Testament. "Notwithstanding all this," said I, "the different denominations are very much opposed to us. The Universalists are alarmed lest their religion should suffer loss, the Presbyterians tremble for their salaries, the Methodists also come, and they rage, for they worship a God without body or parts, and they know that our faith comes in

contact with this principle."

After hearing me through, the gentlemen said, "Can we see the manuscript, then?"

"No, sir," replied I, "you cannot see it. I have told you what it contains, and that must suffice."

He made no reply to this, but said, "Mrs. Smith, you and the most of your children have belonged to our church for some length of time, and we respect you very highly. You say a good deal about the Book of Mormon, which your son has found, and you believe much of what he tells you, yet we cannot bear the thoughts of losing you, and they do wish—I wish, that if you do believe those things, you would not say anything more upon the subject—I do wish you would not."

"Deacon Beckwith," said I, "if you should stick my flesh full of faggots, and even burn me at the stake, I would declare, as long as God should give me breath, that Joseph has got that Record, and that I know it to be true."

At this, he observed to his companions, "You see it is of no use to say anything more to her, for we cannot change her mind." Then, turning to me, he said, "Mrs. Smith, I see that it is not possible to persuade you out of your belief, therefore I deem it unnecessary to say anything more upon the subject."

"No, sir," said I, "it is not worth your while."

He then bade me farewell, and went out to see Hyrum, when the following conversation took place between them:

Deacon Beckwith: "Mr. Smith, do you not think that you may be deceived about that Record, which your brother pretends to have found?"

Hyrum: "No, sir, I do not."

Deacon Beckwith: "Well, now, Mr. Smith, if you find that you are deceived, and that he has not got the Record, will you confess the fact to me?"

Hyrum: "Will you, Deacon Beckwith, take one of the books, when they are printed, and read it, asking God to give you an

evidence that you may know whether it is true?"

Deacon Beckwith; "I think it beneath me to take so much trouble, however, if you will promise that you will confess to me that Joseph never had the plates, I will ask for a witness whether the book is true."

Hyrum: "I will tell you what I will do, Mr. Beckwith, if you do get a testimony from God, that the book is not true, I will confess to you that it is not true."

Upon this they parted, and the Deacon next went to Samuel, who quoted to him, Isaiah, lvi: 9-11:

All ye beasts of the field, come to devour; yea, all ye beasts in the forest. His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber; yea, they are greedy dogs, which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter.

Here Samuel ended the quotation, and the three gentlemen left without ceremony. ([Lucy Mack Smith, History of Joseph Smith, by his Mother](#))

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