

General Comments on Doctrine & Covenants 30-36

These seven sections are tailored to prominent individuals among the early ecclesia (with the exception of section 35, which is given to Ridgon, a convert during this time). They were given from September through December, 1830. The Church has been established for several months and the Lord is providing individual guidance among the relatively small group, between 60-70 people, that is not winning over converts locally, and is facing adversity from locals.

It is clear the Lord's focus is long term, while the early members of the Church are caught up in present matters. The Lord largely encourages them to preach the gospel so they can build up the ecclesia in preparation for the Second Coming.

Comments on Doctrine & Covenants 30

The text of this section was originally published as three separate texts based upon the target. The text is presented below in the sections as they were originally published in the 1833 Book of Commandments. The targets of these revelations are the three Whitmer brothers, sons of Peter Whitmer, Sr.

1 Behold, I say unto you, David, that you have feared man and have not relied on me for strength as you ought. 2 But your mind has been on the things of the earth more than on the things of me, your Maker, and the ministry whereunto you have been called; and you have not given heed unto my Spirit, and to those who were set over you, but have been persuaded by those whom I have not commanded. 3 Wherefore, you are left to inquire for yourself at my hand, and ponder upon the things which you have received. 4 And your home shall be at your father's house, until I give unto you further commandments. And you shall attend to the ministry in the church, and before the world, and in the regions round about. Amen.

v1-4 These verses are aimed at David Whitmer. The Lord informs him that He had tried to work with him, but David was persuaded by the world. It is now up to David to seek after Him.

Verse 2 is probably referring to the subject of D&C 28, namely the matter of Hyrum Page's stone, which was dealt with earlier that same month of September. Cowdery and members of the Whitmer family believed these false revelations were genuine. This is the first revelation to David since that incident. Oliver was reprimanded and told to resolve the problem in D&C 28.

Among those who believed the false revelations it is

particularly surprising Oliver and David were duped. David was baptized early on in Church history in June 1829 and so was one of the first converts. He and Oliver were also two of the Three Witnesses of the Book of Mormon.

David was probably also involved in the controversy of the preceding July regarding Smith's editing of D&C 20. We are informed in History of the Church 1:104-105 that members of the Whitmer family were supportive of Cowdery in his contention. It was Christian Whitmer, not David, who sided with Smith and persuaded the others of the Whitmer family that Cowdery was in error.

5 Behold, I say unto you, Peter, that you shall take your journey with your brother Oliver; for the time has come that it is expedient in me that you shall open your mouth to declare my gospel; therefore, fear not, but give heed unto the words and advice of your brother, which he shall give you. 6 And be you afflicted in all his afflictions, ever lifting up your heart unto me in prayer and faith, for his and your deliverance; for I have given unto him power to build up my church among the Lamanites; 7 And none have I appointed to be his counselor over him in the church, concerning church matters, except it is his brother, Joseph Smith, Jun. 8 Wherefore, give heed unto these things and be diligent in keeping my commandments, and you shall be blessed unto eternal life. Amen.

v5-8 These verses are aimed at Peter Whitmer, Jr. Peter is called to be Cowdery's "Junior Companion" in their mission to the Lamanites.

9 Behold, I say unto you, my servant John, that thou shalt commence from this time forth to proclaim my gospel, as with the voice of a trump. 10 And your labor shall be at your brother Philip Burroughs', and in that region round about, yea, wherever you can be heard, until I command you to go from hence. 11 And your whole labor shall be in Zion, with all your soul, from henceforth; yea, you shall ever open your mouth in my cause, not fearing what man can do, for I am with you. Amen.

v9-11 These verses address John Whitmer. John is called to preach in Western NY, but not specifically to the Lamanites, and is warned not to fear man.

v10 "Philip Burroughs", this is the only reference to the man in the D&C. According to the Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt he preached at a church meeting held at Burroughs' home in Seneca, NY in September 1830.

Samuel H. Smith and Orson Hyde visited the Burroughs home

in 1832 and both comment on this event. Samuel in his journal wrote of him "He was glad to see us & Sister Buroughs was strong in the faith held a meeting in the school house a considerable number of people came to hear & paid good attention." Orson in his journal wrote of him "Brother B. [was] rather low, but left him about persuaded to go to Zion."

According to the New York Federal census of 1860 he was still living in Seneca, NY with his wife and 5 family members. Clearly, they never gathered with the Saints in Kirtland or elsewhere. The level of their commitment beyond this is unknown.

Historical Material Pertaining to Doctrine & Covenants 30

These three revelations, and the next one in section 31, were received at the end of the same Church conference in September, 1830 as that which served as the setting of section 29. There is no historical documentation concerning the text. It is safe to assume they sought instruction from the Lord concerning their respective duties in the Church.

This section was first published in the Book of Commandments in 1833, pages 69-70. It was published in the Kirtland edition Doctrine and Covenants in 1835, pages 182-183. It was published in the Times and Seasons, volume 4, number 10, dated April 1, 1843, and in the Millennial Star, volume 4, number 11, pages 167-168, dated March, 1844.

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