

Comments on Doctrine & Covenants 73

In D&C 71, the Lord tells Smith and Rigdon to stop translating the Bible and start preaching locally to allay the hostile feelings being caused by Ezra Booth's publications of slanderous letters in a local newspaper. Here, after preaching locally and challenging Booth publicly, which he declined, the Lord tells them to return to translating the Bible, but still make time to preach when time and opportunity permits.

1 FOR verily, thus saith the Lord, it is expedient in me that they should continue preaching the gospel, and in exhortation to the churches in the regions round about, until conference; 2 And then, behold, it shall be made known unto them, by the voice of the conference, their several missions.

3 Now, verily I say unto you my servants, Joseph Smith, Jun., and Sidney Rigdon, saith the Lord, it is expedient to translate again; 4 And, inasmuch as it is practicable, to preach in the regions round about until conference; and after that it is expedient to continue the work of translation until it be finished.

5 And let this be a pattern unto the elders until further knowledge, even as it is written. 6 Now I give no more unto you at this time. Gird up your loins and be sober. Even so. Amen.

The other Elders in the area who are waiting for the conference to start (cf. D&C 75) are to continue preaching in the surrounding area until the conference (v. 1-2).

Smith and Rigdon are to return to the translation of the Bible as their primary work (v. 3), after the diversion necessitated by the subject of D&C 71. But, they (v. 4), and the other Elders of the Church (v. 1-2), should still preach when time permits. They should continue in this until the upcoming conference (v. 5). The Lord then closes by admonishing them to work diligently (v. 6).

Smith and Rigdon, having countered Ezra Booth's libelous letters, are to return to translating the Bible.

Historical Material Pertaining to Doctrine & Covenants 73

This section was first published in the Kirtland edition D&C in 1835, page 156. It was published in Times and Seasons, volume 5, number 13, page 576, dated July 15, 1844. It was published in the Millennial Star, volume 14, number 8, pages 115-116, dated April 15, 1852.

Excerpt from History of the Church

From this time until the 8th or 10th of January, 1832, myself and Elder Rigdon continued to preach in Shalersville, Ravenna, and other places, setting forth the truth, vindicating the cause of our Redeemer; showing that the day of vengeance was coming upon this generation like a thief in the night; that prejudice, blindness and darkness filled the minds of many, and caused them to persecute the true Church, and reject the true light; by which means we did much towards allaying the excited feelings which were growing out of the scandalous letters then being published in the Ohio Star, at Ravenna, by the before-mentioned apostate, Ezra Booth. On the 10th of January, I received the following revelation making known the will of the Lord concerning the Elders of the Church until the convening of the next conference.

[text of D&C 73 quoted]

Upon the reception of the foregoing word of the Lord, I recommenced the translation of the Scriptures, and labored diligently until just before the conference, which was to convene on the 25th of January. (Joseph Smith, History of the Church, volume 1, pages 241-242)

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