

Comments on Doctrine & Covenants 80

This section is typical of preceding revelations where individuals are called to preach the gospel.

1 Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you my servant Stephen Burnett: Go ye, go ye into the world and preach the gospel to every creature that cometh under the sound of your voice. 2 And inasmuch as you desire a companion, I will give unto you my servant Eden Smith. 3 Wherefore, go ye and preach my gospel, whether to the north or to the south, to the east or to the west, it mattereth not, for ye cannot go amiss. 4 Therefore, declare the things which ye have heard, and verily believe, and know to be true. 5 Behold, this is the will of him who hath called you, your Redeemer, even Jesus Christ. Amen.

v1-5 The Lord calls Burnett to be a missionary (v. 1) and assigns Eden Smith to be his companion (v. 2). He tells him to preach anywhere around there, because there are people around there who will accept the gospel (v. 3). They are to preach what they have been taught and already understand (v. 4). The Lord then concludes with a standard authority statement (v. 5).

v1 "Stephen Burnett", cp. D&C 75:35. Both Burnett and Eden Smith had been called some few weeks earlier with different companions. It is likely the previous missionary work was not far from home, given Eden Smith's journal comments, so the missions were relatively short and they were reassigned.

v2 "Eden Smith", the son of John Smith, cp. D&C 75:36.

v3 As opposed to being called "into the eastern countries" or to Missouri, which would necessitate lengthy travel, this verse suggests they should preach anywhere around the immediate vicinity.

v4 Compare D&C 52:9.

Historical Material Pertaining to Doctrine & Covenants 80

This revelation was first published in the Kirtland edition Doctrine and Covenants in 1835, page 206. It was published in Times and Seasons, volume 5, number 15, pages 608-609, dated August 15, 1844. It was published in the Millennial Star, volume 14, number 10, page 146, dated May 1, 1852.

Excerpts from Who's Who in the Doctrine and Covenants

Eden Smith's missionary labors in 1831-32 were of short duration and were performed within five to fifteen miles of his home. For example, his mission with Micah Welton began in Northampton, Ohio, on 10 December 1831 and ended in Northampton nine days later (see D&C 75:36). He kept a journal of his missionary activities from 25 September 1831 to 21 August 1832. A typical entry reads: "I went to Stow and preachd in the fore noon and did tonight and then attended in the afternoon and preachd and then returned home and Laboured for the support of my familey."

In March 1832 at Hiram, Ohio, the Prophet received a revelation directing Eden to serve a mission with Stephen Burnett (see D&C 80:1-2). According to Eden's journal, they served in eastern Ohio on a number of missionary trips during the following months into the surrounding country; he held many meetings and baptized a few. He later joined Charles C. Rich in preaching near Eugene, Ohio, and served as the president of the branch there. (Susan Easton Black, Who's Who in the Doctrine and Covenants, pages 271-272)

Only a few of Eden Smith's missionary entries are preserved, one of which states: "We traveled on north two miles and Cald with A presbyterian Priest and told him Concerning the Bok of mormon and Concerning the Gosple of Jesus Christ and he Cald for proof of the Book of Mormon and we cited him to the bible and he said he did not Receive that and we told the Cituation he was in and what he must do left him and went on our way." (Susan Easton Black, Who's Who in the Doctrine and Covenants, pages 39-40)

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