

Doctrine and Covenants 19

Lesson 10: Come, Follow Me, Doctrine and Covenants, 7 March 2025

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Introduction

After the three and eight witnesses saw and testified of the plates, Joseph began to arrange for printing of the book, secured by a note from Martin Harris against his farm after the reception of D&C 19. In the midst of local opposition in Palmyra, including Abner Cole's illegally printing excerpts and residents vowing not to buy the book, the Book of Mormon went on sale and began to be used for the first missionary efforts. Finally, on 6 April 1830, Joseph and five other elders officially organized The Church of Christ.

Summary Chronology

- **Early June 1829** – Joseph Smith and Martin Harris visited printers in Palmyra and Rochester, New York, trying to find a printer for the Book of Mormon. In the end, Egbert B. Grandin of Palmyra agreed to print it with a portion of Harris' land as security.
- **Thu, 11 June 1829** – The Copyright was obtained for the Book of Mormon with the printed title page as part of the application.
- **Mid-June 1829** – Joseph Smith received D&C 14, 18, 15, and 16.
- **Fri, 26 Jun 1829** – Egbert B. Grandin published the title page of the Book of Mormon in his newspaper, the *Wayne Sentinel*.
- **About Wed, 1 Jul 1829** – The Book of Mormon translation was completed, according to David Whitmer, and the plates returned to Moroni.
- **Early August 1829** – Oliver Cowdery began making a second copy of the Book of Mormon manuscript to give to the printer.
- **Aug 1829** – Joseph Smith received D&C 19, for Martin Harris concerning his contract to print the Book of Mormon.
- **Tue, 25 Aug 1829** – Martin Harris pledged his farm for \$3,000 to provide payment for Grandin to print 5,000 copies of the Book of Mormon.
- **Late August 1829** – The first pages of the Book of Mormon are delivered to the printer for typesetting.
- **Late Aug 1829** – Hyrum Smith delivered the first copied pages to Grandin for printing. Solomon Chamberlain took printed, unbound pages to Canada, telling people about it.
- **Early Sep 1829** – First gathering of the Book of Mormon printed.
- **Sun, 4 Oct 1829** – Joseph returned to Harmony, leaving the printing in the hands of Oliver and Hyrum.
- **Thu, 8 Oct 1829** – Oliver Cowdery purchased a Bible (or he and Joseph before he left) from Grandin's bookstore for \$3.75; Joseph later wrote this date in the cover. This Bible will be used for the Joseph Smith Translation work.
- **Wed, 9 Dec 1829** – Abner Cole announced in his paper, *The Reflector*, that he would shortly publish sections of the Book of Mormon.
- **Mon, 28 Dec 1829** – Joseph Smith, Sr., left Palmyra for Harmony, PA, to inform Joseph Smith, Jr., of Cole's efforts.
- **Sat, Wed, Fri, 2, 13, 22 Jan 1830** – Cole published unauthorized excerpts from 1 Nephi in *The Reflector*.
- **Mid-Jan 1830** – Joseph Smith arrived in Palmyra to confront Cole.
- **Sat, 16 Jan 1830** – Joseph Smith signed agreement with Martin Harris about Book of Mormon sales.
- **Late Jan 1830** – Joseph Smith won arbitration against Abner Cole who had copied excerpts from the Book of Mormon he discovered at Grandin's print shop into his own newspaper.
- **Early 1830** – Joseph Smith received a revelation agreeing to Hyrum's plan to sell the copyright of the Book of Mormon in Canada, in order to raise money to help with the printing. Hiram Page and Oliver Cowdery went to Kingston in February 1830 with that goal, but returned unsuccessful.

- **Mar 1830** – Meetings were reportedly held in Palmyra where people agreed to boycott the sale of the Book of Mormon. Binding of the book began.
- **About Sun, 14 Mar 1830** – Joseph Smith wrote the Preface to the Book of Mormon.
- **Fri, 19 Mar 1830** – Grandin states in *The Wayne Sentinel* that the Book of Mormon will soon be available for sale.
- **Fri, 26 March 1830** – The Book of Mormon is advertised for sale at Grandin’s bookstore in *The Wayne Sentinel*. Joseph Smith arrived in Palmyra for a five-day visit.
- **Late March 1830** – Solomon Chamberlain takes 8-10 copies of the Book of Mormon and goes preaching. He sold one copy.
- **Mon, 29 March 1830** – Hyrum and Samuel Smith are suspended from the Presbyterian church in Palmyra for non-attendance.
- **Tue, 6 April 1830** – The Church of Christ is organized in Peter Whitmer, Sr.’s home.

Doctrine and Covenants 19

Setting

For years, D&C 19 was dated to “March 1830,” based on dates put in the 1833 Book of Commandments and the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants. The oldest copy is from Revelation Book 1, but the first part is missing, having been torn from the book, so the date is not listed. It appears that when it was published in the Book of Commandments, they were not certain of the date but picked March 1830 based on available information. Later, this was supported by a story told by Lucy Smith in her history about Martin needing a “commandment” to complete the transaction of his property to Grandin to pay for the Book of Mormon, or Grandin would halt the printing. Joseph Knight, Sr., later picked up on this date and story in telling his own account of this period, apparently getting the whole story from the printed Doctrine and Covenants and not from any personal account. In addition, Joseph Smith’s own history copied the date from the Doctrine and Covenants as well, being assembled by scribes who were not witnesses to the event. Interestingly, however, they placed it in an 1829 context, likely either realizing the date was incorrect or being told so by Joseph Smith. The incongruence remains in his history today.¹

New Joseph Smith Papers evidence shows that the date in the 2013 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, summer 1829, is the correct one (in fact, we can narrow it to mid- to late-August 1829; see discussion below). Regarding the 1833 Book of Commandments and 1835 Doctrine and Covenants, in both cases, the date was put in parentheses, indicating that it was not certain. In later editions, the parentheses were removed, fixing the date at March 1830. When he copied it into Revelation Book 1, John Whitmer included it with other 1829 revelations and listed it in the index in that year. The context also fits summer 1829, once we better understand the Book of Mormon publishing activities happening that summer, and do not fit events of March 1830.²

The timing of this revelation makes it a key document in a busy time of Church history. There are no other revelations published in the Doctrine and Covenants dated between D&C 19 (August 1829) and the organization of the Church in April 1830.³ So there is a lot of history to cover in those crucial months before and after this section (see also Results).

In terms of this revelation, Martin Harris had agreed to help fund the publication of the Book of Mormon as early as mid-1828 and renewed that commitment after his experience as one of the Three Witnesses in June 1829. Even before Joseph and Oliver moved to Fayette at the beginning of June, Martin was apparently looking into the process of securing the copyright and talking to printers about the project. The title page and copyright form were submitted in Utica, New York on 11 June 1829. Given travel time and the fact that the printed title page already conformed to the requirements (including

¹ For commentaries that follow this line of thinking, see Robinson and Garrett, *A Commentary*, 1:110-112; McConkie and Ostler, *Revelations*, 143-144; even the fairly recent Harper, *Making Sense*, 68-69 places it in March 1830, though in his more recent synopsis on Scripture Central, he supports the August 1829 date (see [Historical Context and Background of D&C 19 | Doctrine and Covenants Central](#)).

² This whole setting section is based on *JSP*, D1:85-88 (Revelation, circa Summer 1829 [D&C 19], [Historical Introduction](#)) and McKay and Dirkmaat, *From Darkness unto Light*, 163-197.

³ As we’ll discuss in the next lesson, parts of D&C 20 were likely first recorded well before April 1830, but the exact date cannot be discerned.

putting the title “Author and Proprietor” under Joseph’s name), Martin Harris had to have researched it early.⁴ The details of how the copyright title page was printed and who delivered it to Utica are unknown.

Shortly after Joseph arrived in Fayette to finish the translation in the Whitmer home, the search for a printer began in earnest, starting with one in Palmyra, Egbert B. Grandin, who printed the *Wayne Sentinel* newspaper and other items. Grandin said the cost to print 5,000 copies of the book would be \$3,000, a sum that may have surprised Martin and Joseph. For Joseph Smith, that was more than he could typically earn in ten years doing the kind of labor he was accustomed to.

Even after agreeing to his terms, Grandin declined the project and even attempted to have friends and neighbors talk Martin out of it. Martin was determined, so the men were forced to look elsewhere.

The other printer in town was Jonathan A. Hadley, a twenty-year-old new business owner who printed the *Palmyra Freeman* paper, an anti-Masonic publication. Nothing is known of their conversations, but Hadley’s later negative press against the book indicates that their talks were extensive (he knew many details about the project) and yet he not only declined but thought it was great foolishness. Still, Hadley appears to have referred Joseph and Martin to his former employer in Rochester, which is where the men next went.

In Rochester, the men first met with Thurlow Weed. He had served in state politics and, like Hadley, published an anti-Masonic paper. Weed also declined to publish the book, explaining later that he did not have the facility for such a project, nor the inclination to do it, considering Joseph Smith a fraud, even after Joseph apparently gave him a demonstration of how he had translated the record.

Going directly across the street, the men had better luck with Elihu Marshall, the printer of the *Rochester Album* paper. Marshall was an experienced book publisher and seller. Marshall was also very open-minded religiously, publicly supporting those who lived good lives but believed differently than he. After discussing the terms, Marshall accepted the job. Now, however, Joseph hesitated, due to the distance (about 25 miles from Palmyra) and the cost involved, because someone would have to board in Rochester to bring the daily pages in for printing and protect the manuscript. No contract was signed, but with Marshall’s agreement in hand, the men returned to Grandin in Palmyra.

Telling Grandin that Marshall was prepared to print the book, the men were able to persuade him to take on the job after all. His terms were payment of \$3,000 up front instead of the more usual method of splitting the proceeds from the book sales. Calculations show that this was a \$1,000 profit for Grandin, a very inflated price. But Grandin knew he would have to buy 800 pounds of pica type to set the book, thousands of pages of paper, and pay workers for several months, all without any income during the printing—and he expected none after. So, getting all the money at the start was his only option. Joseph and Martin accepted the terms. The date of the final agreement is not known, but by 11 August 1829, the news reached Rochester that the deal was done.

Martin now needed to do his part and mortgage a portion of his 320-acre farm to get Grandin the money. His wife, Lucy, was absolutely against it, and he had been told by multiple people that it was a fools’ errand. He hesitated, and the project was delayed getting started as a result. Martin knew he faced certain ruin if the book did not sell. At the same time, his wife Lucy was gathering testimony from neighbors that Joseph was duping Martin out of his money and took Joseph to court. Martin boldly testified in Joseph’s behalf but still was not ready to close on the mortgage.

It was at this time that D&C 19 was given to Martin, instructing him in the strongest terms to pay the debt so the book could be printed. The exact date is not known, but on 25 August 1829, Martin complied, so it was before that date and after the agreement with Grandin was reached, which was sometime in early August. Grandin’s payment was thus secured on 25 August and Martin’s role was done on that date, showing that D&C 19 could not have been in March 1830 but in August 1829.

Documents and Publication

The oldest copy is a partial one (starting at v. 14 to the end) in Revelation Book 1, the previous two pages being missing from the book. D&C 19 was first published as Chapter 16 of the 1833 Book of Commandments and as Section 44 in the 1835 and 1844 Doctrine and Covenants.

⁴ It could be that he at least started this research in early 1828 when he went to New York to visit the scholars with the characters from the plates. As part of that trip, he stopped in Utica, where the copyright was later filed in 1829.

Outline

1. God's judgments ([1-12](#))
2. Christ suffered for all ([13-19](#))
3. Commandments to Martin ([20-41](#))

Introduction

Joseph and Martin learned great truths in addition to Martin's request for a commandment about his farm. The doctrine of eternal and endless punishment being tied to God's name and not as a definition of that punishment is unique in the Christian world. The personal description of Jesus' suffering for our sins is also unique, supporting and adding to the third-person accounts in the four gospels. Martin learned about repentance, pray, and trusting the Lord. Like other revelations given to individuals at this time, the Lord can still use them to teach all of us critical lessons and doctrine today. We're grateful this one was preserved and made available for us to ponder and live by.

God's Judgments (1-12)

1 I am Alpha and Omega, Christ the Lord; yea, even I am he, the beginning and the end, the Redeemer of the world.

2 I, having accomplished and finished the will of him whose I am, even the Father, concerning me—having done this that I might subdue all things unto myself—

3 Retaining all power, even to the destroying of Satan and his works at the end of the world, and the last great day of judgment, which I shall pass upon the inhabitants thereof, judging every man according to his works and the deeds which he hath done.

4 And surely every man must repent or suffer, for I, God, am endless.

5 Wherefore, I revoke not the judgments which I shall pass, but woes shall go forth, weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth, yea, to those who are found on my left hand.

6 Nevertheless, it is not written that there shall be no end to this torment, but it is written endless torment.

7 Again, it is written eternal damnation; wherefore it is more express than other scriptures, that it might work upon the hearts of the children of men, altogether for my name's glory.

8 Wherefore, I will explain unto you this mystery, for it is meet unto you to know even as mine apostles.

9 I speak unto you that are chosen in this thing, even as one, that you may enter into my rest.

10 For, behold, the mystery of godliness, how great is it! For, behold, I am endless, and the punishment which is given from my hand is endless punishment, for Endless is my name. Wherefore—

11 Eternal punishment is God's punishment.

12 Endless punishment is God's punishment.

Commentary

After clearly identifying himself as the speaker, Jesus announces his qualifications to be our Redeemer, the authority he has because of it, and then defines some key terms so that we have insight into both his punishments and his mercy.

1 *I am Alpha and Omega, Christ the Lord.* The revelation boldly proclaimed whose voice was speaking in the first verse. This is a powerful revelation in the first person, the most significant and personal account of Jesus' Atonement that we have in scripture.

2 *having accomplished and finished the will of him whose I am, even the Father.* Jesus taught that those who loved him did the will of the Father (Matthew 12:50). In his own life, he obeyed the Father perfectly, in all things, to the very end, allowing him to declare here that he "accomplished and finished" the Father's will.

3 *even to the destroying of Satan and his works.* Having done the complete will of the Father and overcome the world, Jesus has all power over Satan and all men, giving him authority to pass judgment on all.

4 *repent or suffer, for I, God, am endless.* This verse introduces a key theme and teaching of Section 19, which went against everything taught in Joseph's day by other churches. They taught that God's punishment was eternal—meaning never-ending. The Lord revealed here the true meaning of that term, which instead shows his amazing and infinite mercy.

5 *to those who are found on my left hand.* Evoking the image from his apocalyptic sermon at the end of Matthew, Jesus says that those on his left hand will experience judgment and suffering because they did not repent. See Matt. 5:32-41.

6-7 *it is written endless torment . . . eternal damnation*. The Lord explained that these terms are used to motivate us to repent (“work upon the hearts”), but that they do not mean that there is no end to torment. Even though these words were taught by other churches, the words ‘endless torment’ are not found in the Bible. They are, however, in the Book of Mormon seven times, and this once in the Doctrine and Covenants. In other words, the Lord is actually building on a Book of Mormon teaching, where it is clearly taught that people are delivered from endless torment by the Savior’s Atonement.

‘Eternal damnation’ is found only once in the Bible, in Mark 3:29, and not in the Book of Mormon, but twice in the Doctrine and Covenants (here and 29:44). In Mark, it is the potential fate of those who “blaspheme against the Holy Ghost.”

8 *I will explain unto you this mystery*. A mystery is something that can only be learned by revelation, which was exactly what the Lord was offering here to Martin Harris.

10 *Endless is my name*. God has many names in scripture, ‘Endless’ being one of them, something we learn here.

11 *God’s punishment*. Because Eternal and Endless are his names, eternal or endless punishment simply means punishment that originates from God.

Christ Suffered for All (13-19)

13 Wherefore, I command you to repent, and keep the commandments which you have received by the hand of my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., in my name;

14 And it is by my almighty power that you have received them;

15 Therefore I command you to repent—repent, lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by my wrath, and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore—how sore you know not, how exquisite you know not, yea, how hard to bear you know not.

16 For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent;

Commentary

Martin was taught to repent or suffer, as Jesus suffered for us. Jesus suffered mightily but endured it and accomplished his eternal mission. Martin is invited to do that same and accomplish his own mission.

13 *I command you to repent*. Martin Harris is called upon to repent again, or suffer the endless and eternal punishment just described in the previous section.

14 *keep the commandments which you have received*. The early Saints, and especially Martin, often called a revelation a “commandment.” Martin was thus told to stay true to the revelations the Lord had given him already, which included the need for him to fund the printing of the Book of Mormon.

15 *smite you by the rod of my mouth*. The phrase comes from Isaiah 11:4 which was quoted by Nephi (2 Nephi 21:4) and then used again by him in his interpretation of Isaiah’s words. The word translated “rod” in Isaiah has the meaning of a staff, stick, or javelin—all weapons in one way or another. These weapons are usually wielded by hands. But the Lord’s word alone—which was enough to create the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1)—is a mighty weapon to judge and punish the wicked.

15 *how sore you know not*. We do not want to sin without repenting, because there will be eternal consequences and suffering, which we cannot begin to comprehend now.

16 *I, God, have suffered these things for all*. Christ has amazingly suffered completely voluntarily for every person that has ever lived or will ever live. He did this so that we would not have to suffer (as much) if we would repent. But if we do not bring ourselves to repent, we are left to suffer as he did (v. 17).

18 *bleed at every pore*. Some New Testament scholars contend that the account in Luke 22:44 is a late addition and not part of the original text because some of the oldest texts do not include it. But some of the most ancient manuscripts do include this verse, so there is controversy. Section 19 resolves the issue, because we get the Savior himself explaining what his experience was. The double reference using Luke’s wording and that of the drinking the bitter cup tie it to his

experience in the garden of Gethsemane, the beginning of his Atoning sacrifice. This is a first-person account of that experience, even as the gospels are second (or third, in Luke's case) person accounts, making D&C 19 an intimate expression of Jesus' own feelings.

19 *I partook and finished my preparations.* He had prepared for his Atonement from the earliest time of his premortal existence, from the great council where he stood and declared his willingness to do the will of the Father. After eons of preparation, he finished those preparations in Gethsemane and on the cross at Calvary. In turn, those events were preparations for his Second Coming when he will transform the earth into a terrestrial kingdom with peace and prosperity under his divine rule, leading to the eventual exaltation of the Father's children.

Commandments to Martin (20-41)

20 Wherefore, I command you again to repent, lest I humble you with my almighty power; and that you confess your sins, lest you suffer these punishments of which I have spoken, of which in the smallest, yea, even in the least degree you have tasted at the time I withdrew my Spirit.

21 And I command you that you preach naught but repentance, and show not these things unto the world until it is wisdom in me.

22 For they cannot bear meat now, but milk they must receive; wherefore, they must not know these things, lest they perish.

23 Learn of me, and listen to my words; walk in the meekness of my Spirit, and you shall have peace in me.

24 I am Jesus Christ; I came by the will of the Father, and I do his will.

25 And again, I command thee that thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife; nor seek thy neighbor's life.

26 And again, I command thee that thou shalt not covet thine own property, but impart it freely to the printing of the Book of Mormon, which contains the truth and the word of God—

27 Which is my word to the Gentile, that soon it may go to the Jew, of whom the Lamanites are a remnant, that they may believe the gospel, and look not for a Messiah to come who has already come.

28 And again, I command thee that thou shalt pray vocally as well as in thy heart; yea, before the world as well as in secret, in public as well as in private.

29 And thou shalt declare glad tidings, yea, publish it upon the mountains, and upon every high place, and among every people that thou shalt be permitted to see.

30 And thou shalt do it with all humility, trusting in me, reviling not against revilers.

31 And of tenets thou shalt not talk, but thou shalt declare repentance and faith on the Savior, and remission of sins by baptism, and by fire, yea, even the Holy Ghost.

32 Behold, this is a great and the last commandment which I shall give unto you concerning this matter; for this shall suffice for thy daily walk, even unto the end of thy life.

33 And misery thou shalt receive if thou wilt slight these counsels, yea, even the destruction of thyself and property.

34 Impart a portion of thy property, yea, even part of thy lands, and all save the support of thy family.

35 Pay the debt thou hast contracted with the printer. Release thyself from bondage.

36 Leave thy house and home, except when thou shalt desire to see thy family;

37 And speak freely to all; yea, preach, exhort, declare the truth, even with a loud voice, with a sound of rejoicing, crying—Hosanna, hosanna, blessed be the name of the Lord God!

38 Pray always, and I will pour out my Spirit upon you, and great shall be your blessing—yea, even more than if you should obtain treasures of earth and corruptibleness to the extent thereof.

39 Behold, canst thou read this without rejoicing and lifting up thy heart for gladness?

40 Or canst thou run about longer as a blind guide?

41 Or canst thou be humble and meek, and conduct thyself wisely before me? Yea, come unto me thy Savior. Amen.

Commentary

Martin is given many commandments in this revelation—to repent; to only preach repentance and other core doctrines; to learn of Christ and listen to his words; to be meek; to not covet; to pray vocally and silently; to declare glad tidings; to be humble and trust in God; to avoid speculative gospel topics; and to surrender his property to print the Book of Mormon. With all of these commandments, though, he is also promised great blessing that are worth more than the treasures of the earth. Isn't this reason enough to rejoice?

20 ***I command you again to repent.*** The word “repent” is used nine times in this section; only sections 18 and 42 use it more. This was a message that Martin—and now all of us—needs to hear.

20 ***you have tasted at the time I withdrew my Spirit.*** After the loss of the first Book of Lehi manuscript, Martin suffered a great deal in his spirit, losing the support of the Lord and going through a painful repentance process. Reminding him of that, the Lord counseled for continued and deeper repentance now, lest he suffer that, and worse. This could also be a reference to when Jesus suffered the withdrawal of the Spirit during his own sacrifice, helping Martin see this his personal suffering was “in the least degree” compared to the Savior’s.⁵

21 ***show not these things unto the world.*** Meaning this revelation and these truths. They will one day be punished but in 1829, they were just for Martin.

22 ***they cannot bear meat now, but milk.*** The world would definitely struggle with this doctrine—today as in Martin’s day. Though now the revelation is freely available to anyone who wants to read it, we do not pull out D&C 19 in the missionary discussions, for example, and start teaching from it. It is meat that is best understood when weaned from the milk of gospel basics.

23 ***Learn of me, and listen to my words.*** Elder David A. Bednar taught that knowing Jesus is a critical part of our salvation, which comes as we exercise faith in him, follow his commandments, serve him and others, and believe his words and become what he wants us to become. We must not just know about him but know him as we would a good friend.⁶

24 ***I came by the will of the father, and I do his will.*** Later Joseph Smith will reveal words that Moses recorded about Jehovah’s pre-mortal decision: “Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever” (Moses 4:2). In the New Testament, Jesus advocated doing the Father’s will many times (e.g., Matt. 7:21; 12:50) and in the gospel of John, Jesus taught that he constantly and consistently does the will of the Father (John 5:30; 6:39).

25 ***thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife.*** There is no evidence that Martin had any adulterous designs. But Martin was in a bad marriage and surely sometimes looked at other marriages and wished his might be like that. The Lord counseled him against such thinking.

26 ***thou shalt not covet thine own property.*** We usually think of coveting as something we do toward another’s property or situation (in a Ten Commandments type of approach). But the Lord here commanded Martin not to covet or desire even his own property, but to give it up that the Book of Mormon might be printed.

26 ***impart it freely to the printing of the Book of Mormon.*** As explained above, this was a very hard commandment for Martin, and understandably so. He knew he was giving up basically everything he owned to get the book printed. In the end, he made the sacrifice, which is how we should remember him.

27 ***my word to the Gentile, that soon it may go to the Jew.*** The Book of Mormon is to a worldwide audience, both Gentile and Jew (which included the Lamanites in this verse). Moroni said as much on the title page, which Joseph Smith had recently printed and used for the copyright: “Written to the Lamanites, who are a remnant of the house of Israel; and also to Jew and Gentile.”

28 ***pray vocally as well as in thy heart.*** Private prayers uttered in silence are good communication with the Lord. But here he counseled Martin and us to also offer vocal prayers, which can have a certain power as we organize our thinking and petition out loud for the things we desire for ourselves and others.

29 ***declare glad tidings, yea, publish it upon the mountains.*** Martin’s role focused on the good news of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, especially as one of the Three Witnesses; he was to declare it to the world, metaphorically upon high mountains to all could hear. The use of the word “publish” likely kept the focus on Martin’s concern as well.

30 ***with all humility, trusting in me, reviling not against revilers.*** Harris had many revilers, including his own wife and other family members. People in Palmyra, Rochester, and New York all counseled him to walk away from Joseph Smith and this book. But the Lord promised that if he stayed humble and exhibited faith (another word for trust), he would be supported.

31 ***of tenets thou shalt not talk.*** When teaching the gospel, it is best to stick to the core messages of faith, repentance, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. All the early revelations counsel recipients to stay focused on core doctrines.

⁵ Griffiths, *Scripture Central Commentary*, 1:203.

⁶ David A. Bednar, “[If Ye Had Known Me](#),” October 2016 General Conference.

32 ***a great and last commandment***. Unlike the first Book of Mormon manuscript requests from Martin, this request would get one answer and no more. Martin needed to accept it as the last word on this topic.

32 ***this shall suffice for thy daily walk***. Martin had a tendency toward the fantastic and got excited about manifestations that went beyond the everyday experience of a faithful Saint. The Lord's counsel was to keep his faith and preach simple on a daily basis.

33 ***misery thou shalt receive if thou wilt slight these counsels***. Not a threat but a statement of consequence, which Harris experienced when he left the church for a while. When we ignore God's will, misery will always be the final result.

34 ***Impart a portion of thy property, yea, even part of thy lands***. Martin Harris did obey the revelation. At great personal cost to himself, he mortgaged about half of his farm (151 acres at about \$20/acre) to pay the cost of printing the Book of Mormon. He struggled with some things, but he also strived to be obedient to the Lord's commands through his young Prophet.

35 ***Pay the debt thou hast contracted***. The debt is Martin's, not Joseph's, not even the Lord's. He is the one in bondage, coveting his own land. Selling the land will cost him personally but will release him from that bondage and free him up to serve the Lord.

36 ***Leave thy house and home***. As a witness, Martin was expected to travel and bear testimony to his experiences and the Book of Mormon. This proved to be another difficult commandment for Martin, essentially never leaving Kirtland once he settled there.

37 ***preach, exhort, declare the truth***. Martin was not a preacher but as time went on, he did grow bolder in his telling of the truth. At the end of his life, he would declare his testimony of the Book of Mormon and of Joseph Smith to anyone who would listen.

38 ***Pray always, and I will pour out my Spirit upon you***. What a great promise! As the brother of Jared was chastised for not praying regularly (Ether 2:14), Martin was counseled to make prayer part of his daily walk, resulting in an abundance of the Spirit in his life. This blessing would be more valuable to him and "treasures of earth," surely referring to his own property there in Palmyra.

39 ***canst thou read this without rejoicing***. The Lord's perspective is fascinating. Martin was commanded sternly to repent or suffer, was told to sell off his property, and was called to sacrifice for God. Then this question—doesn't this revelation bring you joy and gladness? The gospel presents many paradoxes to us, such as when we submit ourselves to God and 'sacrifice' much, we discover that it is cause for rejoicing, sometimes to our own surprise.

40 ***canst thou run about longer as a blind guide?*** Jesus condemned some in his day as "blind guides" (Matthew 23:16, 24), meaning those who stressed over small issues of the Law of Moses but overlooked the truly critical issues relating to salvation and exaltation. Martin had been worried about his position in society, his wealth, and his place of residence. These were important, to be sure, but the Lord was asking him to trust and quit worrying about small matters when truly great and marvelous works were happening all around him. The Lord did not want Martin to be blind to great miracles.

41 ***come unto me thy Savior***. His mercy is continual, and no matter our decisions and choices, Christ continues to call us to come to him, repent, leave our sins behind, and be his children.

Results

On 25 August 1829, Martin Harris mortgaged nearly all his available property to Egbert B. Grandin for \$3,000. It was an 18-month note, meaning Martin could stay until the note was due on 25 February 1831, and retain ownership of the land if the note was paid in full before that due date. Grandin was also allowed to sell the mortgage for cash to speculators, who then took possession of it (today called assigning a loan and still commonly done). Grandin held the note until 21 October 1830, then sold it to Thomas Roger II, his wife's great-uncle, for \$2,000. Martin then sold 151 acres of his property, which included his house, to Thomas Lakey for \$3,000 on 1 April 1831 just before he left for Kirtland, Ohio (May 1831). The \$3,000, though, went to Rogers, the holder of the note, who may have also given some to Grandin (in other words, he funded the initial cost of printing with his \$2,000 purchase of the note, and then both collected from the sale of Martin's property). Lakey then sold it on 28 January 1832 to John Graves for \$3,300. Everyone profited from the transaction—

except Martin Harris, who sold his farm to pay the debt, as he had been told to do in D&C 19.⁷ However, Martin later said, “I never lost one cent. Mr. Smith . . . paid me all that I advanced, and more.”⁸

Printing the Book of Mormon

With Harris’ note in hand, Grandin started printing the Book of Mormon in September 1829, after purchasing type and paper in New York. The work continued through the fall and winter into early 1830, while Joseph returned to his farm in Harmony, Pennsylvania.

The task of supervising the printing of the Book of Mormon fell mainly to Oliver Cowdery and Hyrum Smith, with Martin paying close attention to the progress. Oliver had started making a copy of the manuscript to give to the printer in the summer of 1829; the men did not want to surrender the one and only original manuscript and risk losing it, as Martin had done with the first manuscript. This was, of course, the second time that Oliver Cowdery had written nearly the entire Book of Mormon out in longhand: in the printer’s manuscript, Oliver wrote about 84%; John and Christian Whitmer wrote about 15%; and Hyrum Smith wrote about 1%.⁹

John Gilbert was the lead typesetter at Grandin’s shop. Oliver or Hyrum brought him a few pages of the copy at a time, and he would mark it up with punctuation and small corrections, then begin setting the type for the pages. Generally, Oliver seems to have been able to keep up with the pace of copying, but for some of the printing (5 of 21 gatherings), they had to give the original manuscript to Gilbert, either because they fell behind or because they needed the manuscript for the Canadian copyright effort.¹⁰

Correspondence

During this period, Joseph and Oliver corresponded through letters, which are preserved in the Joseph Smith Papers.

The first was written on 22 October 1829 by Joseph to Oliver. He commented on his arrival in Harmony on 4 Oct, that he just bought a horse, and that Josiah Stowell was nearly ready to spend “five or six hundred dollars” buying books (there is no evidence he was able to arrange that). He was very anxious to hear from Oliver on the progress of the printing.¹¹

Oliver wrote back on 6 November 1829, spending much of the letter writing about his desires to serve God and his gratitude for salvation and desire to be prepared for the Second Coming. Oliver said the printing work had been somewhat delayed because of illness at Grandin’s (perhaps with John Gilbert) but Grandin still hoped to be done by early February 1830. He mentioned a letter from a man named Thomas B. Marsh, from Boston, who had heard about the book and expressed interest.¹² In a PS, Oliver stated that he had copied the printer’s manuscript to Alma speaking to his son, so about Alma 36-42.¹³

On 28 December 1829, Oliver wrote again. He told Joseph that he had “So Soon become a printer” by setting several pages of type for the project.¹⁴ He has been pondering his mission and has experienced “many long Struglings in prayr of Sorrow for the Sins of my fellow beings.”¹⁵

Abner Cole

Shortly after this letter, a man named Abner Cole, who was printing a newspaper in Palmyra and using Grandin’s print shop on evenings and weekends to do it, began to take type set for the Book of Mormon and reset it for his paper, printing excerpts from the book. Hyrum and Oliver discovered him working on it one Sunday, and insisted he stop because it was

⁷ *JSP*, D1:88n338; Revelation, circa Summer 1829 [D&C 19], [Historical Introduction](#). Transcriptions of the notes and contracts can be found at [harrismor.pdf](#), published by H. Michael Marquardt.

⁸ Agreement with Martin Harris, 16 January 1830, in *JSP*, D1:107-108; Agreement with Martin Harris, 16 January 1830, [1](#).

⁹ *JSP*, R3, Part 1:8; Printer’s Manuscript of the Book of Mormon, circa August 1829-circa January 1830, [Historical Introduction](#). Part 2:418 (Directory of Scribes and Printers).

¹⁰ *JSP*, R3, Part 1:9; Printer’s Manuscript of the Book of Mormon, circa August 1829-circa January 1830, [Historical Introduction](#).

¹¹ *JSP*, D1:96-97; Letter to Oliver Cowdery, 22 October 1829, [9](#).

¹² Later Marsh came to Palmyra and met Martin Harris and Oliver, taking back a sheet from the printing, and shortly thereafter joining the Church. Others also received sheets from the printer at this time, including the Hyde family (Orson Hyde was later an apostle) and Solomon Chamberlain, who took his sheets preaching; see MacKay and Dirkmaat, *From Darkness unto Light*, 200-202.

¹³ *JSP*, D1:98-101; Letter from Oliver Cowdery, 6 November 1829, [6](#).

¹⁴ This experience later played a role in Oliver taking the lead on printing several Church projects.

¹⁵ *JSP*, D1:103-104; Letter from Oliver Cowdery, 28 December 1829, [4](#).

a copyrighted work, but Cole went on printing it in his paper. In his paper, he also derided Joseph Smith and the whole project, working to turn his readers against the Prophet.

When Joseph heard about Cole's effort from his father, who came to Harmony to inform him, he immediately went to Palmyra and confronted Cole. As a former justice of the peace and constable,¹⁶ Cole knew the law, so when Joseph forbade him to print any more of the book to which he possessed the copyright, Cole's only reaction was rage and challenging Joseph to a fight. Finally, Cole agreed to arbitration. The details are unknown, but after printing two more editions of his paper with Book of Mormon quotations, he quit. However, he later published a fictional satire called the Book of Pukei that continued to mock the story of the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith.

Finishing the Book

In the meantime, Martin Harris continued to be concerned about how he was going to recover enough money to pay the mortgage. Initially his financing the book was seen as a gift, but Harris told Joseph during that he hoped to recover some of his investment through book sales. On 16 January 1830, Joseph and Martin signed an agreement that gave Martin the right to sell copies of the Book of Mormon until he collected the amount of his mortgage.¹⁷

Another interesting event happened early in 1830, perhaps as a result of the copyright confrontation with Cole combined with Martin Harris' concern about money, when Joseph received a revelation (not canonized or ever published in the Doctrine and Covenants) directing them to obtain copyrights for the Book of Mormon "upon all the face of the Earth."¹⁸ Apparently, Hyrum Smith suggested to Joseph that such a copyright could be sold in Canada for "considerable money."¹⁹ Accordingly, Oliver Cowdery, Joseph Knight, Sr. Hiram Page, and Josiah Stowell went to Canada to attempt to do that. The men were not successful, mainly due to the fact that Canada was still under British rule at that time and copyright had to be obtained in England, and was poorly enforced in Canada until more than a decade later. Thus no one was interested in purchasing the book's copyright and having the rights to print it in Canada.²⁰ Of course, later the Church pursued copyrights for all its scriptures in various nations and continues to protect the books using such methods today.

Finally, in late March 1830, the first books came from Luther Howard's bindery, located on the second floor of Grandin's building. Palettes of printed pages were lowered by a pulley system out the window from the third to second floor, for binding by Howard and his men. The finished books were lowered to the first floor in the same way, for sale in Grandin's store and for distribution to Joseph Smith and others. The books were immediately used for missionary purposes, and in just a few months, Oliver was writing from Kirtland, Ohio, telling Joseph Smith to send 500 copies because the Book of Mormon was in great demand.

Martin Harris

A final word about Martin Harris, the man the Lord spoke to in this revelation.²¹ After becoming one of the three witnesses and paying for the printing of the Book of Mormon, as mentioned above, Harris moved to Kirtland, Ohio, in May 1831. His wife, Lucy, stayed behind in Palmyra. Though they never divorced, Martin's support of Joseph Smith and his association with the Church was not tolerated by Lucy. Martin made many trips back to Palmyra to support Lucy and their four children, including one as she lay on her deathbed in the early summer of 1836, shortly after the dedication of the Kirtland temple. After her death, their youngest children came to Kirtland to live with Martin.

After Lucy's death, Martin married Caroline Young, a niece of Brigham Young, on 1 November 1836. Caroline was twenty and Martin was fifty-three. Family members speculated that because of severe acne as a youth, she struggled to find a husband, so a well-off and prominent Church leader who needed a wife to care for his young children seemed a good arrangement to her. She and Martin had seven children together. However, as time passed and Martin distanced himself from the Church after 1837, Caroline grew dissatisfied. The body of the Church moved to Missouri and then Illinois, but she and Martin remained in Kirtland. After the Saints left for the west, she wanted to join her extended family in Utah,

¹⁶ [Cole, Abner Biography](#), Joseph Smith Papers.

¹⁷ *JSP*, D1:105-108; Agreement with Martin Harris, 16 January 1830, [1](#).

¹⁸ *JSP*, D1:108-112; Revelation, circa Early 1830, [30-31](#). See also Smoot and Passantino, *Uncanonized Revelations*, 33-35.

¹⁹ *JSP*, D1:109; Revelation, circa Early 1830, [Historical Introduction](#).

²⁰ *JSP*, D1:108-112; Revelation, circa early 1830, [30](#).

²¹ Most of this comes from Dennis A. Wright, "Caroline Young Harris: The Kirtland Wife of Martin Harris," [111-123](#), in Dorius, Guy L., Craig K. Manscill, and Craig James Ostler, eds., *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: Ohio and Upper Canada*. Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 2006.

but Martin would not agree. Finally, in the spring of 1856, a pregnant Caroline packed up her family and joined the Horton D. Haight wagon company heading to Utah. She gave birth to the baby on route and bled badly, nearly dying herself. But she finally arrived in Salt Lake City that fall. Five years after arriving, she met John C. Davis, a British convert who had lost his wife crossing the plains, and though still married to Martin, married Davis. Martin still refused to come west, so Caroline must have determined she would never see him again. The couple moved to Payson, Utah, but the marriage did not last long. John left the Church after a dispute with Brigham Young over land, and Caroline returned to Salt Lake and again took the name of Harris. She and her oldest son, Martin Jr., continued to write to Martin and encourage him to come to Utah.

With the support of the Church, Martin finally agreed to come west in 1870, arriving by train at the end of August. He was rebaptized by Edward Stevenson and received his endowment in October 1870. He was eighty-eight years old. He bore testimony many times of the Book of Mormon, of Joseph Smith, and of the establishment of the Church. Both Martin and Caroline moved to Smithfield, Utah but lived separately. At age fifty-four, she and her son cared for Martin as he grew more sickly. In 1874, Martin Jr. moved to Clarkston, Utah, a short distance from Smithfield, taking his father with him. Martin passed away in Clarkston at the age of ninety-two, 10 July 1875. Caroline lived with her son until she passed away in 1888.

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