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Lesson 77 - The Book of Mormon Published

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LESSON 77.—THE BOOK OF MORMON PUBLISHED.

PLACE—Palmyra, N. Y.

Time—Spring of 1830.

TEXT.—I Nephi, 13: 35-37.

35. For behold, saith the Lamb, I will manifest myself unto thy seed, that they shall write many things which I shall minister unto them, which shall be plain and precious; and after thy seed shall be destroyed, and dwindle in unbelief, and also the seed of thy brethren; behold, these things shall be hid up to come forth unto the Gentiles, by the gift and power of the Lamb;

36. And in them shall be written my gospel, saith the Lamb, and my rock and my salvation;

37. And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost; and if they endure unto the end, they shall be lifted up at the last day, and shall be saved in the everlasting kingdom of the Lamb; and whoso shall publish peace, yea, tidings of great joy, how beautiful upon the mountains shall they be.

¹ II Nephi 27: 6-26. III Nephi 16: 4. Mor. 8: 4. ² II Nephi 30: 3. Jacob 5: 70-75. 6: 2, 3. ³ Isa. 52: 7. Rom. 10: 15. Mosiah 12: 21; 15: 15, 16, 17, 18.

LESSON STATEMENT.

The Prophet Joseph was busily engaged in the translation of the Book of Mormon records during the years 1828 and 1829. In this work he was assisted by his wife, Emma Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and Martin Harris, who at various times acted in the capacity of scribe. The Prophet was given some trouble by Martin Harris, who received reluctant permission to take a portion of the manuscript and show it to his relatives. It fell into the hands of the enemies of the work, necessitating the translation of a corresponding portion of the * "smaller plates," as a substitute for the lost manuscript. As a result of

Martin's carelessness, the instruments of translation were taken away from the Prophet for a time.

The work of translation was interrupted occasionally by Joseph's financial condition, which rendered it necessary for him to labor for the support of himself and wife. These financial difficulties were partially overcome by the generosity of Mr. Joseph Knight Sen., of Colesville, Broome County, New York, who, out of pure kindness of heart and regard for the Prophet, furnished provisions on a number of occasions. David Whitmer also rendered some assistance, inviting Joseph and Oliver to go to his father's house at Fayette, where they remained until the translation of the Book of Mormon was completed. Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris received a partial reward for their faithful labors, by being permitted to act as the three chosen witnesses to the divinity of the work. †

While the translation was in progress, many persons visited the Prophet and his companions, propounding many questions, some for the purpose of learning the truth, but many with the intention of injuring these faithful men. But the power of God was made manifest in the wisdom with which these

* See Words of Mormon, i: 3-7.

† See Ether 5: 2-4

questions were answered, and the work went on apace. At length the translation was completed, and arrangements were made for the publication. Mr. Egbert Grandon, a printer of Palmyra, Wayne County, New York, issued five thousand copies of the Book of Mormon in the early spring of 1830, charging three thousand dollars for the work. In order to retain the control of all future publications of the book, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery secured the copyright. And thus one of the most precious records ever issued was published to the world. It has since been translated into fully twelve foreign languages.

NOTES.

THE SMALLER PLATES.—When Lehi and his sons left Jerusalem, Nephi was told to keep two records of their history. One of these, engraved on the “larger plates,” was the secular history, containing an account of the wars, travels and troubles of the people. The “smaller plates” contained their religious history, the instructions of their prophets and other leading men being made prominent. The first translation was made from an abridgement of the larger plates. This having been lost by Martin Harris, the next translation, from I Nephi to Omni, inclusive, was made from the smaller plates in order to avoid trouble.

JOSEPH KNIGHT, SEN.—One of the most faithful friends of the Prophet Joseph. He became a member of the Church in June, 1830, and his house was a place of rest and refuge for the Prophet during those troublous times.

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TRANSLATIONS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.—This sacred record has been translated into these languages: Danish, Italian, Welsh, French, German, Swedish, Spanish, Dutch, Hawaiian, Maori, Hindostanee.

WHAT WE MAY LEARN FROM THIS LESSON.

1. That the Book of Mormon is a divine record. 2. That its translation was under the inspiration and guidance of God. 3. That Joseph Smith met with much persecution and annoyance during the work of translation. 4. That in spite of all opposition the labor

was successfully accomplished. 5. That God will always open a way for the fulfillment of his commands. 6. That friends may always be found to assist a servant of God in his work.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

1. In what years was the Book of Mormon translated? 2. By whom was it translated? 3. Where did he obtain power to translate? 4. Who acted as his scribes? 5. What do you know of each of these persons? 6. What trouble did Martin Harris cause the Prophet? 7. How was the place of the lost manuscript filled? 8. What do you know of the “smaller plates?” 9. What was Joseph Smith’s financial condition during this time? 10. Tell what you know of Joseph Knight, Sen. 11. Of David Whitmer. 12. Who were the three witnesses? 13. When was the translation completed? 14. By whom, and where was the first edition of the Book of Mormon issued? 15. When did this occur? 16. How many copies were printed? 17. At what cost? 18. Into what languages has the book been translated? 19. Who secured the copyright?

ILLUSTRATIVE PASSAGES.

BOOK OF MORMON PROMISED.

2. And also, that I may remember the promises which I have made unto thee, Nephi, and also unto thy father, that I would remember your seed; and that the words of your seed should proceed forth out of my mouth unto your seed. And my words shall hiss forth unto the ends of the earth, for a standard unto my people, which are of the house of Israel.

3. And because my words shall hiss forth, many of the Gentiles shall say, A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible. (*II Nephi: 29: 2, 3.*)

19. Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand.

20. And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes. (*Ezekiel 37: 19, 20.*)