

Section 36

Edward Partridge grew up in New England. He spent four years apprenticed to a hat maker before becoming a journeyman hatter with ambitions to go west to open his own factory. He married Lydia Clisbee and they moved to Painesville, Ohio, and succeeded according to their dreams. But something was missing. Respected and prosperous, Edward and Lydia still lacked spiritual fulfillment. They began to worship with Sidney Rigdon in 1828 and were nearly ripe to hear the restored gospel from Oliver Cowdery, Parley Pratt, and their companions in the fall of 1830. When the missionaries offered Edward a Book of Mormon, he refused but reconsidered.¹ Soon Edward “partly believed,” as Lydia put it, “but he had to take a journey to New York and see the Prophet.”²

Joseph's mother Lucy picked up the story there. Joseph, she said, was preaching in Waterloo, New York, when Edward arrived. Joseph invited remarks after his sermon, and Edward stood and said “He believed our testimony and was ready to be baptized,

¹ Richard L. Anderson, “The Impact of the First Preaching in Ohio,” *BYU Studies* 11:4 (1971): 489.

² History of Edward Partridge, Jr., 5, quoted in Anderson, “The Impact of the First Preaching in Ohio,” *BYU Studies* 11:4 (1971): 493.

‘if, said he, ‘brother Joseph will baptize me.’”³ Joseph baptized Edward two days later, then received section 36, apparently before Edward was confirmed by Sidney Rigdon.

This revelation shares a theme common to many others. It calls for urgency in declaring repentance to a perverted generation because the Lord is coming soon to burn the wicked. Section 36 not only calls Edward Partridge to preach the gospel; it sets forth the doctrine that every man is a missionary, not so much in the formal sense but as a duty of holding the priesthood. One who holds the priesthood preaches the gospel.

Edward Partridge obeyed this revelation. He was confirmed by the Lord’s hand—that is, by Sidney Rigdon acting for the Lord—and he spent his life declaring repentance and serving as a bishop. In 1835 he traveled roughly two thousand miles, held fifty meetings, visited nearly thirty branches of the Church, preached the gospel, and baptized three people. On November 7, 1835, Joseph received an un-canonized revelation in which the Lord praised Edward and his companion for “the integrity of their harts in laboring in my vinyard for the salvation of the souls of men.”⁴

³ Lavina Fielding Anderson, editor, *Lucy's Book: A Critical Edition of Lucy Mack Smith's Family Memoir* (Salt Lake City: Signature, 2001), 504–5.

⁴ “[Revelation, 7 November 1835](#),” p. 20, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed September 25, 2020.