

Other Book of Mormon Witnesses Testify

Last Updated
Feb 1998

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THE TESTIMONY OF EIGHT WITNESSES

Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come: That Joseph Smith, Jun., the translator of this work, has shown unto us the plates of which hath been spoken, which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated we did handle with our hands; and we also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship. And this we bear record with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shown unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world, to witness unto the world that which we have seen. And we lie not, God bearing witness of it.

CHRISTIAN WHITMER HIRAM PAGE
JACOB WHITMER JOSEPH SMITH, SEN.
PETER WHITMER, JUN. HYRUM SMITH
JOHN WHITMER SAMUEL H. SMITH

William Smith

TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM SMITH

Source: William Smith, "The Old Soldier's Testimony,"
The Saint's Herald 31(1884):643-44.

Sermon preach by William B. Smith, in the Saints' chapel, Deloit, Iowa, June 8th, 1864. Reported by C. E. Butterworth.

William Smith "Testimony," Saint's Herald 31 (1884), p.643

Bro. Smith arose and said: "Ladies, gentlemen, brothers, sisters and friends:--The subject I have under contemplation is the presentation of some particulars of history concerning the rise of Mormonism. While traveling among the Latter-day Saints, and others who are not of our faith, I am subjected to a great deal of criticism, or am asked a great many questions in regard to the opening of this new dispensation.

". . . I hold in my hand the Book of Mormon. In the past I have had some experience and personally know something about this matter. The world has been filled with articles for the purpose of making it appear a falsehood; One of the great hobbies raised upon which to fight is the angel's visit to Joseph Smith. Ministers take a great deal of pains to make it appear that this book was compiled from a manuscript written by one Solomon Spaulding. I know that this Spaulding story is a falsehood. I remember when Joseph called his father's family together, and told them that he had seen an angel, and what this angel

had told him. When Joseph received the plates, he did not say they were the Spaulding manuscript.

"... I well remember the effect produced upon my father's family, when he told them he was to receive the plates; how they looked forward with joy, and waited until the time should come. The circumstances that occurred, and the impressions made on my mind at that time, I can remember better than those which occurred two years ago. We were all looking forward for the time to come, father, mother, brothers and sisters. He did not receive the plates at the time he expected, but some four years afterward. He had not lived as directed. When he went to get the plates he found them as he was told he should. He took them from the stone box in which they were found, and placed them on the ground behind him, when the thought came into his mind that there might be a treasure hidden with them. While stooping forward to see, he was overpowered, so that he could not look farther. Turning to get the plates, he found they had gone; and on looking around found that they were in the box again; but he could not get them, and cried out, "Why can't I get the plates as Moroni told me I could?" The angel then appeared to him, and told him it was because he had not done as directed. That the plates could not be had for the purpose of making money. That he could not have them for four years.

"I remember how the family wept when they found Joseph could not get the plates at that time. It has generally been stated that my father's family were lazy, shiftless and poor; but this was never said by their neighbors, or until after the angel appeared and the story of the golden Bible was told.

"After my father's family moved to New York State, in about five years they cleared sixty acres of land, and fenced it. The timber on this land was very heavy. Some of the elms were so large that we had to nigger them off. They were too large to be cut with a cross-cut saw. We built a frame dwelling house and out buildings. My brothers Joseph and Hyrum had to work. Joseph did not have time to make gold plates.

"The time to receive the plates came at last. When Joseph received them, he came in and said: "Father, I have got the plates." All believed it was true, father, mother, brothers and sisters. You can tell what a child is. Parents know whether their children are truthful or not. The proof of the pudding is not in chewing the string, but in eating the pudding. Father knew his child was telling the truth. When the plates were brought in they were wrapped in a tow frock. My father then put them into a pillow case. Father said, "What, Joseph, can we not see them?"

"No, I was disobedient the first time, but I intend to be faithful this time; for I was forbidden to show them until they are translated, but you can feel them."

"We handled them [the plates] and could tell what they were. They were not quite as large as this Bible. Could tell whether they were round or square. Could raise the leaves this way (raising a few leaves of the Bible before him). One could easily tell that they were not stone, hewn out to deceive, or even a block of wood. Being a mixture of gold and copper, they were much heavier than stone, and very much heavier than wood.

"I expect to stand before angels and archangels and be judged for how I have told it. When Joseph received the plates he also received the Urim and Thummim, which he would place in a hat to exclude all light, and with the plates by his side he translated the characters, which were cut into the plates with some sharp instrument, into English. And thus, letter by letter, word by word, sentence by sentence, the whole book was translated. It was not written from the Spaulding Romance. That story is false. Some say this romance was stolen by Sidney Rigdon while at Pittsburg. This is false. Sidney Rigdon knew nothing about it. He never saw or heard tell of the Book of Mormon until it was presented to him by P. P. Pratt and others. He was never at my father's house to see my brother until after the book was published. If he had wanted to see Joseph at that time and remained very long, he would have had to be in the field rolling logs or carrying brush.

" I should obey the gospel. I have seen the three witnesses, and have questioned them closely. They all tell the same story. They are all dead but one. David Whitmer, the

only living witness, still lives and may be found at Richmond, Missouri. Now is the time to go and see him and make a scientific examination of his physiognomy and see if he can see angels where there are none.

"Why did all those who first believed this story continue to do so until they passed into the other world?

"I am satisfied that all who have believed in this work and continue to the end, will have no cause to regret it. I am glad for the privilege I have in telling these things. Glad to find so many who believe with this people. May God bless you all. Amen.

A gentleman in the congregation asked, "Where are these plates?"

Ans.--"They were delivered to the angel again."

Ques.--"How much did they weigh?"

Ans.--"As near as I could tell, about sixty pounds."

"[Following the visitations of Moroni to Joseph Smith,] we . . . all gathered. He [Joseph Smith] arose and told us how the angel appeared to him. . . He continued talking to us sometime. The whole family were melted to tears, and believed all he said. Knowing that he was very young, that he had not enjoyed the advantages of a common education; and knowing too, his whole character and disposition, they were convinced that he was totally incapable of arising before his aged parents, his brothers and sisters, and so solemnly giving utterance to anything but the truth. All of us, therefore, believed him and anxiously awaited the result of his visit to the hill Cumorah, in search of the plates containing the record of which the angel told him. He went, and upon his return told us that in consequence of his not obeying strictly the commandments which the angel had given him, he could not obtain the record until four years from that time.

"During this four years, I spent my time working on the farm, and in the different amusements of the young men of my age in the vicinity. I was quite wild and inconsiderate, paying no attention to religion of any kind, for which I received frequent lectures from my mother and my brother Joseph. He occupied himself part of the time working on the farm, and part of the time in Pennsylvania where he courted a young lady by the name of Emma Hale, whom he afterwards married. At the end of the appointed time he went and obtained the plates which were pointed out to him by the angel. The story being noised abroad, he was pursued while on his way home with the plates, by two persons who desired to obtain the possession of the plates to convert them into money. However, he escaped to the house and brought the plates with him, wrapped up in a tow frock. He could not permit us to see them, because he said the angel told him not to do so, and he was determined to obey strictly this time; for he had disobeyed before and was compelled to wait four years before he could come into possession of the plates.

"In consequence of his vision, and his having the golden plates and refusing to show them, a great persecution arose against the whole family, and he was compelled to remove into Pennsylvania with the plates, where he translated them by means of the Urim and Thummim, (which he obtained with the plates), and the power of God. The manner in which this was done was by looking into the Urim and Thummim, which was lying near by (covered up), and reading off the translation, which appeared in the stone by the power of God. He was engaged in this business as he had opportunity for about two years and a half. In the winter of 1829 and thirty, the Book of Mormon, which is the translation of part of the plates he obtained, was published. He then showed the plates to my father and my brothers Hyrum and Samuel, who were witnesses to the truth of the book which was translated from them. I was permitted to lift them as they laid in a pillow case; but not to see them, as it was contrary to the commands he had received. They [plates] weighed about sixty pounds according to the best of my judgment.

"We were all very much scoffed at and persecuted during all this time, while Joseph was receiving his vision and translating the plates. A particular account of his visions and life during this period, will be found in his biography, and therefore I omit it here. From the

time that Joseph received his first vision until the completion of the translation of the Book of Mormon, I was engaged as a farmer boy in working on the farm of my father."

**JOHN C. WHITMER REPORTS
TESTIMONIES OF WITNESSES, 1888**

Source: Andrew Jenson, Edward Stevenson, and Joseph S. Black,
"Historical Landmarks," Deseret News, 17 Sep 1888, p. 2.

"I [John C. Whitmer] was closely connected with Hiram Page in business transactions and other matters, he being married to my aunt. I knew him at all times and under all circumstances to be true to his testimony concerning the divinity of the Book of Mormon. I was also at the deathbed of Oliver Cowdery in 1850, and I heard him speak to my Uncle David (Whitmer) and say: "Brother David, be faithful to your testimony to the Book of Mormon, for we know that it is of God and that it is verily true." He then closed his eyes in death. My father, Jacob Whitmer, was always faithful and true to his testimony to the Book of Mormon, and confirmed it on his deathbed. Of my Uncle John (Whitmer) I will say that I was with him a short time before he died at Far West, Missouri, when he confirmed to me what he had done so many times previously that he knew the Book of Mormon was true. I was also with Uncle David (Whitmer), who died here in January last, and heard him bear his last testimony in the presence of many witnesses whom he had called together for the occasion. He solemnly declared that the record of the Nephites, as he always called the Book of Mormon, was of God, and his testimony concerning it true. . . .

M&A 1 (1835), p.143

"During a conference held in the early 1830s in [New Portage,] Ohio, John Whitmer declared that he had "seen, hefted, and handled [the plates] with his own hands." Commenting on this talk, Oliver Cowdery stated that "no man possessed of common reason and common sense, can doubt, or will be so vain as to dispute" John Whitmer's testimony.

The meeting closed with a few remarks from Elder O. [Oliver] Cowdery upon the further truth of the Book of Mormon.

[John Whitmer was employed in Kirtland as editor of the Messenger and Advocate. In March 1836 he resigned from this position and wrote an article stating he was retiring from the editorial department in which he again bore his testimony of truthfulness of the Book of Mormon.]

John Whitmer "Address," M&A 2 (1836), p.286 - p.287

"To the patrons of the Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate: . . .

"To say that the Book of Mormon is a revelation from God, I [John Whitmer] have no hesitance; but with all confidence have signed my name to it as such; and I hope that my patrons will indulge me in speaking freely on this subject, as I am about leaving the editorial department-- Therefore I desire to testify to all that will come to the knowledge of this address; that I have most assuredly seen the plates from whence the book of of Mormon is translated, and that I have handled these plates and know of a surety that Joseph Smith, Jr., has translated the Book of Mormon by the gift and power of God, and in this thing the wisdom of the wise most assuredly has perished. . . .

And I know that the Bible, Book of Mormon and book of Doctrine and Covenants of the church of Christ of Latter Day Saints, contain the revealed will of heaven."

**E. C. BRAND REPORT OF INTERVIEW
WITH JOHN WHITMER, 1845**

Source: Visit of E. C. Brand with John Whitmer, RLDS Archives.

E C Brand Interview of John Whitmer, RLDS Archives, p.1

"I visited Mr. John Whitmer at his residence at Far West, Caldwell Co., Mo., on the 18th of February, 1845. He also bore his testimony to me concerning the truth, and declared that his

testimony, as found in the testimony of "Eight Witnesses," in the Book of Mormon, is strictly true. He showed me a facsimile of plates, copied from the plates in the handwriting of Joseph Smith. Both of these men (David and John) are respectable, and looked up to as truthful, honorable men, in the vicinity where they live. The above is a brief and correct statement of my interview with them. . . ."

Source: John Whitmer to M. H. Forest, 5 Mar 1876, Whitmer Papers, RLDS Archives.

JOHN WHITMER'S ACCOUNT OF TESTIMONY OF OLIVER COWDERY AND OTHER WITNESSES TO THE BOOK OF MORMON, 1876

Oliver Cowdery lived in Richmond, Mo. [Missouri], some 40 miles from here at the time of his death. I went to see him and I was with him for some days previous to his demise.

I have never heard him deny the truth of his testimony of the Book of Mormon under any circumstances what ever.

I have no knowledge that there was any effort made to force him to deny the Book of Mormon. Neither do I believe that he would have denied at the peril of his life, so firm was he that he could not be moved to deny what he has affirmed to be a divine revelation from God.

I desire to do good when it is in my power. I have never heard that anyone of the three or eight witnesses ever denied the testimony that they have borne to the book as published in the first edition of the Book of Mormon.

There are only two of the witnesses to that book now living to wit. David Whitmer one of the three and John Whitmer one of the eight.

Our names have gone forth to all nations, tongues and people as a divine revelation from God. And it will bring to pass the designs of God according to the declaration therein contained.

WILLIAM LEWIS' INTERVIEW WITH JOHN WHITMER, 1877

Source: William Lewis to Saints' Herald, 15 Dec 1877, pp. 381-82.

STEWARTSVILLE, DeKalb Co., Missouri, November 29th, 1877.

"Dear Herald:--In company with Bro. Temme Hinderks and Charles Faul, I attended a meeting at Far West branch; and as we returned home, we called to see Father John Whitmer, one of the eight witnesses to the Book of Mormon. He informed us that he is the only one of the eight living; and David, his brother, one of the three, is the only one; so they are the only two out of the eleven witnesses that now live; and their testimonies are still the same as that recorded in the Book of Mormon. Father Whitmer says that he hopes that God will give him strength to stand firm to the testimony."

I. C. FUNN'S REPORT OF TESTIMONY OF JOHN WHITMER, 1878

Source: I. C. Funn to Saints' Herald, 15 Feb 1878, p. 57.

"We were down to the Whitmer school house to preaching on last Sabbath at eleven o'clock. Mr. John Whitmer delivered the discourse. It will be remembered by a great many readers, that Mr. Whitmer is one of only two now living that helped (were witnesses) to the translation of the Book of Mormon, or generally known as the Mormon Bible. Mr. Whitmer is considered a truthful, honest and law abiding citizen by this community, and consequentially, his appointment drew out a large audience. Mr. Whitmer stated that he had often handled the identical golden plates which

Mr. Smith received from the hand of the angel, he said it was of pure gold, part of the book was sealed up solid, the other part was open and it was this part which was translated, and is termed today the Mormon Bible. This is the first time Mr. Whitmer has attempted to preach for a good many years; and time, who waits for no one, has written many a furrow upon his brow. He is upwards of sixty years old, and gave some good advice to both old and young. Before closing he asked the audience if they would take the Book of Mormon and the Bible and compare them, and to take Paul's rule, "To prove all things and hold fast to that which is good," in comparing them."

I. C. Funn. . . .

TESTIMONY OF HYRUM SMITH

Source: Hyrum Smith, "Communications," Times and Seasons 1 (Dec 1839):20-24.

"To the Saints scattered abroad,
Greeting:

Having given my testimony to the world of the truth of the Book of Mormon . . . I [Hyrum Smith] thought that it might be strengthening to my beloved brethren, to give them a short account of my sufferings, for the truth's sake, and the state of my mind and feelings, while under circumstances of the most trying and afflicting nature. . . .

Prior to my settlement in Missouri, [I] . . . endured almost all manner of abuse, which was poured out upon the church of Latter-day Saints, from its commencement . . . After enduring many privations and much fatigue, . . . I arrived with my family in Far West. . . .

[In the fall of 1838, I was imprisoned with my brethren] for about six months . . . and suffered much for want of proper food, and from the nauseous cell in which I was confined. . . .

How inadequate is language to express the feelings of my mind, knowing that I was innocent of crime, and that I had been dragged from my family at a time, when my assistance was most needed; that I had been abused and thrust into a dungeon, and confined for months on account of my faith, and the "testimony of Jesus Christ." However I thank God that I felt a determination to die, rather than deny the things which my eyes had seen, which my hands had handled, and which I had bore testimony to . . . I can assure my beloved brethren that I was enabled to bear as strong a testimony, when nothing but death presented itself, as ever I did in my life. . . .

I yet feel a determination to do the will of God, in spite of persecutions, imprisonments or death."

Phineas Young Recounts Testimony of Samuel H. Smith

Source: Autobiography of Phineas Young, in
Millennial Star 25 (6 June 1863):360-61.

[This testimony was spoken during a conversation in 1830 between Samuel H. Smith and Phineas Howe Young (brother of Brigham Young) and was recorded in Phineas Young's autobiography.]

"The Book of Mormon, or, as it is called by some, the Golden Bible . . . [is] a revelation from God . . . If you will read this book with a prayerful heart, and ask God to give you a witness, you will know of the truth of this work. . . . I [Samuel H. Smith am] one of the witnesses . . . I know the book to be a revelation from God, translated by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, and that my brother, Joseph Smith, Jr., is a Prophet, Seer and Revelator . . ."

TESTIMONY OF CHRISTIAN AND PETER WHITMER

Source: Oliver Cowdery, "The Closing
Year," Messenger and Advocate 3 (Dec 1836):425-29.

"Among those who have gone home to rest, we mention the names of our two brothers-in-law, Christian and Peter Whitmer, Jr., the former died on the 27th of November 1835, and the other the 22nd of September last [1836], in Clay County, Missouri. By many in this church, our brothers were personally known: they were the first to embrace the new covenant, on hearing it, and during a constant scene of persecution and perplexity, to their last moments, maintained its truth - they were both included in the list of the eight witnesses in the Book of Mormon, and though they have departed, it is with great satisfaction that we reflect, that they have proclaimed to their last moments, the certainty of their former testimony. The testimony is in force after the death of the testator. May all who read remember the fact, that the Lord has given men a witness of himself in the last days, and that they, have faithfully declared it till called away." Andrew Jenson et al "Landmarks," Deseret News, 17 Sep 1888, p.426

**FINAL TESTIMONIES OF
JACOB AND JOHN WHITMER**

(Reported by Jacob's son, John C. Whitmer)

Source: Andrew Jenson, Edward Stevenson, and Joseph B. Black,
"Historical Landmarks," Deseret News (Salt Lake City), 17 Sep 1888, p.2.

"My father, Jacob Whitmer, was always faithful and true to his testimony to the Book of Mormon, and confirmed it on his deathbed. Of my Uncle John [Whitmer] I will say that I was with him a short time before he died at Far West, Missouri, when he confirmed to me what he had done so many times previously that he knew the Book of Mormon was true."

**TESTIMONY OF
HIRAM PAGE AND OTHER WITNESSES**

Source: Andrew Jenson, Biographical Encyclopedia, 1:278.

Philader Page [son of Hiram Page] testified to Elder Andrew Jenson in September, 1888 as follows, "I knew my father to be true and faithful to his testimony of the divinity of the Book of Mormon until the very last. Whenever he had an opportunity to bear his testimony to this effect, he would always do so, and seemed to rejoice exceedingly in having been privileged to see the plates and thus become one of the Eight Witnesses. I can also testify that Jacob, John and David Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery died in full faith in the divinity of the Book of Mormon. I was with all these witnesses on their deathbeds and heard each of them bear his last testimony."

John C. Whitmer, a nephew of Hiram Page by marriage, testified in the presence of Elder Jenson: "I was closely connected with Hiram Page in business transactions and other matters, he being married to my aunt. I knew him at all times and under all circumstances to be true to his testimony concerning the divinity of the Book of Mormon."