

Doctrine and Covenants 14

— Significant stories at this time period —

“Soon after this [the arrival of a letter from Oliver Cowdery] Joseph sent for me to come to Harmony to get him and Oliver, to bring them to my father’s house. I did not know what to do. I was pressed with my work. I had some twenty acres to plow, so I concluded I would finish plowing and then go. I got up one morning to go to work as usual, and on going to the field, found between 5 and 7 acres of my ground had been plowed during the night. I do not know who did it, but it was done just as I would have done it myself, and the plow was left standing in the furrow.’ This incident was related to Orson Pratt and Joseph F. Smith by David Whitmer, on the 7th of September, 1878, forty years after he had left the Church. It was to him a miraculous evidence, the force of which he never denied.” (Smith and Sjodahl, *Doctrine and Covenants Commentary*, pg. 73)

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“When David Whitmer was approaching the little village of Harmony with his two-horse team and wagon, he was met some distance from it by the Prophet and Oliver. ‘Oliver told me’, says David Whitmer, in relating the circumstance, ‘that Joseph had informed him when I started from home, where I had stopped the first night, how I read the sign at the tavern; where I stopped the next night, etc.; and that I would be there that day before dinner, and this was why they had come out to meet me; all of which was exactly as Joseph had told Oliver, at which I was greatly astonished’.” (BH Roberts, *New Witnesses for God*, 2:126)

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“David Whitmer said, ‘When I was returning to Fayette, with Joseph and Oliver, all of us riding in the wagon. Oliver and I on an old-fashioned wooden spring seat and Joseph behind us—while traveling along in a clear open space, a very pleasant, nice-looking old man suddenly appeared by the side of our wagon and saluted us with, ‘Good morning, it is very warm,’ at the same time wiping his face or forehead with his hand. We returned the salutation, and, by a sign from Joseph, I invited him to ride if he was going our way; but he said very pleasantly, ‘No, I am going to Cumorah.’ This name was something new to me; I did not know what Cumorah meant. We all gazed at him and at each other, and as I looked around inquiringly of Joseph, the old man instantly disappeared, so that I did not see him again... I also remember that he had on his back a sort of knapsack with something in it shaped like a book. It was the messenger who had the plates, who had taken them from Joseph just prior to our starting from Harmony.’” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3:236)

[Cumorah (Hebrew) = Cumorah – if you take away the vowels = CMRH = the H is a silent letter used to show accent = CMR - which means “the shrinking and maturing of fruits by underground storage” (Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim*, pg. 647)]

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“Joseph Smith with his wife and Oliver Cowdery, whom David Whitmer a short time previous had brought up from Harmony, Pennsylvania, were all boarding with the Whitmers, and my grandmother [Mary Musselman Whitmer] in having so many extra persons to care for, besides her own large household, was often overloaded with work to such an extent that she felt it to be quite a burden. One evening, when (after having done her usual day’s work in the house) she went to the barn to milk the cows, she met a stranger carrying something on his back that looked like a knapsack. At first she was a little afraid of him, but when he spoke to her in a kind, friendly tone and began to explain to her the nature of the work which was going on in her house, she was filled with inexpressible joy and satisfaction. He then untied his knapsack and showed her a bundle of plates, which in size and appearance corresponded with the description subsequently given by the witnesses to the Book of Mormon. This strange person turned the leaves of the book of plates over, leaf after leaf, and also showed her the engravings upon them; after which he told her to be patient and faithful in bearing her burden a little longer, promising that if she would do so, she should be blessed; and her reward would be sure, if she proved faithful to the end. The personage then suddenly vanished with the plates, and where he went, she could not tell. From that moment my grandmother was enabled to perform her household duties with comparative ease, and she felt no more inclination to murmur because her lot was hard.” (Andrew Jenson, *LDS Biographical Encyclopedia*, 1:283)