
Expedient

D&C 73:3

As the Prophet Joseph Smith and his scribe Sidney Rigdon were working on the Bible translation, the Lord revealed to them on December 1, 1831, that it was “*expedient* in me that you should open your mouths in preaching my gospel” (D&C 71:1; emphasis added). The Prophet Joseph said,

Knowing now the mind of the Lord, that the time had come that the Gospel should be proclaimed in power and demonstration to the world, from the Scriptures, reasoning with men as in days of old, I took a journey to Kirtland, in company with Elder Sidney Rigdon on the 3rd day of December [1831].¹

Joseph and Sidney preached in the nearby townships of Ravenna and Shalersville and other small communities in Portage County, Ohio.

On January 10, 1832, less than six weeks later, the Lord directed “my servants, Joseph Smith, Jun., and Sidney Rigdon ... [that] it is *expedient* to translate again” (D&C 73:3; emphasis added). They were also told that “it is *expedient* to continue the work of translation until it be finished” (v. 4; emphasis added).

In scriptures, the word *expedient* is always connected with a specific purpose. For example, in the Book of Mormon the Lord did for Israelites “all things ... *expedient* for man to receive” (1 Nephi 17:30; emphasis added) and “if ye will have faith in [Christ,] ye shall have power to do whatsoever thing is *expedient* in [Him]” (Moroni 7:33; emphasis added). In the Doctrine and Covenants, we learn that the Holy Ghost manifests “all things which are *expedient*” (D&C 18:1; emphasis added), and the Saints are to be instructed in “all things ... that are *expedient* for [them] to understand (D&C 88:7; emphasis added).

¹ History, 1838–1856, volume A-1 [23 December 1805–30 August 1834], 176. Joseph Smith Papers.

As Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon returned to the John Johnson farmhouse in Hiram, Ohio, in obedience to the divine directive to be “expedient,” they commenced again to work on the translation of the Bible. Joseph wrote, “I completed the translation and review of the New Testament, on the 2nd of February, 1833, and sealed it up.”² They then turned their attention once again to the Old Testament.

When the Prophet Joseph’s inspired revisions of the Old and New Testament are brought together, “A total of 3,410 verses in the printed Joseph Smith Translation differ in textual construction from the King James Bible. Of this number 25 verses compose the visions of Moses (Moses 1), 1,289 changes are in the Old Testament, and 2,096 in the New Testament.”³

The numerical listing next to each book of scripture indicates the number of verses Joseph Smith revised in the King James Version of the Bible:

Old Testament

Genesis ... 662

Exodus ... 66

Psalms ... 188

Isaiah ... 178

New Testament

Matthew ... 483

Mark ... 349

Luke ... 563

John ... 159

Romans ... 118

1 Corinthians ... 68

Hebrews ... 47

Revelation ... 75⁴

² Smith, *History of the Church*, 1:324.

³ Robert L. Millet, “Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible and the Doctrine and Covenants,” in Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson, eds., *Studies in Scripture, Volume One: The Doctrine and Covenants* (Sandy, UT: Randall Book, 1983), 136.

⁴ Millet, “Joseph Smith’s Translation,” 137.