

REL C 325

Fall 2012

The Doctrine and Covenants (77–138, OD 1–2)

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History of the Doctrine and Covenants

- I. A scrapbook
 - A. D&C not arranged in any specific order
 - 1. Sections are arranged haphazardly
 - 2. In early editions, there was some attempt to arrange them thematically
 - 3. Not long before the order became a mess
 - B. Kinds of texts in this “scrapbook”
 - 1. Revelations (most of the D&C would be classified as revelations)
 - 2. Letters
 - 3. Q&A notes
 - 4. Bylaws
 - 5. Prayers
 - 6. Visions
 - 7. Sermons
 - 8. Instructions
 - 9. Manifestos (statements of belief)
 - 10. Quorum meeting minutes
 - 11. Eulogy
- II. How did Joseph Smith receive revelations?
 - A. 1828–1830: instruments
 - 1. Seer stone
 - a) Placed into a hat to block out the light
 - b) JS would “see” something
 - 2. Urim and Thummim
 - a) Like a pair of glasses but fastened to an ancient breastplate
 - b) Much like the seer stone method
 - c) JS preferred the seer stone because the Urim and Thummim were harder to use, made his eyes hurt
 - B. After 1830
 - 1. “Classic revelations”/direct inspiration
 - a) He spoke deliberately to a scribe, almost never repeating words
 - b) Would go back and review the draft and make corrections
 - c) Corrections were ongoing; JS would make changes as late as 1844 (the year of his death)
 - d) Doesn’t claim to hear an audible voice
 - 2. Bible revision
 - a) Sometimes receives revelations while reading the Bible
 - b) Elder Dallin H. Oaks: Bible became a kind of Urim and Thummim
 - 3. Sometimes revelations appear suddenly in a letter
 - a) Liberty Jail letter
 - b) Letter to William W. Phelps
 - 4. Blending of JS’s own language, nomenclature, and Johannine language in the Gospel of John
- III. Diverse formats
 - A. Revelations appear in various formats
 - 1. Marginalia of his Bible during his revision project
 - 2. Direct voice of an angel

- a) Moroni (D&C 2)
 - b) Unidentified angel (D&C 27)
 - 3. Through the Urim and Thummim (D&C 3, 10)
 - 4. Through more than one person (D&C 18, 20 with Oliver Cowdery; D&C 76 with Sidney Rigdon; D&C 109 with Cowdery)
 - 5. Something really freaky: A translation of a hitherto undiscovered parchment from ancient Palestine on which wrote the gospel author John, seen in some kind of vision via the Urim and Thummim (D&C 7)
 - 6. Another revelation (D&C 93) contains a segment of lost writings of John including a testimony of John the Baptist that were apparently committed to writing but have been lost to history
- IV. Occasions of revelation
- A. After prayer
 - B. During the study of the Bible
 - C. Impromptu, even with song: “sang by the gift of tongues and translated”
 - D. Sudden visions
 - E. Sudden bursts of inspiration
 - F. While in prison
 - G. After personal requests of the Saints
 - H. During administrative meetings, quorum meetings
- V. Source texts of the D&C
- A. Miscellaneous manuscripts of “Commandments”
 - B. “The Articles and Covenants” (1830)
 - C. Compilations (Nov 1831)
 - 1. Revelation Book 1
 - 2. Revelation Book 2
 - D. The Evening and the Morning Star
 - E. Book of Commandments project (Dec 1832–Jul 1833)
 - F. First edition of the Doctrine and Covenants (1835)
 - G. Second edition of the D&C, or “Nauvoo edition” (1844)
 - H. Salt Lake edition (1876/1879)
 - I. 1921 edition
 - J. 1981 edition—the current one