

Doctrine and Covenants Section 28



Inside the rebuilt Peter Whitmer home in Fayette, New York

Hiram Page's Seer Stone

Just a few days after the prophet had been in Colesville at the end of August, Newel Knight took his wagon to Harmony and helped Joseph and Emma move to the Peter Whitmer, Sr. home in Fayette. Persecution and harassment for Joseph Smith had made life just too hard. Newel returned home and a few weeks later went back to Fayette, a three-day journey, to attend a conference.

The first conference of the Church was held in early June 1830 in Fayette, and the second conference was held at the end of September, also in Fayette. Newel had some significant observations about his experiences as he arrived to attend that September conference. Newel wrote:

After arranging my affairs at home, I again set out for Fayette to attend our second conference which had been appointed to be held at father Whitmer's where Joseph now resided. On my arrival, I found Bro. Joseph in great trouble of mind on account of Hiram Page¹ who had managed to get up some dissension of feeling among the brethren by

¹ Hiram Page married Catherine Whitmer, daughter of Peter Whitmer, Sr. in 1825.

giving revelations concerning the government of the church and other matters, which he had received through the medium of a stone he had in his possession. He had quite a roll of papers full of revelations and many in the church were led astray by them. Even Oliver Cowdery and the Whitmer family had given heed to them, although they were in contradiction to the New Testament and the revelations of these last days. Here was a chance for Satan to work amongst the little flock, and he sought by this means to accomplish what persecution failed to do.²

Joseph was perplexed and scarcely knew how to meet this new exigency. That night I occupied the same room that he did and the greater part of the night was spent in prayer and supplication; and after much labor with these brethren they were convinced of their error and confessed the same.

Page missing in the journal.

Joseph Smith wrote:

As a conference meeting had been appointed for the 26th day of September, I thought it wisdom not to do much more than to converse with the brethren on the subject until we should meet. Finding however, that many, especially the Whitmer family and Oliver Cowdery were believing much in the things set forth by this stone, we thought it best to inquire of the Lord concerning so important a matter, and before the conference convened, we received the following:

Revelation to Oliver Cowdery, given at Fayette, N.Y.

September 1830

[and then what we know as section 28 was copied.]³

Newel recorded in his journal that “much of the power of God was manifested among us,” and “The Holy Ghost came upon us and filled our hearts with unspeakable joy.”

The revelation received made it clear that only the president of the Church had authority to receive commandments and revelation for the church.

Diane L. Mangum – January 2025

² *Newel Knight Journal*, Allen typescript, p 9.

³ Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 7 vols., introduction and notes by B. H. Roberts (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1932-1951), 1: 10.