

Section 32

Inspired by the Spirit, Parley Pratt left his Ohio homestead in the summer of 1830 and learned of the Book of Mormon while preaching in western New York. He devoured it, became converted, and went in search of Joseph Smith. He first met Joseph around the time of the September 1830 Church conference. During that conference, several of the elders desired very much to know how they could best take the Book of Mormon to the Lamanites. They agreed to ask the Lord whether some of them should go to the Native Americans, whom they assumed were descendants of Lehi.¹

Oliver Cowdery had already been called to lead such a mission, and Peter Whitmer was assigned to join him (sections 28, 30). Parley remembered that Joseph “inquired of the Lord, and received a revelation appointing me a mission to the west, in company with Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer, Jr., and Ziba Peterson. We started this mission in October, 1830.”²

Parley and Ziba took this revelation seriously and worked hard to obey it. On October 17, 1830, they signed a statement that said,

Being called and commanded by the Lord God, to accompany our brother Oliver Cowdery to go the Lamanites and to assist in the . . .

¹ “[History, 1838–1856, volume A-1 \[23 December 1805–30 August 1834\]](#),” p. 60, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed September 25, 2020.

² “History of Parley P. Pratt,” *Deseret News*, May 19, 1858.

glorious work and business, we do, therefore, most solemnly covenant before God, that we will assist him faithfully in this thing, by giving heed to all his words and advise, which is, or shall be given him by the spirit of truth, ever praying with all prayer and supplication, for his and our prosperity, and our deliverance from bonds, and imprisonments and whatsoever may come upon us, with all patience and faith.³

Joseph's mother Lucy remembered that "Emma Smith, and several other sisters, began to make arrangements to furnish those who were set apart for this mission, with the necessary clothing, which was no easy task, as the most of it had to be manufactured out of the raw material."⁴ Lucy said that "as soon as those men designated in the revelation were prepared to leave home, they started on their mission, preaching and baptizing on their way, wherever an opportunity afforded."⁵

³ Ezra Booth to Rev. Ira Eddy, November 24, 1831, Nelson, Ohio, in *Ohio Star* (Ravenna, Ohio), December 8, 1831.

⁴ Lavina Fielding Anderson, editor, *Lucy's Book: A Critical Edition of Lucy Mack Smith's Family Memoir* (Salt Lake City: Signature, 2001), 502–3.

⁵ Anderson, *Lucy's Book*, 503.