Come Follow Me Podcast
Elo Viz Production
Week 27
Doctrine and Covenants 71-75

Transcript provided by Otter.ia

hello and welcome to the come follow me. Podcast. This week, we're reading Doctrine and Covenants section 71 through 75 there is some important history to talk about regarding this section. Just to recap, briefly, there was a revelation given that many of the men, in fact, 13 pairs of missionaries should travel to Missouri. Isaac Morley and Ezra booth were among the missionaries called. They had both attended the conference and had been ordained, and they were designated to travel as companions.
Isaac Morley had been among the first converts of the church in Ohio at the time of his conversion, morally, his wife, Lucy and his family and several friends lived on his farm, sharing a communal lifestyle. They were trying their best to live as the early Christians mentioned in the book of Acts, who had all things in common. Ezra booth had been a respected Methodist preacher in northeastern Ohio. His conversion created a small stir among his friends and acquaintances who lamented his joining the mormonites booth had felt strongly prompted to join the new faith. The impression of his minds were deep and powerful, he recalled, and my feelings were excited to a degree to which I had been a stranger, but by the time of his departure in June 1831
booth had begun to doubt. The Spiritual manifestations at the conference did not meet his expectations, and he was upset that Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon left for Missouri on a wagon while he and Isaac were called to walk the entire distance in the summer heat, preaching along the way.
The journey was inconvenient for others as well. Joseph Smith departed just weeks after he and Emma lost twins shortly after birth.
When Ezra booth finally arrived in Missouri, he felt deflated. He and others expected to find a country abounding with the necessities and comforts of life. Instead, he looked around and noted that the prospects appeared somewhat gloomy for most of the elders. The reality on the ground in Missouri was a disappointment, but they would deal with that disappointment in different ways, though a few of the missionaries had been chosen to remain in Missouri. The August 1 revelation commanded the rest of the missionaries to return to their homes. Another revelation now, doctrine of covenant 60 instructed returning missionaries to travel the Missouri River East to St Louis.
There Joseph insignia would travel speedily to Cincinnati, Ohio to preach while the others were to travel two by two and preach the word, not in haste among the congregations of the wicked, they embarked in canoes from St Louis on August 8, the Missouri River was notoriously difficult to navigate. Steamboat captains dreaded the Sawyers or fallen trees lurking in the river that frequently wrecked their vessels.
The elders would later tell Elizabeth Marsh that the river's rolling current looked mad, as if it had been cursed. The journey was contentious for the elders, exhaustion, heat and the treacherous Missouri River frayed their nerves on their third day on the water, some of the canoes nearly

became entangled in the Sawyers, which threatened to capsize the canoes, endangering the lives of those who could not swim. After they made it safely to shore, they continued bickering, though certainly capable of contention himself, Ezra booth had a little tolerance for it. In others, he later observed sarcastically, these are the leaders of the church and the only church on earth, the Lord beholds without probation.
Joseph Smith received another revelation the following morning on the river bank, in which the Lord warned them from the dangers upon the waters, and said, it mattereth Not to me whether they go by water or by land. Joseph Smith proceeded on land the next day. Ezra booth, on the other hand, decided to get back as quickly as possible, rather than preach, according to the earlier Revelation, he and a few companions traveled the remainder of the journey to Ohio by boat and coach. Shortly after his return to Ohio, Ezra booth parted ways with the church in a very public fashion
because his experience did not match his expectations of how Zion should look or how Joseph Smith should behave. He first wavered and then abandoned his faith. Beginning that October, the Ohio star, a newspaper located in Ravenna, Ohio, began publishing a series of letters. Booth penned heavily criticizing Joseph Smith and the church. By December, his letters had even started to hinder missionary work, and Joseph Smith received two Rev.
In December 1831
and January 1832 now found in Doctrine and Covenants 71 and 73
they challenged booth and other descendants such as Simon Ryder to bring forth their strong reasons against the Lord. They also encouraged Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon to preach actively confound your enemies, call upon them to meet you, both public and in private. Though Sidney Rigdon challenged booth and writer to a public debate, they declined, perhaps aware of Rigdon reputation as a fierce debater. Rigdon preached in Ravana, Ohio and in other locations, refuting Booth's claims, although Booth's letters had a dampening effect upon missionary work. That effect was short lived. Tragically. Booth's cynicism had driven a wedge not only between him and the restored Church, but also between him and his earlier spiritual experiences. He ultimately abandoned Christianity and became agnostic.
It's interesting to me how and why Ezra booth left the church. This can be hard to understand for those of us who have strong, unwavering testimonies in the Gospel.
I've had several long conversations with faithful members of the church that have lost their testimonies and either left the church or become completely agnostic.
And though this is not a complete list, I've noticed a trend and those that I have talked to as to why they abandoned their faith,
they list reasons such as being offended or they saw a member of the church say or do something that was against the Mormon religion,
but the number one reason I heard over and over was Joseph Smith.
How could God choose such a flawed man to restore his gospel? This, ironically, was the same reason that Ezra booth left the church, he didn't think Joseph Smith's behaviors were becoming of a prophet of God.
I like to address this matter to everyone who may have the same thought or feeling towards Joseph Smith or any other prophet or church leader in this dispensation,
during Christ's ministry, He told His disciples and his followers to Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect, suggesting in his mortal journey that he had not yet been

perfected. It wasn't until after His Atonement and Resurrection that he declared Be ye, therefore perfect, even as your Father and I are perfect.
We know Christ was and is the only perfect being to walk this mortal Earth.
So why do we ask of and expect so much from our mortal, earthly leaders? Flawed, sinful men and women doing the best they possibly can.
I think we would all agree President Nelson, imperfect as he is, is a pretty great man, more Christ like than any I've ever met.
I believe one reason he is so great is because the many examples he has had before he became that great prophet, men like Thomas S Monson, Gordon B, Hinckley, Howard W Hunter and even Spencer W Kimball. For 34 years, he has served in the Quorum of the 12 Apostles, learning from and associating with great spiritual men before he became the president of the church in 2018
why this is so important to understand
is then we realize Joseph Smith had none of that.
Joseph was 14 when he received the first vision. Several years later, he translated the plates and the church was established in 1830 when he was only 25 years old, he had no one to guide him, no one to look to as an example, only an occasional visitation from angels and a hope for revelation kept him on the right Path. Joseph was as flawed as any one of us. A young boy asked and chosen to do a great work, probably the only man saved Jesus Christ that was able and willing to restore the gospel in the latter days.
So why are we so critical of him?
I don't understand why we expect him to be this perfect man when God hasn't, or didn't. God used Joseph just the way he was, just as He uses us just the way we are right now,
in April, 2013 general conference, President Jeffrey R Holland gave a.
Talk titled Lord I believe in it. He says this be kind regarding human frailty, your own, as well as those who serve with you in the church led by volunteer mortal men and women,
except in the case of his only perfect begotten Son, imperfect people are all God has ever had to work with. That must be terribly frustrating for him, but he deals with it, and so should we. And when we see imperfection, remember that the limitation is not in the divinity of the work. One gifted writer has suggested, when the infinite fullness is poured forth, it's not the oils fault, if there is some loss, because finite vessels cannot quite contain it. All these finite vessels include you and me.
So be patient
and kind and forgiving.
I understand, however, how it feels to look at a leader in the church and recognize many of their shortcomings. I have felt those many feelings of frustration. I have thought on many occasions that if I were in that position, I would have never made that decision. On one occasion, while sitting in a temple recommend interview, a member of the stake presidency took a personal phone call in the middle of the interview, I was extremely disappointed in his actions and held a grudge towards him for a long time.
On the other hand, I had a bishop that changed my life. He was just as flawed as this other man, but for some reason, I was able to look past his flaws and forgive his mistakes.
The important thing to understand is that men don't make the gospel True and Living
only Christ does that.

He is the reason we are here. He is the reason we continue our mortal journey, holding fast to the iron rod. He is the truth and the light.
So when mortal men fail, you
turn to Him,
He will never fail you.
May I conclude, echoing President Jeffrey R Holland's testimony,
I declare to you with the conviction Peter called the more sure word of prophecy,
what was once a tiny seed of belief for me, has grown into the tree of life. So if your faith is a little tested in this or any season, I invite you to lean on mine.
I know this work is God's very truth. I know that only to our peril would we allow doubt or devils to sway us from this path
hope on, journey on, honestly, acknowledge your questions and your concerns, but first and forever, fan the flame of your faith, because all things are possible to them that believe
in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen,