



CHAPTER 4

Martin Harris and the Lost Pages

1827–1828



In Pennsylvania, Joseph began to translate the writing on the gold plates. He did not know what the writing meant, but when he used the Urim and Thummim, God helped him understand the words.

Joseph Smith—History 1:62



Martin Harris went to Pennsylvania and helped Joseph translate. As Joseph translated the words from the gold plates, Martin wrote them on paper. Joseph and Martin translated 116 pages of the Book of Mormon.

Martin Harris wanted to take the 116 pages home so his family could see them. Joseph asked the Lord if Martin could take the pages, but the Lord said no. Joseph asked again, but the Lord said no again.



Martin still wanted to take the pages home. He pleaded with Joseph to ask the Lord once more. This time the Lord said Martin could take the pages if he agreed to show them only to his wife and certain other members of his family.



Martin promised to obey the Lord. He took the pages home and showed them to his family. But then he broke his promise and showed the pages to some other people.



Later Martin went to get the pages. He looked everywhere but could not find them. The pages were lost.



After a few weeks, when Martin Harris had not returned with the pages, Joseph became worried. He went to New York to find Martin, who told him the pages had been lost. Joseph and Martin both felt very bad.



Joseph returned to Pennsylvania, where he prayed for forgiveness. Moroni appeared and took the gold plates.



In a revelation, the Lord told Joseph that he would not be allowed to translate for a time because he had not obeyed. The Lord also comforted Joseph, saying His work would go forward and that Joseph was still chosen to do the work if he repented.

Doctrine and Covenants 3



Jesus told Joseph that Satan had influenced some wicked men to take the 116 pages. These men were going to change the words so other people would not believe the

Book of Mormon. Jesus said Satan and the wicked men could not stop God's work.

Doctrine and Covenants 10, section heading
Doctrine and Covenants 10:8-29, 31-33, 43



Joseph repented. Soon Moroni returned the gold plates, and the Lord forgave Joseph and restored the gift to translate. Jesus told Joseph not to worry about the lost pages because the same stories were written in another

part of the gold plates. Jesus said Joseph should translate the other part of the plates. Jesus also said many people would read the book and learn about His gospel.

Doctrine and Covenants 10:3, 30, 38–43, 52, 62–63