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CHAPTER 7

# Witnesses See the Gold Plates

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1829–1830



Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery finished translating the Book of Mormon. Jesus wanted people to read the book. He also wanted them to know that Joseph had told the truth about the gold plates.

Doctrine and Covenants 17:4–5



Jesus chose three other men to see the gold plates and be witnesses that they were real. These men were Martin Harris, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer.



Joseph took the three witnesses into the woods, where they prayed. An angel came and showed them the gold plates. Jesus told the three witnesses to tell people what they had seen.

Doctrine and Covenants 17:3, 5  
“The Testimony of Three Witnesses”  
(see the introductory pages of the Book of Mormon)



Joseph Smith was very happy. The three witnesses would tell people about the gold plates, and more people would believe that Joseph had told the truth.



Jesus told Joseph to show the plates to eight more witnesses. The eight men held the gold plates in their hands and saw the writing on the plates.

“The Testimony of Eight Witnesses”  
(see the introductory pages of the Book of Mormon)



All the witnesses wrote about the gold plates. They said they had seen the plates, and they testified that the plates were real. The words of the witnesses are in the Book of Mormon.

“The Testimony of Three Witnesses” and “The Testimony of Eight Witnesses” (see the introductory pages of the Book of Mormon)



After Joseph Smith had translated the plates and the witnesses had seen them, Joseph did not need them any longer. The angel Moroni appeared, and Joseph gave the gold plates back to him.



After Joseph finished translating the Book of Mormon, he took it to a printer. Joseph did not have money to pay the printer. Martin Harris had enough money, and in a revelation he was asked to share it to pay the printer.

Doctrine and Covenants 19:26, 35



Satan did not want the Book of Mormon to be printed. He did not want people to read it. Wicked men tried to stop the printer.



One man went to the printing shop on Sundays and stole some pages of the Book of Mormon. He printed the pages in a newspaper until other men made him stop stealing them.



The people who tried to stop the printing did not succeed because those who are wicked cannot stop Jesus' work. After many months, the printing of the Book of Mormon was completed.