A Comprehensive Commentary

of the

Doctrine and Covenants

Sections 1 through 72

together with references for further study
from the General Conferences of
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
the Encyclopedia of Mormonism
and other doctrinal texts by General Authorities of the Church

Written and compiled by

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Orem, Utah
Preface

This project began as an attempt to provide my children and grandchildren something of their ancestor’s love and understanding of the scriptures. I began producing volumes many years ago which I was pleased to call Paraphrastic studies. I wrote one of these studies for each of the four Gospels and the letters of Paul. Eventually, however, I began to sense that there was much that I knew about the New Testament that my “translations” could not communicate. I therefore thought to write a comprehensive commentary on the entire New Testament, beginning with Matthew and concluding with the book of Revelation. As I published each of the nine volumes, I included the paraphrastic studies, where I had them, in conjunction with the commentary for each book in the New Testament. I began this project in 2005 and completed the final volume in 2010. The whole effort was a delight to my soul.

A year before I retired from the Church Educational System, in 2003, I thought to produce an 1830 formatting of the Book of Mormon using the present text of the 1981 edition. This was a relatively easy task, given the technology available to me. I distributed these to my colleagues at the Orem Institute of Religion, members of my family, and a few other interested parties for the cost of printing and binding them. Sometime in the early spring of 2007, I was impressed to begin a verse by verse commentary on the Book of Mormon, a task that I had not presumed to attempt, inasmuch as there are no translation difficulties that abound in the Old and New Testaments. Yet, there were instances of nineteenth-century word usage and syntactic issues that I thought a commentary might help to clarify. As I began, however, I discovered that there was much more that I could communicate to my children of my understanding of the ancient record of the Nephites, material that I had gleaned as I taught the scriptures during my thirty-five year career with CES. This labor eventually produced five volumes of moderate size. As I published each segment of the commentary, I enclosed the 1830 formatting of each book in the Book of Mormon that I had devise several years before. The last volume also appeared in late 2010.

By the time that I was fully engaged with writing commentaries on both the New Testament and the Book of Mormon, I had become infatuated with the idea that I might be able to expand the commentaries to include the other volumes of scripture as well. Thus, in the winter of 2010 I began writing commentaries on the Pearl of Great Price, and the Doctrine and Covenants. Once I finished with the Pearl of Great Price, I began to move ahead with the book of Genesis and the rest of the Old Testament. In the late fall of 2014 I finished the last of the commentaries on the Old Testament, for a total of thirty-three printed and bound volumes. With these volumes and the others produced over the past ten years, I have completed commentary on every verse of the Standard Works of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

My procedure for writing the Commentary was similar to that used in creating the original paraphrastic studies. The same reference texts were employed. For difficult words in Greek, Hebrew,
and English I resorted to the works of James Strong and other lexicographers for linguistic insight. I consider the contributions made by conservative Protestant scholarship (as recorded in the New International Version) and conservative Catholic scholarship (as related in the New Jerusalem Bible). I resorted to the considered thought of Adam Clarke, one of the most prominent and prolific commentators on the sacred manuscripts available at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and who, I believe, was a man of great faith. I consulted with the Joseph Smith Translation at appropriate times (including in another column an indication that a JST change had been made for any given verse), and frequently to the writings of the General Authorities of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as I contemplated the possible meanings of each word and phrase. From time to time I resorted to Smith’s Bible Dictionary and Discovering the World of the Bible by LaMar Berrett for some of the more arcane information that I thought would illuminate the text.

I have attempted to maintain a steady course throughout my commentaries, treating each verse as unique, and where appropriate, duplicate notes and the text rather than use cross-references within the volume. Some may find this a waste of paper and ink, but I frankly dislike having to rifle through pages or volumes trying to find the first instance of the note or commentary. The duplications are easily ignored; fumbling through pages cannot be. It is in the best interests of the reader, however, to contemplate the reasons why such duplications exist in the biblical text in the first place. They are purposeful and I have attempted to point out their purpose as I have progressed through each volume.

My numbering system for the notes used in the body of the commentary was adapted from historical linguistic texts with which I am familiar and which I had found quite useful. The pattern used is chapter.verse.word, thus note “3.4.5” would contain material referring to the fifth word in the book of Hosea 3:4, for example. I make no comprehensive promises regarding the preciseness of my word count in any particular verse, but it will be close enough to eliminate any distressing confusion. Inasmuch as I began this series with the Gospel of Matthew, there will be times when I will make reference to my own work in that first volume. Sometimes there will be no more than a reference, “MT-C 23.4.5”; other times I may quote directly from the original text. In either case my sole motivation will be to facilitate the flow of ideas rather than to multiply words. There are enough words already. References to the Commentaries on other books of the New Testament are abbreviated as follows:

| Matthew—MT-C | Ephesians—EP-C | Hebrews—HB-C |
| Mark—MK-C | Philippians—PP-C | 1 Peter—1 PE-C |
| John—JN-C | 1 Thessalonians—1 TH-C | 1 John—1 JN-C |
| Acts—AC-C | 2 Thessalonians—2 TH-C | 2 John—2 JN-C |
| Romans—RM-C | 1 Timothy—1 TM-C | 3 John—3 JN-C |
| 1 Corinthians—1 CO-C | 2 Timothy—2 TM-C | Revelation—RV-C |
| 2 Corinthians—2 CO-C | Titus—TT-C | 1 Thessalonians—1 TH-C |
| Galatians—GA-C | Philemon—PL-C | 2 Thessalonians—2 TH-C |
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I have also made reference to the other standard works of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The references to the Book of Mormon are articulated in bold and italics lettering using the following abbreviations:

- 1 Nephi—**1 NE-C**
- 2 Nephi—2 *NE-C*
- Jacob—**JA-C**
- Enos—**EN-C**
- Jarom—**JM-C**

The abbreviation **TPWC-C** refers to the material found on the Title Page of the Book of Mormon and in the Testimonies of the Three and Eight Witnesses. The references to Sections that are in the Doctrine and Covenants are indicated as **DC-C** followed by the section number and verse (*OD1-C* and *OD2-C* are self-explanatory); The Pearl of Great Price references contained herein use the following abbreviations: **MO-C, AB-C, SM-C, SH-C, and AF-C**.

In some cases I have have taken on what some would consider controversial material. I make no apologies for so doing. I have found that my children are best served when an issue is approached head on, the differing points of view presented, and the rationale given as to why one school of thought ought to be preferred over another. Sometimes the decisions are logically founded; others the result of doctrinal points that are unique to the theology of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In most cases I have not argued authorities, even though I could have inserted multiple references to the writings of scholars with whom I am familiar. I have chosen to have my sources on any particular issue to remain anonymous in the text of the commentary for several reasons. First and foremost, this work is my commentary, what I believe and hold to be true. In the end, that is what my children wish to know. Secondly, I did not wish to have my children accept or dismiss a particular view merely because of who had been the author of it. Many wonderful insights have been made by scholars both inside and outside of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Wherein I have found one view to be preferable over another has not been a partisan matter, but rather a matter of the mind, heart, and spirit cooperating together in an attempt to understand what must be the truth. Thirdly, I have been quite clear who my “authorities” have been. It is my fondest
desire that my children would become as familiar with their writings as I have. Were I to cite all of
my sources with extensive quotes from each, there would be no need for them to open any of the
books that I have come to love. That, in part, is why I included the third column containing cross-
references to the various doctrinal works in the Commentaries. Exceptions to this practice should be
noted as being of extreme importance.

In addition to the text of the Standard Works, together with my own commentary, I inserted a
column of references for further study. The citations are taken from three major sources: the Conference
Reports of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from April 1980 to November
2002 (abbreviated as CR followed by the year, month, and page number); the Encyclopedia of Mormonism
(four volumes, abbreviated EM followed by the volume and page number); and A Scripture Index
(a compilation of scripture references cited in various texts published by General Authorities of
the Church). For those not familiar with the abbreviations used in A Scripture Index. I include them
below:

TPJS—Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith
GD—Gospel Doctrine
MA—Mediation and Atonement
FWR—Far West Record
DHC—History of the Church (7 vols.)
TSWK—Teaching of Spencer W. Kimball
MF—Miracle of Forgiveness
FPM—Faith Precedes the Miracle
MD—Mormon Doctrine

PM—Promised Messiah
MM—Mortal Messiah (4 vols.)
MLM—Millennial Messiah
DNCT—Doctrinal New Testament Commentary (3 vols.)
JC—Jesus the Christ
AF—Articles of Faith
DS—Doctrines of Salvation (3 vols.)
AGQ—Answers to Gospel Questions (5 vols.)

As with each of the volumes previously published, I include two lists. The first, bound in front
of the Commentary, is a listing of all of the words and phrases upon which I have made extensive
remarks, a kind of sequential table of contents. I have also arranged this list alphabetically and have
placed it at the end of the Commentary as a kind of index. A comprehensive alphabetical index for
the entire volume appears as the last section of this book.

Needless to say that all of the errors in the material submitted herein to the reader are the
product of my own limitations as a scholar; all of the brilliance which may appear here is the product
of minds and hearts filled with the fire of the Spirit of God, from whom all truth and beauty uti-

A Note on the Electronic Edition

Not only did my children and other family members receive bound copies of commentaries, but
there were a number of friends and neighbors who had expressed an interest in them. There were
requests from others who desired copies of what I had done, but I was not in a position to provide
them with hard copies. Inasmuch as I had all of the volumes in computer files, I thought to compile
each of the commentaries in some format that could be read on a smart device. I opted to use Adobe
Acrobat, turning all of the work into PDF files. I have used these on my tablet for many years and
have found them useful and far easier to cart about with me. In the early spring of 2015, my
neighbor David Dollahite arranged for a meeting with Jack Welch and Marny Parkin regarding the
possibility of BYU providing a dedicated web site so that there would be greater public access to my
work. Thus began the present enterprise of editing and standardizing all that had done during the last ten years. My commentary on the Gospel of Matthew is the first of these electronic volumes. Within a year or so I hope to have all of the books available in the same format.

PNH
Orem, Utah
September 2015
Sequence of Specifically Noted Words and Phrases in Doctrine and Covenants Commentary, Sections 1 through 72

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0. In no other time in the history of the Church of Jesus Christ has there been a more complete account of the operations of the Spirit of God upon the servants of the Most High than that which has been preserved in this dispensation. It is a glorious experience to witness, even through the passage of time, the effect of the Savior’s love upon the hearts and minds of those who would be his disciples. The Doctrine and Covenants is an organization of a small portion of the revelations received by the prophet Joseph Smith and his successors in the Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints designed to aid the honest in heart to perceive the hand of God in the movements of the early saints, to illuminate how and why they did as they did. It serves as a primer in the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel as applied into their lives and a witness of the blessings that followed in the wake of faith and obedience. There are also included notable instances of the effects of disobedience to the voice of the Lord and the sorrow that accompanied rebellion and ignorance. All of the characters in the Doctrine and Covenants can easily serve as archetypes, representative personalities that can either serve as models of piety or as cautionary tales for the children of God. The righteous are admirable, overcoming great personal and collective challenges, while advancing the Kingdom of God upon the earth. They were not perfect in all of their dealings with their fellow men and with their God, but they wished to be better men and women than they were when they began their sojourn upon the earth. Inasmuch as they serve us as archetypes, there is little to be gained in dwelling excessively on their flaws as human beings in order to denigrate them historically. These were men and women who lived the Gospel to the best of their ability and who failed from time to time to live up to their potential. In other words, they were just as we are. Someone wisely suggested that it is easy and appropriate to insert our own names in the places where our early brethren and sisters are mentioned. The effect can be almost overwhelming, but can serve to spur us on to greater righteousness by consciously avoiding the thoughts and actions that deprived others of desired blessings. We are building upon the historical foundations which they laid during their mortal lives. It is to be expected that most, if not all of those about whom we read have overcome their short-comings and follies in another venue, and are to be found within the bonds of fellowship and salvation. We can learn from their example without being eternally critical of their untoward actions; we can be as charitable to them as we hope others will be of us in the passage of time. Beyond all of the personalities involved, however, are the glorious principles of truth that came to light as the Lord God of Israel nurtured His children during the time when the Church and Kingdom of God were first introduced to the children of men in this, the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time. They are not only consistent with the truths revealed in every other dispensation since the days of Adam and Eve, but they reveal the wisdom of God that is beginning to be poured out upon His servants in the latter days prior to the second advent of his Only Begotten Son. These are joyous times in which to live, notwithstanding the tumult and degradation that seems to fill the world. The Doctrine and Covenants is an additional promissory note that there is yet a blessing to be bestowed upon all those who are willing to hearken to the voice of God the Father and His Son, even the fullness of eternal life.
1.0.1 The Father and the Son had appeared to the boy prophet, Joseph Smith, in the spring of 1820 when he was fourteen years of age. They announced to him, among a great many other subjects, that he had been chosen to be an instrument for good among his fellow men and that he would be given further instruction that would fully satisfy the desires of his heart as to the course of life he should follow in order to obtain salvation and eternal life. From time to time Joseph was visited by angelic ministers who supported him in his endeavors, strengthening him by their own experience and wisdom. Portions of their interviews were written down and preserved by Joseph's own hand. Others the prophet dictated to scribes as the mind and will of the Lord were revealed to him, line upon line and precept upon precept. With the passage of time came the labor of translating the ancient record which has come into the world as the Book of Mormon. In conjunction with that service came inquiries into the nature of salvation and the manner in which redemption from sin might be gained. Other servants of God were sent to Joseph and his companions whereby he was entrusted with the keys of both the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods. Thus empowered he and others were able to perform the ordinances of baptism by emersion for the remission of sins and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. Eventually, Joseph Smith and his associates in the Gospel of Jesus Christ were commissioned to reestablish the Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth according to the laws of the land. This took place on 6 April 1830 in Fayette, New York, as a direct response to divine command. The small group of disciples began to grow and the honest in heart were gathered in from the surrounding regions to form a nucleus unto whom the Lord would reveal his mind and will. Eventually, the center of the burgeoning Church shifted to Kirtland, Ohio, where the sons and daughters of God enjoyed the blessings of the Spirit of God in their personal lives and witnessed the outpouring of the same spirit upon the whole Church through the offices of the prophet Joseph Smith. Many of the revelations that had been received through Joseph Smith had been copied by the early elders of the Church for their personal use in order to help them better understand and communicate the reality of the restoration. As the Church began to grow in numbers it was perceived that publishing selected revelations would be a benefit to the saints. In the late fall of 1831 a committee was formed to select and organize various of the revelations which would first be printed in the Church’s journal in Independence, Missouri, and then as a small book which the elders of the Church could carry with them as they pursued the missionary work that had been assigned to them, a small volume to be called “A Book of Commandments”. The Lord approved this project and determined to provide His own preface to the whole. Section 1 is the result. As a preface, it naturally appears at the first revelation printed, even though there are sixty-six other Sections included in the Doctrine and Covenants which were received prior to 1 November 1831. The printing of the text to be included in the Book of Commandments began in the Evening and Morning Star in June of 1832. Sections 20 and 45 were printed in their entirety. The second issue in July 1832 included portions of Section 42, and the whole of Sections 59 and 76. And thus the Church continued to announced to the world the mind and will of the Lord God of Israel in the latter days. Included in the first fourteen issues of the Evening and Morning Star were large portions of or the whole of 26 sections of what we have now as the Doctrine and Covenants. The text of Section 1 appeared the tenth issue, published in March of 1833. In addition, scores of direct citations were made from various of the Lord’s commandments to His servants throughout the publication. In July 1833, the Church publishing house
in Independence, Missouri, was destroyed by a mob. The printing of the *Evening and Morning Star* would be continued in Kirtland, Ohio. During the same time that the *Evening and Morning Star* was being produced, W.W. Phelps and his assistants had typeset and printed several signatures of the Book of Commandments. When the printing house was attacked by the mob, much of the work was destroyed. A few copies of the signatures were spirited away through the bravery of some of the Latter-day Saint children in Independence, copies that would later be bound and treasured by the early members of the Church. Facsimiles of that early text containing the first sixty-seven Sections and a portion of the sixty-eighth have enjoyed circulation even unto the present day. The commandment to print the revelations was never rescinded and in 1835, the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants was printed in Kirtland, Ohio, containing about 100 of the revelations given to the prophet Joseph Smith. Several editions have followed since those early beginnings, and wisdom has dictated the various configurations that each edition has enjoyed. The current edition contains 138 sections and two Official Declarations. Each edition has begun with the Lord’s Preface.

1.0.2 Both in the Kirtland Revelation Book and in the Book of Commandments, this Section has the following headnote: “A Preface or instruction unto the Book of Commandments, which was given of the Lord unto his church, through whom he appointed to this work, by the voice of his saints, through the prayer of faith: This church being organized according to the will of him, who rules all things, on the sixth day of April, in the year of our Lord, on thousand eight hundred and thirty:”

1.1 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had been organized on 6 April 1830, a little more than eighteen months before the text of this revelation to the prophet Joseph Smith was written down. In 1831 there were less than three thousand members of the Church of Jesus Christ, and yet the leadership felt impressed to print 10,000 copies of the Book of Commandments. Most of the membership had come from missionary labors in New York and Ohio, yet the Lord in his wisdom clearly foresaw that there would be readers of the revelations in every quarter of the planet.

1.1.1—*Hearken*—The early 19th century definition of the English word “hearken” includes the sentiments “listen, lend the ear, attend with eagerness or curiosity, observe or obey, grant or comply with”.

1.1.23—*men*—The eyes of the Lord must needs be upon all men, inasmuch as he is the Savior and Redeemer of all, even as many as will choose to be saved.

1.1.32—*afar*—It is clear that the Church of Christ would not be a localized phenomenon for very long.

1.1.39—*islands*—Determining the status of an island is naturally relative. Every land mass on this planet is surrounded by water and, hence, each could be considered an island. To the ancient Israelites, any location that one traveled to by means of a boat was thought of as an island, even though it may have been possible to travel to that place on foot. The continents of North and South America would clearly be thought of as islands in the Jewish mind. Needless to say, if one speaking were located in the western hemisphere, all other land masses would be considered islands, no matter what their size. The issue is determined by perspective.

1.1.43–44—*listen together*—At the heart of this injunction is the notion of unity. The Church of Christ has been established to bring harmony into the lives of the children of men, to lay the foundations of the city

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1 HEARKEN, O ye people of my church, saith the voice of him who dwells on high, and whose eyes are upon all men; yea, verily I say: Hearken ye people from afar; and ye that are upon the islands of the sea, listen together.

D&C 1:1
AF 215
EM 2:579, 703,743
D&C 1:1–3
AGQ 1 213
DS 2 132
D&C 1:1–4
EM 3:1156
D&C 1:1–7
DS 3 201
D&C 1:1–16
DS 1 309
of Zion and prepare the sons and daughters of Jesus Christ to be received into the Celestial glory.

1.2 The implications of this verse are far-reaching. The duty of the saints is to go into all of the world to preach the fullness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord tacitly promises that wherever they go they will be preceded by the Savior, together with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. Every man, woman, and child who dwells upon the earth will have the opportunity to hear and understand the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Christ. Every man, woman, and child will have the opportunity to choose for themselves whether they will obey or ignore the witnesses that will come before them. Also implied is that they who do not have the opportunity while in mortality to respond to the truth, will eventually have that provided in the world of spirits. The establishment of the Church and Kingdom of God in the latter days is a preamble to the dawn of the Millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ. In that day, every eye will see, every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ.

1.2.17—escape—Every human being who has ever dwelt upon this earth will see with their eyes, hear with their ears, and feel in their hearts. No one will be able to excuse themselves because of a lack of opportunity.

1.3 As the light of the Millennial dawn begins to shine throughout the world, the eyes of the honest in heart will be opened so that they might discern the machinations of those who would exercise unrighteous dominion over them.

1.3.3—rebellious—Simply put, the rebellious are those who know to do good or know to abstain from doing wrong, and commit sin in spite of their knowledge and conviction of the difference between good and evil.

1.3.9—sorrow—We may quibble as to whether this sorrow is unto repentance or not, whether this is godly sorrow, but the overall fact remains that wickedness never was nor can ever be happiness.

1.3.18—housetops—Whether speaking of social gatherings on the roofs of ancient Israel, or the elements of modern technological communication, the effect is the same. Their sins will be common knowledge. The wicked will not be able to keep their transgressions against God and man to themselves.

1.3.21—secret acts—Whether speaking of the desperate private acts of perversion committed by individuals or the acts of combinations that have formally organized themselves to subvert the truth and peace of mankind, the results will be the same.

1.4 In a revelation given a few months before Section 1, the Lord revealed the context in which the voice of warning was to be raised.

I have sworn in my wrath, and decreed wars upon the face of the earth, and the wicked shall slay the wicked, and fear shall come upon every man; And the Saints also shall hardly escape; nevertheless, I, the Lord, am with them, and will come down in heaven from the presence of my Father and consume the wicked with unquenchable fire. And behold, this is not yet, but by and by. Wherefore, seeing that I, the Lord, have decreed all these things upon the face of the earth, I will that my saints should be assembled upon the land of Zion; And that every man should take righteousness in his hands and faithfulness upon his loins, and lift a warning voice unto the inhabitants of the earth; and declare both by word and by flight that desolation shall come upon the wicked. (D&C 63:33–37)

2 For verily the voice of the Lord is unto all men, and there is none to escape; and there is no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated.

3 And the rebellious shall be pierced with much sorrow; for their iniquities shall be spoken upon the housetops, and their secret acts shall be revealed.

4 And the voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days.
The warning is to be delivered to the wicked, that if they did not repent they would be destroyed by others as wicked as themselves. Repentance from sin would provide the only refuge from the storm that was about to be poured out upon the inhabitants of the earth.

1.4.16—disciples—The inhabitants of the earth will not be able to excuse themselves because mortal men would serve as the messengers of the Lord. The servants of God would bear the power of the priesthood and their words would be attended by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. Every ear and eye would be opened to the spiritual realm and every heart would be touched by the Spirit of God. The weak and despised things of the world would bring about the harvest of souls.

1.5 The world of men can do nothing to effectively hinder or prosper the work of God. It is His world and he will choose His own to perform the assigned labors. They will be sustained by His hand and delivered from all evil proposed against them.

1.5.9—stay—The English language utilizes the word “stay” in three forms: as a noun, as a transitive verb, and as an intransitive verb. In the context here, it is clearly employed as a transitive verb. In the early 19th century, this word had the following meanings attached to it: “stop, hold from proceeding, withhold, restrain, delay, obstruct, keep from departure, to prop up, support, sustain from sinking, sustain with strength.”

1.6 In another revelation received about the same time as this section of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord is quite specific about the nature of the power with which He has imbued His servants.

MY servant, Orson Hyde, was called by his ordination to proclaim the everlasting gospel, by the Spirit of the living God, from people to people, and from land to land, in the congregations of the wicked, in their synagogues, reasoning with and expounding all scriptures unto them. And, behold, and lo, this is an ensample unto all those who were ordained unto this priesthood, whose mission is appointed unto them to go forth—And this is the ensample unto them, that they shall speak as they are moved upon by the Holy Ghost. And whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation. Behold, this is the promise of the Lord unto you, O ye my servants. Wherefore, be of good cheer, and do not fear, for I the Lord am with you, and will stand by you; and ye shall hear record of me, even Jesus Christ, that I am the Son of the living God, that I was, that I am, and that I am to come. (D&C 68:1–6)

Men had been and would continue to be ordained to the priesthood of God by which authority they would carry the truths of eternity into all of the world. If attended by the power of the Holy Ghost, the words they would speak would be as binding upon the children of men as if the Lord Jesus Christ had spoken directly to them. The Lord had already spoken through the prophet Joseph Smith and by that means had brought forth the Book of Mormon, the Church of Christ, and the revelations which were about to be published. There would be no greater authority granted unto the children of men, for it was the very power of God Himself.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>5 And they shall go forth and none shall stay them, for I the Lord have commanded them.</th>
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<tr>
<td>D&amp;C 1:5</td>
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<tr>
<td>DHC 5 (39)</td>
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<th>6 Behold, this is mine authority, and the authority of my servants, and my preface unto the book of my commandments, which I have given them to publish unto you, O inhabitants of the earth.</th>
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<tr>
<td>D&amp;C 1:6</td>
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<td>AF 196</td>
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<td>DHC 5 (38)</td>
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<td>EM 1:409, 425</td>
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<td>EM 4:1538</td>
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<td>D&amp;C 1:6–13</td>
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1.7 Many of the revelations which the prophet Joseph had already received were quite explicit about the events that awaited the inhabitants of the earth, Sections 29 and 45 being only two examples of many. The details regarding the immediate future were terrifying at first blush, especially given the spiritual state of most of those who then dwelt upon the earth. Those who would choose righteousness over the spirit of the natural man would be given extraordinary shelter from the storm that was about to burst upon them.

1.8 We generally think of the sealing power in connection with the authority given to the servants of God to bring about eternal marriages and to unify generations one to another. Yet in this and the following verses, the sealing spoken of is in conjunction with the binding of the tares in the last days in preparation for the burning of the field related in the Lord’s parable of the Wheat and the Tares (see MT-C 13.24–30). The authority and spirit of the ministers of Jesus Christ is powerful enough and so clearly articulated that the inhabitants of the earth will plainly choose who they are willing to follow, either the Spirit of the Lord or the spirit of the devil. The wicked will be distinguished from the righteous in the demeanor that they present to their fellow men. They will have the frustration, disappointment, and vitriol of their spiritual advisor engraved upon their countenances; the righteous will reflect the sentiments, values, and love of the Savior in all of their dealings with their fellow men.

1.9 The wicked will naturally gravitate toward those of their own ilk. They will align themselves with the wicked because they are wicked, feeling far more at ease with lost and fallen mankind than with the saints of God. The time will come when the unrighteous would rather die than associate with the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, does the devil seal them his own. The division between the wicked and the honest in heart, however, will be precipitated by the preaching of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ by those possessing the authority of the Savior.

1.10 At the heart of the whole matter of salvation is the manner in which we treat our fellow beings. The spirit of the Gospel of Jesus Christ anticipates the spirit of the city of Zion, both upon the earth and as it exists in the Celestial Kingdom. There can be no enmity between the disciples of Christ if we are to find salvation and exaltation. Our judgment will be performed in large measure according to our mutual feelings for one another. Have we been sufficiently forgiving and forgiven?

1.11 Inasmuch as all men will be judged by the Savior and no man will escape, in his mercy and love he has sent the fullness of the Gospel into the world so that men might choose for themselves whether they will have life or death, salvation or banishment.

1.11.1—Wherefore—a conclusionary conjunction, summing up all that has been said in the previous verses.

1.12 In a relatively short period of time, the glory of the Millennial reign will burst upon this lost and fallen earth, restoring it to its Terrestrial glory, that which graced the world prior to the fall when the conditions extant in the Garden of Eden prevailed. Those who cannot bear the paradisical glory will be summarily ushered into the spirit world for a thousand years.

1.13 The Lord God of Israel loves His children, but He cannot abide their disobedience. The children of men who have disassociated themselves from the

7 Wherefore, fear and tremble, O ye people, for what I the Lord have decreed in them shall be fulfilled.

8 And verily I say unto you, that they who go forth, bearing these tidings unto the inhabitants of the earth, to them is power given to seal both on earth and in heaven, the unbelieving and rebellious;

9 Yea, verily, to seal them up unto the day when the wrath of God shall be poured out upon the wicked without measure—

10 Unto the day when the Lord shall come to recompense unto every man according to his work, and measure to every man according to the measure which he has measured to his fellow man.

11 Wherefore the voice of the Lord is unto the ends of the earth, that all that will hear may hear:

12 Prepare ye, prepare ye for that which is to come, for the Lord is nigh:

13 And the anger of the Lord is kindled, and his sword is bathed in
light of Christ and who prey upon the innocent and weak will be held to account. During the Millennium, only the honorable and the honest in heart will find solace in mortality. Prior to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ the earth will be cleansed of the abject wicked. The imagery here is reflective of that employed by the prophet Isaiah in his description of the latter days.

Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. For the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. (Isaiah 34:1–6)

1.14 In every dispensation since the days of Adam and Eve this principle has been in operation. When a people defy the God of Heaven by rejecting His appointed servants, who cast aside the teachings of the living prophets that have been preserved for their benefit, and who rebel against the promptings of the light of Christ and the whisperings of the Holy Ghost, they find themselves outside the pale of salvation, disaffected in every way from the righteous. They seek no unity with the saints, and often become avowed enemies of those who were once their brethren. These will have no part in the establishment of Zion; they cannot be found within the body of the saints, the Church and Kingdom of God.

1.15 The ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ are outward temporal tokens representing spiritual milestones in the lives of the children of men. A man may be baptized by immersion for the remission of sin, but this must follow on the heels of a burgeoning faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and an effective repentance from sin. Without faith and repentance, no man could ever perceive the necessity for entering into the waters of baptism. Therefore, if men have strayed from the tokens of the priesthood, they have first strayed from the spiritual realities for which the tokens stand. Men who once enjoyed the blessings of the principles and ordinances of the Gospel may find themselves disaffected and disenchanted by the truths they once held dear; they are invariably participants in activities proscribed by the covenants into which they once willingly entered. They have become willful apostates from the truth and have, once again, embraced the spirit of the natural man.

1.16 The natural man is an enemy to God and is forever attempting to justify his own conduct as the standard by which they should be judged. For such men, there is no absolute truth, only that which they desire to be truth. Righteousness is that which they define for themselves as the proper thing to do. They are, as is clear to anyone with eyes to see, functioning as their own personal god; they have created their god in their own personal image. They do not and will not entertain any other standard other than their own. As is the case with all things upon this earth, the human body will age, decay, and heaven, and it shall fall upon the inhabitants of the earth.

14 And the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, shall be cut off from among the people;

15 For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant;

16 They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even
eventually perish. The spirit will be released from its tabernacle and will be exposed to the reality of eternity. In that day there no one will be able to resort to one’s own standards or views.

1.16.2—seek—Only those who accept the notion that there is some standard greater than themselves will devote time to discovering a better way in which to live. Only when a man is infused by the light of Christ or is moved upon by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost will he attempt to orient himself to a standard different from the one which the natural man desires. Seeking inspiration from God the Father will produce inspiration and direct revelation, guidance which will lead a man to rise above the lost and fallen conditions of the earth and find joy in the promises made to the faithful.

1.16.42—idol—The images that men craft for themselves are made of temporal material, some more enduring than others, but all of which suffer eventual decay and dissolution.

1.16.50—Babylon—The ancient city of Babylon has become the scriptural archetype for materialism, dependence upon the flesh, the quintessential representation of carnal security. It is, in short, the name that embraces all of the untoward effects of a lost and fallen world.

1.17 The time appointed for the temporal existence of the earth was established long before the foundations of this world were laid. From the beginning of time the sons and daughters of God have known that there would come an era in which the Lord God of Israel would reign personally upon the earth. The planet which had once enjoyed the blessings and glory of the creation, fell from its paradisical glory, falling from the presence of God into the Telestial conditions which have now persisted more than six thousand years. The glory of the Terrestrial kingdom would one day be restored to the earth and at that day all things which could not bear the presence of the glorified Christ would be exiled to the world of spirits. The Lord announces here that the glorious and triumphant day has nearly arrived. Inasmuch as humanity in general had completely received unto themselves the spirit of the natural man, they were in no way prepared for the blessings that would be poured out upon the children of men when he appeared in glory. In order to have a people prepared to receive him at his coming, the Lord provided the means whereby a complete restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ was achieved, together with the establishment of the Church and Kingdom of God. With the principles and ordinances of salvation and exaltation available to men, through the offices of the priesthood of the Son of God, men and women could put off the natural man and take the Holy Ghost for their guide, that they might eschew the very appearance of sin and rejoice when their Lord appeared in glory. As He had in every dispensation since the days of Adam and Eve, God called upon one of His children to serve as the prophet, seer, and revelator to his generation. Thus, Joseph Smith was chosen from among men to be the instrument by which the sons and daughters of God might know the truth in these latter days. The Father and the Son revealed themselves to the boy prophet, sent messengers of glory to him and his companions, carefully instructing him in the plan of salvation and happiness. Power and authority were conferred; effective ordinances were performed; and the Church and Kingdom of God were reestablished among the faithful.

1.17.7—calamity—that is to say, the utter destruction of all human life upon this earth at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ that otherwise would have transpired.

1.17.21–23—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No
one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord 
Jesus Christ.

1.17.33—commandments—The purpose of commandments is not to 
determine whether an individual or a body of people will be obedient. 
Every commandment reveals an aspect of the character and personality 
of God the eternal Father and of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. We 
live the commandments in order to personally acquire the perfections, 
characteristics, and attributes connected with the divine nature.

1.18 The justice and mercy of God the Father required that more than an 
isolated few should know of the dire state of wickedness filling the earth. 
Joseph Smith alone could not possibly do all that would be required to pro-
claim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people 
in the world. Therefore, from among the faithful, others were called, ordained, 
and set apart for the ministry. These were sent out in ever increasing spheres of 
influence, as part of the Lord’s plan to have all of the children of men be the 
beneficiaries of the love and compassion of the Father.

1.18.29—prophets—In this particular case, the Apostle Paul and Nephi the 
son of Lehi, 

1.19 The Apostle Paul expressed similar sentiments to the Corinthians. 

But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and 
unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews 
and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because 
the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is 
stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not 
many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are 
called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to con-
found the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to 
confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, 
and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which 
are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory 
in his presence. (1 Corinthians 1:23–29)

Nephi was quite candid about the danger of the dependence of men upon 
their own strength and wisdom.

O Lord, wilt thou encircle me around in the robe of thy righteousness!
O Lord, wilt thou make a way for mine escape before mine enemies!
Wilt thou make my path straight before me! Wilt thou not place a 
stumbling block in my way—but that thou wouldst clear my way 
before me, and hedge not up my way, but the ways of mine enemy. O 
Lord, I have trusted in thee, and I will trust in thee forever. I will not 
put my trust in the arm of flesh: for I know that cursed is he that 
putteth his trust in the arm of flesh. Yea, cursed is he that putteth his 
trust in man or maketh flesh his arm. (2 Nephi 4:33–34)

1.20 A man may only speak in the name of the Lord when he speaks with the 
tongue of angels, even by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. Nephi 
the son of Lehi taught this same principle to his brethren.

Wo be unto him that shall say: We have received the word of God, and 
we need no more of the word of God, for we have enough! For behold, 
thus saith the Lord God: I will give unto the children of men line upon

18 And also gave commandments 
to others, that they should pro-
claim these things unto the world; 
and all this that it might be ful-
filled, which was written by the 
prophets—

19 The weak things of the world 
shall come forth and break down 
the mighty and strong ones, that 
man should not counsel his fellow 
man, neither trust in the arm of 
flesh—

20 But that every man might speak 
in the name of God the Lord, even 
the Savior of the world;
line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto my counsel, for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have. Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm, or shall hearken unto the precepts of men, save their precepts shall be given by the power of the Holy Ghost. (2 Nephi 28:29–31)

One of the great tragedies of this dispensation is that there are multitudes who express this same negative attitude, that the word of the Lord as encapsulated in the Bible is sufficient, that there need not be any more. But the Lord is clear here that every man has need to be a prophet, has need to speak under the influence of the Holy Ghost, and has need to lean upon the strength of the Lord which is able to bear us up under any and all circumstances.

1.21 Faith increases in the world when men become aware of the truthfulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Faith is a concatenation of intellectual awareness coupled with the conviction that the knowledge gained is eternally true. Thus, it is one thing to know the details of the life, ministry, and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, and it is quite another to have a testimony that he was and is the Son of the living God. Factual knowledge may not motivate us to change the course of our personal lives, but having the heart-felt conviction that the knowledge has direct bearing on our eternal happiness will spur us into action.

1.22 Faithless men do not enter into covenants with the powers of Heaven without committing blasphemous mockery. It is the willing submission to divine will through the observance of the laws, principles, and ordinances of the Gospel of Christ that lays the foundation for a lasting relationship between God and man.

1.23 Man has never been completely abandoned to falsehood and ignorance. There has always been some aspect of eternal truth that has been accepted into the lives of the peoples of the world. Thus, when the fulness of the Gospel of Christ is preached, there are resonances to be heard among every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. The weak and the simple of the Church and Kingdom of God are chosen to preach the Gospel because they do so without pretention. They are weak and simple in their own eyes because they are fully aware of the glory and grandeur of God the Father and that of His Son. The world may very well initially perceive the servants of God as weak and simple, unworthy of the glory and pomp of the world, but they soon learn that the power of the Holy Ghost that inspires these men is irrefutable, a force that cannot be reckoned with, even at the hands of the kings and rulers of the world.

1.24 The language of Heaven, the language spoken by Father and the Son, together with all of the hosts who dwell with them, is unimaginably perfect, far beyond the skills and capacity of the most learned linguistic upon the earth. If man is to understand anything of the divine nature and the destiny of the human race, he must have it explained to him in terms that he can comprehend. Therefore, God and His emissaries condescend to speak unto the children of men using the languages of men in their lost and fallen condition. Needless to say, this communication is intended to enhance the spiritual capacity of the children of men, until they are equipped to speak the tongues of angels. Therefore, we must needs be cautious about how we regard the composition of the revelations preserved in the scriptures, especially those recorded in

21 That faith also might increase in the earth;

22 That mine everlasting covenant might be established;

23 That the fulness of my gospel might be proclaimed by the weak and the simple unto the ends of the world, and before kings and rulers.

24 Behold, I am God and have spoken it; these commandments are of me, and were given unto my servants in their weakness, after the manner of their language, that they might come to understanding.
the Doctrine and Covenants. They were not preserved so that we might admire their literary or philosophical value; they were communicated to the least of us that we might come to a knowledge of fundamental truths. Articulate eloquence in spiritual things comes with experience and devotion. For all of our learning, however, we still bear the burden of communicating the truth to those less fortunate than ourselves. We must do so in the manner that the Lord has demonstrated to us.

1.25 All have sinned and have come short of the glory of God. The Father and the Son desire that we fall not short of their glory at all, and have provided the means whereby we might become as they are. Every principle and ordinance of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is formulated such that we can learn, line upon line, precept upon precept, wherein our lives are not in tune with the mind and will of the Father. It is our faith and humility that will sustain us as we pass through the process of repentance, purification, and sanctification.

1.26 For all of the wickedness prevalent upon this earth, there are countless millions who desire the eternal happiness that the teachings and covenants of Jesus Christ can provide. The honest in heart are receptive to the truth when they hear it.

1.27 Often men sin in secret, thinking that their deeds will not be perceived by their fellow men. Yet, a servant of God, blessed and sustained by the power of the priesthood, filled with the influence of the Holy Ghost may know the heart and mind of every man that pertains to his stewardship. Those who bear the keys are blessed with this awareness so that all who come into their sphere of action might be reminded of the love and compassion of the Father and the Son, that the sinner might acknowledge those things in which they have forsaken the covenants of God, the first step toward reconciliation.

1.28 Humility derives from comparison. Men, however, have a tendency to make temporal comparisons in order to humiliate their fellow citizens upon the earth. There is no desire to raise up the humiliated one, but rather only a desire to aggrandize the proud. God the Father and His Son, however, desire all men to be as they are, in the spirit of love and fellowship. They will not force their knowledge and wisdom on any man. The natural man cannot and will not humble himself before God because he is too concerned about humiliating others. That man who recognizes that God has only His child’s best interests at heart will willingly submit to His counsel. In so doing, men are able to overcome the world, a feat impossible without the influence of Heaven.

1.29 The prophet Joseph Smith was first visited by the angel Moroni on the evening of 21 September 1823. During the interviews that transpired that night and the following morning, the boy Joseph learned of the record of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas that had been preserved and sealed up to come forth in the latter days. Four years later, Joseph Smith was given leave to retrieve the Nephite record and proceeded to translate a portion of the plates into the published record we have today as the Book of Mormon. The labor was achieved by the hand of God, working through Joseph and the instrument known as the Urim and Thummim which had been delivered to him by Moroni. All this was accomplished through strict obedience to the commandments of God (see 1.24)

| 1.29 And after having received the record of the Nephites, yea, even my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., have power to translate through the mercy of God, by the power of God, the Book of Mormon. | D&C 1:29  
| AF 295  
| DS 2 202  
| EM 1:140, 210  
| EM 2:751  
| D&C 1:29–30  
| CR98-A 7 |

25 And inasmuch as they erred it might be made known;  
D&C 1:26–28  
CR95-A 33

26 And inasmuch as they sought wisdom they might be instructed;  
D&C 1:27  
AF 119  
DNCT 3 223  
MD 122, 631  
EM 1:407

27 And inasmuch as they sinned they might be chastened, that they might repent;  
D&C 1:28  
CR98-O 43  
EM 2:663

28 And inasmuch as they were humble they might be made strong, and blessed from on high, and receive knowledge from time to time.  
D&C 1:28  
CR98-O 43  
EM 2:663

1.29.9—Nephites—In reference to Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

1.29.14–16—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the
restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

1.29.33–35—Book of Mormon—The sacred record of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, composed by the prophet Mormon during the fourth century of the Christian era, using nearly a thousand years of preserved records of the Nephite civilization. Its resting place was revealed to the prophet Joseph Smith who was then permitted to translate the record into English by the gift and power of God.

1.30 When the Church was organized on 6 April 1830, six men were numbered in the charter, men who had been willing to take upon themselves the burden of the Kingdom of God upon the earth, namely: Joseph Smith Junior, Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, Peter Whitmer Junior, Samuel H. Smith, and David Whitmer, all of whom had been baptized previously for the remission of sins.

1.30.6–7—these commandments—That is to say, those revelations that were being included in the Book of Commandments, which now appear in the Doctrine and Covenants.

1.30.19—church—That is to say, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints which was formally established according to the laws of the state of New York on 6 April 1830.

1.30.27—obscenity—The English word “obscenity” suggested the following sentiments at the beginning of the 19th century: “a state of retirement from the world, unnoticed, privacy, darkness of meaning, unintelligible, illegible, unknown to fame, humble condition”.

1.30.31—darkness—The English word “darkness” suggested the following sentiments at the beginning of the 19th century: “absence of light, want of clearness or perspicuity, ignorance, secrecy, privacy, infernal gloom, hell, troubles, distress, calamities, perplexities, empire of Satan”.

1.30.34—true—The English word “true” suggested the following sentiments at the beginning of the 19th century: “conformable to fact, accordance with the actual state of things, genuine, pure, real, not counterfeit, not adulterated, faithful, steady in adhering to promises, honest, exact, precision, straight, right, not pretended, rightful”.

1.30.36—living—A being is considered living if the spirit of life dwells within its tabernacle. It is the same with the Church of Christ and the power and influence of the Holy Ghost.

1.31 The Father and the Son are perfect beings; their residence is a place of glory, purity, and sanctification. No sin or imperfection can be excused; it must be repented of and overcome. We are called upon to forsake all sin that we may be cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ, his atoning sacrifice for and in our behalf.

1.32 Justice condemns all sin and the sinners who commit them. The nature of the Celestial Kingdom is such that only those who are pure and undefiled can enter in. The law of mercy, however, provides a way whereby a sinner may be unburdened of all his guilt and distress, so that he might stand unashamed in the presence of God and the hosts of Heaven. Forgiveness of sin is not founded in capriciousness; there is order in the Kingdom of God.

1.33 Alma the younger taught this same principle to the people of Antionum.

And now Alma began to expound these things unto him, saying: It is

30 And also those to whom these commandments were given, might have power to lay the foundation of this church, and to bring it forth out of obscurity and out of darkness, the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, with which I, the Lord, am well pleased, speaking unto the church collectively and not individually—

31 For I the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance;

32 Nevertheless, he that repents and does the commandments of the Lord shall be forgiven;

33 And he that repents not, from him shall be taken even the light which he has received; for my
given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are
laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according
to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of
men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him.
And therefore, he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the
lesser portion of the word; and he that will not harden his heart, to him
is given the greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to
know the mysteries of God until he know them in full. And they that
will harden their hearts, to them is given the lesser portion of the word
until they know nothing concerning his mysteries; and then they are
taken captive by the devil, and led by his will down to destruction.
Now this is what is meant by the chains of hell. (Alma 12:9–11)

Without the influence of the Holy Ghost or the light of Christ, a man is
almost entirely devoid of intelligence, hardly knowing his right hand from his
left. He is like unto the beasts of the field who barely live from day to day,
ever contemplating their eternal prospects.

1.34 The Lord will reveal the truth of all things unto the children of men, but
not just to satisfy their idle curiosity. The Father and the Son desire to reveal
themselves unto the inhabitants of the earth so that they might be prepared to
receive the Lord Jesus Christ when he comes in glory. They desire that men
become as they are, so that they might dwell in the eternities filled with light
and truth, endowed with power to live in accordance with the laws that govern
exaltation.

1.35 The principles and ordinances that have provided the prophets, seers, and
revelators with the prospects of eternal life are available to all who have lived
upon this earth, or those who will ever live upon it. It is for this very purpose
that we left our Celestial home on high to be born upon this planet to our
earthly parents. All men everywhere and everwhen have been provided with the
opportunity to accept or reject the blessings extended by the Father
through His Son, but in our day, the imperative implies far more dire conse-
cquences than at any other time in the earth’s temporal history. The time is
short for the children of men, far shorter than it has ever been, before the Son
of God will dismiss those not prepared to dwell in his earthly Kingdom to a
place of sorrow and darkness. Most of those who will be summarily intro-
duced into the world of spirits will have been sent there as a direct result of the
great wars and other calamities that would afflict the children of men in the
latter days. Satan will rage in the hearts of men, and the wicked will perish as
did the Nephites and the Jaredites at the hill Cumorah.

1.36 The power protecting and guiding the disciples of Christ is twofold: first,
the keys of the priesthood that have been committed into the hands of worthy
men will provide intelligence in a world filled with darkness and ignorance;
second, the power and influence of the Holy Ghost which will dwell in the
heart and mind of those willing to keep the commandments of God. They will
receive him as their King and their Lord. The world of abject wickedness will
come to an end.

1.36.10—saints—In reference to the membership of the Church of Jesus
Christ, those who have covenanted to no longer partake of the
wickedness of the world. The Greek word used in the New Testament
means “those not of the earth”.

1.36.24—Idumea—An alternative form of the name Edom, which in turn
is representative of Esau and his posterity who settled in the regions

Spirit shall not always strive with
man, saith the Lord of Hosts.

D&C 1:32
MD 295
MF 201, 340,
348
TSWK 105
CR95-A 104
D&C 1:32–33
AF 113
MF 344
D&C 1:33
AF 114, 119
AGQ 2 156
AGQ 5 119
DNTC 1 496
DS 1 53
FPM 147
MD 445, 631,
727, 753
MF 86
EM 3:1021
D&C 1:34–35
DS 1 234

34 And again, verily I say unto
you, O inhabitants of the earth: I
the Lord am willing to make these
things known unto all flesh;

D&C 1:35
AF 73
DNTC 1 335
DNTC 3 479
DS 1 242
DS 3 43, 48, 315
MD 562, 632,
727
PM 33
CR01-A 75
EM 2:738, 907
D&C 1:35–36
MLM 367

35 For I am no respecter of
persons, and will that all men shall
know that the day speedily cometh;
the hour is not yet, but is nigh at
hand, when peace shall be taken
from the earth, and the devil shall
have power over his own
dominion.

D&C 1:36
AF 365, 373
MLM 451, 522,
590
EM 1:270

36 And also the Lord shall have
power over his saints, and shall
reign in their midst, and shall come
down in judgment upon Idumea,
or the world.
south of Jerusalem. Esau, Edom, and Idumea have all served as archetypal names for peoples who minds and hearts are set upon the material aspects of this lost and fallen world, the Celestial state. In some respects, Idumea may be equated with Babylon. The fact that Esau sold his birthright to his brother Jacob for a mess of pottage should instruct us in the dire effects of the covenant people thinking and feeling after the desires of the flesh.

1.37 The injunction here is not just for the sixty-seven revelations that chronologically preceded this divine preface to the Book of Commandments, but it applies to all that the Lord saw fit to insert into the current edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. We may extrapolate the principle to all that the Lord has revealed unto the children of men since the beginning of time and to all that He will yet reveal unto His disciples prior to His glorious advent upon the earth.

1.38 Those who are not influenced by the power of the Spirit of God have great difficulty recognizing the servants of the Most High. They typically view them as mere mortal men, perhaps somewhat gifted and charismatic, but mortal men nonetheless. The prophets, seers, and revelators not only serve as the spokesmen for Heaven, they are also empowered to perform the will of Heaven. They are not to be trifled with, notwithstanding their humility and tenderness of heart. They wield the sword of justice as well as the shield of truth. They cannot be confounded or overcome until their work upon the earth is complete, even though the nations may roar and the wicked may oppress.

1.39 The Lord Jesus has overcome the world; he has overcome the powers of death and hell; he has been enounced in the throne of his Father to rule and reign in time and in eternity. We may all be partakers of the truth by means of the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, a gift available to all men if they will exercise a degree of faith which will produce sincere repentance and a desire to enter into the covenants by the Father of all. Embracing truth will ultimately provide us with eternal life, for truth is the stuff of which eternity is made.

1.39.26—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2.0 As a fourteen year old boy, Joseph Smith sought light, truth, and knowledge at the hands of God the eternal Father. For his pains, he was ushered into the presence of the Father and the Son in the spring of 1820. He was informed that the blessings that he had been diligently seeking were not presently upon the earth but would soon be made available to him. He was to remain faithful, not joining himself to any of the existing sectarian churches of his day. For more than three years, the young prophet suffered at the hands of his neighbors and associates, sometimes being abused with threatenings and violence. In the fall of 1823, on the evening of 21 September, Joseph was again visited by a divine minister, this time in the person of Moroni, the son of the prophet Mormon, the latter having served as the compiler of a condensed record of the history of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas. During the whole of that night, Moroni instructed the young man regarding the

37 Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled.

38 What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same.

39 For behold, and lo, the Lord is God, and the Spirit beareth record, and the record is true, and the truth abideth forever and ever. Amen.

Section 2

Date: September 21, 1823
Place: Manchester, New York
To: Joseph Smith

D&C 1:37
AQG 1 (14)
DNTC 1 201
DS 1 302
DS 3 200
MD 786
MM 2 81
EM 2:751
D&C 1:37–38
EM 1:296
D&C 1:37–39
DNTC 1 56
MD 206
D&C 1:38
DHC 5 (38)
DS 1 187, 310, 323
DS 2 129
DS 3 80
FPM 319
MF 45, 183
MM 3 40
PM 84
D&C 1:38
CR00-0-20
CR01-A 84
CR95-A 25
CR97-A 29, 101
CR97-O 45
CR98-O 51
EM 1:409
EM 2:520, 742, 743
EM 3:1127,
1133, 1134,
1277, 1282
EM 4:1538
D&C 1:39
DHC 5 (40)
MD 810
D&C 2
AF 156
DS 3 19, 21, 42
MD 206
EM 1:8, 389,
405, 407, 426,
427
tasks that would devolve upon him as the Lord’s servant. As part of three distinctive visions, Moroni rehearsed not only the nature and location of the record, but also gave detailed explanations of Old and New Testament scriptures that would ultimately have bearing of the prophet’s role in re-establishing the Church of Jesus Christ once more upon the earth and restoring the principles and ordinances of salvation and exaltation for both the living and the dead. One of the many passages of scriptures that Moroni explained were verses extracted from the writings of the prophet Malachi. Although Joseph was not specific in his account of Moroni’s visit, it is probable that Moroni cited at least the first three verses of Malachi chapter 3.

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years. (Malachi 3:1–4)

Note that several issues are addressed that would be in the forefront of Joseph Smith’s mind during the subsequent ten years or so. At the heart of the matter is the coming of the messenger of the covenant who would help prepare the way before the glorious advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. This would transpire in a temple raised up unto the Lord God of Israel. These things would take place so that there would be a people who could indeed receive the Savior as the Son of God, prepared to dwell with him for a thousand years upon this planet during the time it would be restored to its paradisiacal glory. Joseph’s initial question that had precipitated his prayer in the grove near his home had involved his search for the religious organization to which he could turn for salvation, a redemption from his personal sins. Moroni asserted through this passage of scripture that the answer to this question was about to be answered. Also, there is a direct allusion to the restoration of the Aaronic priesthood. Moroni then quoted the entirety of the fourth chapter of Malachi. The King James version of this chapter appears below for purposes of comparison.

For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts. Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. (Malachi 4:1–6)

Moroni quoted the first verse of Malachi 4 differently than what we presently
have in the King James version.

For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall burn as stubble: for they that come shall burn them, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

What is implied here is that a rather substantial change in the nature of humanity would have to take place before the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, or no one would remain to dwell with the Savior in the aftermath. The translation and publication of the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the priesthood and the Church, and the bestowal of the keys of the priesthood in the House of the Lord would be instrumental in preparing the honest in heart for the coming of the Lord. Verses 2 through 4 refer to the blessings that would befall those who embrace the principles of truth and light that were about to be revealed unto the children of men in preparation for the coming of the Savior. The changes in verses 5 and 6 of the fourth chapter of Malachi constitute the substance of Section 2 of the Doctrine and Covenants. Although these inspired verses had been available to the members of the Church in various forms and publications, they were not included in the text of the Doctrine and Covenants until the 1876 edition compiled and edited by Orson Pratt under the direction of the First Presidency of the Church. In that edition and in all subsequent editions, this material has been entitled Section 2.

2.1 Those who are familiar with the New Testament and the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will be immediately aware how this verse has been fulfilled multiple times. When John the Baptist was queried about his particular mission he responded thusly:

And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem, to ask him; Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not that he was Elias; but confessed, saying; I am not the Christ. And they asked him, saying; How then art thou Elias? And he said, I am not that Elias who was to restore all things. And they asked him saying, Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as saith the prophet Esaias. (JST, John 1:20–24)

In his own particular way, John the Baptist served as a partial fulfillment of Malachi’s prophecy, in that he did turn many of the hearts of the children of Israel to the promises made to their fathers regarding the coming of the Messiah. His appearance to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on 15 May 1829, when he bestowed upon them the keys of the Aaronic priesthood, did much the same, particularly in terms of they then being able to administer the ordinance of baptism for the remission of sins. John the Baptist made it clear to the Pharisees that he was not the only individual who would serve as an Elias (or as it would be in Hebrew, Elijah), but the Savior himself would be one who restored all things. In another venue, at the mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus to Peter, James, and John, administering to them certain powers, keys, and authority that pertained to their calling as Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. After having seen Elijah in glory after the time that the ministry of the Savior had begun naturally raised some questions.
And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead. And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the Scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things, as the prophets have written. And again I say unto you that Elias has come already, concerning whom it is written, Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and they knew him not, and have done unto him, whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of Man suffer of them. But I say unto you, Who is Elias? Behold, this is Elias, whom I send to prepare the way before me. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist, and also of another who should come and restore all things, as it is written by the prophets. (JST, Matthew 17:8–14)

On 3 April 1836, during the time of the dedication of the Kirtland Temple, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery beheld an open vision of the Lord Jesus Christ who accepted the Temple as the House of the Lord. Shortly thereafter, Moses, Elijah, and another prophet who is called Elias, appeared to Joseph and Oliver bestowing the appropriate keys which they had each held during their mortal ministries. All these things were done to prepare the saints for the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

2.1.4–5—reveal unto—This phrase replaces the word “send” in the King James version.
2.1.7–8—the Priesthood—This is additional text to the original King James version.
2.1.9–12—by the hand of—This is additional text to the original King James version.
2.1.13—Elijah—Elijah the prophet lived in the days of Ahab and Jezebel. He was a native of the region east of the Jordan River called the Gilead. The city of Tishbe, the traditional home of Elijah, is located about seven miles east of the Jordan and about fourteen miles north of the river Jabbok. Elisha, Elijah successor, watched as Elijah was caught up into heaven in a fiery chariot. Elijah appeared with Moses on the mount of Transfiguration where he bestowed upon Peter, James, and John the keys of the authority which he held. The use of these keys in the Meridian of Time is confirmed by the fact that the saints in Paul’s day were performing vicarious work for the dead, including baptism (see 1 CO-C 15.29).
2.1.15—prophet—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

2.2 Whether speaking of John the Baptist or any of the other angelic ministers who have been sent from time to time to stir up the children of men to reflect upon the blessings that have been promised the faithful, the principle is essentially the same. Since the days of Adam and Eve, the Lord has extended blessings and covenants that not only impinged upon their mortal lives and their eternal destiny, but also on those of their posterity. Because of those covenants, the children of men are blessed by the power and authority of the priesthood of God. Upon being blessed, or upon becoming aware that they can be blessed, the posterity of the faithful can look back upon their righteous ancestry with love and admiration, grateful for their willingness to abide by the laws and commandments that established their family in eternity.

2 And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers.

D&C 2:2
EM 2:493
D&C 2:2–3
CR98-O 30
CR00-A 109
2.2.4—plant in—This phrase replaces “turn” in the King James version of Malachi 4:5.
2.2.6—hearts—This noun is singular in the King James version.
2.2.9—children—This word replaces “fathers” in the King James version.
2.2.10—12—the promises made—This is additional text to the original King James version.
2.2.15—fathers—This word replaces “children” in the King James version.
2.2.18—hearts—This noun is singular in the King James version.
2.2.22—23—shall turn—This is additional text to the original King James version.

2.3 This verse is a complete reworking of the last full phrase of the book of Malachi, if not an extrapolation by Moroni himself. At the beginning of the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times, there was no man prepared to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming in glory. Had he appeared in glory, initiating the Millennium in the spring of 1820, in the fall of 1823, or at any other time prior to April 1836, no mortal would have been sufficiently prepared to dwell with the Lord Jesus Christ. With the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, his priesthood, his Church, and the principles and ordinances of salvation and exaltation, the servants of God were enabled to gather in the faithful from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. For nearly two hundred years, the keys of the priesthood have been wielded in behalf of the children of men, so that faith and righteousness might abound upon the face of the earth. There has been some progress; there remains much yet to do.

3 If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming.

Section 3

Date: July 1828
Place: Harmony, Pennsylvania
To: Joseph Smith

D&C 3
AF 295
DHC 1: 22, 55
DHC 5 (35), (36)
MD 206
EM 1:407, 408, 427
EM 2:574, 855
EM 3:1335

35
the product of his labors. Joseph appealed to the Lord and the request was refused twice. The third time, the Lord allowed Martin to take the manuscript if he would covenant that only his wife, her sister, his brother and parents would become privy to the contents of the 116 pages. Martin departed Harmony and Moroni retrieved the Urim and Thummim from Joseph Smith as a punishment for his persistence in attempting to satisfy his temporal benefactor. In short order Martin lost control of the 116 pages and they have not been recovered. In July 1828, Moroni returned the Urim and Thummim just long enough for Joseph to receive this revelation which is now referred to as Section 3. After the Lord revealed His displeasure with the young prophet, the Urim and Thummim and the plates were taken from him for a short time. A while later, Joseph received instructions as to how he should proceed, the text of which may be found in Section 10 of the Doctrine and Covenants. This section appeared as Chapter II in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 30 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

3.1 The Lord had fixed His mind and heart regarding the coming forth of the Book of Mormon long before it had been composed. The instructions given to Lehi and Nephi to make and preserve the personal records of their experiences in the wilderness and in the promised land served as a preamble to the great effort that would be made for nearly a thousand years, as the historians and scribes of the Nephites contributed their portion to the overall sacred library of the ancient Americans. From this vast collection of writings, the prophet Mormon would fashion his abridged account of his people. The record would survive the final conflict between the Nephites and their enemies, the Lamanites. Mormon’s son, Moroni, would be entrusted with the task of completing his father’s work, after which he ensconced it in a small stone depository in the hill Cumorah about the year AD 421. The prophets had declared time and again that this record would be the means of gathering much of the House of Israel unto the Lord Jesus Christ, and would also provide an opportunity for the Gentiles to receive salvation and exaltation. Notwithstanding the machinations of the enemies of Joseph Smith, notwithstanding any personal weaknesses the young prophet might have that would endanger the progress of the work, the Book of Mormon would be brought forth to the world according to the economy of the Lord. God had anticipated all that would transpire and had provided the means to complete the work in spite of the attempts of the wicked to destroy the prophet and his associates.

3.2 The Lord God of Israel is omniscient, knowing all things that will have ever transpired from the beginning of time until its last moments. Therefore, He cannot be duped or dissuaded from that which He has set in His mind and heart to do. His economy is known to Himself; He provides for all eventualities long in advance of the reality of those events. Therefore, even the most recalcitrant and rebellious of His children cannot surprise Him; He has anticipated their every move. Even the most destructive actions have been accounted for and provisions made in order to ameliorate their effects.

3.2.7—crooked paths—Crooked paths are created as the result of weakness in the face of temporal challenges. God does not have any weaknesses to be exploited.

3.2.12—turn—There is no necessity to turn to the right or to the left, because the Father is ever efficient and charts the straightest course possible. Knowing the end from the beginning, there is never a misstep along His chosen path.

3.2.30—said—The Father and the Son are full of light and truth and cannot err in their pronouncements.

1 THE works, and the designs, and the purposes of God cannot be frustrated, neither can they come to naught.

D&C 3:1
EM 2:521
EM 3:1310
D&C 3:1–2
MD 546
D&C 3:1–3
CR99-O 115
EM 3:1030
D&C 3:1–10
CR01-O 110

2 For God doth not walk in crooked paths, neither doth he turn to the right hand nor to the left, neither doth he vary from that which he hath said, therefore his paths are straight, and his course is one eternal round.
3.2.40—**one eternal round**—The knowledge and comprehension of the Lord is perfect and complete. The actions of all are accounted for; nothing has been left out of the contemplations of the Lord God of Israel.

3.3 No man is intelligent enough to overthrow the wisdom of God. Even Lucifer in his great pride thought that he could subvert the will of the Lord regarding the salvation and exaltation of mankind, but he knew not the mind of God (see 4.6). He has been thwarted on every hand, as have been all those who have lifted up their heels against the servants of the most high.

3.4 Here the prophet Joseph Smith and Martin Harris serve as archetypal examples of the failure of men to anticipate the wickedness of their fellows. Notwithstanding the fact that Joseph had been personally taught and comforted by the Father and the Son early in his life, that he had been instructed personally by the angel Moroni and other angelic ministers for more than four years, that he had been the instrument in the hands of the Lord to translate a goodly portion of that which had been engraved upon the gold plates, yet he had been overpowered by the solicitations of his friend and his friend’s wife. Martin Harris had learned for himself the wisdom and inspiration of the young prophet as he had visited with the worldly wise of his day. How, then, could either of these good men be persuaded to ignore the counsel of the God of Heaven. Martin was plagued with a termagant wife; Joseph could not bring himself to disappoint his erstwhile benefactor.

3.4.24—**strength**—We may be somewhat hard pressed to point to Joseph’s boasting, but it is clear that Martin Harris was afflicted with this aspect of pride. Not only did he overextend himself with respect to the nature of the covenant that he had made with the Lord, he also took glory unto himself as he presented the manuscript to any and all who desired to see the 116 pages.

3.4.43–44—**carnal desires**—When the mind and heart of a man is set upon the things of this world, he has distracted himself sufficiently that he will certainly trip in his progress on the path to eternal life. Joseph wished to maintain his friendship with his friend and benefactor; Martin wished to appease his wife at any cost.

3.4.51—**vengeance**—For Joseph Smith, part of the vengeance was manifested in the retrieval of the Urim and Thummim and the plates of the Book of Mormon. For both Joseph and Martin the withdrawal of the Spirit of God from them personally, was sufficient for them to know that they no longer had a desire to disappoint the God of Heaven again. Martin would never again be entrusted with the task of helping with the translation of the Book of Mormon.

3.5 The instructions that Joseph Smith had received regarding Mormon’s plates and the Urim and Thummim were quite specific. No doubt the counsel regarding the manuscript was similar, both to Joseph and to Martin.

3.5.7–8—**these things**—Joseph had been physically entrusted with the Urim and Thummim and the plates containing the Book of Mormon. In addition he had been tasked to translate the record and to protect the manuscript as it was being produced.

3.5.14—**commandments**—The angel Moroni had been candid about the manner in which the plates should be protected, and painfully explicit that if he dared to show them or the interpreters to any, other than those who would be identified, Joseph would be destroyed (see *SH-C 1.42*). He had also been commanded to consider the plates and the

3 Remember, remember that it is not the work of God that is frustrated, but the work of men;

4 For although a man may have many revelations, and have power to do many mighty works, yet if he boasts in his own strength, and sets at naught the counsels of God, and follows after the dictates of his own will and carnal desires, he must fall and incur the vengeance of a just God upon him.

5 Behold, you have been entrusted with these things, but how strict were your commandments; and remember also the promises which were made to you, if you did not transgress them.
3.6 We are not privy to every instance of disobedience perpetrated by the prophet Joseph Smith from 1820 until July of 1828, but certainly the Lord could allude to many. In the twentieth section of the Doctrine and Covenants Joseph reveals that this had been the case (see 20.5–6). It would be easy to make excuses for a young man making his way from his fifteenth to his twenty-third year in the midst of intense persecution. The Lord, however, does not afford Joseph the opportunity to do so.

3.7 It is quite certain that Joseph did not want to lose the patronage and friendship of Martin Harris, one of the few outside of his own family who had believed his account of the first vision and the visit of the angel Moroni.

3.7.13—men—In this specific case, Martin Harris had gone off on his own track. Joseph was never given leave to compare himself with the conduct of Martin. While it is true that in some respects Martin had offended God in a grievous way, Joseph was still very much culpable in the episode. Joseph could not cover his own sins with the sins of others.

3.7.22–24—despise his words—Certainly we may view Martin’s flagrant neglect of his covenant with Joseph and the Lord as fulfilling this aspect of the Lord’s words as given here. In addition, however, it is clear that Martin’s appreciation of that which he had written as dictated by the prophet was not as great as it should have been, particularly in light of the fact that he cavalierly neglected his charge once he had accomplished the task of satisfying his wife that had not been idly whiling away the hours in Harmony, Pennsylvania, for more than two months.

3.8 The faithlessness of Martin Harris could not ameliorate the failure of the prophet Joseph to follow the counsel of the Lord. The Lord is perfectly clear here. If Joseph had hearkened to the voice of the Lord in the first place, taking the Lord at his word that the manuscript should not leave his hands, Martin indeed might have taken extreme offense and might have abandoned the Lord’s servant to the vagaries of the world. He might have also joined the ranks of Joseph’s oppressors out of spite. The Lord, however, is plain. Had these eventualities transpired, the Lord God of Israel would have protected him and lifted him up and away from all of the machinations of the wicked.

3.9 In the far distant past, before the foundations of the earth were laid, the sons and daughters of God who would pertain to this planet were organized into dispensations and families, each spirit receiving particular assignments to achieve while dwelling in mortality. That Joseph Smith was foreordained to participate in opening the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time is a certainty. He was not, however, predestined to succeed in every instance. The prophet passed through a period of instruction during which he learned from his own experience the difference between good and evil. He made mistakes and then, like all of us who would inherit the Celestial Kingdom, he passed through a period of repentance, receiving forgiveness and proceeding to press forward in faith toward perfect obedience to the mind and will of God. Through all of this he was a moral agent with definite choices placed before him.

6 And behold, how oft you have transgressed the commandments and the laws of God, and have gone on in the persuasions of men.

7 For, behold, you should not have feared man more than God. Although men set at naught the counsels of God, and despite his words—

8 Yet you should have been faithful; and he would have extended his arm and supported you against all the fiery darts of the adversary; and he would have been with you in every time of trouble.

9 Behold, thou art Joseph, and thou wast chosen to do the work of the Lord, but because of transgression, if thou art not aware thou wilt fall.
3.9.4—*Joseph*—In reference to Joseph Smith, Jun., the prophet, seer, and 
revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon 
the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except 
for the Lord Jesus Christ.

3.10 Never again would Joseph allow the manuscript of the Book of Mormon 
out of his hands. In April 1829, Oliver Cowdery would join with the prophet 
in Harmony, Pennsylvania, and act as scribe during the renewed translation 
process. By the middle of June 1829, the translation process was complete. 
Oliver then made a copy of the entire narrative of the Book of Mormon as it 
had been translated. This copy would serve the typesetter as the Book of 
Mormon was being published. The original manuscript was carefully guarded so 
that the adversary could not have an opportunity to corrupt the text of the 
book. Joseph would be equally concerned about the integrity and preservation 
of the various revelations that he had caused to be written during his ministry, 
as well as the various accounts of his life and the rise of the Church of Jesus 
Christ in the last days.

3.11 Without faith and repentance, without the inspiration of the Spirit of 
God, without faithful obedience to the counsel and guidance of the Lord God 
of Israel, Joseph Smith was no more than an inhabitant of a lost and fallen 
world subjected to the spirit of the natural man. The young prophet knew 
how it felt to have the Spirit of the Lord withdrawn from him; it was a faint 
foreshadowing of hell.

3.12 The inherent value of the material contained in the 116 pages of manu 
script is incalculable. These writings were crafted by the prophet Mormon 
with the same skill and care as the rest of the volume that bears his name. That 
the Lord had a contingency plan whereby the Small Plates of Nephi were used 
to take the place of the lost manuscript does not demean in any fashion the 
book of Lehi and the initial chapters of the book of Mosiah.

3.12.23—*sacred*—Even though no body of saints had ever accepted the 
text of the Book of Mormon as scripture, this did not lessen it in the 
estimation of the Almighty.

3.12.29–30—*wicked man*—We are not privy to all those who were 
involved in the theft of the manuscript of the book of Lehi and the first 
part of the book of Mosiah, but certainly both Joseph Smith and Mar 
tin Harris were instrumental in the loss of the 116 pages. Lucy Harris 
was certainly part of the conspiracy and no doubt there were others. Most scholars and historians have settled upon Martin Harris as the 
wicked man being referred to here, yet there is undoubtedly another 
individual who fostered the plot to destroy the prophet and his work 
early in his ministry.

3.13 Certainly Martin Harris is the easily identified culprit in these matters. 
He did indeed persist in his petitioning of the prophet to allow him to take 
the manuscript in spite of the Lord’s refusal to allow it on two separate occa 
sions. Martin also had entered into a covenant that limited any access to the 
116 pages to only five other people other than himself. His lack of integrity in 
this promise ultimately led to the theft of the manuscript. We may only guess 
as to how Martin prefaced his revelation of the manuscript to his family, but it 
seems clear that he took more glory unto himself than was justified. If a third 
party is intended here, another man filled with wickedness and perfidy who 
participated in the confiscation of the manuscript, then it is fairly easy to

| 10 But remember, God is merci 
ful; therefore, repent of that which 
that which you shall have done which is contrary to 
the commandment which I gave 
you, and thou art still chosen, and 
art again called to the work; |
| D&C 3:10 |
| DNTC 3 73 |
| MD 484 |
| D&C 3:10–11 |
| MF 35 |
| CR96-A 98 |

| 11 Except thou do this, thou shalt 
be delivered up and become as 
other men, and have no more gift. |
| 12 And when thou deliveredst up 
that which God had given thee 
sight and power to translate, thou 
deliveredst up that which was 
sacred into the hands of a wicked 
man, |
| D&C 3:12–13 |
| MF 57 |
| CR99-A 47 |
create a scenario in which the man would be guilty of all of the sins credited to the wicked man.

3.14 The translation process had begun on 12 April 1828 and continued until 14 June 1828, at which point, it is to be supposed, that Martin Harris asked to take the 116 pages home. After Martin left, the prophet was severely chastised by the Lord and the Urim and Thummim was taken from him. The prophet was bereft of the translators until July of 1828, implying that several weeks had past, perhaps as many as six, during which the prophet was on his own. After this revelation was received, as was stated above, both the plates and the Urim and Thummim were taken back into the custody of the angel Moroni for another short period of time.

3.14.14—season—If in reference to what had already happened, the season could have been as much as six weeks. If in reference to the future, Joseph would have these things restored to him by the angel Moroni within a few days.

3.15 Whether by the Lord’s own voice or the voice of his servants, it is the same.

3.15.9—director—Ultimately in reference to the Lord God of Israel. We may, however, perceive the instructive role of the angel Moroni as being ignored or slighted by the Joseph Smith during this episode. No doubt the promptings of the Spirit of the Lord did not dissuade Joseph from going on in a manner that would please Martin Harris rather than the Savior.

3.16 The Book of Mormon would serve as a second witness concerning the truths recounted in the text of the Old and New Testaments, that the Father of Heaven sent His Only Begotten Son into the world to bring faith, hope, and charity into the minds and hearts of the children of men.

3.16.22—testimony—That is to say, the record preserved unto the latter days known as the Bible.

3.16.25—Jews—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnant, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

3.16.36–37—my people—Given the context, the Lord must be speaking of all of the remnant of the House of Israel unto whom the Book of Mormon would come, in addition to the posterity of the covenant people who lived in the western hemisphere.

3.17 Throughout the long history of the posterity of Lehi in America, the children of the original members of the company that made their way to the western hemisphere under the inspired guidance of Lehi and Nephi, had intermingled. This amalgamation had fractured from time to time, bringing about theological distinctions using the same general titles. Those who adhered to the principles of righteousness were generally called Nephites, regardless of their genetic background. Those who were disobedient to the principles of righteousness were traditionally referred to as Lamanites, even though many of the wicked were dissident Nephites. Thus, among those Native Americans who can legitimately be called Lamanites flows the blood of Nephi, Jacob, Joseph, and Zoram.

3.17.4—Nephites—The posterity of Nephi, the fourth son of the prophet Lehi who led his family from the city of Jerusalem to the land of their inheritance in the western hemisphere.
3.17.7—Jacobites—The posterity of Jacob, the fifth son of the prophet Lehi.

3.17.10—Josephites—The posterity of Joseph, the sixth son of the prophet Lehi.

3.17.13—Zoramites—The posterity of Zoram, a servant of Laban who joined the family of Lehi because of his trust in the words of the prophets and the assurances of Nephi.

3.17.16—testimony—That is to say, the witness that can be found within the pages of the Book of Mormon.

3.18 The Book of Mormon was directed specifically to the descendants of the family of Lehi who would dwell in the Americas at the time that their history would be brought forth by the gift and power of God. It would also serve to bless the lives of the remnants of the House of Israel scattered throughout the world and the Gentiles who would embrace the fullness of the Gospel in the latter days.

3.18.3—testimony—That is to say, the record preserved in the Book of Mormon.

3.18.11—Lamanites—The posterity of Laman, the eldest son of the prophet Lehi.

3.18.14—Lemuelites—The posterity of Lemuel, the second son of the prophet Lehi.

3.18.17—Ishmaelites—The posterity of Ishmael, a righteous man who, with his family, departed with Lehi into the wilderness in order to find salvation in the promised land.

3.18.35—destroy—The final battle between the nominal Nephites and Lamanites took place at the hill Cumorah about the year AD 384.

3.18.39—Nephites—The posterity of Nephi, the fourth son of the prophet Lehi who led his family from the city of Jerusalem to the land of their inheritance in the western hemisphere.

3.19 The blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are inheritable blessings; a continuation of covenants that extend through one generation after another. These are blessings that come as the direct result of the faithfulness of the righteous fathers. Similar blessing were bestowed upon the first patriarchs among the posterity of Lehi, by which many millions of his posterity will have the opportunity to receive and accept the fullness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The knowledge of those inheritable promises, together with the covenants of salvation and exaltation that attend the promises, is recorded upon the plates from which the narrative of the Book of Mormon has been taken.

3.20 The descendants of the ancient inhabitants of this hemisphere have long since become ignorant of the glorious truths that their fathers once possessed. In some instances the ignorance was deliberately perpetrated by apostates; in other cases, the ignorance persisted because the people would not depart from their traditions. The Book of Mormon reveals the nature of the apostasy and the source of the traditions. In addition, the promises of the Lord are encapsulated in the brief historical narratives provided by Mormon and his son. In this light, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon would proceed forward, in spite of the setbacks caused by the wickedness of men. How Joseph was to proceed in his translation now that the 116 pages were useless to him, is provided in the tenth section of the Doctrine and Covenants. As will be seen, the instructions were received shortly after this revelation, but were not recorded until nearly a year later.

3.20.4—Lamanites—The posterity of the survivors of the last battle fought

18 And this testimony shall come to the knowledge of the Lamanites, and the Lemuelites, and the Ishmaelites, who dwindled in unbelief because of the iniquity of their fathers, whom the Lord has suffered to destroy their brethren the Nephites, because of their iniquities and their abominations.

19 And for this very purpose are these plates preserved, which contain these records—that the promises of the Lord might be fulfilled, which he made to his people;

20 And that the Lamanites might come to the knowledge of their fathers, and that they might know the promises of the Lord, and that they may believe the gospel and rely upon the merits of Jesus Christ, and be glorified through faith in his name, and that through their repentance they might be saved. Amen.
at the hill Cumorah nearly sixteen hundred years ago. These are a mixture of every remnant of the House of Israel that has been brought to this hemisphere by the hand of the Lord.

3.20.36–37—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

3.20.55—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

4.0 The translation process of the Book of Mormon that had essentially ended in June 1828 did not resume for several months. For a portion of that time Joseph had been deprived of the Urim and Thummim; for a few additional days both the Urim and Thummim and the plates were taken into custody by the Angel Moroni. On 22 September 1828, the angel Moroni returned the plates and the interpreters to the prophet. Joseph knew by revelation how he was to proceed, but for whatever reason did not do so immediately. When the translation resumed, his wife Emma acted as scribe. By the middle of March 1829, Joseph and Emma had only transcribed sixteen pages of the narrative. During the intervening months, Joseph had for the most part confined himself in laboring on the farm and the small house that he had purchased from his father-in-law. In February 1829, Joseph’s parents came from Palmyra, New York, to Harmony, Pennsylvania, to visit their son, his wife, and her parents. This was the first time that the Smiths had ever visited with the Hale family. No one had been more supportive of the young prophet in his ministry than his own father. From Joseph’s first experience with the God of Heaven in the spring of 1820, Joseph Smith Senior had believed the accounts of the various interviews that his son had related to the family and had encouraged him to do all that he had been instructed to do by the various divine emissaries sent to him by the Lord. When, through the perfidy of Martin Harris and his family, the 116 pages of the manuscript of the book of Lehi were lost, the entire Smith family grieved with their son and brother. At that time no one knew what would subsequently happen, and though they were encouraging, they feared the worst. After the prophet Joseph returned to Harmony, Pennsylvania, in July 1828, the family heard little from him and this in part prompted the visit in February 1829. During the time that his parents resided in Harmony, the prophet received for his father that which we now call Section 4 of the Doctrine and Covenants. We are not privy as to what set of circumstances prompted the revelation, but it is clear that the prospects for the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the establishment of the Church and Kingdom of God once more upon the earth through the instrumentality of the prophet Joseph Smith were prospering. The direct role of Joseph Smith, Senior, in this process is clearly articulated as well. This section appeared as Chapter III in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 31 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

4.1 For centuries the world had wavered in ignorance and depravity because of the wickedness of the children of men. The prophet Isaiah saw that in the latter days a book would come forth that would dispel the foolishness of men who depended solely upon their own wisdom to interpret the nature of their existence and the purpose of this earth (see IS-C 29.9–24).

4.1.4–5—marvelous work—This is certainly in reference to the whole

1 NOW behold, a marvelous work is about to come forth among the children of men.

Section 4

Date: February 1829
Place: Harmony, Pennsylvania
To: Joseph Smith, Sen.
the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Church and Kingdom of God, but in the immediate temporal context refers to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

4.2 The work and the glory of God the Father and that of His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of the children of men. The Book of Mormon is to serve as an instrument of salvation to all those who would seek for a fullness of the truth. The fundamental teachings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ are easily accessed in the pages of the Book of Mormon and any man who would effectively serve his fellowman must be fully acquainted with its contents. The effort to acquire knowledge of the truth, coupled with a desire to share that truth with one’s fellow men, is at the heart of the Church and Kingdom of God. The reference here is clearly to the instructions given to the children of Israel by the prophet Moses.

Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. (Deuteronomy 6:3–7)

In responding to the scribe who wished to know which of all of the commandments was the first, Jesus cited a portion of this passage (see MK-C 12.28–30). This constitutes a complete commitment, nothing wavering.

4.2.3—ye—This pronoun is always in the plural. The revelation was directed for the benefit of Joseph Smith Senior, but clearly the Lord was speaking to all those who would be of his spiritual stature.

4.2.14—serve—Service without joy is slavery; joyful service is the product of love.

4.2.19—heart—The Hebrew word used in Deuteronomy refers to the “innermost organ” of the body. Metaphorically used for the feelings, will, and intellect, the center of everything, courage, and understanding”. The Greek word “kardia” used in Mark refers to the “heart, thoughts or feelings of the mind, and the middle of things”.

4.2.20—might—The use of the word “might” in the English language constitutes a reference to the will or the conscious agency of a man as much as it does to his physical power.

4.2.21—mind—This is in reference to a man’s intellectual abilities, his powers of observation and analysis.

4.2.23—strength—Certainly in reference to a man’s physical endurance, but likewise applicable to his character and integrity.

4.2.28—blameless—To have the capacity to render good to one’s fellow men and then to deliberately refrain from employing one’s resources in the prospering another’s quest for eternal life, is to be culpable of a grave transgression against the nature of godliness.

4.3 At the heart of the matter is the source of the desires that anyone has to bless and benefit his fellow men. What inspires a man to want to serve God with all of his heart, might, mind, and strength? Is it not the Spirit of God that has rested down upon him? Why does the Spirit rest down upon any man? For the scribe who wished to know which of all the commandments was the first, Jesus cited a portion of this passage (see MK-C 12.28–30). This constitutes a complete commitment, nothing wavering.

2 Therefore, O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day.

3 Therefore, if ye have desires to serve God ye are called to the work;
particular man? Is it not because that man in susceptible to the whisperings of the spirit of the Lord? From whence comes that susceptibility if not from a willingness to keep the commandments of God and live according to His every word? A man of faith, a man repentant of his sins and transgressions against the laws and commandments of God, is in large measure prepared to effectively serve in the Church and Kingdom of God. As part of his calling, he will be endowed with authority and commissioned to serve by those who hold the keys of the ministry. The subsequent conduct of Joseph Smith, Senior, illustrates the principles presented here.

4.4 Jesus had used this particular metaphor in his explanation to the Apostles as to why he was unwilling to partake of the viands that they had obtained in the nearby Samaritan city of Sychar. The woman whom he had met at the well had returned to the city and had stirred the hearts and minds of the city there so that they were willingly seeking the Lord at the well. Thus, were the inhabitants of Sychar as a mature field of grain ready to be harvested. The disciples were then given the opportunity to bless and benefit a people whom they had not previously taught. In the latter days, angels and divinely inspired circumstances have prepared the way before the servants of the Lord in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time. Tens of thousands of the emissaries of the Lord are harvesting where they did not sow; this is typical of missionary work throughout the world.

4.4.4—field—The imagery is easily understood by those who have engaged in the agricultural arts.

4.4.17—sickle—A hook-shaped instrument with teeth used in the harvesting of grain by hand.

4.4.29—perisheth—The practical object of farming is to feed one’s self, one’s family, and the domesticated animals that pertain to the household. Without the harvest there can be no prosperity. Without the harvest, all of the preceding efforts with the field are rendered worthless. Without the harvest alluded to here, that which pertains to the salvation of the children of men, the work of the Lord would be frustrated.

4.4.33—salvation—The children of men are anxiously engaged in their mutual salvation, or there is no salvation at all. Salvation and exaltation derive from divine service, from acquiring the sentiments which the Father and the Son have for the inhabitants of the earth. This can only come into the heart and mind of a man as he actively loves those around him, which love is expressed in his service to them.

4.5 If we have desires to serve, we are being called by the whisperings of the Spirit of God. If we wish to respond to that tender beckoning, then we must needs prepare ourselves for the tasks that will be placed upon us.

4.5.2—faith—There is no point to service unless it is rendered in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. The purpose in doing good to all men in the name of the Savior is to bring them to an awareness that there are others who have their best interests at heart. What a disciple may be able to express to another is but a faint shadow of the sentiments that the Redeemer feels, but it is perceptibly of the same kind. Without faith it is impossible to please God; likewise, without faith it is impossible to persuade others that the Son of God has made all the preparations necessary to bring them into the fullness of light and truth.

4.5.3—hope—Hope is engendered by faith in Christ. Once a man accepts the notion that salvation is possible, and has received some evidence that such salvation is applicable to himself, he begins to believe that he has a chance for personal happiness in the eternities. It is hope, that

4 For behold the field is white already to harvest; and lo, he that thrusteth in his sickle with his might, the same layeth up in store that he perisheth not, but bringeth salvation to his soul;

5 And faith, hope, charity and love, with an eye single to the glory of God, qualify him for the work.
assurance that comes from within a man’s heart, coupled with faith, the assurance that comes from the Father and the Son, that fires true conviction. It is this true conviction that can be sensed by others and inspired them to exercise faith, or at least a willingness to believe.

4.5.4—charity—No one can truly serve his fellow man without comprehending their eternal potential. It is this clear view of the sons and daughters of God as they could be that motivated the Lord Jesus Christ to enter into this lost and fallen world of the children of men and bring about the defeat of physical death and the sufferings of hell. That he did so at his own expense is the quintessential exemplar of charity.

4.5.6—love—Natural affection, brotherly love, an affable and convivial attitude towards all men cannot be replaced by any other human characteristic, no matter how winsome.

4.5.13—glory—The glory of God is intelligence, or in other words, light and truth. A servant of the Lord cannot deal in darkness and hope to be an effective instrument in the hands of the Lord; he cannot engage in any degree of falsehood and hope to bring salvation to another’s soul. In fact, by so doing he endangers his own eternal prospects.

4.6 This passage is certainly a hearkening back to the writings of the Apostle Peter wherein he commends each of these attributes of the divine nature, that a true disciple partakes of them as he attempts to make his calling and election sure (see 2 PE 1:3–10).

4.6.2—faith—The Greek word which Peter employs in his discourse and which is translated as “faith” derives from roots that mean “persuasion, credence, conviction, reliance, constancy”. Faith in Christ is vital to the disciple or he cannot qualify for the work (see 4.5.2).

4.6.3—virtue—The Greek word which Peter employs in his discourse and which is translated as “virtue” derives from roots that mean “manliness, valor, excellence”. The more effectively a servant of God represents Him whom he serves, the more beneficial such a man is to his fellow men.

4.6.4—knowledge—The Greek word which Peter employs in his discourse and which is translated as “knowledge” derives from roots that mean “allow, be aware of, feel, perceive, be resolved, can speak, be sure”. A man ignorant of the teachings of Jesus Christ can inspire no one to righteousness.

4.6.5—temperance—The Greek word which Peter employs in his discourse and which is translated as “temperance” derives from roots that mean “self-control, self-restraint, masterful”. We cannot serve Christ in any fashion without first mastering the natural man which predominates the children of men in this lost and fallen world.

4.6.6—patience—Conversion of the natural man into a son or daughter of God does not occur in a moment, but is the product of countless choices of good over evil. Therefore, we must be patient with ourselves and every other child of God who is attempting to partake of the divine nature.

4.6.7—brotherly kindness—The Greek word which Peter employs in his discourse and which is translated as “brotherly kindness” derives from roots that mean “fond of the brethren, fraternal”. It is also the source of the place name Philadelphia.

1.6.12—godliness—Godliness is the state that a disciple achieves as a result of continually choosing righteousness over wickedness. Eventually that attitude can become a perfect and continual state of being.

4.6.9—charity—This is the pure love of Jesus Christ, the power by which the atoning sacrifice was achieved by the Savior of mankind. This capacity derives from an abandonment of all sin. See also 4.5.4.

6 Remember faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, godliness, charity, humility, diligence.

D&C 4:6
DN TC 3 322, 354
MD 370, 413
4.6.10—*humility*—Pride is by its nature divisive. The invitation to another is hollow indeed, if it is not done according to the unity extant in the city of Zion, where all of the inhabitants are of one mind and heart, dwell in righteousness, and have no poor among them. Pride stratifies society; the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in its fullness does not.

4.6.11—*diligence*—The first flush of having found the truth in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is not sufficient to carry any man or woman through to salvation and exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom. The joy of having sought for and having received forgiveness is indescribable for even the most articulate of saints. After having exercised faith in Christ, having repented of sin, and having received the ordinances of salvation, the whole spiritual orientation of the burgeoning disciple is changed. Simply put, he or she is aimed in the right direction and is firmly and clearly set upon the path of righteousness and happiness. However, there is much left to do. The path must be taken, obstacles avoided and overcome, progress toward perfection achieved. At some point along that path, whether as a living mortal or as a spirit in the bosom of Abraham, the child of Christ will come to know that he or she is worthy of salvation and exaltation. This will come in the only way that it can come; the Father and the Son will advise him or her of that glorious destiny and the attendant ordinances will be administered by those possessing the authority to do so. It is in this determined spirit that the servant of God pursues his master’s will.

4.7 An effective servant of God must needs be a prayerful one or he cannot possibly bring any soul unto Christ. It is His work and it must be done in His own way. No man can know the mind and will of the Father and the Son without communion with Him. The effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

5.0 In the fall of 1827, after four years of intense instruction by the angel Moroni and other divine messengers, Joseph Smith was given permission to remove the plates containing the Book of Mormon from their hiding place in the hill Cumorah. Because of the public sentiment surrounding the Smith family in general and Joseph in particular, the translation process was quite slow in the beginning. Eventually, persecution became so intense that Joseph and Emma were forced to depart from Palmyra, New York, and make their way to the home of Emma’s parents in Harmony, Pennsylvania. This exodus took place in December of 1827. Their financial circumstances were such that they were having great difficulty raising enough money to make the move. At that moment a local farmer, Martin Harris, provided them with fifty dollars to facilitate their travels. From December 1827 until February 1828, Joseph Smith copied and translated a number of characters from the plates. Sometime during February 1828, Martin Harris visited the prophet in Harmony, Pennsylvania, and was allowed to carry some of the transcribed characters away with him for the purpose of showing them to learned men, academicians of his day. Martin Harris reported to Joseph that he visited with both Charles Anthon and Samuel L. Mitchill while in New York City, both of whom thought the characters and their translation remarkable. We are not privy to all of the exchanges between the three men, but it is clear that by the time Martin Harris returned to Joseph’s home in Pennsylvania, he was thoroughly convinced that Joseph was who and what he said he was and that the coming forth of the Book of Mormon was divinely inspired. On 12 April 1828,
Martin Harris began as Joseph’s scribe as the prophet dictated the translated text that he received by means of the Urim and Thummim. By 14 June 1828, the handwritten manuscript amounted to 116 pages. Martin besought Joseph three times to be allowed to take the manuscript with him when he returned home so that he might convince his wife that he and Joseph were actively engaged in the translation of the gold plates entrusted to the prophet. His request was denied twice, but on the third occasion Martin agreed to the stipulations demanded by the Lord, promising that only those of his immediate household would be allowed to view the manuscript. Martin failed to the terms of his covenant and in a very short time, through his carelessness and the perfidy of his wife, the manuscript disappeared and has not seen the light of day since. Needless to say, the relationship between Joseph and Martin became more than strained once the loss had been confirmed. For a time both the translators and the plates were taken from Joseph. They were eventually returned by the angel Moroni on 22 September 1828. Joseph attempted to resume the translation with Emma acting as his scribe, but by the middle of March 1829, they had only produced 16 pages of manuscript. Not until Oliver Cowdery arrived in Harmony during the first week of April 1829, did the translation of the Book of Mormon begin in earnest. It is in this context that Martin Harris saw fit to visit with the prophet in his home in Harmony, Pennsylvania. Somehow Martin had learned that Joseph was once again in the Lord’s favor because of his humility and obedience. Martin was certainly out of favor and was suffering for it. As to his exact motive for making his way to Harmony we may only speculate. Was he seeking forgiveness? Did he desire to be reinstated as Joseph’s scribe? We know not. That he had hoped to have outward tangible evidence that the plates had been returned to Joseph is certain. Martin requested a revelation regarding his status before the Lord during his visit and Joseph received this section of the Doctrine and Covenants in response to that request. Martin Harris would eventually be granted a witness, but not the one he had hoped for. The blessing of forgiveness would come and he would be graced with a spiritual witness of the plates, the angel Moroni, and the veracity of the translation. This section appeared as Chapter IV in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 32 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

5.1 We need not assume that Martin Harris is dubious regarding the experiences that he had already had with Joseph. He had not forgotten his inspiring journey to New York and the illuminating exchanges that he had had with Professor Anthon and Dr. Mitchell. He had not forgotten the long hours that he had invested in the early spring of 1828 acting as Joseph Smith’s scribe. But Martin did miss the influence of the Holy Ghost, the spiritual aura that accompanied their labors. That particularly blessing that he had received in Joseph’s company had long since been withdrawn and he had, as the Lord later testifies, been suffering the punishment of the wicked (see 19.15–20). If it were true, as others had informed him, that Joseph once again was enjoying the blessings of the Lord, would it not be possible for him to receive the same? The real proof for Martin, the tangible evidence of Joseph’s restoration, would be that the plates were in his possession. Martin’s curiosity, however, would not be satisfied in this fashion. Martin Harris’ problem was fundamentally spiritual in nature and no amount of tangible testimony would secure his salvation.

5.1.10–11—Martin Harris—Martin Harris was one of the first men to be baptized after the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation. He received that ordinance at the hands of Oliver Cowdery on 6 April 1830. In 1837, due in large part to a disagreement with Sidney Rigdon, Martin was dropped from the High Council of the

1 BEHOLD, I say unto you, that as my servant Martin Harris has desired a witness at my hand, that you, my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., have got the plates of which you have testified and borne record that you have received of me;

D&C 5:1–18
AF 295
Kirtland Stake and was purportedly excommunicated. On 7 November 1842, Martin Harris applied for and was received into full fellowship in the Church through baptism. Notwithstanding the various movements of the body of the saints, Martin remained in Kirtland until the summer of 1870, at which time he was persuaded to move to Utah. He died in Clarkston, Utah, on 10 July 1875. Shortly before his death, he bore a fervent and compelling testimony of the experience that he had as one of the Three Witnesses.

5.1.23–25—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

5.2 In the course of time, there would be eleven other men who would be given a witness of the plates. The Three witnesses, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris, would find themselves in the presence of the angel Moroni, together with an open vision of the depository and the ancient Nephite artifacts stored there. Moroni would turn the leaves of the golden plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated, and the voice of the Lord would testify to them that the translation was correct. This certainly qualifies as a spiritual witness of truth of the whole matter. Eight other men, were blessed to have the plates shown to them by the prophet Joseph Smith, each man actually handling the individual plates in the light of day. They each hefted the entire collection, becoming aware of its solidity and weight. One could not have a more tangible experience. Joseph Smith’s overall experience, however, was a combination of both, a twelfth witness whose testimony combined the spiritual and the temporal in one.

5.2.6—you—that is to say, Joseph Smith.
5.2.9—him—that is to say, Martin Harris. Note that although Martin Harris requested the revelation, the Lord initially addresses himself to Joseph Smith. In the original manuscript, as published in the Book of Commandments, a goodly portion of the revelation is addressed to Martin Harris, beginning at this point. When the revelations were revised for the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants published in 1835, the present second person orientation of the revelation was established throughout the entire revelation, with Joseph Smith as the one to whom the Lord speaks. We may only vainly speculate as to why these modest changes were made.
5.2.10—he—that is to say, the Lord.
5.2.14—you—that is to say, Joseph Smith.
5.2.17—you—that is to say, Joseph Smith.
5.2.32–25—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

5.3 Joseph Smith’s custody of the plates and of the Urim and Thummim depended upon his personal righteousness, his faithful adherence to the instructions that he had received from Moroni and other divine emissaries. Joseph had been strictly told on the night of 21 September 1823 that he was not to show the plates or the translators to anyone other than those whom the Lord would specifically identify. If he infringed upon those instructions in any fashion he would be destroyed (see SH-C 1.42).

5.3.23–24—those persons—Joseph was directly involved with the presentation of the plates to the Eight Witnesses. The angel Moroni was

2 And now, behold, this shall you say unto him—he who spake unto you, said unto you: I, the Lord, am God, and have given these things unto you, my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and have commanded you that you should stand as a witness of these things:

3 And I have caused you that you should enter into a covenant with me, that you should not show them except to those persons to whom I commanded you; and you have no power over them except I grant it unto you.

D&C 5:3
MD 166
instrumental in providing the Three Witnesses with their testimony. Moroni apparently took the opportunity to reveal the plates to a few other selected individuals because of their special circumstances. Joseph was not granted that privilege.

5.4 Joseph here is reminded that the Lord has asked him to accomplish a specific task and that all of his efforts must needs be directed at the accomplishment of that task, which was the translation of the Book of Mormon. At the time, in March of 1829, the Lord knew that Joseph would be called upon to do other tasks once the Book of Mormon was finally printed. As that revelation was being written down, however, the Lord chose not to distract the prophet or Martin Harris with intimations about the keys of the priesthood, the eventual organization of the Church, the bringing forth of the writings of Moses and Abraham, the Joseph Smith Translation, the building of temples, and so forth. The original text of the revelation reflected the Lord’s determination at that moment to keep Joseph on task. When the revelations were later reviewed for publication in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, amendments were made to the text to reflect the additional gifts and blessings that had been forthcoming after the Book of Mormon had been produced.

5.4.28—pretend—A strong word, but probably not chosen for Joseph Smith’s benefit. Certainly Martin Harris had taken undeserved honor and glory unto himself as he presented the 116 pages of the translation, first to his immediate family and then to others who fell outside of the bounds and limitations that the Lord had set. The word, therefore, also serves as a poignant reminder to Martin wherein his pride had undermined his determination to keep the covenant that he had made with Joseph and the Lord.

5.5 Both Joseph and Martin had learned through their own personal experience that disobedience and neglect to the terms of sacred promises inevitably lead to sorrow and misery of the heart and mind. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon into the world would serve to distinguish between the honest in heart and those whose pride would ultimately cause them to forsake the truth and light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the lusts and desires of a lost and fallen world.

5.6 This verse does not appear in the Book of Commandments, but is included in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery would receive the keys of the Aaronic priesthood on 15 May 1829 at the hands of John the Baptist. By 1 June 1829 they had also received the keys of the Melchizedek priesthood under the hands of the ancient Apostles Peter, James, and John (see 5.4.28).

5.7 In the end, truth faith is a spiritual gift, based in large measure on a desire to know the truth of all things. Belief in the Book of Mormon comes as a direct result of desiring to know the origins of the text, the origins of the doctrines contained therein, and the truthfulness of the prophecies that are recorded within its pages. Only God the eternal Father can bestow a satisfactory testimony of its claims. No other witness from any other source will do. The same may be said of the calling and mission of the prophet Joseph Smith. No man can know of the truthfulness of his role in the latter days without the benefit and blessings of the power of the Holy Ghost. Nothing that pertains to this temporal earth will ever successfully bring a man to Christ. There can be no evidence generated by or presented to the natural men of this lost and
fallen planet that will be sufficiently compelling to motivate a man to forsake all and submit himself to the will of the Lord Jesus Christ. Only the loving witness of the Father will do.

5.7.16—Joseph—In reference to Joseph Smith, Jun., the prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

5.8 Where there is no humility, no sense of remorse for poor conduct can be obtained. Without remorse, there can be no repentance from sin. Without repentance from sin, there can be no forgiveness and remission of sins. Without remission of sins, the full weight and measure of the justice of God falls upon those who have an unjustifiably exalted opinion of themselves. Both Martin and Joseph did not have to look very far in order to find individuals and entire communities ripening for destruction.

5.8.5—stiffnecked—This meaning of this English adjective implies “arrogance, obstinacy, haughtiness, and stubbornness”, suggesting that the reason for disbelief is willful pride.

5.9 The Lord’s economy surveys the entire history of this planet, including all of the individuals who will ever live here. He understands the needs of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, in every time and place. The manner in which He has dealt with His children in this dispensation will prove to be a great and marvelous blessing to them, preparing them to dwell in the presence of the Savior for a thousand years and with the Father of all for eternity.

5.9.9—reserved—that is to say, the fact that only a limited few would be privy to the physical reality of the plates.

5.9.10-11—those things—This is to say, the whole of the Nephite records and artifacts, including the plates upon which the Book of Mormon was engraved and the Urim and Thummim which was used to translate the record.

5.9.20—Joseph—In reference to Joseph Smith, Jun., the prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

5.9.34-35—future generation—No doubt in reference to a time in which the faithful would be in a position to appreciate the artifacts that had been preserved by the ancient inhabitants of this land. Certainly, the denizens of the earth during the Millennium would be in such a category.

5.10 We might be inclined, at first blush, to speak of the period of time during which Joseph Smith dwelt in mortality upon the earth. Yet it seems clear that the Lord is referring to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the fact that in order to obtain a testimony of the religious history of the ancient Nephites, one would also be required to gain a testimony of the prophet Joseph Smith. The one cannot be received separate from the other. This is not only true of the opening years of the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times, but also of the whole of the preparatory period prior to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh.

5.10.3—generation—Probably in reference to the entire dispensation prior to the coming of the Savior in glory.

5.10.6-7—my word—At the time of the revelation, both Joseph and Martin understood that the Lord was speaking of the Book of Mormon. Certainly a great deal more would be contributed by the prophet

8 Oh, this unbelieving and stiffnecked generation—mine anger is kindled against them.

9 Behold, verily I say unto you, I have reserved those things which I have entrusted unto you, my servant Joseph, for a wise purpose in me, and it shall be made known unto future generations;

10 But this generation shall have my word through you;
Joseph Smith before his martyrdom in 1844 that could easily be construed to be the word of the Lord.

5.11 It is hard to imagine that Martin Harris would have listened to the words of this revelation without desiring to be named as one of the Three Witnesses.

5.11.10—three—The Three Witness would ultimately be given the privilege of viewing the plates, the angel Moroni, and the depository containing all of the Nephite records. Additionally they would hear the voice of God testifying as to the truthfulness of all that which would be found on the pages of the Book of Mormon.

5.11.19—ordain—Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery received the keys of the Aaronic priesthood on 15 May 1829. They would receive the keys, power, and authority of the Apostleship from Peter, James, and John a short time afterwards. The Three Witnesses received the fullness of the Melchizedek priesthood by which they were authorized to call and ordain the first Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in February 1835 (see 18.37–38).

5.11.28—they—One could suppose that this is in reference to the Three Witnesses themselves, but the prophecy could also be understood as referring to the testimony that they would jointly issue that has appeared in every copy of the Book of Mormon since it was first published in 1830.

5.11.33–34—my words—Certainly this could refer to all that Joseph Smith would eventually bring to light through in inspiration of God, but at this particular moment in March 1829, this phrase most assuredly was understood as the text of the Book of Mormon.

5.12 In the latter part of June 1829, as the final passages of the Book of Mormon were being translated, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris were called to serve as the Three Witness. As part of the vision which they had, they heard the voice of the Lord declaring to them that "these plates have been revealed by the power of God, and they have been translated by the power of God. The translation of them is correct, and I command you to bear record of what you now see and hear". None of the three would ever deny the experience they had that day.

5.13 As the future witnesses prayed a heavenly light appeared above them and eventually rested down upon them. In the midst of that light, the angel Moroni spoke to the men, bringing into their view the plates from which the Book of Mormon had been translated.

5.13.5—power—We may say with a degree of certainty that David, Martin, and Oliver were transfigured by the Lord so that they might have their spiritual eyes opened, their spiritual ears prepared, and their spiritual hearts softened so that they might fully comprehend all that was transpiring before them.

5.14 In March of 1829, as the prophet Joseph was receiving this revelation for and in behalf of Martin Harris, nothing was said of the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ, but clearly the Lord fully intended that to take place in short order. That event, however, lay yet in the future, a task not to be reckoned with until after the Book of Mormon had seen the light of day. The restoration of both the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods had yet to take place, the ordinances of salvation had yet to be revealed. The Lord was instructing His servants line upon line, and precept upon precept, until they had a fullness. By 1835, however, many of these things had already come to

11 And in addition to your testimony, the testimony of three of my servants, whom I shall call and ordain, unto whom I will show these things, and they shall go forth with my words that are given through you.

12 Yea, they shall know of a surety that these things are true, for from heaven will I declare it unto them.

13 I will give them power that they may behold and view these things as they are;

14 And to none else will I grant this power, to receive this same testimony among this generation, in this the beginning of the rising up and the coming forth of my church out of the wilderness—clear as the moon, and fair as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

D&C 5:11
CR99-A 45
D&C 5:11–13
EM 1:214
D&C 5:11–15
AF 269
DHC 1:52
D&C 5:11–18
EM 4:1514
D&C 5:11, 15, 24
CR99-A 47

D&C 5:14
AF 215
MLM 685
CR96-A 7
light, and in preparing the revelations for publication in the Doctrine and Covenants the subsequent historical events that had bearing on this revelation were inserted to clarify the context.

5.14.3—none else—The vision of the Three Witnesses should be considered as being unique to this dispensation.

5.14.32—church—The Church of Jesus Christ was to prepare the world for the Millennial reign, a period of time during which the conditions of the Terrestrial Kingdom will prevail upon the earth. During the Millennium much will be done to prepare the children of God for the Celestial Kingdom. In the eyes of the uninspired, the growth and authority of the Church of Christ will appear to be a threat. However, the Kingdom of God will prevail.

5.14.36—wilderness—An allusion to the writings of John the Beloved wherein he testified that after the days of the mortal ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ that the Church would be taken from the earth for 1,260 years. The Church is represented by a woman bright as the sun, standing on the moon, with a crown of twelve stars upon her head (see RV-C 12.1–6).

5.15 The Three Witnesses were to testify of all that they had heard and seen in the vision given to them of the plates and the angel Moroni. All this that the Book of Mormon might be received by the honest in heart.

5.16 The fact of the matter is that it is virtually impossible for anyone with an honest heart, perusing the text with real intent, to come away from a reading of the Book of Mormon without knowing that there is something extraordinary about the material appearing on its pages. That awareness should be sufficient to cause any man or woman thus affected, to bow himself or herself before God humbly asking Him to know the truth of the book. The end result for such a man or woman will inevitably be the same; they will know for themselves, nothing doubting, that the Book of Mormon is precisely what it purports to be. This they will know by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost.

5.16.27—water—That is to say, they will receive baptism by immersion for the remission of sins.

5.16.31—Spirit—That is to say, they will receive the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.

5.17 Again, this passage was added for the benefit of the readers of the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants in 1835. In March of 1829, no man born in that generation held the priesthood of God; no man could effectively perform the ordinances of salvation or exaltation for the benefit of his fellow men, notwithstanding claims to the contrary. Within six months, the keys to both the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods would be bestowed upon the heads of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.

5.18 The witnesses of the Book of Mormon will continue to grow as the honest in heart are touched by the Spirit of God in their reading of that volume. These will carry their witness into all of the world, testifying of that which the Father and the Son have committed to them by revelation. The world can chose to believe them and live, or they can bitterly refuse to hear the truth and suffer the consequences for so doing.

5.18.2—their—Speaking of those who would believe the Book of Mormon and would receive the ordinance of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost. Those who have the word of God in their hearts, having
received a witness from the Holy Ghost that the Book of Mormon is true and that Joseph Smith was an instrument in the hands of the Father to bring forth that marvelous work and a wonder, are not to be trifled with.  

5.18.7—f orth—It is interesting that in the original publication of this revelation in the Book of Commandments, there follows at this point a rather long passage which does not appear elsewhere. Whether this is an editorial error or a conscious decision on the part of the committee whose task it was to prepare the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants we cannot at present say. The passage is as follows: “And thus, if the people of this generation harden not their hearts, I will work a reformation among them, and I will put down all lyings, and deceiving, and priestcrafts, and envying, and strifes, and idolatries, and sorceries, and all manner of iniquities, and I will establish my church like unto the church which was taught by my disciples in the days of old.”

5.19 The scriptures are replete with prophecies regarding the last days the fulfillment of which would decimate the population of the earth, primarily the wicked destroying the wicked. Had the restoration not taken place, if the Book of Mormon had been overthrown by the machinations of wicked men, there would have been no one to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming and the earth, its purposes, and its eternal destiny would have been utterly wasted at his appearance.

5.19.1—F or—This verse does not appear in the Book of Commandments. In its place, however, we find the following: “And now if this generation do harden their hearts against my word, behold I will deliver them up unto satan, for he reigneth and hath much power at this time, for he hath got a great hold upon the hearts of the people of this generation: and not far from the iniquities of Sodom and Gomorrah, do they come at this time: and behold the sword of justice hangeth over their heads, and if they persist in the hardness of their hearts, the time cometh that it must fall upon them.” Taken as a whole, the end result of both passages is the same. For Joseph and Martin in March of 1829, this would have constituted fair warning that following after the persuasions of wicked men ultimately leads to utter destruction.

5.20 The prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem are manifold. We may look at the teachings of the Savior to his disciples regarding the Temple and the city shortly before his arrest and crucifixion (see MT-C 24.1–23). This prophecy was fulfilled before the eyes of the inhabitants of the city in the years AD 69–70. Centuries before, the Jeremiah and other prophets testified of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem at the hands of the Babylonians. This particular period of history impinges upon the opening chapters of the Book of Mormon, inasmuch as Lehi and his family are commanded by the Lord to depart into the wilderness in route to a promised land in order to escape the destruction of the temple and the city that took place eleven years later. Either incident will serve as to the veracity of the Lord’s word when he speaks for or against a people. The Dispensation of the Fullness of Times will unfold according to the mind and will of the Father and the Son and not one prophecy will fail.

5.21 We may not know precisely what the Lord had in mind at this point in the revelation, but we may accept it as a given that Joseph Smith knew precisely what the Lord meant. Martin Harris had initially begun his relationship with the prophet Joseph as a trusted companion and fellow laborer in the

19 For a desolating scourge shall go forth among the inhabitants of the earth, and shall continue to be poured out from time to time, if they repent not, until the earth is empty, and the inhabitants thereof are consumed away and utterly destroyed by the brightness of my coming.

20 Behold, I tell you these things, even as I also told the people of the destruction of Jerusalem; and my word shall be verified at this time as it hath hitherto been verified.

21 And now I command you, my servant Joseph, to repent and walk more uprightly before me, and to yield to the persuasions of men no
ministry of the Lord. He had been a man of means who had blessed the prophet’s family generously with provisions and money. Succumbing to Martin’s incessant petitioning to beseech the Lord one more time for permission to take the 116 pages of manuscript to his home had proven disastrous. The Lord here cautions the prophet in no uncertain terms that he cannot afford such folly in the future. Was Joseph tempted in any fashion to reveal what the Lord had commanded him to do with regard to the continuing translation of the Book of Mormon, to use the Small Plates of Nephri instead of retranslating the book of Lehi?

5.22 We may safely assume that Joseph was determined from that point forward to never again disappoint the Lord. When the Father and the Son required something of the prophet, he was prepared to do it, even at the peril of his own life. At stake was his personal salvation, the salvation of all those for whom he had a deep and abiding affection, and the entire population of the earth from his day unto the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

5.22.32—slain—Fifteen years later, this very event transpired at Carthage, Illinois.

5.23 That which follows in the rest of the revelation is a sobering commentary regarding the precarious position that Martin Harris was in. His salvation and exaltation was hanging in the balance.

5.23.10—Joseph—In reference to Joseph Smith, Jun., the prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

5.23.12—man—that is to say, Martin Harris.

5.23.16—witness—Martin Harris had come to Harmony, Pennsylvania, to find out if the plates and the Urim and Thummim had indeed been returned to the prophet Joseph Smith by the Lord.

5.24 At this distance of time and space, it is difficult for us to determine those flaws in Martin’s character to which the Lord is referring. That Martin Harris had vaunted himself at the time he first gained access to the 116 pages of the manuscript of the book of Lehi is certain. Before his friends and neighbors he attributed to himself far more acumen than his role as scribe would permit. After the manuscript was lost, it seems certain that Martin Harris passed through a deeply distressing time of sorrow and regret (see 19.15–20). From June 1828 to March 1829, the two men had seen little of each other. One wonders why Martin did not attempt a reconciliation before. Given the plot that had been devised to prove that Joseph Smith was not a prophet of God (see 10.10–19), the fact that Joseph had not as yet reproduced anything that resembled the original 116 pages must have troubled the cabal. Did Martin go to Harmony, Pennsylvania, to discover what the status of the translation was? No matter what Martin’s motives may have been, at the heart of the whole matter was that he had learned little from his experience. Joseph had found grace in the eyes of the Lord because he had descended into abject humility, begging the Lord to forgive him of his transgressions against the word of the Lord. Clearly, Martin Harris had done no such thing and for that reason found himself outside of the pale of the Kingdom of God. No matter the source of Martin’s desire to see the plates from which the Book of Mormon was being taken, the Lord was willing to allow that desire to move Joseph’s erstwhile friend and benefactor toward righteousness. As can be seen in the history of the Church of Jesus Christ, the patience and encouragement of the Lord brought forth fruit in the life of Martin Harris, he eventually died in full fellowship with the
saints after many years struggling to overcome those weaknesses and follies which caused him to fall from favor.

5.24.46—view—Here the Lord extends the olive branch to Martin Harris. The following year, Martin would be called to serve as one of the Three Witnesses.

5.25 Following the text of the book of Moroni in the first edition of the Book of Mormon may be found the testimonies of the Three and the Eight Witnesses. Martin Harris, together with Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer, subscribed his name to the following declaration:

Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come: That we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken. And we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true. And it is marvelous in our eyes. Nevertheless, the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment-seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

Each of the three men, Martin included, would prove ever faithful to this declaration, notwithstanding the fact that they each fell away from the Church of Jesus Christ for a time.

5.25.24—26—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

5.26 One of Martin Harris’ follies had been to say far more about the translation process and of his relationship to the prophet Joseph Smith than he should have. The enemies of the Lord had used this inside information in their attempts to overthrow the Lord’s work. In the service of the Lord Jesus Christ, that which we say and do must be in harmony with the mind and will of the Lord or we will find ourselves at odds with the work of the Lord. We obey His instructions simply because we know of no better thing to do. We may think that we are blessed with great knowledge and understanding, but if we assert our own wisdom against the counsel of the Lord, we do so for the same reason that Martin Harris did: an unjustifiable exalted opinion of ourselves.

5.26.9—10—Martin Harris—Martin Harris was one of the first men to be baptized after the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dis-

25 And then he shall say unto the people of this generation: Behold, I have seen the things which the Lord hath shown unto Joseph Smith, Jun., and I know of a surety that they are true, for I have seen them, for they have been shown unto me by the power of God and not of man.

26 And I the Lord command him, my servant Martin Harris, that he shall say no more unto them concerning these things, except he shall say: I have seen them, and they have been shown unto me by the power of God; and these are the words which he shall say.
pensation. He received that ordinance at the hands of Oliver Cowdery on 6 April 1830. In 1837, due in large part to a disagreement with Sidney Rigdon, Martin was dropped from the High Council of the Kirtland Stake and was purportedly excommunicated. On 7 November 1842, Martin Harris applied for and was received into full fellowship in the Church through baptism. Notwithstanding the various movements of the body of the saints, Martin remained in Kirtland until the summer of 1870, at which time he was persuaded to move to Utah. He died in Clarkston, Utah, on 10 July 1875. Shortly before his death, he bore a fervent and compelling testimony of the experience that he had as one of the Three Witnesses.

5.27 Martin Harris was one of the first men to be baptized after the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation. He received that ordinance at the hands of Oliver Cowdery on 6 April 1830. In 1837, due in large part to a disagreement with Sidney Rigdon, Martin was dropped from the High Council of the Kirtland Stake and was purportedly excommunicated. On 7 November 1842, Martin Harris applied for and was received into full fellowship in the Church through baptism. Notwithstanding the various movements of the body of the saints, Martin remained in Kirtland until the summer of 1870, at which time he was persuaded to move to Utah. He died in Clarkston, Utah, on 10 July 1875. Shortly before his death, he bore a fervent and compelling testimony of the experience that he had as one of the Three Witnesses.

5.28 We may safely say that Martin Harris had more wrongs to confess than the loss of the 116 pages of the early manuscript of the Book of Mormon. We may not be able to determine exactly what his role was in the conspiracy against the prophet Joseph Smith, but we cannot possibly conclude that he was completely ignorant of it (see 10.5–13). It is clear also that Martin suffered from other complications in his thoughts and conduct which were unbecoming of a servant of God, especially one who would be given such a tremendous responsibility such as would befall one of the Three Witnesses (see 19.20–28). The fact that Martin Harris was ultimately blessed with the open vision of the angel Moroni, the plates, and many of the other Nephite artifacts would imply that he was somewhat successful in his attempts to put off the desires of the natural man.

5.29 Martin Harris was the master of pestering. He incessantly besought the opportunity to take the 116 pages of manuscript with him to his home. He did not relent until he was given permission to do so. Now Martin was anxious to see if Joseph Smith actually had the plates in his possession. The Lord’s counsel here is preemptive. Martin had asked once and had received the Lord’s answer. To ask again would be to put his immortal soul in peril.

5.29.12—Joseph—In reference to Joseph Smith, Jun., the prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

5.30 With Emma acting as his scribe, Joseph Smith had managed to translate about sixteen more pages from the plates before the arrival of Martin Harris. One may wonder at the reason behind the Lord’s command to cease the translation process for a time. Two possible motivations come immediately to mind, although the Lord undoubtedly had others. So long as Martin Harris

27 But if he deny this he will break the covenant which he has before covenanted with me, and behold, he is condemned.

28 And now, except he humble himself and acknowledge unto me the things that he has done which are wrong, and covenant with me that he will keep my commandments, and exercise faith in me, behold, I say unto him, he shall have no such views, for I will grant unto him no views of the things of which I have spoken.

29 And if this be the case, I command you, my servant Joseph, that you shall say unto him, that he shall do no more, nor trouble me any more concerning this matter.

30 And if this be the case, behold, I say unto thee Joseph, when thou hast translated a few more pages thou shalt stop for a season, even until I command thee again; then
was in the vicinity, there would always be the temptation to employ his services as scribe. If the translation could not resume until Martin returned home, his willing departure could be seen as an act of faith on his part. Second, the Lord had already set in motion a series of events that would provide Joseph with another scribe and companion in the ministry. On 5 April 1829, Oliver Cowdery arrived from Palmyra, New York, in search of further light and knowledge regarding the latter day work. On 7 April 1829, Oliver and Joseph began the translation process in earnest, a commitment that would result in the completion of the book by 1 July 1829.

5.30.12—Joseph—In reference to Joseph Smith, Jun., the prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

5.31 The counsel of the Lord God to Joseph Smith could not have been lost on Martin Harris. To persist in his request to see the plates would not only endanger himself, but would put the prophet at risk. To impose himself once more as Joseph’s scribe would bring about disastrous results. Martin apparently had the presence of mind and spiritual acumen sufficient to wait upon the mind and will of the Lord.

5.32 It seems certain that Martin Harris was still somewhat entangled in the original conspiracy that had has its design to destroy the role of Joseph Smith as a prophet, seer, and revelator. We may not know to what extent that Martin was in collusion; he may have been deceived by the others. But as the Lord told the prophet, the cabal was still very much alive and still very much determined to destroy the work upon which he had embarked. Martin had thought himself wise; he certainly considered himself far more sophisticated than Joseph. Because of his pride, he had not inquired of the Lord as to the real motivations of those who surrounded him. The warning should have been sufficient to inspire him to immediate repentance. He did so to a degree.

5.32.20–21—Martin Harris—Martin Harris was one of the first men to be baptized after the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation. He received that ordinance at the hands of Oliver Cowdery on 6 April 1830. In 1837, due in large part to a disagreement with Sidney Rigdon, Martin was dropped from the High Council of the Kirtland Stake and was purportedly excommunicated. On 7 November 1842, Martin Harris applied for and was received into full fellowship in the Church through baptism. Notwithstanding the various movements of the body of the saints, Martin remained in Kirtland until the summer of 1870, at which time he was persuaded to move to Utah. He died in Clarkston, Utah, on 10 July 1875. Shortly before his death, he bore a fervent and compelling testimony of the experience that he had as one of the Three Witnesses.

5.33 Those who would array themselves against the prophet and the revelations that he was receiving would continue to grow in number and intensity. These were not idle conspiracies, but satanically inspired oppressors who would go to great lengths to discredit the young prophet and, if possible, take his life. These constituted the first secret combinations mounted against the truth in this dispensation.

5.34 Oliver Cowdery had been a schoolteacher hired by the residents in and around Palmyra, New York. For a time he boarded at the home of Joseph and Lucy Smith, inasmuch as several of the Smith children were still of school age.

thou mayest translate again.

31 And except thou do this, behold, thou shalt have no more gift, and I will take away the things which I have entrusted with thee.

32 And now, because I foresee the lying in wait to destroy thee, yea, I foresee that if my servant Martin Harris humbleth not himself and receive a witness from my hand, that he will fall into transgression;

33 And there are many that lie in wait to destroy thee from off the face of the earth; and for this cause, that thy days may be prolonged, I have given unto thee these commandments.

34 Yea, for this cause I have said: Stop, and stand still until I command thee, and I will provide
In the process of time, Oliver became acquainted with some of the rumors associated with young Joseph. He inquired of the Smiths, eventually having the entire story laid out before him. He inquired of the Lord and was given to understand that if he chose, he could become an active part in the great work that the Lord was bringing to pass among the children of men. Of these developments Joseph had no inkling except as is intimated by the Lord in this particular revelation.

5.34—means—Oliver Cowdery would arrive from Palmyra, New York, on 5 April 1829 and would begin as Joseph’s scribe on 7 April 1829.

5.35 We cannot but believe that Joseph Smith was faithful in all of these matters. The young prophet would continue faithful in all that the Lord required of him, even to the point of losing his mortal life at the hands of a mob in June of 1844. That he will be part of that great assembly of resurrected saints to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming we cannot doubt.

5.35.19—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 6

Date: April 1829
Place: Harmony, Pennsylvania
To: Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery

1 A great and marvelous work is about to come forth unto the children of men.

D&C 5:35
CR97-A 100

D&C 6
DHC 1 33
DHC 5 (35)
JC 770
CR99-O 91
EM 1:407, 408
EM 2:574

6.0 From the middle of June 1828 until the following September, Joseph Smith had suffered the judgment of the Lord God of Israel. He was left alone, without the Comforter to strengthen and support him. The angel Moroni had retrieved the plates from which the Book of Mormon was to be translated, together with the breastplate containing the Urim and Thummim. Joseph was desolate, but determined to find a way to receive a degree of forgiveness. On 22 September 1828, the angel Moroni returned the ancient Nephite artifacts to his keeping with a strict warning about observing to do all that the Lord commanded him to do in the future. Some effort was expended by Joseph and his wife to continue the translation process, but by March 1829, they had only managed to record 16 pages of text. At the time that Martin Harris visited with the prophet in Harmony, Pennsylvania, Joseph received a revelation that had bearing on how he should proceed, that means were being prepared for him to expedite the whole work (see 5.32–34). On 5 April 1829, Oliver Cowdery arrived from Palmyra. Two days later, Joseph and Oliver would begin a three month period of time in which the text of the Book of Mormon as we have today would be committed to paper in preparation for its publication. The similarity between elements of this revelation when compared to that given to the father of Joseph Smith two months before should no doubt be attributed to the fact that the two men were of a similar frame of mind when they received the revelation. This section appeared as Chapter V in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 8 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

6.1.1 For centuries the world had wavered in ignorance and depravity because of the wickedness of the children of men. The prophet Isaiah saw that in the latter days a book would come forth that would dispel the foolishness of men who depended solely upon their own wisdom to interpret the nature of their existence and the purpose of this earth (see IS-C 29:9–24).

6.1.4—marvelous work—This is certainly in reference to the whole of the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Church and Kingdom of God, but in the immediate temporal context refers to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.
6.2 The Apostles Paul and John used similar language to describe the effect of the word of God upon the heart and mind of the children of men: “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of body and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (JST, Hebrews 4:12). Nothing in the history of the world, from the greatest cataclysmic events to the secret thoughts in the heart of the lowliest man can be hid from the Lord Jesus Christ or his appointed servants. The fullness Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is based upon personal revelation that was committed to the children of men through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. One cannot have faith unto salvation without personal revelation. No one can know if his repentance from all sin is sufficient without personal revelation. No can know whether the ordinances of salvation and exaltation are effective in his life unless that fact is revealed to him through the instrumentality of personal revelation. Without the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, the Gospel of the Son of God is no better than the Law of Moses. The social Gospel means nothing without divine inspiration and instruction from God the Father to the disciple of Jesus Christ on a daily basis. The spirit of revelation is like unto the two-edged sword.

6.3 Jesus had used this particular metaphor in his explanation to the Apostles as to why he was unwilling to partake of the viands that they had obtained in the nearby Samaritan city of Sychar. The woman whom he had met at the well had returned to the city and had stirred the hearts and minds of the city there so that they were willingly seeking the Lord at the well. Thus, were the inhabitants of Sychar as a mature field of grain ready to be harvested. The disciples were then given the opportunity to bless and benefit a people whom they had not previously taught. In the latter days, angels and divinely inspired circumstances have prepared the way before the servants of the Lord in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time. Tens of thousands of the emissaries of the Lord are harvesting where they did not sow; this is typical of missionary work throughout the world.

6.3.3—field—The imagery is easily understood by those who have engaged in the agricultural arts.

6.3.19—sickle—A hook-shaped instrument with teeth used in the harvesting of grain by hand.

6.3.38—salvation—The children of men are anxiously engaged in their mutual salvation, or there is no salvation at all. Salvation and exaltation derive from divine service, from acquiring the sentiments which the Father and the Son have for the inhabitants of the earth. This can only come into the heart and mind of a man as he actively loves those around him, which love is expressed in his service to them.

6.4 At the heart of the whole matter of the ministry of Christ is the desire on the part of the prospective minister. Those who, in the integrity of their hearts, desire to bless the lives of their fellow men will be called by those in authority to bring the fullness of the Gospel into the lives of others, effectively bringing them unto Jesus Christ for salvation and exaltation.

6.5 An effective servant of God must needs be a prayerful one or he cannot possibly bring any soul unto Christ. It is His work and it must be done in His own way. No man can know the mind and will of the Father and the Son without communion with Him. The effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

2 Behold, I am God; give heed unto my word, which is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, to the dividing asunder of both joints and marrow; therefore give heed unto my words.

3 Behold, the field is white already to harvest; therefore, whoso desireth to reap, let him thrust in his sickle with his might, and reap while the day lasts, that he may treasure up for his soul everlasting salvation in the kingdom of God.

4 Yea, whosoever will thrust in his sickle and reap, the same is called of God.

5 Therefore, if you will ask of me you shall receive; if you will knock it shall be opened unto you.
6.6 Oliver’s confidence in the prophet Joseph Smith had already been strengthened by his conversations with members of the Smith family in Palmyra, New York. His faith had been further enhanced by his rather unique experience some weeks before when the Lord had spoken peace to his soul about the whole matter. This particular verse implies that Oliver desired to know what his course of action should be. In this he differed from Martin Harris who seemed to be lobbying for specific blessings and opportunities rather than waiting upon the will of the Lord.

6.6.5—asked—The Lord has always testified that the way one receives anything from Heaven is by sincerely and humbly asking for it. Clearly Oliver has not asked amiss.

6.5.13—commandments—Only by keeping the commandments of God the Father can anyone enjoy the blessings and benefits of the Holy Ghost. Oliver and Joseph would have need to be strengthened during the subsequent weeks as they embarked on one of the greatest translation enterprises ever entrusted to the children of men.

6.5.24—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

6.7 The purpose of personal and public wealth is to raise up the poor and afflicted, just as Jesus Christ performed the atoning sacrifice in order to preserve and bless his brothers and sisters waltering in mortality and suffering in the world of spirits. Wealth provides opportunities for service, a way in which the hearts of all men might be knit together in love and gratitude. Salvation and exaltation is a joint effort, designed to help us understand the mind and heart of God. One of the great tragedies of mortal life is to lose the spirit of unity, a large measure of which came with us from the eternal worlds where we were nurtured spiritually. Our birth upon the earth did not completely veil those sentiments. Yet in the process of time, after we begin our mortal sojourn, we are affected by the desires of the world, either as victims or as perpetrators. We forget that in the beginning we were all children of the same heavenly parents, that we are all objects of His eternal and perfect love. He is engaged in that glorious work to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of every soul, even as many as will. How can we possibly please the Most High by belittling each other in clearly onerous ways? That God has personal wealth there can be no question. What is His perfect example to us in terms of material things? Is He not willing to bless all of His children with the elements and the fruits of the earth, who we could accomplish nothing on our own? Can we not, therefore, have similar feelings towards the impoverished? We may see this same spirit with regard to the Lord’s willingness to reveal unto us how to use knowledge to bless and benefit those around us. It is in wisdom that the use of both material and spiritual wealth are best determined.

6.7.11—mysteries—Some wisdom, perhaps most wisdom, can only be comprehended by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. To one devoid of the Spirit of God, the blessings of eternity are meaningless, as if they had been couched in an unknown foreign tongue.

6.7.25—rich—Someone whose life has been graced by the power and

6 Now, as you have asked, behold, I say unto you, keep my commandments, and seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion;

D&C 6:6
DS 1 237
CR97-A 20
EM 1:312
EM 3:1132
EM 4:1576
D&C 6:6–7
MM 3 310
D&C 6:6, 9, 37
EM 1:379

7 Seek not for riches but for wisdom, and behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you, and then shall you be made rich. Behold, he that hath eternal life is rich.

D&C 6:7
DN LC 2 425, 433
DN LC 3 461
DS 1 69
DS 2 23
MD 523, 654, 838
MM 3 190
6.8 From time to time Oliver’s desires waned and as a result he became less serviceable to the Kingdom of God on earth. For nearly eight years, however, Oliver Cowdery served the Lord Jesus Christ with great distinction, supporting and sustaining his faithful companion in the ministry in all of his trials and tribulations. Oliver would, for a variety of reasons, find himself at odds with the prophet Joseph Smith and, as a result, with the Lord God of Heaven. In 1838, Oliver Cowdery was formally excommunicated from the Church of Jesus Christ. In a letter written in 1843 to Brigham Young and Willard Richards he confessed his loneliness. In October 1848 he met with the gathered saints in Kanesville, Iowa. There he was baptized back into the Church. He planned to travel to Salt Lake City with the saints but it was too late in the year for the journey. On 3 March 1850, while visiting with his wife’s family in Richmond, Missouri, Oliver Cowdery died having never denied his testimony of the great work of which he had been a part.

6.9 Oliver Cowdery was being commissioned to do good upon the earth. The nature of that goodness is described in this verse. Living by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God and encouraging others to do the same, ultimately will bring about that which constitutes the work and glory of God: the immortality and eternal life of mankind. Advancing the kingdom of God upon the earth must be done in the Lord’s own way; the only way by which a man can know how to proceed is to have His Spirit constantly with you; the Spirit will accompany only those who are willing to obey.

6.10 The spiritual gift that the Lord had bestowed upon Oliver Cowdery had come upon him because he had prepared himself for it. Oliver had been led from one place to another by the promptings of the Spirit of God. Because he had been willing to respond to those promptings, he had received knowledge of Joseph Smith and the divine messengers that had been sent unto him. In his desire to know the truthfulness of that which he had heard by ear, Oliver bowed himself before the Lord God of Israel and petitioned Him for further light and knowledge about the matter. The Lord comforted him in his heart and in his mind, inspiring him to become acquainted with the young prophet by traveling with the prophet’s brother Samuel to Harmony, Pennsylvania. In many respects, Oliver was of the same spiritual orientation as Joseph Smith and was therefore susceptible to the principle of personal revelation.

6.11 Oliver Cowdery knew in part how the process of revelation worked, insomuch that he knew how to ask properly and he was able to recognize the effect that the Spirit of God had upon him when he was being taught from on high. Oliver apparently knew how to ask the right kind of questions and as a result he was blessed with the answers that he desired. For the most part he was willing to receive all that the Lord would reveal to him, although there were times when his traditions and prejudices compromised his insight into the mind and will of God. For many years Oliver would be second only to the prophet Joseph Smith as a source of truth, enlightenment, and inspiration. He

8 Verily, verily, I say unto you, even as you desire of me so it shall be unto you; and if you desire, you shall be the means of doing much good in this generation.

9 Say nothing but repentance unto this generation; keep my commandments, and assist to bring forth my work, according to my commandments, and you shall be blessed.

10 Behold thou hast a gift, and blessed art thou because of thy gift. Remember it is sacred and cometh from above—

11 And if thou wilt inquire, thou shalt know mysteries which are great and marvelous; therefore thou shalt exercise thy gift, that thou mayest find out mysteries, that thou mayest bring many to the knowledge of the truth, yea, convince them of the error of their ways.
began to fail as a servant of the Lord when he began to take honor unto himself. While he remained humble, however, there was no one who could confound him. He was an able spokesman for the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth.

6.12 Once the Church of Jesus Christ had been reestablished upon the earth, Oliver would have the opportunity to be a leading voice among the children of men. During the year that followed his first acquaintance with the prophet Joseph Smith, however, his mind and heart were to be focused on the translation and the preparations necessary for the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

6.12.16—faith—There were but few in the spring of 1829 who had a firm conviction of the calling and mission of the prophet Joseph Smith.

6.12.17—Trifle—When Oliver began to think of himself in unwarranted terms, he trivialized all that the Lord had been doing through him. This was an early and justified warning.

6.13 Oliver’s missed cues would eventually put him outside of the pale of the Kingdom of God. Once he began to have more faith in himself than he did in the work that he was pursuing, he began to stumble in his progress. For a time the Lord allowed Oliver to press on in his self-delusion until he began to see clearly wherein he had failed to do as the Lord had commanded him. When Oliver sought for re-instatement, he did not do so for glory or position; he simply wished to be gathered with the saints, where the fullness of the Gospel might be readily available, and where he might feel once again the power and influence of the Holy Ghost as he once did in his association with the prophet Joseph Smith. He sought for the gift of salvation at the end and we have no reason to believe that he did not receive it.

6.14 The Lord is quite specific here about the gift which Oliver had received. Again, Oliver was willing to ask in an appropriate manner and willing to receive that which the Lord answered with an open heart and a contrite spirit. He had become a worthy vessel into which the truth and knowledge from heavens might be placed. In addition, he was willing to live by that which the Lord revealed to him, thereby preparing him to receive further instruction and intelligence.

6.14.49—place—That is to say, in the home of the prophet Joseph Smith in Harmony, Pennsylvania.

6.15 Oliver Cowdery had been a prayerful man for a long time and had reaped the benefit that befalls those who seek counsel from the Lord God of Israel. Although Oliver may not have been able to articulate exactly that which had inspired him from time to time, but he knew that it was of God. The Lord informs Oliver here that the sensations that had been guiding him from place to place had been the promptings of the Holy Ghost. From henceforth, Oliver would be able to testify precisely of that which motivates men to do good,

6.16 Oliver had not been one to expound upon the various spiritual experiences which had had during his short life. Yet, he sat in the same room with a man whom he had never met before that seemed to know all about the manner in which the Lord had dealt with him. Since it was impossible for Joseph to have intimate knowledge of Oliver’s background, the fact that the prophet was aware of Oliver’s most profound experiences suggested that there was more at work than just Joseph’s discerning personality. The Lord makes it clear that one man cannot read the mind of another, except as that is facili-

12 Make not thy gift known unto any save it be those who are of thy faith. Trifle not with sacred things.

13 If thou wilt do good, yea, and hold out faithful to the end, thou shalt be saved in the kingdom of God, which is the greatest of all the gifts of God; for there is no gift greater than the gift of salvation.

14 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, blessed art thou for what thou hast done; for thou hast inquired of me, and behold, as often as thou hast inquired thou hast received instruction of my Spirit. If it had not been so, thou wouldst not have come to the place where thou art at this time.

15 Behold, thou knowest that thou hast inquired of me and I did enlighten thy mind; and now I tell thee these things that thou mayest know that thou hast been enlightened by the Spirit of truth;

16 Yea, I tell thee, that thou mayest know that there is none else save God that knoweth thy thoughts and the intents of thy heart.
tated by the Spirit of God. Joseph had received and was receiving inspired counsel at that very moment, as he dictated the words of the revelation that Oliver was writing down.

6.17 Oliver Cowdery began as Joseph’s scribe on 7 April 1829. Given the nature of the wording of this verse, it is clear that Section 6 was received sometime in April after that starting date. With the reception of this revelation, Oliver could not but believe that the Lord was speaking through Joseph Smith. Therefore, this testimony from the Lord regarding the correctness of the translation of the Book of Mormon constituted the first of many that would strengthen him in the ministry.

6.18 Within a relatively short time, one assault after another upon the reputation and person of the prophet would begin to transpire in and around Harmony, Pennsylvania. Oliver rightly considered it his duty to accompany Joseph Smith in all of his trials and afflictions. This dedicated companionship would continue for many years.

6.18.8—Joseph—In reference to Joseph Smith, Jun., the prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

6.19 Joseph Smith was a good man, dedicated to the truth, but he was not without his weaknesses. Oliver Cowdery was to sustain the young prophet in truth and righteousness, a true companion in the work of the Lord. By the same token, Oliver was to receive like counsel from Joseph that they might both be edified together.

6.19.13—patient—With both Joseph and himself. Maturation into that which the Lord have them both be would take time and effort.

6.19.15—sober—Again, the seriousness of the work went far beyond any personal aggrandizement.

6.19.17—temperate—The path of righteousness is straight and narrow. Unseemly enthusiasm is a distraction to pressing forward with faith.

6.19.20—faith—Steadfastness in the work of the Lord cannot be maintained without a vibrant faith in the mission of the Son of God.

6.19.21—hope—Constant labor in the Kingdom of God requires a deep conviction that all that is being done is in accordance with one’s divine destiny as a son or daughter of Jesus Christ.

6.19.23—charity—The work in the Church of Christ is meaningless without a desire to bless the sons of men with the light and truth that has been committed into the hands of those with faith and hope.

6.20 Oliver had desired to have the prophet inquire of the Lord as to his status before God. This section of the Doctrine and Covenants had been the result. Within the revelation Oliver had all that he needed to be absolutely convinced of the prophet’s mission to the world, the truth of that which he had been saying from the beginning, and the fact that he, Oliver, was beloved of the Father and had been given a glorious opportunity to bring forth the instrument by which the Church and Kingdom of God would be restored to the earth. So long as he would be obedient to divine counsel, he would prosper in the work.

6.20.4—Oliver—In reference to Oliver Cowdery. As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was 17 I tell thee these things as a witness unto thee—that the words or the work which thou hast been writing are true.

18 Therefore be diligent; stand by my servant Joseph, faithfully, in whatsoever difficult circumstances he may be for the word’s sake.

19 Admonish him in his faults, and also receive admonition of him. Be patient; be sober; be temperate; have patience, faith, hope and charity.

20 Behold, thou art Oliver, and I have spoken unto thee because of thy desires; therefore treasure up these words in thy heart. Be faithful and diligent in keeping the commandments of God, and I will encircle thee in the arms of my
also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

6.21 Here the Savior cites from the writings of John the Beloved, from the first chapter of the Gospel according to John.

He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, [even] to them that believe on his name: (John 1:10–12)

Just as Jesus of Nazareth was not universally recognized as the Son of God, neither would Joseph and Oliver be recognized by the world in their day as instruments of salvation for the inhabitants of the earth. But there would be a few of the honest in heart who would join them in their ministry, just as there were those among the Jews who accepted the invitation to enter into the Church and Kingdom of God. Joseph and Oliver would have the keys of the priesthood bestowed upon them that would provide the means whereby the children of men could become the sons of God.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. (John 1:4–5)

Joseph and Oliver had been called to serve in a lost and fallen world, the inhabitants of which had suffered for centuries in ignorance and depravity. The example and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ would eventually cover the entire earth, banishing the darkness forever. As the light advanced, however, the vast majority of those accustomed to the darkness would rebel at the light and would oppose its falling upon the minds and hearts of the children of men. Joseph and Oliver would not be received with open arms any more than Christ and his Apostles had been.

6.21.4–5—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

6.22 While Oliver Cowdery had taught school in Palmyra, New York, for a portion of the time he had received board and room in the Smith home. After he had become familiar with the fundamental elements of the First Vision and the coming of the angel Moroni, he wished to have his mind and heart satisfied that these events had actually transpired and had been inspired of the Lord God of Israel. As was his custom, Oliver opened his heart to the God of Heaven, seeking truth and light. The Lord in turn spoke to Oliver in no uncertain terms, giving him to understand that all that had been communicated to him was true. He had told no one of this experience, not even his closest confidants. Therefore, when the prophet Joseph Smith dictated this part of the revelation to him, Oliver was astonished beyond measure.

6.23 The Lord references the direct response that Oliver had received in answer to his fervent prayer. There had been no doubt in Oliver’s mind at the time because this had been consistent with every other communication that he had ever experienced with prayer. Oliver had been assured in no uncertain terms that the accounts of Joseph’s experiences as recounted by the Smith family were true. That had been the motivating factor behind his journey from...
6.24 In addition to the testimony that he had received in prayer several weeks before, Oliver was receiving another witness of Joseph’s calling at the very moment he was transcribing the words being spoken by the prophet. No mortal knew anything of Oliver’s prayer to the Father regarding the prophet’s calling and mission. No mortal man knew of the Lord’s answer to his prayer. And yet, Joseph Smith was dictating a revelation that included intimate knowledge of both. Therefore, while Joseph was acting as voice for the revelation, Oliver was actually writing down the words of the Savior as they were being given to the prophet. This constituted a second powerful witness as to the veracity of all that Oliver had been taught.

6.25 In the process of time, within the month, Oliver would be sufficiently encouraged by this passage of the revelation to desire that opportunity to function as a translator of the record as well (see 8:1–3, 8:11–12, and 9:1–11). Oliver would have enough of an understanding of the process to begin, but he would not have staying power in his efforts, due to a misunderstanding of all of the principles involved in working with the Urim and Thummim.

6.25.20—Joseph—In reference to Joseph Smith, Jun., the prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

6.26 The Lord may be referencing any number of ancient records at this point. Once the translation of the Book of Mormon had been completed it would become more than clear that there remained a great number of the plates that had not been rendered into English because they had been sealed. Would Oliver one day have the opportunity to translate these records? In June 1830, the prophet would embark on the Joseph Smith Translation. Oliver initially had some involvement in that great work. While much intelligence and understanding was gained in the three year process, the Joseph Smith Translation was not completed as it had been envisioned. Had Oliver Cowdery made himself faithful available, would more have been done on that great work? In 1835 Joseph Smith came into possession of the books of Abraham and that of his great-grandson Joseph. Some initial work in rendering these papyri into English was begun almost immediately, but the publishing of the manuscripts did not begin in earnest until the saints were located in Nauvoo, Illinois. By that time, Oliver had left the Church. How many other records of divinely inspired origin yet remain to be translated? There are, no doubt, too many to count.

6.27 We do not know and therefore cannot say whether Oliver Cowdery has completely forfeited the blessings promised here through his apostasy. His blessings as Assistant President of the Church and Kingdom of God on the earth, together with those associated with his role as the Second Elder of the Church were ultimately transferred to Hyrum Smith once Oliver disassociated himself from Joseph and the saints. That these records will come forth as promised, there can be no doubt. As to Oliver’s role in assisting to bring them forth we cannot begin to speculate.

6.28 There would be no other man on the planet that would be as acquainted with the translation and publishing of the Book of Mormon than Oliver Cowdery, except for the prophet Joseph Smith himself. Oliver was commissioned to perform this great labor in harmony with Joseph Smith. After the
dictation of the translation was complete, Oliver would spend a couple of months making a second copy of the manuscript that would serve as the printer’s copy during the time that E.B. Grandin’s typesetter prepared the text for printing.

6.28.13—Joseph—In reference to Joseph Smith, Jun., the prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

6.28.34—witness—Joseph and Oliver would stand as witnesses in support of the actual translation process. The Three witnesses would testify of the angel Moroni, the ancient Nephite artifacts, and the voice of the Lord regarding the correctness of the translation. The Eight Witnesses would declare their temporal testimony that the plates themselves physically existed.

6.29 The Book of Mormon, the revelations of God, the power of the priesthood, and the salvation of Christ would be rejected by wicked men who ultimately would take the life of the prophet and his brother Hyrum. We may safely say, however, that if Oliver Cowdery would have remained faithful to his covenants by faithful keeping all of the commandments and counsel that he had received from the Lord, then he undoubtedly would have died with Joseph at Carthage jail in June 1844, the second witness to seal his testimony of the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time.

6.29.8—they—that is to say, the inhabitants of the earth unto which the Book of Mormon would come.

6.30 Joseph Smith would die at the hands of a wicked mob with painted faces on 27 June 1844. His brother Hyrum, he upon whom the Lord had placed the callings and blessings that had been forsaken by Oliver Cowdery, fell the same day as a martyr of the Lord Jesus Christ. Oliver Cowdery died in Richmond, Missouri, of consumption, having contracted tuberculosis sometime previous. Oliver had, by that time, been received back into the Church and Kingdom of God through baptism.

6.31 Many millions of the inhabitants of the earth have joyfully received the words of the Book of Mormon which Joseph Smith dictated to his scribe Oliver Cowdery. The reception of the Nephite record indicates a return to an increased spiritual awareness on the part of the children of men. Needless to say, all those who have been blessed by the contents of the Book of Mormon and the advance of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth will have kind, generous, and eternal sentiments toward the likes of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.

6.32 The implications of the Lord’s words here are prophetic in light of what was being promised to the Apostles who heard the words the Savior is alluded to here.

Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (Matthew 18:18–20)

Within a few weeks, Joseph and Oliver would be blessed under the hands of
John the Baptist who would confer upon them the keys of the Aaronic priesthood. A few days later, Peter, James, and John would ordain Joseph and Oliver as Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ holding the keys of the Melchizedek priesthood. Joseph and Oliver already enjoyed the blessings attendant to the presence of the Spirit of God, but the keys of that ministry would be added in short order.

6.33 The Apostle Paul had taught this same principle to the members of the Church of Christ in the province of Galatia. The context is extraordinarily illuminating considering the personalities and history of Joseph and Oliver.

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden. Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:1–10)

The inferred counsel could not have been more apt.

6.34 The Lord used similar imagery while delivering the Sermon on the Mount, contrasting the wise and the foolish man who respectively built their houses upon bedrock and sand (see MT-C 7.24–27). Can anyone doubt that Jesus was testifying to Joseph and Oliver that there were great storms that awaited them as the restoration of the Gospel and Church of Christ rolled forward? The Lord used similar imagery in instructing Peter about his competency in the ministry, suggesting that the blessings incumbent upon him as a prophet, seer, and revelator would preserve him against the slings and arrows of the adversary (see MT-C 16.16–19). That those same blessings would be bestowed upon the heads of Joseph and Oliver under the hands of the one unto whom those blessings had first been given is a matter of historical record.

6.34.5—flock—It is hard to imagine a flock smaller than two.

6.34.22—rock—The sure and effectual foundation of the principle of revelation.

6.35 We are not at present privy to any action on the part of Joseph or Oliver that would have incurred the Lord’s condemnation. However, neither of the two men had been baptized by immersion for the remission of sins, for that authority had not as yet been commended to them. On 15 May 1829, both would receive that wonderful ordinance, having been authorized to do so by the voice of John the Baptist. In the meantime, while they waited upon the Lord, they were to continue in their faith and repentance, refraining from all evil.

6.36 While they actively worked on the text of the Book of Mormon, the observance of this counsel was considerably easier than if they had been idly waiting for the Lord’s blessings. Hardly a page would have been translated...
without reference to the ministry of the Son of God. As they labored in their
work, their faith and knowledge would continually increase, utterly banishing
doubt and fear.

6.37 By means of the wounds in his flesh, the Lord made himself known to
his disciples after his resurrection from the dead. The wounds could not be
faked. By these same tokens, the Savior revealed himself to the ancient
Nephites and the other remnants of the House of Israel that had been
scattered throughout the world. By them he will be easily identified by the
inhabitants of the earth in the last days, at the time of his second coming in
the flesh.

6.37.1—Behold—Is this a command to contemplate the final moments of
the life of the Son of God, or has the Savior removed the veil from
between himself and his two servants? We should not underestimate
the desire of the Lord to prepare both Joseph and Oliver for the tasks
that lay before them by confirming in their minds and hearts the
veracity of the records that have been preserved that testify of his
victory over death and hell.

6.37.3—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is
perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated
as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of
the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

7.0.1 No revelation from God the Father appears in a vacuum. As Oliver
would soon discover, the spirit of revelation comes as a result of studying out
an issue in one’s mind and heart and, upon having reached a tentative
conclusion, an appeal to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ is made as to
whether or not the conclusion has eternal merit. If the conclusion is erro-
neous, a stupor of thought will befall the supplicant; if the conclusion is correct,
it will be confirmed by the Spirit of truth, even the Holy Ghost, in no uncer-
tain terms. Thus, it is clear that this section of the Doctrine and Covenants
was inspired by the question as to whether John the Beloved had died or had
remained in the flesh as the account in the New Testament seemed to indi-
cate. What remains to be discovered is why the issue came up at all. Joseph
and Oliver were actively pursuing their work on the translation of the plates
of Mormon. Was there something in the revealing text of the Book of Mormon
that would have sparked the discussion? The difficulty of the question is com-
pounded by the fact that neither Joseph nor Oliver kept an accurate chronol-
ogy of the translation process; that is to say, we do not know where they were
in the narrative of the Book of Mormon on any given day. There are, however,
some temporal markers that may serve us in our desires to understand from
whence came the revelation.

7.0.2 There are two significant statements that may aid us in our quest for
knowledge in this matter. The first has to do with the period of time during
which Emma served as the scribe for the prophet. This took place sometime
between January and March of 1829. During those weeks, Joseph and Emma
produced about 16 pages of manuscript. From what we can tell, each manu-
script page contained about 55 lines of text, each line having about ten words
in it. It is also clear that Joseph did not resort to the Small Plates of Nephi
once he resumed translating, but continued on from the point in the book of
Mosiah where he and Martin Harris had concluded, after producing the
116 pages of manuscript which Martin subsequently lost. Sixteen pages of
manuscript would be approximately 8,800 words, or about the first seven chapters or so of the present book of Mosiah. At the time that Martin Harris visited with the prophet in Harmony, Pennsylvania, the Lord instructed that he was to translate only a few more pages then he was to stop the translation for a season (see 5.30). Given the pagination of the manuscript and the location in the book of Mosiah where Joseph probably was in his translation, he probably concluded this portion of the text at the beginning of the account of Zeniff that begins in Mosiah 9 in the current edition of the Book of Mormon. Thus, when Joseph and Oliver began their labors on 7 April 1829, Oliver’s handwriting would have appeared beginning at Mosiah 9:1; Emma’s handwriting would therefore be found in the first eight chapters of the original manuscript.

7.0.3 The second temporal marker in the translation of the Book of Mormon is in connection with the bestowal of the Aaronic priesthood by John the Baptist on 15 May 1829. Oliver Cowdery testifies that the restoration of the Aaronic priesthood took place after they had written the account of the Savior’s ministry to the Nephites, or the narrative contained in 3 Nephi. Although many students of the Book of Mormon and of the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints quibble about the possible passages that might have inspired Joseph and Oliver to retire to the banks of the Susquehanna River to ask the Father regarding baptism, we will settle upon one: the last chapter of the narrative included in 3 Nephi.

Hearken, O ye Gentiles, and hear the words of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, which he hath commanded me that I should speak concerning you, for, behold he commandeth me that I should write, saying: Turn, all ye Gentiles, from your wicked ways; and repent of your evil doings, of your lyings and deceivings, and of your whoredoms, and of your secret abominations, and your idolatries, and of your murders, and your priestcrafts, and your envyings, and your strifes, and from all your wickedness and abominations, and come unto me, and be baptized in my name, that ye may receive a remission of your sins, and be filled with the Holy Ghost, that ye may be numbered with my people who are of the house of Israel. (3 Nephi 30:1–2)

If this passage from the Book of Mormon served to inspire the prophet and his companion to ask about the first saving ordinances of the Gospel of Christ, then we may conclude that during the 38 days between 7 April and 15 May 1829, the pair produced about 238 pages of manuscript or, on average, about 6½ pages per day. This marker would imply that the translation of the final portion of the Book of Mormon, 4 Nephi to Moroni, and the translation of the Small Plates of Nephi probably took another 33 days or so. The translation process would have been interrupted by the machinations of Joseph’s enemies in Harmony, Pennsylvania, and the trip from Harmony to Fayette, New York, that took place just prior to the first of June 1829. Given these circumstances it is unlikely that the translation of the Book of Mormon was completed until after 20 June 1829.

7.0.4 Returning to the question as to what portion of the Book of Mormon might have triggered the revelation regarding the transfiguration of John the Beloved, we are left with only a few possibilities. The histories of several characters in the book of Mormon lend themselves to speculation as to the possibility have having extended missionary experiences. After instructing his sons in their duty to God and to their fellow men, Alma departs from the land of
Zarahemla as if he were going to the land of Melek. He was not heard from ever again (see AL-C 45.15–19). Mormon, and undoubtedly others, speculated that Alma may have been taken up as had been Moses. In other words, Alma may have very well been translated. By the same token, Nephi, the son of Helaman, also left the land of Zarahemla shortly before the signs appeared announcing the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ (see 3 NE-C 1.2–3). Mormon makes a point of Nephi not ever having been seen again a chapter later (see 3 NE-C 2.8–9). Again, the speculation has been that Nephi, too, may very well have been translated. It is in the instance of the Three Nephite disciples of the Savior, however, that we are explicitly told that they would enjoy the precise blessing that had been bestowed upon John the Beloved (see 3 NE-C 28.4–7). This latter case would have resolved the question immediately. Additionally, it is clear that the translation of the passage that would have revealed that fact, would not have taken place until toward the middle of May rather than in April some time. Using our rule of thumb as to how much translation transpired per day, the material from Mosiah 9 until Alma 45 would have taken about 20 days, or until about 27 April 1829. Again, following our rule of thumb, Joseph and Oliver would not have arrived at the translation of 3 Nephi 2 until after 9 May 1829. It seems certain then that the disappearance of Alma served as the stimulus to the question about John the Beloved; the revelation that we have as Section 7 was probably received about 27 April 1829.

7.0.5 Prompted to pose the question to the Lord regarding the status of the Apostle John, Joseph resorted to the Urim and Thummim, by which means he was shown and subsequently translated a document written by John. This document was seen in vision and its current whereabouts are unknown at this time. No doubt there will come a time when this fragment, together with other records that have been hidden up unto the Lord will be revealed in their completeness. This section appeared as Chapter VI in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 33 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. When the revelation was prepared for inclusion in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, the prophet saw fit to include more of that which John the Beloved had written and not just the basic information that settled the dispute between Joseph and Oliver about John’s transfiguration.

7.1 This episode took place after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ when Jesus met with the disciples on the shores of the sea of Galilee. The account begins with the Savior asking Peter if he loved his master more than he loved fishing. This question was asked three times, with Simon answering in the affirmative. Then Jesus repeated his counsel “Feed my sheep”. Peter’s desire had been to remain with the Savior under any and all circumstances, and in doing so had almost put his life in jeopardy on several occasions. At the heart of the Lord’s counsel is the important role that Peter was to play in the development of the Church of Jesus Christ after the Savior’s ascension into heaven. At the heart of Peter’s desire was just a tinge of selfishness, understandable, but selfishness none the less. John in some respects represented the opposite side of Peter’s coin. For the son of Zebedee, the company of the Lord was indeed important, as important to him as that which Peter felt. But in addition to those deep and abiding sentiments was his understanding that all men, through faith, repentance, and obedience to the saving ordinances of the Gospel, could enjoy the same rich relationship with the Son of God that he enjoyed. For this reason he wished to remain on earth to bring as many of the children of men to Christ as he possibly could. Three of the Nephite disciples had similar feelings.
And when he had spoken unto them, he turned himself unto the three, and said unto them: What will ye that I should do unto you, when I am gone unto the Father? And they sorrowed in their hearts, for they durst not speak unto him the thing which they desired. And he said unto them: Behold, I know your thoughts, and ye have desired the thing which John, my beloved, who was with me in my ministry, before that I was lifted up by the Jews, desired of me. Therefore, more blessed are ye, for ye shall never taste of death; but ye shall live to behold all the doings of the Father unto the children of men, even until all things shall be fulfilled according to the will of the Father, when I shall come in my glory with the powers of heaven. And ye shall never endure the pains of death; but when I shall come in my glory ye shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye from mortality to immortality; and then shall ye be blessed in the kingdom of my Father. And again, ye shall not have pain while ye shall dwell in the flesh, neither sorrow save it be for the sins of the world; and all this will I do because of the thing which ye have desired of me, for ye have desired that ye might bring the souls of men unto me, while the world shall stand. (3 Nephi 28:4–9)

Peter had not offended Jesus but he did need to understand that his service in the Kingdom of God was according to the economy of God. His desires were worthy and understandable, but the Lord had mortal tasks for Peter that only he could accomplish. John’s desires were compatible with the will of the Lord, even though John the Beloved may not have known exactly or completely what he was asking for. Neither man would regret doing the will of the Savior.

7.1.7—John—In reference to John the Beloved, one of the original Twelve Apostles chosen by the Lord Jesus Christ during his mortal ministry. John is responsible for the texts of the Gospel that bears his name, three short letters, and the book of Revelations, all contained within the pages of the New Testament.

7.1.13—For—The sentence here is in addition to that which was originally published in the Book of Commandments.

7.2 John was aware that it was possible to have one’s physical existence on the earth attenuated. He was present with Peter and James on the mount of Transfiguration when Moses and Elijah appeared in glory with Jesus to extend certain ordinances and blessings to them (see MT-C 17.1–9). John essentially wished to be transfigured as well, which transfiguration would amount to his body being changed from a Celestial state into a Terrestrial state, much like the transformation that will take place to all life on the earth at the time of the second coming. With that transfiguration, no mortal man or device arrayed against him would have any effect upon him. No disease or injury would befall him. The only sorrow he would suffer would be for the sins of mankind. All of the physical limitations that Celestial mortal life defines would be left behind. John would be enabled to preach the Gospel in whatever set of circumstances he might be. That he would be effective there can be no doubt. There would come a time, however, when the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ would not be received by great numbers of the children of men and John’s assignments would be adapted to the needs of the people.

7.3 John temporal ministry would last more than two thousand years. During that time he would watch the Church of Christ grow, thousands flocking to the teachings and principles of eternal life. He would observe the teaching of the Gospel to the Gentile nations and their willingness to do all that the Son of God would require of them. In the process of time, however, he would

2 And I said unto him: Lord, give unto me power over death, that I may live and bring souls unto thee.

3 And the Lord said unto me: Verily, verily, I say unto thee, because thou desirdest this thou shalt tarry until I come in my glory, and shalt prophesy before nations,
7.4 A portion of this conversation between Peter and Jesus is recorded by John in the Gospel account that bears his name (see JN-C 21.22). Peter desired to come immediately into the Kingdom of God with the Savior. John the Beloved desired to remain upon the earth teaching the Gospel of Christ until the Second Coming. Peter would think his ministry too long, given his love for the Lord Jesus; John would consider his ministry too short, given his love for the children of men. Should either of them be censured for their choice? No, but there are many in their rigid, constrained view of the Gospel of Christ who feel it their place to take either one or both to task for their respective predilections.

7.4.9—Peter—In another place, in a significantly superior manuscript, Simon Barjona’s name is changed to Peter, “a stone”, which Jesus clearly states is to be understood as “a seer”. Simon’s future role as the presiding authority of the Church of Jesus Christ is anticipated in the name change and at the same time an encouragement to Peter that he must needs be the kind of man who perceives the hearts and minds of his fellows that he might strengthen and edify them. He also must be sensitive to the promptings of the Spirit of God that his eyes might be open to the mind and will of God, that he might serve as a witness to that which the Lord God has proposed for the children of men and the saints of God.

7.5 Nine of the Nephite disciples wished to come to their Lord as soon as it was possible. The Savior blessed them in such a manner that they would live in mortality until they were 72 years old, and then they would ascend into heaven. We are not told whether they were to go there as resurrected beings or whether they would be as the spirits of just men made perfect. We cannot say how old Peter was when he was crucified by the Romans, but we might surmise that his life was prolonged sufficiently so that he was able to accomplish the tasks that had been given to him. The Lord is clear here that John the
Beloved did not see himself in competition with Peter; he simply desired to do more than he, John, had done up to that point in his life.

7.5.5—Peter—In another place, in a significantly superior manuscript, Simon Barjona’s name is changed to Peter, “a stone”, which Jesus clearly states is to be understood as “a seer”. Simon’s future role as the presiding authority of the Church of Jesus Christ is anticipated in the name change and at the same time an encouragement to Peter that he must needs be the kind of man who perceives the hearts and minds of his fellows that he might strengthen and edify them. He also must be sensitive to the promptings of the Spirit of God that his eyes might be open to the mind and will of God, that he might serve as a witness to that which the Lord God has proposed for the children of men and the saints of God.

7.5.25—yet—The phrase here is in addition to that which was originally published in the Book of Commandments.

7.6 This verse constitutes additional material given by the prophet Joseph Smith when the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants was published. The glory of the Terrestrial Kingdom is considerably more intense than that of the Celestial Kingdom, just as the brilliance of the Moon is greater than that of the stars. When Moses and Elijah appeared to Peter, James, and John, their glory was as that of the Lord Jesus Christ who stood with them. Any mortal dwelling upon this lost and fallen world who has had the blessing of viewing a translated being may very well think of that glorious personage as being like unto a flaming fire. From AD 33 until the present day, John the Beloved has been actively engaged in gathering the honest in heart, those who have been willing to receive all that the Father has to offer unto the children of men. We may only surmise as to the purpose of his personal visits with these faithful and righteous saints.

7.7 This verse constitutes additional material given by the prophet Joseph Smith when the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants was published. The members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles are servants unto the Most High, disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, and a blessing to the children of men. In sentiment and deed, there is no body of men anywhere upon this earth who are as dedicated in the love and service to one another as these twelve.

7.7.5—thine—That is to say, the Apostle Peter, although one could make an effective argument for the reference being to John the Beloved.

7.7.13—brother—James was the literal, genetic brother of John the Beloved. In terms of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the quorums of the priesthood, however, James was just as much of a brother to Peter as was John.

7.7.14—James—Like Simon and Andrew, James and John were sons of the same man, Zebedee the fisherman. “James” is a transliterated form of the Hebrew name “Jacob” by way of Greek. With his brother John, he served as a companion and counselor to Simon Peter in the presidency of the Church of Christ in the Meridian of Time. He was of a volatile personality in his youth, particularly when those who he loved were threatened or insulted. For that reason he was given the sobriquet “Boanerges”, in that he was one of the “Sons of Thunder”. Some have suggested that he was the author of the Epistle of James, but the evidence is not certain. Because of some confusion with at least two other Apostles named James, we are not exactly certain the nature of his martyrdom.

6 Yea, he has undertaken a greater work; therefore I will make him as flaming fire and a ministering angel; he shall minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation who dwell on the earth.

7 And I will make thee to minister for him and for thy brother James; and unto you three I will give this power and the keys of this ministry until I come.  

D&C 7:7 
JC 362
7.8 Men with righteous desires are not necessarily clones of one another. We are all on the road to salvation and exaltation, each with various talents and gifts. The righteous desires of one’s heart derive from our premortal experiences coupled with our experiences upon the earth. We are all headed toward the same goal, but our beginnings are various. Thus, Peter and John could both express righteousness in their service to God, even though they might be called upon to serve in different venues. We should all take consolation in that.

8.0 Oliver Cowdery had arrived at the home of Joseph Smith on 5 April 1829 and two days later he was acting as the prophet’s scribe, an assignment in the which he had been preceded by Emma Smith and Martin Harris. As part of his introduction to Joseph, the Lord granted to Oliver a revelation which is now printed in the Doctrine and Covenants as Section 6. In that revelation, Oliver’s faith in Joseph was confirmed inasmuch as the young prophet had knowledge of the most intimate thoughts and desires of his heart, thoughts and desires that no mortal man could have know save he were inspired by the God of Heaven. Oliver is also told that he possessed a spiritual gift that few men on the earth had experienced (see 6.10–12). Part of that extraordinary gift was that he had been able to inquire of the Lord and receive answers that satisfied his hunger for truth and light; that is to say, he had the gift of revelation. In addition, Oliver was promised that there would come a time in which he would be allowed to translate records of ancient date just as Joseph was doing with the Book of Mormon (see 6.25–28). The Lord assured Oliver that he and Joseph would jointly hold the keys of this gift. Oliver had no way of knowing at that particular time that there were great translation tasks that yet lay before the prophet and his associates. The beginnings of the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible lay more than a year into the future. The papyri of Abraham and Joseph would not fall into the prophet’s hands until 1835 when Michael Chandler arrived in Kirtland with the Egyptian artifacts that he had brought with him from New York. No doubt Oliver felt that his opportunity to share in the blessings of the translation process involved the task in which he and Joseph were then performing; that is to say, the translation of the Book of Mormon. After several weeks of acting as Joseph’s scribe, Oliver thought that the time was right, especially since Joseph’s strength in the traces seemed to be waning somewhat. Oliver petitioned Joseph for the privilege and Joseph subsequently petitioned the Lord. This revelation was in answer to their prayers. This section appeared as Chapter VII in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 34 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

8.1 Oliver’s ability to participate in the bringing forth of ancient sacred accounts of the workings of the God of Heaven with His children is clearly made manifest here. There were requirements, however, that accompanied these blessings. Oliver’s faith in Christ had to be complete, his heart and mind unified by the power of the Holy Ghost with that of the Father and the Son. As will be seen, Oliver did not comprehend the great expenditure of mental and physical strength that needed to be expended in order to bring to light the records preserved in an ancient unknown language. The Urim and Thummim was a useful instrument, but the translation was not a mechanical process.

8.1.1—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in

8 Verily I say unto you, ye shall both have according to your desires, for ye both joy in that which ye have desired.

Section 8

Date: April 1829
Place: Harmony, Pennsylvania
To: Oliver Cowdery

1 OLIVER Cowdery, verily, verily, I say unto you, that assuredly as the Lord liveth, who is your God and your Redeemer, even so surely shall you receive a knowledge of whatsoever things you shall ask in faith, with an honest heart, believing that you shall receive a knowledge concerning the engravings of old records, which are ancient, which contain those parts of my scripture of which has been spoken by the manifestation of my
the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

8.1.29—knowledge—This constitutes a reaffirmation of the Lord’s explanation of Oliver’s inherent gift to receive the mind and will of God through prayer and inspiration (see 6.5 and 6.10–12).

8.1.53–54—old records—Certainly the plates upon which the Book of Mormon was engraved qualified. Only a third of their number, however, would be translated for the publishing of the Book of Mormon. There were other remnants of the House of Israel whose records would eventually come to light as well. The translation of Bible would soon begin and, not long after, the opportunity to peruse the writings of Abraham and Joseph. There were additional hints that not everything written down by the Apostles and prophets of God had been included within the pages of the Bible, that there remained much to be discovered and translated (see 7.0).

8.2 A prophet, seer, and revelator is not a witless instrument in the hands of the Lord to make pronouncements for the entertainment of the children of men. While it is true that those things which are revealed through a prophet provide great blessings to the honest in heart, yet the prophet himself is also expected to be on a learning curve. The disciples of Christ grow spiritually as their priesthood leaders are strengthened and edified by their experiences. As Oliver would soon discover, there was to be an intellectual component to the revelatory process. Joseph had been in communication with the angels of heaven regarding the contents of the Book of Mormon for several years. Moroni was not the only ancient American servant of God to instruct him in his task. By the time that Joseph received the plates, he had already had a working knowledge of the entire history of the Nephites and the Lamanites, and was not unlettered in the written language of the plates that had been entrusted to him. Oliver lacked this training and he did not realize at the time as to how much his ability to translate would depend on the background information that Joseph already possessed. The fact that Oliver was able to do anything at all during his stint as translator should astonish all those acquainted with his effort. It is a compliment to his great faith and confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ.

8.3 As a personage, the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of revelation. One cannot have the power and influence of the Holy Ghost upon oneself without receiving revelation from God. As a state of mind, the spirit of revelation is the receptiveness of the individual to the promptings of the Holy Ghost. This receptiveness derived from a willingness to live by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God, coupled with a deep and abiding faith in the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. Moses possessed these two principles and for that reason knew precisely what to do in any given situation. The spirit of revelation is that which proceeds forth from a spirit of righteousness. Power in the priesthood can only be wielded by a righteous man who is filled with the spirit of prophecy. Therefore, Moses knew precisely what he was to do on the shores of the Red Sea and had the faith sufficient to do as he had been told.

8.3.16—Moses—We have no idea how Amram and Jochebed referred to their son by name. This given by the princess, however, essentially is a reference to his deliverance from the Nile. In its elemental form, the name of the prophet means “is born”. The cognate in Hebrew means “drew him out”.

8.3.21—Israel—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the

2 Yea, behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart.

3 Now, behold, this is the spirit of revelation; behold, this is the spirit by which Moses brought the children of Israel through the Red Sea on dry ground.
posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

8.3.24–25—Red Sea—That is to say, that tongue of the Egyptian sea that separates Egypt from the Sinai peninsula. The southern border of Israel.

8.4 Pharaoh did all that he could do to frustrate the deliverance of the Israelites from bondage. His own servants were tasked to pour out the same plagues that Moses and Aaron were pronouncing upon the Egyptians, upon the heads of the Israelites who dwelt in the land of Goshen. In this they were somewhat successful. As the deleterious episodes escalated with each passing plague, however, Pharaoh and his servants were determined to take the lives of the prophet and his brother. Moses and Aaron knew precisely what the Egyptians were about because of the gift and spirit of revelation that was upon them. As the opening of this dispensation progressed, Joseph and Oliver would be subjected to the efforts of the adversary to destroy them. So long as they maintain access to the influence of the Holy Ghost they would evade the murderous attempts of their enemies.

8.5 Keeping the commandments of the Lord God of Israel is the only way that a man can maintain the companionship of the Holy Ghost and thus the gifts of that Spirit.

8.6 At the time that Oliver Cowdery was first introduced to the possibility of the restoration and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, he also appeared to have a talent with a rod similar to that which Aaron had during the time of the exodus from Egypt. The reference to this particular gift was clearly articulated in this revelation when it was first published in the Book of Commandments. Oliver was told that notwithstanding the folklore that surround this apparent gift, in his case the rod worked in his behalf because of the spirit of revelation which had been upon him. Eventually, Oliver came to understand more fully how the gift of revelation functioned and the rod was no longer used in accessing the light and truth of heaven. By the time the revelation was published in the Doctrine and Covenants in 1835, Oliver’s initial experiences with the rod were no longer germane to the Church or the saints and the current reading of this section was established. As can easily be seen in the account given in the book of Exodus, a longstanding cult that also used staves had been established among the Egyptians. Likewise there were many men and women who claimed similar power in the days of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Once Oliver no longer required the rod to aid him in receiving revelation, it was thought best to abandon the artifact altogether, which Oliver willingly did. Hence, to avoid any confusion in the minds and the hearts of the saints, the present text was revealed for any subsequent publications of the revelation.

8.6.18—Aaron—When Moses and Aaron first entered into the presence of the Pharaoh and his courtiers, one of the first signs manifested unto the Egyptians of the power and authority of the brothers was the transformation of Aaron’s rod into a serpent (see EX-C 7.10–13). As first of the plagues were called down upon the Egyptians, Aaron’s rod was employed (see EX-C 7.19–20, EX-C 8.5–6, and EX-C 8.16–17). In some of the other plagues and in the dividing of the Red Sea, the rod of Moses was used. Later when the children of Israel were quibbling over which of the tribes should have precedence, each tribe submitted one of their staves to be housed in the Tabernacle of the Congregation overnight. During that time, Aaron’s rod budded, blossomed, and pro-

4 Therefore this is thy gift; apply unto it, and blessed art thou, for it shall deliver you out of the hands of your enemies, when, if it were not so, they would slay you and bring your soul to destruction.

5 Oh, remember these words, and keep my commandments. Remember, this is your gift.

6 Now this is not all thy gift; for you have another gift, which is the gift of Aaron; behold, it has told you many things;

D&C 8:5
EM 1:379
duced almonds (see NM-C 17.8). Needless to say, the Lord made it perfectly clear which of the tribes was to be favored with the power and the authority of the priesthood of God. Aaron’s rod was thereafter safely ensconced in the Tabernacle of the Congregation. When the children of Israel were suffering a want of water in the desert of Sinai, the rod of Aaron was used again to bring forth water from the rock at Meribah (see NM-C 20.8–13).

8.7 In Oliver Cowdery’s case, the rod like unto Aaron’s worked because of his faith in the scriptures which recounted miracles such as these. The Lord confirmed Oliver’s faith in the accounts given in the Bible regarding the rod of Aaron, by revealing His will through that means. Oliver Cowdery was told that notwithstanding the fact that other men and women used diving rods and the like to receive guidance, their power derived from another source, a rather unwholesome one. Oliver’s experience, Father assured him, was not of that spirit, but of God.

8.7.18—Aaron—When Moses and Aaron first entered into the presence of the Pharaoh and his courtiers, one of the first signs manifested unto the Egyptians of the power and authority of the brothers was the transformation of Aaron’s rod into a serpent (see EX-C 7.10–13). As first of the plagues were called down upon the Egyptians, Aaron’s rod was employed (see EX-C 7.19–20, EX-C 8.5–6, and EX-C 8.16–17). In some of the other plagues and in the dividing of the Red Sea, the rod of Moses was used. Later when the children of Israel were quibbling over which of the tribes should have precedence, each tribe submitted one of their staves to be housed in the Tabernacle of the Congregation overnight. During that time, Aaron’s rod budded, blossomed, and produced almonds (see NM-C 17.8). Needless to say, the Lord made it perfectly clear which of the tribes was to be favored with the power and the authority of the priesthood of God. Aaron’s rod was thereafter safely ensconced in the Tabernacle of the Congregation. When the children of Israel were suffering a want of water in the desert of Sinai, the rod of Aaron was used again to bring forth water from the rock at Meribah (see NM-C 20.8–13).

8.8 Satan is the greatest of imitators. Whenever the Lord implements a method by which He communicates with His children, Lucifer devises one to either mock or deceive. The archetype of this is, of course, the magicians of Egypt who were able to duplicate several of the first miracles performed by Moses and Aaron. They did not do so by the power of God, but rather by the power of the devil. So long as Oliver adhered to the principles of righteousness, he would never be deceived by Lucifer.

8.9 For Oliver Cowdery, the rod of nature was very much like the Urim and Thummim for Joseph Smith. Both instruments helped the young men to recognize the spirit of the Lord and to have confidence in the things that were revealed to them. Eventually, their spiritual strength would become so great that neither instrument provided any benefit to them in comparison to the direct access that they had with the Father and the Son. The same thing may be said of the various other artifacts that the Lord has provided His servants from time to time. These things do not constitute mysticism; they are part of reality, about which we lack considerable information.

8.10 The operations of the Spirit of God, regardless of any artifacts that might play a part, only have efficacy in the hearts and minds of those who have faith

7 Behold, there is no other power, save the power of God, that can cause this gift of Aaron to be with you.

8 Therefore, doubt not, for it is the gift of God; and you shall hold it in your hands, and do marvelous works; and no power shall be able to take it away out of your hands, for it is the work of God.

9 And, therefore, whatsoever you shall ask me to tell you by that means, that will I grant unto you, and you shall have knowledge concerning it.

10 Remember that without faith you can do nothing; therefore ask
in the Lord Jesus Christ. All revelation, therefore, is in anticipation of blessing the lives of one’s fellow men with the truths of salvation and exaltation. These gifts are not given to merely satisfy one’s idle curiosity.

8.11 As Oliver embarked upon his opportunity to engage in the translation of a portion of the Book of Mormon he had to keep in mind from whence would come all of his knowledge and understanding. His faith in Christ and his love for his fellow men must govern all of his labors in behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ.

8.11.7—mysteries—The foremost mystery of eternity is why God interferes in the affairs of mankind. The answer is a simple one, but one that can only be confirmed through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. Another of those greatest of mysteries has to do with the willingness of a perfect man, the Lord Jesus Christ, to submit himself to the punishments for all personal sin committed by the inhabitants of this earth from the days of Adam and Eve until the final winding up scenes of the temporal existence of this earth. Again, the answer is simple; he did so out of an incomprehensible love for the children of men, a love that must be revealed by the Spirit of God in order to even imagine the faint hints of understanding. All other mysteries alluded to here are of a similar nature.

8.12 Oliver had been mindful of the inspiration of God even before the time that he had heard anything of the prophet Joseph Smith, the First Vision, or of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. All that he had received of God the Father through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, had come in response to his earnest petitions of Heaven to reveal the principles of light and truth that would eventually lead him to salvation. As Oliver progressed, he would come to know more fully all that the Lord had done for him.

8.12.21—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as "Amen" derives from roots which mean "true". This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

9.0 Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery had begun translating from the book of Mosiah on 7 April 1829 and had made considerable progress by the time this revelation was received. We cannot be absolutely certain as to exactly where in the narrative they were working, but it seems likely that they were nearing the end of the book of Alma. From the beginning of Oliver’s involvement with the prophet and the translation of the Book of Mormon, the Lord had assured Oliver that he would one day have the opportunity to translate ancient records (see 6.25–28). As the work continued at pace, the Lord again indicated that the time would come when Oliver would be given opportunities in addition to being Joseph’s scribe (see 8.11). Almost immediately after Joseph and Oliver were given what now appears in the Doctrine and Covenants as Section 8, Oliver attempted to translate from the plates, and was somewhat successful in the beginning. We do not know exactly what transpired to provide this opportunity, save that Joseph was apparently suffering some fatigue from the rather lengthy and unrelenting experience of laboring with the plates and the Urim and Thummim (see 9.12). The text of this revelation provides us with some of the most explicit instructions that can be found in the scriptures as to how the power and influence of the Holy Ghost works upon the human mind and heart. This section appeared as Chapter VIII in the Book of Commandments,
and as Section 35 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

9.1 We are at a complete loss as to exactly what transpired when Oliver attempted to translate from the plates containing the Book of Mormon. That he began to translate is clear (see 9.5); that for some reason he did not continue is also clear. We may only speculate as to nature of the two events. Of one thing we can be absolutely confident. Oliver’s greatest gifts at that particular time were a good ear and a fine hand. He was perfectly fitted to be a scribe. Joseph on the other hand did not possess these gifts to the same degree as Oliver. But he had been ably fitted for his task. He had been trained in Nephite history and linguistics during the four years that he waited to receive the plates from the hand of Moroni. Several of the ancient American prophets had been his tutors between the years 1823 and 1827. He was also an experienced translator after all was said and done, insomuch as he had dictated 116 pages of material from the books of Lehi and Mosiah to Martin Harris who had served as his scribe before the arrival of Oliver Cowdery. We may look upon the late spring and summer of 1829 as a period of some expediency insofar as the translation of the Book of Mormon is concerned. As will be seen, the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ would take place on the precise date of 6 April 1830. It would appear that the publishing of the Book of Mormon was supposed to take place prior to that date. The first finished volumes were offered to the public 26 March 1830. The typesetting and printing of the first signatures of the Book of Mormon were accomplished in September 1829. During July and August of 1829 Oliver made what would eventually be called the printer’s copy of the entire manuscript. The final portions of the Book of Mormon were translated during the third week of June 1829. As can be seen, the time schedule was quite tight. The time to bring Oliver Cowdery up to speed as a translator was not available at that time. Oliver therefore is commanded to do that which would best serve the needs of the burgeoning King of God upon the earth.

9.1.32–35—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

9.2 Although we are not told exactly to which records the Lord is referring, yet the history of the prophet and the published works of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints give us some clues. In June 1830, Joseph began what would ultimately be called the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. Oliver began as scribe in that labor as well. We are not told if he had any specific input regarding the reviewing of the text. He continued as scribe until the fall of 1830 when he was given charge of the mission sent to the Lamanites. We are not privy to Oliver’s involvement with the translation of the Egyptian papyri that were brought to Kirtland, Ohio, by Michael Chandler in 1835, but he may very well have had a hand in some of the work that eventually produced the book of Abraham. With Oliver’s apostasy in 1839, the door of opportunity appears to have been closed on his role as a translator, at least during his mortal ministry.

9.3 The economy of God considers the whole of eternity and the effect that any decision or activity has on the destiny of mankind. As mortals with limited perspective, it is frequently difficult for us to fully comprehend why the Lord has dealt with us in a particular way. Oliver is no less human than any of us. He naturally wishes to have all of the available blessings at the time that they were announced, rather than be adequately prepared for them.
9.3.15—*expedient*—Perhaps for reasons given above (see 9.1).

9.4 Our service in the Kingdom of God is only in part designed to aid us in our eternal progression toward perfection. Most often, our particular callings are given to us that we might be a blessing to others. It is in our supportive roles as brothers and sisters that the finest of all blessings are bestowed. Norwithstanding the vicissitudes that imposed themselves on Oliver’s relationship with Joseph Smith, yet in the end much of the goodness and mercy that the two expressed to one another in the early years of their association will survive, binding them together as friends and colleagues in eternity.

9.4.16—*Joseph*—In reference to Joseph Smith, Jun., the prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

9.5 Again, we have no idea as to why Oliver paused in his first attempt to translate from the plates upon which were engraved the narrative of the Book of Mormon. His hesitancy, however, was untimely and perhaps indicative of the reduced pace that the translation would have taken had Oliver continued in this manner. Much remained to be accomplished and there was barely enough time to finish the tasks that had been set before them.

9.6 Disappointments of this sort may be looked upon as blessings in disguise. The greatest of these disguised blessings are the required increase in faith and the opportunity to develop attenuated humility. We are, after all, the sons and daughters in this divine system; we are here to learn to submit to the will of the Father that we might learn the wisdom of the Father through our own experience.

9.7 There is no royal road to perfection; there is only the path of righteousness, upon which we learn to follow the commandments of God, that we might learn for ourselves the characteristics and attributes of the Father. So long as we are teachable, we will learn. Oliver had jumped to a conclusion about the nature of the revelation process. It is true that he had already experienced to a great degree the gift of revelation in his own life, but he did not comprehend why it had happened at all. He had observed the prophet Joseph Smith translate with what appeared to be effortless fluidity. Oliver was not acquainted with the years of preparation during which Joseph had been tutored in the affairs of the subject contained upon the plates delivered to him by Moroni. He apparently assumed that all one needed to do was look upon the inscriptions with the aid of the Urim and Thummim and all would be miraculously revealed. This, the Lord testified, was not the case. The Lord then gives Oliver an understanding of the process that Joseph went through as he reviewed the engraving.

9.8 We know very little about the nature of the language in which the religious history of the Nephites was recorded. That it was a dense language in terms of the characters and their meanings there can be no doubt. The entire narrative of the Book of Mormon was transcribed from no more than 64 plates that were approximately six by eight inches. Each plate was the thickness of common tin, the entire stack of plates being about six inches high. According to the prophet Joseph’s own account, only a third of the plates were actually translated. Reformed Egyptian, the written language of the Nephites, had not been actively in use for more than fourteen hundred years. No living man knew how to read or write with those characters. From September 1823

4 Behold, the work which you are called to do is to write for my servant Joseph.

5 And, behold, it is because that you did not continue as you commenced, when you began to translate, that I have taken away this privilege from you.

6 Do not murmur, my son, for it is wisdom in me that I have dealt with you after this manner.

7 Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me.

8 But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right.
to September 1827 Joseph was given instruction on the linguistic fundamentals together with an overview of the thousand years of Nephite history with which he would be working. He had also gained considerable insight as to how the Urim and Thummim were to be used in the translation process as he and Martin Harris had translated the book of Lehi and the first part of the book of Mosiah in the spring of 1828. It is clear that the English translation did not immediately appear in the seer stones, but was represented there as Joseph contemplated any given character inscribed upon the plates. He did, in fact, work it out in his mind and then sought divine guidance as to the correctness of that which he had concluded upon. When that confirmation came, Joseph would then dictate that which was represented in English upon the Urim and Thummim. If the passage needed more reviewing, the prophet could not with confidence read aloud that which he had obtained. Oliver, of course, knew little or nothing of the correct method of using the seer stones.

9.8.10—study—Revelation is as much an intellectual process as it is a spiritual one. The mind and the heart work together.

9.8.44—feel—Simply put, the power and influence of the Holy Ghost will testify that the translation is accurate. The truth of the matter is revealed through the Spirit of God.

9.9 Those with similar experiences will testify of the distinct difference between having the influence of the Holy Ghost touch the mind and heart and that which one experiences when the Spirit of the Lord withdraws. Divine confidence is unmistakable; divine disapproval cannot be ignored. We are, in the end, creatures of light and truth. When truth distills upon us, we are edified and cheered in every way. When we encounter falsehood, we are befuddled by it. The translation process followed the same pattern, but necessarily of a more refined nature. In every conceivable way, the Book of Mormon was translated by the gift and power of God.

9.10 In the process of time, Oliver would learn more of the spirit of translation as it is associated with the spirit of revelation. At that particular time, however, in April of 1829, Oliver’s specific tasks would not put him on that singular learning curve. The task at hand was to finish the translation as quickly as possible and to expedite the publishing of the Book of Mormon.

9.11 We may legitimately ask ourselves how it was that Oliver’s experience was expedient one moment and not expedient the next. Was it not because of the understanding that Oliver Cowdery would gain in his attempt to do as he desired? Was it not in the great humility that would come upon him as he momentarily trifled with the gift of translation? Did he not come away with a far greater respect of all that Joseph Smith had been experiencing and learning before he, Oliver, had come on the scene?

9.12 We do not know to what deficiency that the Lord refers to here regarding the strength of the prophet Joseph Smith. Had he been ill? Was he suffering a momentary exhaustion from the work of the translation? Was there some other cause for which Joseph had waned in his ability to continue apace? We do not know nor, perhaps, is it important. Neither Joseph in his personal weakness nor Oliver in his mild arrogance were severely censured.

9.12.13—Joseph—In reference to Joseph Smith, Jun., the prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

9 But if it be not right you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong; therefore, you cannot write that which is sacred save it be given you from me.

10 Now, if you had known this you could have translated; nevertheless, it is not expedient that you should translate now.

11 Behold, it was expedient when you commenced; but you feared, and the time is past, and it is not expedient now;

12 For, do you not behold that I have given unto my servant Joseph sufficient strength, whereby it is made up? And neither of you have I condemned.
9.13 Oliver’s charge was to do the will of the Lord. So long as he did so, he would be a great blessing to the prophet Joseph Smith and the infant Church of Christ. As we press forward in faith, nothing doubting, the blessings of Heaven are poured out upon our heads and we are found worthy servants fostering the salvation of the children of men upon the face of the earth, in time and in eternity. We cannot, however, afford to take any honor unto ourselves. Oliver did so, the gravest of temptations for him, and found himself becoming more and more alienated from the gifts and powers that the Lord had so richly pour upon us.

9.14 In terms of the translation and publishing of the Book of Mormon, Oliver Cowdery was completely faithful in all matters that were entrusted to him. The promises extended to him here will ultimately be realized, even though for a time he found himself outside of the pale of the Kingdom of God. We have every reason to expect that Oliver will receive a fullness of all that which he once enjoyed in part. 9.14.31—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

10.0 The prophet Joseph Smith received the plates upon which was engraved the record of Mormon on 22 September 1827. Although from that point on he copied and translated many of the Reformed Egyptian characters that he found there, the transcribing of the textual narrative did not begin in earnest until 12 April 1828 when Martin Harris became Joseph’s scribe in Harmony, Pennsylvania. For the next eight weeks, Joseph and Martin produced 116 pages of manuscript containing the book of Lehi and a portion of the book of Mosiah. After almost incessant petitioning, Martin was allowed to take the manuscript to his home in Palmyra, New York. He was under covenant, however, to limit access to the manuscript to those of his immediate family. He was not faithful to that covenant, becoming careless with the invaluable writings. The manuscript disappeared, much to the consternation of Joseph and his family. Moroni retrieved Mormon’s plates together with the Urim and Thummim and the young prophet was left desolate for a time. On 22 September 1828, Moroni returned the Nephite artifacts to Joseph with specific instructions as to how he should proceed. The manuscript did not resurface and the reasons for its disappearance were made clear through revelation. Little translation was accomplished during the following six months, save for sixteen pages when Emma was available to act as Joseph’s scribe. Substantial aid arrived on 5 April 1829 in the person of Oliver Cowdery who would write for Joseph during the remainder of the translation process. Beginning on 7 April 1829, Joseph and Oliver commenced the narrative probably beginning with the first verse of Mosiah 9 (see 7.0.2). By 15 May 1829, the pair had arrived at the end of what we now have as 3 Nephi, a passage of which led them to inquire of the Lord regarding the ordinance of baptism. Following our rule of thumb of 6.3 pages of translation per day (see 7.0.3), Joseph and Oliver would have completed Moroni Chapter 10 sometime around 26 May 1829. By this time, Oliver surely would have been fully aware of what had happened to the manuscript lost by his predecessor. The question then was how to proceed. While it is clear that Joseph had been instructed to resort to the Small Plates of Nephi in order to replace the missing portion of Mormon’s narrative, he apparently had not written that fact down in any detail. When Oliver asked about the course
they were going to take, the formal edict was then dictated and recorded. Thus, though the instructions were originally received during the summer of 1828, the revelation as we have it was not written down until late May 1829. The result of these historical events is that both dates have appeared in the head notes in the various editions of the Doctrine and Covenants. This section appeared as Chapter IX in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 36 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

10.1 Although this revelation was not formally written down until May of 1829, the text is worded as it had originally been given to the prophet; that is to say, in the tense and aspect that would have applied only a short time after the loss of the 116 pages of manuscript. There is no doubt that there was an elaborate conspiracy afoot to discredit the prophet and the work that he was attempting to bring forth.

10.1.28–30—Urим and Thummim—This is the first of five instances in the present edition of the Doctrine and Covenants where this phrase appears. The Urим and Thummim were prepared for the use of various prophets in order to reveal the will and word of the Lord, particularly in matters of linguistic difficulty. At the time Joseph Smith received these seer stones they were attached to a metal breastplate, a piece of armor worn by Mormon and the Moroni during the final era of the Nephite nation. The stones were set in a bow of fine metal, which in turn was connected to the breastplate by a hinged rod. It is clear that there was a fabricated compartment in the breastplate into which the stones could be placed when not in use. The breastplate with the Urим and Thummim accompanied the plates of Mormon in the small depository which had been prepared for them. During the translation process, Joseph wore the breastplate in order to keep his hands free, the Urим and Thummim being positioned over the plates and characters being translated at the time.

10.1.36–37—wicked man—We are not privy to all those who were involved in the theft of the manuscript of the book of Lehi and the first part of the book of Mosiah, but certainly both Joseph Smith and Martin Harris were instrumental in the loss of the 166 pages. Lucy Harris was certainly part of the conspiracy and no doubt there were others. Most scholars and historians have settled upon Martin Harris as the wicked man being referred to here, yet there is undoubtedly another individual who fostered the plot to destroy the prophet and his work early in his ministry.

10.2 When the realization came that Martin had betrayed Joseph’s trust and that the manuscript had fallen into the hands of the wicked, Joseph Smith’s inspiration departed for a time. Simply put, the power and influence of the Holy Ghost that had sustained him through every trouble up to that point withdrew, leaving him alone and miserable. The Lord would refer the prophet and others to that period of despondency with regard to his own suffering in the garden of Gethsemane at the time that the atoning sacrifice was being performed in behalf of the children of men (see 19.10). Eventually Joseph was forgiven and the blessings of the Spirit of God were restored.

10.3 We are not privy as to exactly how long Joseph was bereft of his gifts. He had last seen the manuscript in 14 June 1828 when Martin Harris had departed for his own home. The displeasure of the Lord in Joseph’s repeated requests was manifested by the angel Moroni retrieving the plates and the seer stones which would not be completely entrusted to him again until September
1828. The full weight and measure of his error did not descend upon him until he made the trip from Harmony, Pennsylvania, to Palmyra, New York, to find out what the disposition of Martin and the manuscript was. The news was horrifying to everyone concerned. At that same time, in July 1828, Joseph was given the Urim and Thummim by the angel Moroni just long enough to receive the revelation which is now known as Section 3, in which he was severely chastised for his unwise persistence and disobedience. Although Joseph would not have immediate access to the plates and the seer stones until late September 1828, it seems certain the power and influence of the Spirit of God was restored prior to that time, perhaps within a few weeks.

10.4 The prophet Joseph certainly took the Lord at his word. In terms of the translation process is concerned, Joseph would not even have access to the equipment necessary to continue with the translation until 22 September 1828. Little or no translation took place until after the beginning of 1829, when Emma acted as his scribe for a little while. Not until the arrival of Oliver Cowdery did Joseph have sufficient “strength” and “means” to continue the translation of the Book of Mormon.

10.4.11—strength—We are not certain as to how the episode affected Joseph Smith physically, but some sort of debilitation must have taken place. The Lord makes reference to Joseph’s lack of strength in his revelation to Oliver in April 1829 (see 9.12). The lack of spiritual strength that came upon Joseph because of the fiasco with the 116 pages of manuscript also would have profoundly hindered the translation process.

10.4.13—means—Certainly this would have reference to his time and provisions. His wife had suffered a miscarriage. He had spent some time away from home during which their commodities would have diminished considerably. When the translation resumed, he would once again be committed to the task for an extended period of time. All of the practical necessities would have to be in store in order for him to be able to afford the time and effort. Additionally, he would have great need of another scribe who could devote an enormous amount of time to the ongoing project. That specific means would not arrive until April 1829 in the person of Oliver Cowdery.

10.5 Constant communication with the Lord God of Israel would be necessary if Joseph were to be able to accomplish the task that had been placed before him. We can know nothing of the efforts of our enemies to destroy us if we do not hearken to the voice of the Lord in these matters. Joseph had essentially ignored the counsel of the Lord in the affair with the 116 pages of the manuscript of the Book of Mormon and, as a result, the adversary had been able to compromise the work and set it back several months. If Joseph were to eventually succeed he would need to be diligent in seeking proper counsel from Him who knows all things.

10.5.14—Satan—Let no one doubt that there is an intelligent entity, a wicked personality, that is determined to oppose the Father and the Son in all of their dealings with the children of men. Satan loves no man, even those who are in his service. There is no compassion or mercy to be found in him; he will destroy anyone who is not diligent and vigilant.

10.5.24—servants—These are men and fallen spirits who partake of the same anger and cynicism as their master.

10.6 Marin Harris would eventually pass through a time of increased faith and arduous repentance, by which he would be received back into the company of have begun.

4 Do not run faster or labor more than you have strength and means provided to enable you to translate; but be diligent unto the end. D&C 10:4
DS 3 215
TSWK 401
EM 4:1587

5 Pray always, that you may come off conqueror; yea, that you may conquer Satan, and that you may escape the hands of the servants of Satan that do uphold his work. D&C 10:5
MD 582
D&C 10:5–6
FPM 206

6 Behold, they have sought to destroy you; yea, even the man in
the saints with open arms. But for a time, he served Lucifer in the latter’s plan
to completely destroy the influence of the prophet. That there was a wicked
conspiracy devised against the coming forth of the Book of Mormon we can-
not doubt. How much of the nefarious details of the plot was made clear to
Martin Harris? We do not know, but there was something in his overall
attitude that made him susceptible to the temptations of the wicked one and
the machinations of his wife and her accomplices.

10.6.11—man—An obvious reference to Martin Harris.

10.6.20—destroy—This is an undeniable indictment against Martin
Harris. One wonders as to Martin’s motivation for doing so.

10.7 Again, at the heart of the Lord’s condemnation are the motives that
guided Martin in his betrayal of the prophet.

10.7.21—things—There is no question that Martin Harris deprived the
prophet Joseph of the 116 pages of manuscript. Were there other pos-
sessions that Martin coveted as well? Would Martin have gained no-
toriety and fame if he had acquired the plates any of the other Nephite
artifacts that had been entrusted to Joseph Smith? One wonders at the
possible motivations that brought Martin Harris to Harmony, Pennsyl-
vania, in March of 1829 (see 5.1–3).

10.7.33—destroy—We may rightly wonder as to how Martin thought to
disrupt the translation process by the prophet Joseph Smith and to
what end. We may suppose that there was something to be gained for
having done so, yet we are at a loss to directly identify what it would
have been.

10.8 We are hard pressed to name those men who conspired with Lucy Harris,
Martin’s wife, to corrupt the text of the 116 pages of the Book of Mormon
manuscript in order to provide evidence of the prophet’s supposed fraud. Mrs.
Harris had at one time successfully enlisted the help of a young man by the
name of Dikes to help her destroy her husband’s confidence in the prophet
when Martin was preparing to make his way to New York City with the
characters Joseph had copied out from the plates for him. We do not know
whether he had any further involvement in the plot. The anger and fear of
Mrs. Harris were so great that she was willing to engage in just about any kind
of clandestine activity to disassociate her husband from the work of the Lord.

10.9 The book of Lehi and the first portion of the book of Mosiah, that which
was contained on the 116 pages of manuscript that was lost, were no less
valuable than any other portion of the Book of Mormon that is presently
published. That lost narrative was composed by the prophet Mormon and had
been approved by the Spirit of God in that ancient prophet’s heart and mind.
Its loss has been and ever will be a tragedy until it is restored.

10.10 This aspect of the plot against Joseph Smith and the coming forth of
the Book of Mormon is nefarious, based on a misunderstanding of the revela-
tory process or at least a misconstruing of it. The fundamental assumption
held by those involved in the plot was that when the Lord speaks through His
servant, the prophet has no involvement in the process. That is to say, they
were of the opinion that the Lord puts the very English words which the
prophet is to speak upon his lips. Unfortunately, they were not alone in their
misrepresentation of the manner in which the Father and the Son inspire their
servants; almost all of those who professed a belief in the word of God
perceived the act of revelation to be something like unto it. The truth of the
matter is, of course, that while the Lord does have a great influence over the

whom you have trusted has sought to destroy you.

7 And for this cause I said that he
is a wicked man, for he has sought
to take away the things wherewith
you have been entrusted; and he
has also sought to destroy your gift.

8 And because you have delivered
the writings into his hands, behold,
wicked men have taken them from
you.

9 Therefore, you have delivered
them up, yea, that which was
sacred, unto wickedness.

10 And, behold, Satan hath put it
into their hearts to alter the words
which you have caused to be writ-
ten, or which you have translated,
which have gone out of your hands.

D&C 10:9–13
EM 2:855

85
mind and heart of those who receive revelation, much of the process is provided by the prophet himself. The general wording, the general flow of the text is an expression of the thoughts and concepts that are to be revealed, as reflected in the mind and heart of the man thus inspired. The refinement of the exact wording is aided by the gifts of the Spirit, but again according to the frame of mind of the prophet at that particular moment in time. In all of this, the language and thinking processes of the prophet are engaged. Would this mean that if the same revelation were present through two different men, equally authorized by God the Father to represent Him, that the wording of the revelation would differ somewhat? That would exactly be the case. The prophet Joseph’s adversaries in Palmyra were utterly devoid in experiences in these matters and thus sought to prove Joseph in an untenable way.

10.10.11—alter—One is forced to admit the possibility that Martin Harris was somehow involved in this ploy. The manuscript was, after all, in his handwriting. There is, however, the distinct possibility that Lucy Harris or one of the other conspirators had learned to forge Martin’s hand.

10.11 In the natural course of events, Joseph could have translated the book of Lehi again. One wonders if the wording of the second translation would have been exactly the same; that certainly would have been within the power of God. The conspirators were quite confident that the wording would be the same and for that reason changed the writing in the original 116 pages. This was a black and wicked deed. The fact of the matter was, however, that if Joseph had returned to the beginning of Mormon’s collection of plates, his translation would have differed on its own, in part because his experiences would have improved his abilities as a prophet, seer, and revelator in every way; the base from which he operated as a servant of God would have changed; it would have improved considerably. This would not have made the resultant narrative more true; it probably would have simply been more aesthetically pleasing than the original. Rather than have the pundits dither over the differences, whether aesthetic, lexographic, or grammatical, the Lord obviated the whole problem by telling Joseph not to return to the book of Lehi, but to resume at the place where he and Martin had left off in the book of Mosiah. This is precisely what Joseph did when he began translating with Emma as his scribe. The Lord further told Joseph that there were other sources on the plates that could substitute for Mormon’s original narrative.

10.12 No matter what would have happened with the retranslation of the book of Lehi, the enemies of the prophet would have brought forth the 116 pages of the first manuscript to “prove” that Joseph was a complete fraud. This would have serious jeopardized the promulgation of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ among the honest in heart, the establishment of the Church and Kingdom of God, and the preparation of a righteous people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming in glory. Satan’s desire to foil the Father in the redemption of His children lay at the heart of the entire conspiracy.

10.13 In the mind and heart of Lucy Harris, and in the hearts and minds of her co-conspirators, the end of Joseph’s influence upon the lives of Martin Harris and the other residents in the vicinity justified any means whatsoever. And thus have the wicked persecuted and tormented the righteous from the days of Adam and Eve. No amount of prevarication and defamation of character is too much in their estimation.

10.14 Lucifer would be foiled in this particular plot, but this happenstance

11 And behold, I say unto you, that because they have altered the words, they read contrary from that which you translated and caused to be written;

12 And, on this wise, the devil has sought to lay a cunning plan, that he may destroy this work;

13 For he hath put into their hearts to do this, that by lying they may say they have caught you in the words which you have pretended to translate.

14 Verily, I say unto you, that I
would not diminish his fervor in persecuting the humble disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. The plan would not succeed, even though there have been others who would insinuate and plot against the reputation of the prophet and Book of Mormon in similar ways as this original, but they have all fallen back into the dust from whence they came.

10.15 In their suppositions, the wicked men and women engaged in the plot against Joseph Smith concluded that they would emerge triumphant and would thereby gain the honor and glory of the world for having done so. They did not know, of course, that a contingency had been established centuries before when the prophet Mormon had been inspired to physically include the Small Plates of Nephi with the plates that he had fashioned for his own book.

10.16 It would be almost unimaginable that Lucy Harris and her co-conspirators would not have known about the tremendous distress that had come upon the prophet and his family when the 116 pages of the Book of Mormon manuscript had gone missing. It is clear as well, that at least one of the cabal knew from some source that the Urim and Thummim, together with the plates, had been retrieved from Joseph by the angel Moroni. No doubt they also were aware that the gift of translation, the power and influence of the Holy Ghost had been withdrawn from Joseph Smith. There seems to have been a question in their minds as to whether or not Joseph would ever recover the gifts that he once had, and whether the Lord would employ him again as a prophet, seer, and revelator.

10.17 These are certainly evilly disposed people who have arrayed themselves against the prophet Joseph Smith. No matter how the prophet were to proceed, no matter how exciting the second translation might have been, they were prepared to destroy the work of the Lord through deliberate falsehoods of every kind. There is no desire for truth here, just an unrelenting pursuit of a servant of God.

10.18 It is hard for us, perhaps, to imagine how such a body of men and women arrived at such a despicable state of mind and heart. Ostensibly, these were Christian disciples, yet their hearts had become corrupted by the enemy of all mankind, filled with hatred and anger. In their conspiracy they were willing to lie and manipulate evidence in order to destroy the object of their hostility.

10.19 The coming forth of the Book of Mormon in conjunction with the account of the First Vision given by the prophet Joseph Smith had unnerved vast numbers of people who were content to live out their Telestial lives in relative peace and security, notwithstanding the great calamities which had been prophesied about the latter days. The revelations given through the prophet anticipated a great change, from a Telestial world to a Terrestrial one. The children of men would be required to change as well, if they wished to continue their residency in mortality upon this earth. Lucy Harris and her co-conspirators were unsettled, as if they were being awakened from a deep slumber in which they wished to continue. Therefore, they were willing to lash out at the brightening light that Joseph Smith represented. Great personal sorrow would ultimately accompany their opposition.

10.20 We may only speculate about the sort of life style that these men and women were living to make them susceptible to the enticements and influence of the devil. A good man is not instantly set upon by Satan and rendered into

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<th>D&amp;C 10:20–23</th>
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<td>15 For behold, he has put it into their hearts to get thee to tempt the Lord thy God, in asking to translate it over again.</td>
<td>16 And then, behold, they say and think in their hearts—We will see if God has given him power to translate; if so, he will also give him power again;</td>
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<td>17 And if God giveth him power again, or if he translates again, or, in other words, if he bringeth forth the same words, behold, we have the same with us, and we have altered them;</td>
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<td>18 Therefore they will not agree, and we will say that he has lied in his words, and that he has no gift, and that he has no power;</td>
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<td>19 Therefore we will destroy him, and also the work; and we will do this that we may not be ashamed in the end, and that we may get glory of the world.</td>
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<td>20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, that Satan has great hold upon their hearts; he stirreth them up to</td>
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eternal servitude. He is led carefully away from the principles of truth and light, becoming more and more benighted and confounded until he finds himself doing what was once thought to be unthinkable evil.

10.21 Satan teaches a man that he should not pray. If a man hearkens to that voice it will not be long before he is able to think in no other terms than that of the natural man. He will love himself to excess, engaging in one vice after another until he is completely enthralled by evil. The light of truth exposes the self-righteous and the self-absorbed; they cannot bear the revelation, seeking either to deliberately close their eyes or to extinguish the source of the divine illumination. Thus the wickedness of Lucy Harris and her cohorts.

10.22 There is no love, no natural affection expressed between the devil and his subjects. There is only the lust for unrighteous dominion, a sadistic desire to inflict eternal pain on those who would not join his cause when he first rebelled against the powers of Heaven.

10.23 The plan to destroy the prophet Joseph Smith would ultimately fail. The conspirators would be frustrated by the Lord’s solution to what they thought was an irresolvable conundrum. Eventually, the men and women involved in the plot would drift away from the mainstream of the history of the Church and Kingdom of God. The 116 pages of manuscript that was pilfered from the belongings of Martin Harris would likewise disappear. If it survives, it would prove to be of little worth inasmuch as the narrative has already been tampered with. One day, perhaps, that portion of the book that Mormon wrote will be restored, much to the joy of the saints. Those who pertained to the secret combination proposed by Lucy Harris, however, will one day stand before the judgment bar of Christ where their perfidy will be exposed to all of the world.

10.24 The anger of Satan stands in direct opposition to the love of God, as is profoundly represented in Lehi’s vision of the Tree of Life; the fountain of living waters is in direct contrast with the fountain of filthy waters (see 1 NE-C 11.25 and 1 NE-C 12.14–16).

10.25 This has been the hue and cry of the devil since the beginning of time. Satan and his minions have slandered the children of men in every generation. A man may choose to cheat his fellow men, because he thinks that if given the opportunity, those men would likewise cheat and defraud him. The fact of the matter is that most men would willingly live in a society based on mutual trust rather than in a society where every man is prepared to feast upon the flesh of his neighbor. Most men would rather not live in the bestial Telestial world. Good men everywhere desire the utopia that is promised those who will dwell in the Kingdom of God. Satan is the instigator and perpetuator of all of the cynicism and mistrust that fills the hearts of those without faith in Jesus Christ.

10.26 Satan is father of wittiness over kindness. He fosters cleverness over humility. He inspires revenge over forgiveness. His flattery is encapsulated in his dictum that there is no such thing as the devil and no such thing as sin. Everyone is okay just the way they are; there is no cry for improvement or progression of any kind. We are snared by doing absolutely nothing. Our condemnation will be that we laid down in the traces and would pull no more.

10.27 Satan will one day be cast out from the society of mortal men, but that
has not happened yet in a general way. His immediate influence dwindles and men and women individually choose to walk uprightly before the face of God. He has enormous influence over those who chose the pleasures of the flesh over the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

10.28 Morality is not relative. We cannot justify immoral conduct because of the conduct of others like ourselves. The earth and all who dwell upon it are accountable to the God of Heaven who is the purveyor of all truth, absolute truth, things as they really are. Since the parameters for exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom have been established by the mind and will of God, no amount of rationalization or finger pointing will suffice to excuse any man or woman from the punishment that befalls them for their infractions against the law of God.

10.29 Lucy Harris and her associates had justified their own lies because they had come to believe that everything that Joseph Smith had said from the beginning had been a lie. None of these men and women ever sought to inquire of the Lord God of Israel whether or not the Father and the Son appeared to the boy prophet. None of them sought the Father of all to know if Joseph had been visited by the angel Moroni or had the plates and the translators in his possession. In their deliberate ignorance, then, they and others like them hounded Joseph Smith incessantly until he finally fell to their machinations at the Carthage jail in June of 1844. There are those living at this very hour who are of the same mind.

10.30 Here then is the direct command given to the prophet Joseph Smith as to how he should proceed from this point forward. Joseph was not to resort to the plates that he had already translated; that is to say, he was not to retranslate the book of Lehi and the first portion of the book of Mosiah.

10.30.12–13—those words—That is to say, the material that had been written upon the 116 pages of manuscript taken and lost by Martin Harris.

10.31 We are not in a position to determine exactly how radically the satanic cabal had changed the nature of the written text, but it is clear that substantive manipulations of the narrative had taken place, so much so that it could have been said that Joseph Smith had contradicted himself had he reproduced the translation again. As we have observed before, it was certainly within the realm of possibility that Joseph could have brought forth the lost portion, word for word, just as it had been upon the 116 pages of Martin Harris’ manuscript. The conspirators had counted on that. If there were natural differences in vocabulary and syntax, so much the better. The sole object of the exercise was to discredit Joseph and the Book of Mormon at any cost.

10.32 As it is, every idle thought that could be brought to bear against the narrative and doctrine of the Book of Mormon has been leveled at them by the evilly disposed of this dispensation. Let the arguments be as illogical as they may, there have been those who have perpetuated and believed them in a vain attempt to prevent the honest in heart from holding fast to the truths of eternity. This enormous lie, concocted even before the book had been brought to light, would prove to be too much of a deterrent. Therefore, the Lord summarily destroyed their plot.

10.33 The devil’s goal was to undermine the whole effort to bring forth the Church and Kingdom of God. He desired that there would be no man prepared to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his second coming, that the whole

down, to and fro in the earth, seeking to destroy the souls of men.

28 Verily, verily, I say unto you, wo be unto him that lieth to deceive because he supposeth that another lieth to deceive, for such are not exempt from the justice of God.

29 Now, behold, they have altered these words, because Satan saith unto them: He hath deceived you—and thus he flattereth them away to do iniquity, to get thee to tempt the Lord thy God.

30 Behold, I say unto you, that you shall not translate again those words which have gone forth out of your hands;

31 For, behold, they shall not accomplish their evil designs in lying against those words. For, behold, if you should bring forth the same words they will say that you have lied and that you have pretended to translate, but that you have contradicted yourself.

32 And, behold, they will publish this, and Satan will harden the hearts of the people to stir them up to anger against you, that they will not believe my words.

33 Thus Satan thinketh to overpower your testimony in this generation, that the work may not come

MD 192
EM 1:379
D&C 10:30–46
D&C 10:31
DN TC 1 122
D&C 10:33
CR01-O 48

earth might be utterly wasted at his coming. If he had been successful, Satan would have effectively destroyed all those who had sided with the Father and the Son in the beginning when he was frustrated in his attempt to usurp the throne of God.

10.34 This may be the very reason why Joseph did not write down this revelation when it was originally given in the summer of 1828. The enemies of the prophet waited for the time that the new translation would come forth, not knowing that it would never see the light of day. Had they known the response of the Lord to their plotting, they might have actively engaged themselves in other ploys to destroy Joseph Smith. As it was, they waited upon the fruition of what they thought to be their infallible plan. Thus, Section 10 was not formally written down until the translation of the Book of Mormon was almost complete, just as Joseph and Oliver were commencing to translate the Small Plates of Nephi.

10.35 Joseph had not been particularly insightful in the past regarding those to whom he had expressed confidence. The Lord recommends attending to His counsel that Joseph might survive to do all that the Father had given him to do. Keeping the enemies of the work at bay would be best accomplished by not revealing the course of action that the Lord had taken. It should not surprise us that Joseph did not reveal to Oliver Cowdery anything of that which was to happen to correct the problem with the missing portion of Nephite history until the latter part of May 1829. He was merely being obedient.

10.36 Obviously there would have been a conundrum otherwise. Oliver was decidedly no longer part of the world, but a man willing to work righteousness in the name of Jesus Christ. He would keep the confidences of the Lord until the Book of Mormon appeared in the bookstore of E.B. Grandin in March of 1830. The disappointment of the cabal must have been profound when they could find nothing between the covers of the book by which they could discredit the prophet Joseph Smith.

10.37 The Lord’s mild rebuke of Joseph’s past choices was not lost on the prophet. Not only had the prophet misjudged the character and motives of Martin Harris at a critical time in the history of the Restoration, he had chosen to share his experiences with those outside of his immediate family who had not responded well to the notion that modern revelation from God was an option. Hence, the counsel that Joseph was given in the summer of 1828 and observed to do until May of 1829. Even then, it is likely that Emma was the only other person who might have been privy to that which Joseph was supposed to do with regard to the Small Plates of Nephi.

10.38 The Small Plates of Nephi had been physically attached to the plates upon which Mormon was engraving his own account of the Nephite people.

10.38.12–13—those thingsthat is to say, the book of Lehi and the first part of the book of Mosiah that had been translated and transcribe upon the 116 pages of manuscript that Martin Harris lost.

10.38.31—NephiThere were, in the archives of the Nephite people, two sets of plates which were originated by Nephi the son of Lehi. The first set contained a detailed history of the affairs of the Nephites that eventually became enormous in content and volume, aptly named the Large Plates of Nephi. These probably would have constituted many wagonloads of plates, covering as they did nearly one thousand years of forth in this generation.

34 But behold, here is wisdom, and because I show unto you wis-

dom, and give you commandments concerning these things, what you shall do, show it not unto the world until you have accomplished the work of translation.

35 Marvel not that I said unto you: Here is wisdom, show it not unto the world—for I said, show it not unto the world, that you may be preserved.

36 Behold, I do not say that you shall not show it unto the righteous;

37 But as you cannot always judge the righteous, or as you cannot always tell the wicked from the righteous, therefore I say unto you, hold your peace until I shall see fit to make all things known unto the world concerning the matter.

38 And now, verily I say unto you, that an account of those things that you have written, which have gone out of your hands, is engraved upon the plates of Nephi;
history. It was to the Large Plates of Nephi that Mormon originally resorted when he began to compile his work that would eventually come to be known as the Book of Mormon. Several years after Nephi had initiated the Large Plates of Nephi, he was commanded by the Lord God of Israel to fabricate another set of plates that would confine itself to the more spiritual aspects of the Nephite culture of his day. This record was supplemented by the writings of other chosen men for about 400 years, at which time the last of these writers turned the Small Plates of Nephi over to the curator of the entire archive of Nephite records. There they remained until in his research, Mormon discovered them in the general collection. He was so impressed by the things which he read there that he physically included that small collection of plates with his own record, as a kind of appendix. As it turned out, the historical narrative of the Small Plates of Nephi almost covered the entire part of Mormon’s own work that had been lost in the 116 pages of the initial translation of the Book of Mormon. It is to the Small Plates of Nephi that the Lord is referring in this verse.

10.39 As Joseph and Martin had been translating the book of Lehi and the first part of the book of Mosiah, they read of and recorded Mormon’s experiences with the Small Plates of Nephi. Even though Joseph did not have the 116 pages in front of him, he did remember Mormon’s notation. He undoubtedly made note of the Small Plates of Nephi in the collection that he held in his hands as the translation progressed. At that point he had received no instructions regarding their future translation and publication.

10.39–10—those writings—That is to say, Mormon had mentioned the Small Plates of Nephi as some point in the material that had been recorded upon the 116 pages. This insertion had taken place about the time that Mormon had discovered Nephi’s work among all of the other plates.

10.39.25—Nephi—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

10.40 We do not know what would have happened if Martin Harris would have remained faithful to his covenants regarding the 116 pages of the Book of Mormon manuscript. We might speculate that the rest of the translation would have continued as had been anticipated in an uninterrupted fashion, the main text of the Book of Mormon being finished in the summer of 1828, rather than the following year. It seems clear, however, that at some point the Lord would have required Joseph Smith and his companions to translate the Small Plates of Nephi as well, given the sentiments recorded here.

10.40.13—Nephi—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

10.41 After Joseph and Oliver completed the last of the book of Moroni, they then turned their attention to the Small Plates of Nephi, beginning with the First Book of Nephi. They pursued their labors until they came to the last plate in the collection upon which was recorded the Words of Mormon, a passage that explained in some detail the relationship between the Small Plates

39 Yea, and you remember it was said in those writings that a more particular account was given of these things upon the plates of Nephi.

40 And now, because the account which is engraved upon the plates of Nephi is more particular concerning the things which, in my wisdom, I would bring to the knowledge of the people in this account—

41 Therefore, you shall translate the engravings which are on the plates of Nephi, down even till you come to the reign of king Benjamin, or until you come to that
of Nephi and the plates that Mormon himself had fashioned for his own record. Thus, Mormon made the final connections between the writings of Amaleki in the book of Omni and his own labors on the history of the three righteous kings of the land of Zarahemla, Mosiah 1, Benjamin, and Mosiah 2.

10.41.13—Nephi—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

10.41.24—Benjamin—The son of Mosiah I and the father of Mosiah II. He was the second righteous Nephite king of the land of Zarahemla.

10.42 The record of Nephi referred to here would be published in several sections with the names 1 Nephi, 2 Nephi, Jacob, Enos, Jarom, Omni, and the Words of Mormon, all of the narrative having been identified as having been translated from the Small Plates of Nephi. Needless to say, the efforts of Lucy Harris and her cohorts to destroy Joseph Smith’s righteous influence in the world came to naught.

10.42.11—Nephi—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

10.43 The devil does not and cannot know the mind of God. Therefore, all of his efforts to destroy the work of God ultimately advance the whole Church and Kingdom of God. We do not know at this point exactly what the reaction of this nefarious cabal was when the Book of Mormon finally appeared in print, but they must have been vastly disappointed. One wonders if any of the participants in the conspiracy other than Martin Harris every fully repented of their wickedness.

10.44 The historical material included in the Small Plates of Nephi had also been inscribed upon the Large Plates of Nephi in far more secular detail. Mormon had extrapolated his book of Lehi from the Large Plates. Thus, Mormon’s account of the spiritual life of the Nephites during the first four hundred years of their existence had been abridged from a record that was primarily secular in its orientation. The Small Plates of Nephi had been desirable in Mormon’s eyes because they were far more explicit in recounting the spiritual aspects of their society.

10.44.15—Nephi—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

10.45 Anyone who has perused the writings of Nephi and his brother Jacob cannot help but be impressed by their grasp on the principles of eternal life and exaltation. These were men who were as familiar with the workings of the Spirit of God as any men who ever lived upon the earth. Jacob was well acquainted with the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ as if he had lived in the days of the Savior. The brother contributed wonderful citations taken from the Brass Plates that preserved for us the writings of hitherto unknown prophets, seers, and revelators who had served the House of Israel long before Lehi and his family left Jerusalem.

which you have translated, which you have retained;

42 And behold, you shall publish it as the record of Nephi; and thus I will confound those who have altered my words.

43 I will not suffer that they shall destroy my work; yea, I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.

44 Behold, they have only got a part, or an abridgment of the account of Nephi.

45 Behold, there are many things engraven upon the plates of Nephi which do throw greater views upon my gospel; therefore, it is wisdom in me that you should translate this first part of the engravings of Nephi, and send forth in this work.
10.45.11—Nephi—That is to say, the Small Plates of Nephi.
10.45.31–32—first part—We may be assured that Joseph and Oliver translated all of the engravings made upon the Small Plates of Nephi, including all of the words which Mormon appended to the record. The Small Plates of Nephi, however, would serve as the “first part” of the published Book of Mormon in the absence of the book of Lehi.

10.46 There is no other ancient book available to the children of men that is as explicit regarding the fullness of the Gospel of Christ, the principles of eternal life and salvation.

10.46.5—remainder—that is to say, the part that Joseph, Emma, and Oliver had translated from Mosiah through Moroni.
10.46.20—prophets—Specifically referring to Lehi and his sons, their righteous children, and many others who served the Nephites and the Lamanites during their long history.
10.46.25—disciples—The Lord could be referring to any and all of those who became his sons and daughters through the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but it is most likely that he is referring to the Twelve Disciples that he chose when he visited the Nephites at the temple in the city of Bountiful shortly after his resurrection from the dead.

10.47 We may easily point to Lehi (see 1 NE-C 1.11–14), Enos (see EN-C 1.15–17), and Mormon (3 NE-C 5.14–18) as being among those who were desirous that an account of their dealings with the God of Heaven might come forth in the latter days to be a benefit to their posterity and the posterity of their brethren.

10.48 One of the most extraordinary elements of the faith of the ancient Nephites was their compassion for those who would be born many generations after their own mortal ministries had come to an end. They felt deep concern not only for the welfare of their own children, but those of their enemies as well. As the Gospel and the Church of Christ began to unfold in this present dispensation, the Lord and His servants went to great lengths to fulfill the promises made to the ancient inhabitants of this hemisphere. In the fall of 1830, Oliver Cowdery would lead the first formal mission of the Church of Jesus Christ throughout the midwest and into the Unorganized Indian Territory west of the state of Missouri in order to initiate the beginnings of the fulfillment of the covenants made with the Nephite prophets. Thus was the Book of Mormon first introduced among the native Americans of this land.

10.48.28—Lamanites—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

10.49 Nephi the son of Lehi, as he partook of the vision of the Tree of Life, was shown the latter days in which the Gentiles who would come to the promised land of the children of Lehi, would become beneficiaries of the restoration of the Gospel intended for the posterity of the Nephites and the Lamanites (see 1 NE-C 13.32–38). Others of the prophets of God expressed similar observations and sentiments that this would all transpire according to the mind and will of the Father and the Son.

10.50 The servants of God who dwelt in this hemisphere anciently felt a deep

46 And, behold, all the remainder of this work does contain all those parts of my gospel which my holy prophets, yea, and also my disciples, desired in their prayers should come forth unto this people.

47 And I said unto them, that it should be granted unto them according to their faith in their prayers;

48 Yea, and this was their faith—that my gospel, which I gave unto them that they might preach in their days, might come unto their brethren the Lamanites, and also all that had become Lamanites because of their dissensions.

49 Now, this is not all—their faith in their prayers was that this gospel should be made known also, if it were possible that other nations should possess this land;

50 And thus they did leave a
compassion toward their own posterity and the posterity of their brethren, even though hundreds of years separated the generations into which they were born. In this thing they were blessed with divine sight, seeing the children of men as the Father and the Son see them. For the Nephite prophets, the children of men of the latter days just prior to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ were not part of a faceless mass of humanity. They perceived them as individual souls who had need of the principles of righteousness, the ordinances of salvation, and the faith to bring them into the presence of God without spot or stain. This may seem a bit overwhelming to those of us who live in this present dispensation, but we also must needs took to the future, a time when the fullness of the Gospel of Christ might find root in the hearts of hundreds of millions of the children of God that the great work of the ministry might be conducted in behalf of the living and the dead in every corner of the world.

10.51 We should understand that there will come a time when the fullness of the Gospel will be preached in all of the world, and that the inhabitants of the earth will be granted their moral agency to either accept or reject the principles and ordinances presented to them. We may momentarily blanch at the scope of the task, but so it will be, for the Lord God of Israel has decreed it.

10.52 The coming forth of the Book of Mormon is not destined to destroy the influence of the Bible among the children of men, but rather the reverse. The only aspects of Biblical scholarship that will be endangered by the truths contained in the Nephite record will be the false traditions and misinterpretations made and promulgated by uninspired men. The honest in heart have nothing to fear from the words of the Father and the Son, no matter where they may be found. They are all part of the perfect truth that defines eternity and should be embraced wholeheartedly. This is a reprise of the Lord’s testimony given to the prophet earlier (see 3.16–20).

10.53 This is an echo of the Lord’s counsel to Joseph Smith and Martin Harris given some two months before (see 5.14–19).

10.53.7—said—As an aside, we may speak with assurance that the current text of Section 10 was written down after March 1829 and not during the summer of 1828 as some suppose, inasmuch as the Lord is directly referring to the text of Section 5 here in this verse.

10.54 There are those who look upon the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the emergence of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as a threat to Christianity. This has not nor ever will be the case. Those who believe and live the truth are candidates for membership in the Church and Kingdom of God and may, if they continue faithful and true to that which they know is right, partake of the divine nature and enter into Heaven as exalted children of God, heirs of eternal life.

10.54.9–10—my church—The Church of Christ is of divine origin. Nothing that pertains to truth and light can be destroyed. The philosophies of men and the doctrines of devils, however, will perish in the light of Celestial day.

10.55 Is there a difference between the Church of Jesus Christ and those churches established by the children of men in imitation of that which pertains to the Savior? Certainly. The one infuses the minds and hearts of its membership with light and truth by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. Within its pale there is joy, peace, and comfort in the midst of a lost blessing upon this land in their prayers, that whosoever should believe in this gospel in this land might have eternal life;

51 Yea, that it might be free unto all of whatsoever nation, kindred, tongue, or people they may be.

52 And now, behold, according to their faith in their prayers will I bring this part of my gospel to the knowledge of my people. Behold, I do not bring it to destroy that which they have received, but to build it up.

53 And for this cause have I said: If this generation harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them.

54 Now I do not say this to destroy my church, but I say this to build up my church;

55 Therefore, whosoever belongeth to my church need not fear, for such shall inherit the kingdom of heaven.

D&C 10:55
AF 215
MD 134
MD 417
and fallen world. The other may have a form of godliness, but there is no power to save, no power to lift, no power to instill the fullness of eternal life into the lives of its adherents.

10.56 The honest in heart among the children of men desire light and truth, the brighter and clearer that light the better. They diligently seek for that which will give them rest in their lost and fallen condition. The world is not entirely devoid of truth; it may be found in almost every earthly realm and endeavor. The honest in heart are often attracted to these fragments of truth, desiring to be provided with more. Seldom do they find the satisfaction that they are seeking because in almost every instance there is only a portion, only an incomplete representation of the whole. The Lord in His mercy, has brought forth the fullness of truth and has incorporated it within the formal organization which is His Church and Kingdom upon the earth. Is it any wonder at all that those who have been seeking for the fullness of the light for all of their lives will forsake all else in order to possess it? Should we be surprised when those whose motives are less than divine are filled with anger when those who were attracted by what little light they once provided embrace the fullness? Not all those who profess Christianity are filled with Christian strength. Not all those who attempt to rally the faithful to their banners are equipped to do battle against the efforts of the adversary to destroy the children of God.

10.57 This constitutes a reprise of that which they Lord had spoken to Joseph and Oliver earlier (see 6.21). The circumstances that existed in the days of Jesus' mortal ministry had not changed much. The Savior successfully taught the fullness of the Gospel to those who were spiritually inclined, but he was not universally acclaimed as the promised Messiah. In fact, those who most ardently professed to be the practitioners of the faith of the God of Israel became those who most fervently opposed Him. Joseph is warned that little would be forthcoming from those who were likeminded to the Sadducees and Pharisees of his day.

10.58 Light and truth are irritants for those who have accustomed themselves to the darkness of this lost and fallen world. When the Savior appears in glory to restore the earth to its paradisiacal state, not everyone will be happy with that development. The second coming of the Lord is declared to be “great and dreadful” for a reason. The righteous will rejoice; the wicked will fear and tremble. In the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times, as the light of the Millennial day dawns upon humanity, there will be many who will cringe and object, who will lash out at that which they can no longer recognize as eternal truth.

10.59 Likewise, there are those in this dispensation who cannot or will not accept the truths that were revealed by the Lord Jesus Christ unto the remnants of the House of Israel shortly after his resurrection from the dead (see 3 NE-C 15:12–24 and 3 NE-C 16:1–7). Jesus had alluded to the scattered remnants of the House of Israel to his disciples in the land of Jerusalem (see JN-C 10:14–16). They thought that he had spoken of the Gentile nations that existed at the time; in this they erred.

10.60 The account given in the Book of Mormon regarding the ancestry of the ancient Nephites and Lamanites is quite clear that they constituted a
branch of the House of Israel. The record assures its readers that the Israelites located in the Americas were not unique, that there were many other remnants scattered throughout the world unto whom the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ had come.

10.60.6-7—this people—That is to say, those unto whom the Book of Mormon was about to come.

10.60.21-23—house of Jacob—The posterity of Lehi pertained to the tribe of Joseph. Lehi himself belonged to the tribe of Manasseh and Ishmael to the tribe of Ephraim.

10.61 The Book of Mormon clearly articulates the marvels that transpired during the thousand years of Nephi history recorded there, the kindness and tenderness of the Lord’s dealings with His people who were oftentimes recalcitrant and rebellious. Yet, the Lord raised up great and good men among them who stood as sentinels of truth, who encouraged the faithful to work deeds of righteousness and the sinners to come unto Christ.

10.62 The Book of Mormon would prove to be a second witness of the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. It would testify of the eternal principles and ordinances that have been in place since before the foundations of the earth were laid. In nothing would the Book of Mormon disgrace any truth that the children of men had gleaned from the scriptures they had received from the Jews. It would, however, lay to rest the endless bickering and disputing that have clouded the minds and hearts of the children of men as they have attempted to interpret the words of the Apostles and prophets while devoid of the Spirit of the Lord.

10.63 Satan is the master of contention; he would have the children of men at continual odds with one another that they might not hear the tender whisperings of the Spirit of the Lord. Lucifer cares not about the nature of the argument, so long as the hearts of men are turned one against the other. The frequent ambiguity of the texts of the Old and New Testaments serve as well as anything to stir up the hearts and minds of the children of men, especially when one or more individuals has invested his pride in his particular understanding of a passage of scripture. In the spirit of academia, many others have fabricated all sorts of principles and doctrines by which they have hoped to acquire fame, wealth, and power. They seek for novelty, rather than truth.

10.64 The truths of the Book of Mormon are so clearly articulated that much of the uninspired ruminations of the learned of the world is exposed for what it is. Where there had once been darkness of mind and heart, there would be light and truth.

10.65 Anyone upon the earth may be subject to salvation, if he or she is willing to forsake the enticements of the natural man and embrace righteousness with all of their hearts. The hundreds of millions of souls who have inhabited this planet are susceptible to improvement, and in spite of the multifold transgressions and rebellions that the children of men have committed against God the Father and His laws, there is yet room for forgiveness.

10.65.5—gather—Jesus used this same metaphorical language in reference to the city of Jerusalem, which at the time was as corrupt as any place on the planet. We may perceive that there would be those in the present dispensation who would partake of the same spirit as the wicked during the Lord’s mortal ministry.

61 And I will bring to light their marvelous works, which they did in my name;

62 Yea, and I will also bring to light my gospel which was ministered unto them, and, behold, they shall not deny that which you have received, but they shall build it up, and shall bring to light the true points of my doctrine, yea, and the only doctrine which is in me.

63 And this I do that I may establish my gospel, that there may not be so much contention; yea, Satan doth stir up the hearts of the people to contention concerning the points of my doctrine; and in these things they do err, for they do wrest the scriptures and do not understand them.

64 Therefore, I will unfold unto them this great mystery;

65 For, behold, I will gather them as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, if they will not harden their hearts;
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<th>Verses</th>
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<td>10.66</td>
<td>This is phrasing that is found in the fifth and forty-second chapters of the book of Alma in the Book of Mormon (see <em>AL</em> 5:34 and <em>AL</em> 42:27). 10.66—<em>freely</em>—That is to say, any man or woman who exercises faith sufficiently to have the desire to partake of eternal life may do so unhindered.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 10:66; PM 207</td>
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<td>10.67</td>
<td>The fullness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is to express faith in the Savior’s atoning sacrifice and his power in the resurrection, sincerely repent of all past wrongdoing with a determination to adhere to the word of God at all times and in all places, receive the ordinance of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins at the hands of those who are duly authorized by Jesus Christ to do so, and to prepare oneself for the full weight and measure of the gift of the Holy Ghost whereby one can clearly see the course of action one must follow if he is to please God in all things. This is what is meant to repent and come unto Christ; there is no other way to obtain eternal life.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 10:67; MD 204; D&amp;C 10:67–69; DNTC 1 423; MD 133; MLM 126; D&amp;C 10:67–70; AF 215</td>
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<td>10.68</td>
<td>Why would any man disagree with the fundamental principles set forth in the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Self-interest? Rebellion? Fear? A lack of humility? Self-content? Weariness? Whatever the reasons, whatever the sentiments, the choice not to accept the truth serves as a harbinger for increased sorrow and despair.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 10:69; AGQ 1 98; DNTC 1 389; MD 134, 304; EM 2:579</td>
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<td>10.69</td>
<td>The first steps of exercising faith unto repentance and entering into the first covenants of the Gospel of Christ constitute the beginnings of salvation and exaltation. Those who have come unto Christ in his appointed way, are then given the opportunity to partake of the divine nature, to become as the Father and the Son are. This is not a light matter nor does it transpire in a day. A man must continue to press forward in faith, with an eye single to the glory of God. By so doing, the man begins to perceive himself and his fellow men as does God. He slowly but surely becomes a fountain of living waters to those around him, nourishing and sustaining the children of men as does the Father of all. He eventually become impervious to the temptations of the devil and the attractions of the natural man, finding joy and rejoicing in his service to his God and his brethren.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 10:70; JC 407; MD 443, 448; PM 208; EM 2:832; D&amp;C 10:88; MD 447</td>
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<td>10.70</td>
<td>The counsel given in this Section went far beyond the scope of the original question having to do with how the deficit in the narrative of the Book of Mormon was to be made up. The translation was but a beginning. The restoration of the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthood lay yet in the future, as did the organization of the Church and its various quorums and auxiliaries. The keys of the ministry of the latter days, preparatory to the coming of the Savior in glory, had yet to be bestowed. And needless to say, the practical matters of providing an opportunity for all of humanity, both the living and the dead, to accept or reject the Gospel of Jesus Christ stretched out before Joseph and Oliver in a seemingly endless straight and narrow path of righteousness. Thus, did the Lord foreshadow the great labor that awaited the saints of the latter days. 10.70.24—<em>Amen</em>—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 10:70; JC 407; MD 443, 448; PM 208; EM 2:832; D&amp;C 10:88; MD 447</td>
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11.0.1 The arrangement of the various Sections of the Book of Commandments as well as those of the current edition of the Doctrine and Covenants is primarily chronological, with a few obvious and notable exceptions. Section 1, the Lord’s Preface to the volume of commandments, was received 1 November 1833 in anticipation of the first printing of the revelations. Section 133 was first published in the Doctrine and Covenants as Section 100 labeled as an “Appendix”, even though the revelation was given on 3 November 1831. Section 134 appeared in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants in 1835 as Section 102 labeled as “On Governments and Laws in General”; it was originally transcribed in August 1835. Other Sections were clearly received at an early date but not formally written down until later. This is true of Sections 10, 132, and one or two others. Other anachronistic Sections may have suffered the vagaries of history and editorial errors as the various editions of the Doctrine and Covenants were prepared for publication. The current arrangement of the Sections was established in large measure by Elder Orson Pratt of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1876. The several editions of the Doctrine and Covenants have continued in that pattern notwithstanding the fact that subsequent historians have found that the chronological order of the revelations varies somewhat from Elder Pratt’s arrangement. This Section, for example, was no doubt received a few days after the one which we presently call Section 13. None of this, of course, detracts from the content of the material received by the prophet Joseph Smith.

11.0.2 From the time of the First Vision in the spring of 1820, Joseph Smith’s parents and siblings had been supportive of the young prophet’s accounts of all that had been transpiring to him as part of that which would one day be referred to as the Restoration. Joseph was the fourth child in a family of ten children who lived to majority. Joseph’s two older brothers, Alvin and Hyrum, were extraordinarily supportive of the younger brother, Alvin in particular. Alvin died 19 November 1823 at a young age, much to the anguished sorrow of Joseph and the rest of his family. The prophet considered Alvin to be the noblest of his father’s children and one of the noblest men who ever dwelt upon the earth. In many respects, Hyrum, the second son, was cut from the same bolt of cloth and after the death of Alvin became extremely close to Joseph. When Oliver Cowdery forfeited his privileges in the Church and Kingdom of God through his personal apostasy, Hyrum became the second Elder of the Church, and the companion martyr with his brother at Carthage, Illinois, 27 June 1844.

11.0.3 In the midst of the translation process in the late spring of 1829, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were once again reminded of the necessity of the ordinance of baptism as they finished the account given in the Book of Mormon regarding the visit of the resurrected Christ to the Nephites in the city of Bountiful. Being somewhat anxious about their status as erstwhile disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, they resorted to the banks of the Susquehanna River to inquire of the Lord regarding this ordinance. In response, John the Baptist appeared as a resurrected being and bestowed upon them the keys of the Aaronic priesthood, the precise authority by which John had baptized the Lord Jesus Christ in the river Jordan two millennia before. Joseph and Oliver were then commanded to baptize each other, which they immediately did. A few days after this glorious event that transpired on 15 May 1829, one of the prophet’s younger brothers, Samuel H. Smith, visited with the prophet and his scribe in Harmony, Pennsylvania. In short order, Samuel received a personal...
witness that all that which had been communicated to him by his brother was true. Therefore, on 25 May 1829 Samuel entered into the waters of baptism at the hands of Oliver Cowdery. Shortly thereafter, Joseph’s older brother, Hyrum, arrived in Harmony, desiring to know more of that which had been related to him. Joseph received this Section by means of the Urim and Thummim as a result of his brother’s request. Much of the introductory verses are similar to those that appear in previous revelations to Joseph’s father and to Oliver Cowdery. This clearly indicates the intimate involvement that Hyrum would have in the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the establishment of the Church and Kingdom of God. Joseph Smith Sr. and Hyrum Smith would serve as two of the Eight Witnesses to the Book of Mormon. Hyrum would share most of the blessings that would be bestowed upon Oliver in his ministry. This section appeared as Chapter X in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 37 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

11.1 For centuries the world had werted in ignorance and depravity because of the wickedness of the children of men. The prophet Isaiah saw that in the latter days a book would come forth that would dispel the foolishness of men who depended solely upon their own wisdom to interpret the nature of their existence and the purpose of this earth (see IS-C 29.9–24). This salutation began the revelation that the prophet received for his father some month’s before (see 4.1)

11.1.4–5—marvelous work—This is certainly in reference to the whole of the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Church and Kingdom of God, but in the immediate temporal context refers to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

11.2 The Apostles Paul and John used similar language to describe the effect of the word of God upon the heart and mind of the children of men: “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of body and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (JST, Hebrews 4:12). Nothing in the history of the world, from the greatest cataclysmic events to the secret thoughts in the heart of the lowest man can be hid from the Lord Jesus Christ or his appointed servants. The fullness Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is based upon personal revelation that was committed to the children of men through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. One cannot have faith unto salvation without personal revelation. No one can know if his repentance from all sin is sufficient without personal revelation. No can know whether the ordinances of salvation and exaltation are effective in his life unless that fact is revealed to him through the instrumentality of personal revelation. Without the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, the Gospel of the Son of God is no better than the Law of Moses. The social Gospel means nothing without divine inspiration and instruction from God the Father to the disciple of Jesus Christ on a daily basis. The spirit of revelation is like unto the two-edged sword. Similar language is employed in an earlier revelation given for the benefit of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery a month before (see 6.2)

11.3 Jesus had used this particular metaphor in his explanation to the Apostles as to why he was unwilling to partake of the viands that they had obtained in the nearby Samaritan city of Sychar. The woman whom he had met at the well had returned to the city and had stirred the hearts and minds of the city there so that they were willingly seeking the Lord at the well. Thus, were the inhabitants of Sychar as a mature field of grain ready to be harvested. The disciples

1 A great and marvelous work is about to come forth among the children of men.

2 Behold, I am God; give heed to my word, which is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, to the dividing asunder of both joints and marrow; therefore give heed unto my word.

3 Behold, the field is white already to harvest; therefore, whoso desireth to reap let him thrust in his sickle with his might, and reap while the day lasts, that he may treasure up for his soul everlasting.

D&C 11:1
DHC 4 (38)
EM 2:703

D&C 11:2
DN TC 3 153
EM 2:703

D&C 11:4
DHC 5 128
EM 2:703

99
were then given the opportunity to bless and benefit a people whom they had not previously taught. In the latter days, angels and divinely inspired circumstances have prepared the way before the servants of the Lord in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time. Tens of thousands of the emissaries of the Lord are harvesting where they did not sow; this is typical of missionary work throughout the world.

11.3.3—field—The imagery is easily understood by those who have engaged in the agricultural arts.

11.3.19—sickle—A hook-shaped instrument with teeth used in the harvesting of grain by hand.

11.3.38—salvation—The children of men are anxiously engaged in their mutual salvation, or there is no salvation at all. Salvation and exaltation derive from divine service, from acquiring the sentiments which the Father and the Son have for the inhabitants of the earth. This can only come into the heart and mind of a man as he actively loves those around him, which love is expressed in his service to them.

11.4 At the heart of the whole matter of the ministry of Christ is the desire on the part of the prospective minister. Those who, in the integrity of their hearts, desire to bless the lives of their fellow men will be called by those in authority to bring the fullness of the Gospel into the lives of others, effectively bringing them unto Jesus Christ for salvation and exaltation.

11.5 An effective servant of God must needs be a prayerful one or he cannot possibly bring any soul unto Christ. It is His work and it must be done in His own way. No man can know the mind and will of the Father and the Son without communion with Him. The effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

11.6 Joseph’s two older brothers, Alvin and Hyrum Smith had been early believers in the principles and experiences declared by the prophet. Alvin’s death had deeply moved Joseph’s mind and heart. Hyrum, however, proved to be equal to the task of unwaveringly supporting Joseph through some of the most difficult times in his mortal life, including the final hours in the Carthage jail.

11.6.5—asked—The Lord has always testified that the way one receives anything from Heaven is by sincerely and humbly asking for it. Clearly Hyrum has not asked amiss.

11.6.13—commandments—Only by keeping the commandments of God the Father can anyone enjoy the blessings and benefits of the Holy Ghost.

11.6.24—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Hyrum would join with his brother Joseph to realize this goal of the latter days.

4 Yea, whosoever will thrust in his sickle and reap, the same is called of God.

5 Therefore, if you will ask of me you shall receive; if you will knock it shall be opened unto you.

6 Now, as you have asked, behold, I say unto you, keep my commandments, and seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion.

7 Seek not for riches but for wisdom; and, behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you,
the world of spirits. Wealth provides opportunities for service, a way in which
the hearts of all men might be knit together in love and gratitude. Salvation
and exaltation is a joint effort, designed to help us understand the mind and
heart of God. One of the great tragedies of mortal life is to lose the spirit
of unity, a large measure of which came with us from the eternal worlds where
we were nurtured spiritually. Our birth upon the earth did not completely veil
those sentiments. Yet in the process of time, after we begin our mortal sojourn,
we are affected by the desires of the world, either as victims or as perpetrators.
We forget that in the beginning we were all children of the same heavenly
parents, that we are all objects of His eternal and perfect love. He is engaged in
that glorious work to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of every
soul, even as many as will. How can we possibly please the Most High by
belittling each other in clearly onerous ways? That God has personal wealth
there can be no question. What is His perfect example to us in terms of
material things? Is He not willing to bless all of His children with the elements
and the fruits of the earth, we who could accomplish nothing on our own?
Can we not, therefore, have similar feelings towards the impoverished? We
may see this same spirit with regard to the Lord’s willingness to reveal unto us
how to use knowledge to bless and benefit those around us. It is in wisdom
that the use of both material and spiritual wealth are best determined.

11.7.11—mysteries—Some wisdom, perhaps most wisdom, can only be
comprehended by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. To one
devoid of the Spirit of God, the blessings of eternity are meaningless, as
if they had been couched in an unknown foreign tongue.

11.7.25—rich—Someone whose life has been graced by the power and
influence of the Holy Ghost is advancing upon the path to salvation
and exaltation. If he or she persists in this path with faith in Christ, he
or she will find that they have become an heir of the Father and a joint
heir with the Lord Jesus Christ. Such heir receives all that the Father
has, wealth unimaginable, even to the most avarice.

11.7.30–31—eternal life—To receive eternal life is to live that sort of
existence that the Father and the Son enjoy. There is nothing in time or
eternity of greater value to the children of men than this.

11.8 Hyrum Smith would prove to be as faithful a fellow servant in the
Church and Kingdom of God as he was a faithful brother. He was baptized by
Oliver Cowdery in Seneca Lake in June of 1829. He was called upon to be
one of the Eight Witnesses of the Book of Mormon, having personally
handled the plates from which the text of the Book of Mormon had been
translated. He served as one of the six founding members of the Church of
Jesus Christ on 6 April 1830 in Fayette, New York. He would latter serve as
one of the counselors of the First Presidency of the Church from 1837 to
1841. Upon the death of his father, Joseph Smith Sr., Hyrum assumed the
responsibilities as Patriarch to the Church. He died as a martyr of Jesus Christ
with his brother Joseph on 27 June 1844 at the hands of a mob in Carthage,
Illinois.

11.9 Hyrum Smith was being commissioned to do good upon the earth. The
nature of that goodness is described in this verse. Living by every word that
proceeds forth from the mouth of God and encouraging others to do the
same, ultimately will bring about that which constitutes the work and glory of
God: the immortality and eternal life of mankind. Advancing the kingdom of
God upon the earth must be done in the Lord’s own way; the only way by
which a man can know how to proceed is to have His Spirit constantly with
you; the Spirit will accompany only those who are willing to obey.

and then shall you be made rich. Behold, he that hath eternal life is
rich.

8 Verily, verily, I say unto you, even as you desire of me so it shall
be done unto you; and, if you desire, you shall be the means of
doing much good in this generation.

9 Say nothing but repentance
unto this generation. Keep my
commandments, and assist to bring
forth my work, according to my
commandments, and you shall be
blessed.

MD 523, 654,
838
EM 1:407
EM 3:1230

D&C 11:9
DNCTC 1 328
MD 631
D&C 11:9, 22
EM 3:1329
D&C 11:9–24
EM 2:558
11.10 Hyrum Smith differed from Oliver Cowdery in that the latter already was blessed with gift of revelation, a blessing that had been operative in his life for a long period of time (see 6:10–15). Hyrum is promised a gift as well, one that would conform to the desires of his own heart. We cannot point with certainty, but is clear that one of the native gifts that Hyrum possessed was that of a tender, sympathetic heart and a propensity to express a spirit of mercy in his daily walk and talk. We might suppose, too, that the Lord was addressing, in part, the spiritual gifts that would be bestowed upon him once he was baptized and received the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. This would transpire the following month. Those blessings would come, as they come to every worthy man, as the result of a fervent desire to keep the commandments and a willingness to abide by the all of the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

11.10.29–30—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

11.11 Hyrum sat nearby as the prophet of God uttered the words that were being written down by Oliver Cowdery. It would easy to assume that Joseph was merely composing the text of the revelation; all outward indications seemed to confirm that. Oliver had been convinced of Joseph’s authority as a prophet because of the knowledge that he had of Oliver’s heart and mind that no mortal man could have known. Hyrum did not need convincing as to the truthfulness of his brother’s experiences. The Lord simply testifies to him that although he was seeing and hearing Joseph speak, he would know in his own heart and mind that he was being spoken to by the Savior of the world, just as surely as if he had been in a darkened room when the lights were turned on.

11.12 Hyrum had always been one to do that which was good and right. Although he may not have understood how and why he was prompted to conduct himself in a certain fashion, he willingly did that which he was impressed to do. The Lord advises the prophet’s brother that the Spirit to which he had been hearkening for most of his life, was that which emanated from Himself.

11.13 That which Hyrum had enjoyed in part was to be poured out upon him in fullness. The first step in these increased blessings of the Spirit would take place once he had received baptism at the hands of Oliver Cowdery and had received the gift of the Holy Ghost which would serve as an ever-increasing source of light and knowledge to him. The Holy Ghost is a revelator by which all things of eternal import might be communicated to the children of men. The Holy Ghost is the Comforter, instilling in the heart and mind of the believer an unflinching confidence in the protection and promises of the Lord God of Israel.

11.14 Hyrum Smith is promised truth and light undefiled through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. The Lord is perfectly willing to reveal unto His children the fullness of His Gospel and the principles of eternity, even to as many as will seek Him out in faith. God is no respecter of persons, desiring that all men should come unto Him in faith. The rewards for doing so are constant and consistent.

11.15 This is a lesson that all the world stands in need of. The Lord chooses his servants. Hyrum was willing and ready to preach the truth of that which he had received from the prophet Joseph. Yet no man can take upon himself the

10 Behold, thou hast a gift, or thou shalt have a gift if thou wilt desire of me in faith, with an honest heart, believing in the power of Jesus Christ, or in my power which speaketh unto thee;

11 For, behold, it is I that speak: behold, I am the light which shineth in darkness, and by my power I give these words unto thee.

12 And now, verily, verily, I say unto thee, put your trust in that Spirit which leadeth to do good—yea, to do justly, to walk humbly, to judge righteously; and this is my Spirit.

13 Verily, verily, I say unto you, I will impart unto you of my Spirit, which shall enlighten your mind, which shall fill your soul with joy;

14 And then shall ye know, or by this shall you know, all things whatsoever you desire of me, which are pertaining unto things of righteousness, in faith believing in me that you shall receive.

15 Behold, I command you that you need not suppose that you are called to preach until you are
Honor of God unless he is called, appointed, and ordained as was Aaron, the older brother of Moses. The time would come when Hyrum would jointly hold the keys of the ministry of the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times with Joseph, but each successive calling would be according to the Lord’s economy. One wonders if this counsel applied to Joseph and Oliver as well. From the time they had been baptized on 15 May 1829, the prophet and his scribe had thought it important to share with others their experiences with which they had been blessed in conjunction with their understanding of the scriptures, as the words of the ancient Apostles and prophets of the Nephites had progressively been revealed to them. They may have been precipitous in this matter.

11.16 Hyrum is receiving these instructions during the latter part of the month of May 1829. He would be baptized in June 1829. The translation of the Book of Mormon would be finished about the same time. The appearance of the published work would follow in March 1830. The formal organization of the Church of Jesus Christ would take place on 6 April 1830, of which he would be a founding member. These events would prepare him to be an adequate spokesman for the Lord, together with the blessings of the Spirit of God that would fill him with light and truth, a light and truth that the honest in heart would immediately recognize. As was indicated above, this counsel may very well have been directed to Joseph and Oliver as well, that they should wait until the time of the organization of the Church before promulgating the message of restored Gospel to the general public.

11.16.10—word—Certainly in reference to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, but likewise in reference to the call that would be extended by prophecy and the laying on of hands for him to serve in the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth.

11.16.12—rock—The power and influence of the Holy Ghost serves as the foundation stone for the faith of all men who would be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

11.17 Once all of the elements of an effective missionary program had been established by the hand of the Lord, Hyrum would be given an opportunity to openly serve according to the desires of his heart.

11.18 Prior to any effective service in the Kingdom of God, a man must learn to abide by the terms of his discipleship to Jesus Christ. He must speak only when guided by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, lest he lead the honest in heart astray.

11.19 Hyrum would have a part in the publishing process of the Book of Mormon. He and Oliver Cowdery were actively engaged in monitoring the daily production of E.B. Grandin’s press, making certain that the text conformed to the original copy of the manuscript. From time to time, the type would be changed in the midst of the printing in order to correct typographical errors. Hyrum was also involved during the period of time that copyright infringements were taking place. Patience would indeed be required by everyone concerned as all things were accomplished in their proper, divinely ordained order.

11.20 Simply put, servants obey. Hyrum could not presume to impose himself upon the Lord. In order to serve as he desired, Hyrum would have to be blessed with the greatest degree of the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. This could only come as the result of strict and faithful obedience to the mind called.

16 Wait a little longer, until you shall have my word, my rock, my church, and my gospel, that you may know of a surety my doctrine.

D&C 11:16
MD 204

17 And then, behold, according to your desires, yea, even according to your faith shall it be done unto you.

D&C 11:17
AF 118
CR95-O 28

18 Keep my commandments; hold your peace; appeal unto my Spirit;

19 Yea, cleave unto me with all your heart, that you may assist in bringing to light those things of which has been spoken—yea, the translation of my work; be patient until you shall accomplish it.

20 Behold, this is your work, to keep my commandments, yea, with all your might, mind and strength.

D&C 11:19
AF 118
CR95-O 28
and will of God.

11.21 The Old and New Testaments provide limited instruction as to the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as the rather divisive nature of modern Christianity painfully illustrates. The Book of Mormon was provided by the Lord in order to lay to rest the egregious doctrinal and philosophical departures from that which had been taught by all of the holy prophets since the world began. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon would afford the emissaries of the Lord Jesus Christ the opportunity to clarify the ambiguities of the Bible and present in a manner pure and undefiled the truth of the atoning sacrifice of the Savior together with a firm testimony of his literal victory over physical death. The proselyting of the children of men would have to be delayed until the servants of God had all of the appropriate tools of salvation and exaltation in their hands. The honest in heart would recognize immediately the divine power that accompanied the disciples of the Savior.

11.22 The best kept secret in the Church of Jesus Christ is that the scriptures, all that the Lord has revealed unto his servants, are the key to personal revelation. Most all that we have in the canon has come about as a result of serious contemplation of that which had been revealed and written down before. We cannot expect the inspiration of the Lord to whisper more of the mysteries of eternity if we are unwilling to peruse that which He has already given us.

11.22.8—word—In reference primarily to the text of the Old and New Testaments which contain a portion of that which had been revealed unto the children of men in ages past.

11.22.22—word—Certainly in reference to the Book of Mormon. There would be, however, additional materials that would see the light of day as the Church and Kingdom of God rolled forth among the nations. The publishing of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and the words of the living prophets, seers, and revelators who would take a major part in the establishment of Zion in the midst of the nations of the earth.

11.23 Herein the Lord paraphrases his own counsel given to his disciples during the Sermon on the Mount. The disciples had been concerned in part regarding the funding of their missionary labors. How could they actively participate and provide for their families. The modern disciples would be faced with the same conundrum. The Savior testified anciently that if the Lord provided for the fowls of the air and open fields of the earth, how could he not provide for His devoted servants? All that Hyrum needed in order for him to be able to achieve the desires of his heart would eventually be provided. In the meanwhile, he was to seek to perform all that the Father and the Son had given him to do.

11.23.4—Hyrum Smith—Hyrum was the elder brother of Joseph Smith, born on 9 February 1800. Although more than five years Joseph’s senior, Hyrum was completely faithful to all that Joseph testified had transpired in his boyhood. He served as one of the Eight Witnesses of the Book of Mormon and as the eldest of the six men who formally organized the Church of Jesus Christ on 6 April 1830. He served in many capacities in the Church and Kingdom of God before his death as a martyr on 27 June 1844 in Carthage, Illinois.

11.24 The fullness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ can only be obtained by revelation. The Book of Mormon would come forth unto the children of

21 Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men.

22 But now hold your peace; study my word which hath gone forth among the children of men, and also study my word which shall come forth among the children of men, or that which is now translating, yea, until you have obtained all which I shall grant unto the children of men in this generation, and then shall all things be added thereto.

23 Behold thou art Hyrum, my son; seek the kingdom of God, and all things shall be added according to that which is just.

24 Build upon my rock, which is my gospel:

D&C 11:21
CR97-O 115
CR99-A 6
D&C 11:21-22
CR95-O 8
EM 3:1285
D&C 11:21-28
AGQ 1 132
D&C 11:22
AF 254
EM 2:751
D&C 11:24
PM 170
men by the gift and power of God. The truthfulness of the Gospel contained therein could only come into a man’s heart and mind through the inspiration of the Almighty. Upon this personal revelation regarding the Savior and his works among the honest in heart in all times and places constitutes the only secure foundation upon which anyone desiring eternal life can build.

11.25 There is no more destructive attitude in human existence than that which doubts the ability of man to know the mind and will of God. The spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus Christ. Without a testimony of the Savior of mankind, no person on this planet would ever be sufficiently prepared to enter back into the eternal home from whence he or she came. Without personal revelation, a man remains in ignorance about his eternal family. Without the inspiration of God, he knows little or nothing regarding his eternal prospects. Without prophecy and revelation, there is neither faith, hope, nor charity.

11.26 By pondering the words of the ancient prophets and Apostles as contained in the Bible and in the Book of Mormon, doing so with the spirit of prophecy and revelation, the mind and heart of Hyrum Smith would be prepared to carry the message of the Restoration to those who desired the truth in righteousness.

11.27 Thus, we learn that the revelations given to specific individuals in the early years of the history of the Church of Jesus Christ might easily be applied to all those who would come in contact with them later. The counsel given to Hyrum may be received by all those who have similar sentiments in the latter days. See also 11.4.

11.28 The Lord ended his counsel to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery a few weeks before in similar terms (see 10.70). We should here observe that while it is our duty to pray to the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and to no other, it is often the responsibility of the Son of God to speak the answers which God would have His children hear. All redeeming light and intelligence revealed unto humanity in the latter days will come through the offices of the Savior and through none else. There is no immortality or eternal life outside of the atoning sacrifice and the power of the resurrection vested in the Son of God.

11.28.4–5—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

11.29 This constitutes a reprise of that which the Lord had spoken to Joseph and Oliver earlier (see 6.21 and 10.57). The circumstances that existed in the days of Jesus’ mortal ministry had not changed much. The Savior successfully taught the fullness of the Gospel to those who were spiritually inclined, but he was not universally acclaimed as the promised Messiah. In fact, those who most ardently professed to be the practitioners of the faith of the God of Israel became those who most fervently opposed him. Joseph is warned that little would be forthcoming from those who were likeminded to the Sadducees and Pharisees of his day.

11.30 Here the Lord paraphrases a similar declaration made by the Apostle John in the introductory material to his Gospel (see JN-C 1.12). The disciples of Christ are empowered, through their obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Christ, to pass by every sentinel placed between

25 Deny not the spirit of revelation, nor the spirit of prophecy, for wo unto him that denieth these things:

26 Therefore, treasure up in your heart until the time which is in my wisdom that you shall go forth.

27 Behold, I speak unto all who have good desires, and have thrust in their sickle to reap.

28 Behold, I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I am the life and the light of the world.

29 I am the same who came unto mine own and mine own received me not;

30 But verily, verily, I say unto you, that as many as receive me, to them will I give power to become the sons of God, even to them that

D&C 11:25
AF 310, 311, 313
DNTC 3 58
DS 1 186
MD 603, 649

D&C 11:28
MD 448, 571
CR95-A 45
CR97-O 34
D&C 11:28–30
AF 468
EM 4:1673

D&C 11:29
CR96-O 48

D&C 11:30
DS 2 38
MD 745
PM 353
the inhabitants of the earth and the abode of deity. They are perfected in spirit and body to dwell in the presence of God through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are knowledgeable and strong in their convictions. They are without guile and filled with charity for all men. They have bestowed upon them the authority of Heaven to bless and strengthen their brethren. In other words, the disciples have become precisely as their Master, inasmuch as they have obeyed the same laws and hearkened to the same voice as did he.

11.30.34—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 12

Date: May 1829
Place: Harmony, Pennsylvania
To: Joseph Knight, Sen.

12.0.1 The appearance of the Father and the Son to the prophet Joseph Smith had taken place in the spring of 1820. Three years later on 21 September 1823, the angel Moroni attended to young Joseph informing him of the record that was about to come forth that would eventually be known as the Book of Mormon. The plates would not be entrusted to the prophet’s care until 22 September 1827. During the intervening four years, Joseph Smith was instructed in the affairs of the Nephites by the ancient prophets who were raised up among them. As he acquired an increasing body of information regarding the ancient inhabitants of this continent, he would share vignettes with the various members of his family. From time to time, the young men of the Smith household sought for employment outside of their own farm, at times travelling great distances in order to procure means by which they could pay off the mortgage on their home. In October 1825, a man by the name of Josiah Stowell (sometimes spelled Stoal) visited Palmyra in search of wheat and flour which he purchased from the farmers and later sold in New York City. As a result he came in contact with the Smith Family. It was not long before he was privy to all of the rumors and gossip regarding Joseph Smith, Junior, but instead of being repulsed by the young man’s stories he was attracted by them. Josiah Stowell had come into possession of an old document which purported to be an account of a cache of Spanish silver that had been hidden somewhere on the Stowell farm. Joseph was asked to help him find the treasure because of his rumored skills. Joseph and his family informed Josiah that the young man did not possess magical skills, that the stories regarding the discovery of the gold plates upon which the Book of Mormon had been inscribed had been twisted by the local inhabitants. Having been disabused of the misinformation, Mr. Stowell still requested that Joseph come work as a common laborer for him. To this the Smiths readily agreed. While in the employ of Josiah Stowell in Harmony, Pennsylvania, Joseph met and courted Emma Hale, the third daughter of Isaac and Elizabeth Hale, whom he eventually married 18 January 1827.

12.0.2 In the process of doing business with Josiah Stowell, the Smith family also became acquainted with Joseph Knight, Senior, who was engaged in a similar enterprise as Josiah Stowell. Joseph Knight owned a flour mill in the vicinity of Harmony, Pennsylvania, and from time to time hired Joseph Smith to work him. At the Knight family home in Colesville, New York, he became acquainted with Mr. Knight’s two sons, Newel and Joseph, Junior, to whom he confided much of that which he had experienced as a young man living in Palmyra, including the First Vision and the coming of the angel Moroni. The entire Knight family became quite fond of the young prophet and on many occasions had proved themselves faithful friends. When the time came for
Mormon’s record to be retrieved from the hill Cumorah, both Josiah Stowell and Joseph Knight were present at the Smith home in Palmyra, having arrived a day or two before. Joseph Knight’s horse and wagon were used by Joseph Smith and his wife to go to the hill Cumorah for the prophet’s meeting with the angel Moroni. After Joseph Smith was attacked various times as he brought the plates to the Smith home, Josiah Stowell and Joseph Knight, went with the prophet’s father to apprehend the men who had assaulted the young man. After Joseph and Emma moved by to Harmony, Pennsylvania, from Palmyra, Joseph Knight and his family expended time and means in providing for Joseph and Emma as the translation proceeded. On several occasions the Knights brought supplies to the Smith home from Colesville, New York, to Harmony, Pennsylvania, a distance of about thirty miles. It was on one of these visits, while Joseph and Oliver were progressing in the translation, that Joseph Knight, Senior, desired to know in what additional ways he could help move the work forward. This revelation was the result. The similarity in language and content with previous revelations given through the prophet Joseph Smith about this same time is obvious, inasmuch as all of the energies of the prophet and his associates were focused on one object: the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. This section appeared as Chapter XI in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 38 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

1. A great and marvelous work is about to come forth unto the children of men.

12.1 For centuries the world had weltered in ignorance and depravity because of the wickedness of the children of men. The prophet Isaiah saw that in the latter days a book would come forth that would dispel the foolishness of men who depended solely upon their own wisdom to interpret the nature of their existence and the purpose of this earth (see IS-C 29.9–24). This salutation began the revelation that the prophet received for his father some month’s before (see 4.1)

12.1.4–5—marvelous work—This is certainly in reference to the whole of the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Church and Kingdom of God, but in the immediate temporal context refers to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

12.2 The Apostles Paul and John used similar language to describe the effect of the word of God upon the heart and mind of the children of men: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of body and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (JST, Hebrews 4:12). Nothing in the history of the world, from the greatest cataclysmic events to the secret thoughts in the heart of the lowliest man can be hid from the Lord Jesus Christ or his appointed servants. The fullness Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is based upon personal revelation that was committed to the children of men through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. One cannot have faith unto salvation without personal revelation. No one can know if his repentance from all sin is sufficient without personal revelation. No one can know whether the ordinances of salvation and exaltation are effective in his life unless that fact is revealed to him through the instrumentality of personal revelation. Without the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, the Gospel of the Son of God is no better than the Law of Moses. The social Gospel means nothing without divine inspiration and instruction from God the Father to the disciple of Jesus Christ on a daily basis. The spirit of revelation is like unto the two-edged sword. Similar language is employed in earlier revelations given for the benefit of Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and Hyrum Smith (see 6.2 and 11.2)
3 Behold, the field is white already to harvest; therefore, whoso desireth to reap let him thrust in his sickle with his might, and reap while the day lasts, that he may treasure up for his soul everlasting salvation in the kingdom of God.

12.3 Jesus had used this particular metaphor in his explanation to the Apostles as to why he was unwilling to partake of the viands that they had obtained in the nearby Samaritan city of Sychar. The woman whom he had met at the well had returned to the city and had stirred the hearts and minds of the city there so that they were willingly seeking the Lord at the well. Thus, were the inhabitants of Sychar as a mature field of grain ready to be harvested. The disciples were then given the opportunity to bless and benefit a people whom they had not previously taught. In the latter days, angels and divinely inspired circumstances have prepared the way before the servants of the Lord in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time. Tens of thousands of the emissaries of the Lord are harvesting where they did not sow; this is typical of missionary work throughout the world.

12.3.3—field—The imagery is easily understood by those who have engaged in the agricultural arts.

12.3.19—sickle—A hook-shaped instrument with teeth used in the harvesting of grain by hand.

12.3.38—salvation—The children of men are anxiously engaged in their mutual salvation, or there is no salvation at all. Salvation and exaltation derive from divine service, from acquiring the sentiments which the Father and the Son have for the inhabitants of the earth. This can only come into the heart and mind of a man as he actively loves those around him, which love is expressed in his service to them.

12.4 At the heart of the whole matter of the ministry of Christ is the desire on the part of the prospective minister. Those who, in the integrity of their hearts, desire to bless the lives of their fellow men will be called by those in authority to bring the fullness of the Gospel into the lives of others, effectively bringing them unto Jesus Christ for salvation and exaltation.

12.5 An effective servant of God must needs be a prayerful one or he cannot possibly bring any soul unto Christ. It is His work and it must be done in His own way. No man can know the mind and will of the Father and the Son without communion with Him. The effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

12.6 Joseph Knight, Senior, had been an early believer in the principles and experiences declared by the prophet. Of his own free will, motivated by the generosity of his own heart, he had provided for Joseph and Emma Smith through extraordinarily difficult times for the young couple. He had followed the work in progress with great anticipation, willing to be a benefit and a blessing wherever he could. Joseph would continue to support the prophet throughout the rest of his life. He was baptized on 28 June 1830 and together with his extended family formed the nucleus of the Colesville Branch, a body of saints that settled in Jackson County in anticipation of the establishment of the city of Zion in that place. The Knights were driven from Jackson County in 1833 and from Caldwell County, Missouri in 1839. Joseph Knight dwelt in Nauvoo, Illinois, before leaving with the saints in the winter of 1846. While on his way to the Salt Lake basin, Joseph died at Mt. Pisgah, Iowa, on 2 February 1847. No more faithful man has been numbered with the disciples of Christ in this dispensation.

12.6.5—asked—The Lord has always testified that the way one receives anything from Heaven is by sincerely and humbly asking for it. Clearly Joseph Knight has not asked amiss.

12.6.13—commandments—Only by keeping the commandments of God the Father can anyone enjoy the blessings and benefits of the Holy
12.6.24—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Joseph Knight, Senior, extended himself time and again to bring about this glorious work to establish Zion in the minds and hearts of the children of men so that it might be realized in communal form upon the earth.

12.7 If the similarity in the various revelations had not been understood properly before, the Lord here is quite articulate, giving all those who would ever come in contact with the earliest commandments in this dispensation, that what the Lord says to one, He says to all. During any given period of time, the Lord has appointed certain tasks to be accomplished. His servants attend to those tasks until they are accomplished, after which the Lord adapts the callings and responsibilities of all those involved to fit the next steps necessary to prepare for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory, that there might be a people to receive him in love and faith.

12.8 The wording of the counsel given here to Joseph Knight is similar to that given to the prophet’s father (see 4:3–7). Not only were these qualities that were required in the work of the ministry, they were also qualities which Joseph Knight already possessed, a fact that had been demonstrated over the course of many years in his tender treatment of Joseph Smith. In other words, Joseph Knight need not overly concern himself about how and when he could serve. His natural proclivities had already served him and his God well. If he would hold fast to that which he already believed, he would continue faithful unto the end.

12.9 The Lord ended his counsel to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery a few weeks before in similar terms (see 10:70 and 11:28). We should here observe that while it is our duty to pray to the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and to no other, it is often the responsibility of the Son of God to speak the answers which God would have His children hear. All redeeming light and intelligence revealed unto humanity in the latter days will come through the offices of the Savior and through none else. There is no immortality or eternal life outside of the atoning sacrifice and the power of the resurrection vest in Son of God.

12.9.27—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Behold, I speak unto you, and also to all those who have desires to bring forth and establish this work;

D&C 12:7
DHC 5 (39)

8 And no one can assist in this work except he shall be humble and full of love, having faith, hope, and charity, being temperate in all things, whatsoever shall be entrusted to his care.

D&C 12:8
AF 452
DNTC 2 264, 379
DNTC 3 45, 322
MD 121, 365, 370
CR98-O 34

9 Behold, I am the light and the life of the world, that speak these words, therefore give heed with your might, and then you are called. Amen.

D&C 12:9
DHC 5 (39)
MD 443, 448
D&C 12:15–18
AF 156
D&C 12:18
AF 151

13.0.1 There is only One who possesses the right to reign in eternity. In Him is invested all light, truth, and wisdom. He comprehends all that has ever transpired, all that now transpires, and all that ever will transpire. He is filled with love, mercy, and compassion. He is the embodiment of all that is right, all that is good, and all that is holy. His power is supreme and is the means by

Section 13

Date: May 15, 1829
Place: Near Harmony, Pennsylvania
To: Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery

D&C 13
AF 22, 135, 188, 196, 487
AGQ 1 116
AGQ 3 163
which existence is sustained and prospered. He is the source of all light and life in the universe. He is our Father; there is no one in time or in eternity who loves us more than does He. It is His deepest desire that we, His children, grow into maturity to partake of the fullness of eternal existence. For this reason He has created this earth and everything that dwells thereon. Each of us has been provided with a set of circumstances which is unique to our particular needs, that we might acquire those characteristics, attributes, and perfections that He has. As we advance on the path to eternal life, we are given additional experiences and opportunities to aid us in our progress. One of the major assets given to women is the power to bring forth new life, nurture that life, and provide it with knowledge and truth sufficient that it might progress independently. There is no other task in all of eternity that more accurately reflects the work and glory of God. The corresponding blessing given to men is the power to preside in righteousness, to govern the elements, to bring about unity and harmony where once there was chaos and confusion, and to bring about redemption and exaltation where there was once condemnation and degradation. Men and women together, as husbands and wives, learn through their temporal experiences how to be loving parents, providing for the physical and spiritual needs of their children, that they might themselves grow into a fullness of joy. The authority to do so within the domains of the Father and God of all, is called the Priesthood.

13.0.2 There is only one priesthood, inasmuch as there is only One who bestows that authority. Inasmuch as this authority is ultimately a power that defines the nature of the eternal family of God it is called the Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God. The Lord Jesus Christ, he who was the great Jehovah before his mortal birth in Bethlehem, is the Firstborn Son of the Father and the His Only Begotten in the Flesh. Of all of the spirit offspring of our Heavenly Parents, he has been the most faithful and the most trustworthy. By divine appointment he was charged with the practical aspects of providing the means by which all of the other sons and daughters of God might be redeemed from this lost and fallen world. He is the archetypal Son and was ordained before the foundations of the earth were laid to do the will of the Father.

13.0.3 This same power and authority of God that was bestowed upon the Savior has been reserved for those who prepare themselves to follow in his footsteps as perfectly obedient sons. Adam proved himself worthy, as did Abel and Seth. Throughout the history of this earth, there have been countless millions of men who, with their eternal companions, have administered the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to their children by virtue of that authority that was original given from the Father to the Son. There have been times when the children of men utterly refused to be governed by the authority of God and thus fell into serious transgression and distress. During these periods of apostasy, spiritual chaos reigned, often accompanied by egregious crimes against humanity by those determined to exercise unrighteous dominion. That is to say, they ruled over the hearts and minds of the children of men while they themselves were devoid of the principles of truth and light. Their principles of government became the gratification of their lusts of the flesh, the spirit of the natural man. In the midst of these eras of wickedness, when the Lord perceived that there were those who would be willing to live in accordance with the law of God, a dispensation was initiated. Prophets were called, revelation bestowed, authority rendered unto the faithful, the righteous disciples of Christ gathered, and the Church and Kingdom of God established among them.
13.0.4 As part of each dispensation, certain promises were extended to the faithful regarding their posterity. All of these blessings were founded in eternal covenants entered into by virtue of the priesthood of God. One of the principles aspects of this patriarch covenant was that when the Lord decided to pour out His knowledge upon the children of men, the posterity of the faithful would immediately be given an opportunity to either accept or reject the blessings of the emerging dispensation. Thus, a prophet like Moses was sent not just to any of the children of men who dwelt upon the earth in his days, but to a specific family: the children of Israel who were ensconced in the land of the Egypt. In this particular instance, the House of Israel had endured nearly four hundred years of Egyptian influence in almost every aspect of their daily lives, and they proved to be a hardened people, more inclined to follow after the temptations of the world than to hearken to the whisperings of the Spirit of the Lord. There were times during the sojourn of Israel in the wilderness when it was proposed that the House of Israel be rejected out of hand as a recalcitrant people and the dispensation begin again among another, more pliable people. The decision was made, however, to maintain the covenant established with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and provide means by which the House of Israel might be salvaged from the corruption that they had embraced. Few among the millions who left Egypt under the direction of Moses and Aaron were prepared to receive the fullness of the priesthood of God. The Father then provided a means by which the children of Israel might grow into the fullness by establishing among them a preparatory Gospel governed by a preparatory priesthood. One of the tribes of the House of Israel was selected to bear and administer this lesser manifestation of the authority of God; the tribe of Levi, the one to which both Moses and Aaron pertained. Aaron himself was called and ordained to preside over this priesthood, and upon his death, the presidency would befall the eldest of his righteous sons. This preparatory Gospel and its governing priesthood would continued from one generation to another for nearly eighteen hundred years, until the time of the ministry of the Mortal Messiah.

13.0.5 At the time of the Savior’s mortal ministry in the land of Israel, the presidency of the Levitical priesthood had become confused with the political machinations of the Jews. The Lord, however, had selected His own High Priest, His own president of the Aaronic priesthood, in the person of John, the son of Zacharias, who is also called the Baptist. John the Baptist was a direct descendant of Aaron and held the keys of the lesser priesthood. As such, he was acknowledged by the children of Israel who flocked to the banks of the Jordan river to receive the teachings and ordinances that only he could provide them. Many of the men who would become the disciples and Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ first came into contact with the true spirit of faith and repentance at the feet of John. In the process of time, even Jesus, as the obedient Son of God, came to the Baptist and received that holy ordinance from him in the waters of the river Jordan. John knew who Jesus was; that fact had been manifested to him in no uncertain terms. John knew that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, he who held the keys of all of the power and authority that the Father had granted unto His children. John the Baptist mildly protested Jesus’ submission to his authority, testifying that the power of the higher priesthood should take precedence. The Savior continued to defer to John, and was baptized of him. The Savior then began his formal ministry among the children of men, establishing his Church and the Kingdom of God among the Jews, administering the principles and ordinances of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to them. He ordained others with this same power and authority, preeminent among them, the Apostles, Peter, James, and John who ulti-
mately would preside in the Church of Christ after the death and resurrection of their Lord. John the Baptist continued preparing and encouraging those in his circle of associates to resort to the Lord Jesus Christ who possessed the fullness of that which he held in part. Within a short period of time, however, John the Baptist was arrested by King Herod, imprisoned, and eventually beheaded through the machinations of the king’s paramour and her daughter. And thus the specific keys of the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood were lost to the world.

13.0.6 When Joseph Smith first began to feel the need to seek the truth regarding his own salvation, he resorted to the various congregations of Christians which were organized in his part of the country. All of these various organizations claimed to be able to provide salvation and Joseph was at a loss to determine where the truth lay. He therefore, in the spring of 1820, resorted to a grove of trees near his home in western New York where he poured out his heart in earnest prayer. The subsequent appearance of the Father and the Son laid to rest any notion of joining himself to the established religions of the day. He was given divine counsel to the effect that he should wait for a time until that which he desired was revealed to the world, for it certainly would transpire during his lifetime. Three years later, in September of 1823, the angel Moroni appear to the young Joseph and tasked him with an assignment to translate an ancient record hidden up unto the Lord, a record which would one day be published as the Book of Mormon. After a series of distressing events, Joseph Smith was given an opportunity, together with his scribe Oliver Cowdery, to accomplish the translation. In the midst of that translation, however, when they arrived at the end of the book that is called 3 Nephi, the pair read the counsel of Mormon that they ought to repent and be baptized in the fashion that Jesus had taught the Nephites. Joseph and Oliver therefore retired to the banks of the Susquehanna River near their abode in Harmony, Pennsylvania, where they petitioned the Lord as to what they should do. The result was the appearance of an angel who declared himself to be John the Baptist, the very same individual who had performed the ordinance of salvation for the Lord Jesus Christ. This Section represents a portion of that which was said during their interview. Joseph and Oliver had the priesthood bestowed upon them and were commanded by John to baptized each other, which they immediately did. This citation is taken directly from the Joseph Smith’s written account of the episode as it is presently included in the Pearl of Great Price (see SH-C 1.69)

13.1 In his own account of the experience, Oliver Cowdery quotes John the Baptist slightly different.

“But, dear brother, think, further think for a moment, what joy filled our hearts, and with what surprise we must have bowed, (for who would not have bowed the knee for such a blessing?) when we received under his hand the Holy Priesthood as he said, ‘Upon you my fellow-servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer this Priesthood and this authority, which shall remain upon earth, that the Sons of Levi may yet offer an offering unto the Lord in righteousness!’” (endnote to Joseph Smith—History)

This ordination and conferring of these priesthood keys occurred on 15 May 1829. Joseph was commanded to baptize Oliver and then Oliver did the same for Joseph. They then confirmed the priesthood upon each other in the same order. Joseph and Oliver were told that John was acting under the direction of
Pater, James, and John and that in short order the power and keys of the greater priesthood that they held would be bestowed upon them as well. This would transpire sometime during the final days of May 1829.

13.1.10—*Messiah*—The term “Messiah” is the Hebrew form of the Greek word “Christ” and means precisely the same; that is to say, the “Anointed One”. The priesthood of God is always bestowed upon the servants of the Lord in the name of the Son of God.

13.1.16—*Aaron*—The brother of Moses who was given the keys of the presidency of the priesthood bestowed upon the tribe of Levi. Technically, the Aaronic priesthood is the presiding body of the Levitical priesthood.

13.1.23—*ministering*—Although we can wax eloquent regarding the visitations of divine ministers from the heavens to bless and strengthen the servants of God, it should be understood that any man who bears the priesthood of God, of whatever order, is called to be a ministering angel to the inhabitants of the earth. The Aaronic priesthood is, by definition, an order of divine authority that concerns itself primarily with the temporal affairs of the Church and Kingdom of God. Therefore, the bearers of the lesser priesthood are engaged in efforts to bless and edify the children of men in material ways, that the poor, the afflicted, the naked, the hungry, the lonely, and the deprived are assisted and strengthened, nurtured until they can again provide for themselves.

Much of the material means of the Church and Kingdom of God are generated by those who labor in the affairs of the Aaronic priesthood.

13.1.29—*gospel*—The fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is administered by the keys of the Melchizedek priesthood, which concerns itself primarily with the spiritual affairs of the Church, although the temporal aspects of the Kingdom of God are within its purview as well. The preparatory Gospel does engage the faith of the adherent, promotes a course of life devoted to the path of righteousness, and the reconciliation is made possible if one is willing to covenant with the Lord through the ordinance pertaining to salvation from personal sin. Although the Gospel administered by the keys of the Aaronic priesthood offers a promissory note regarding the blessings attendant to the reception of the gift of the Holy Ghost, those bearing the lesser priesthood are not authorized to perform that particular ordinance. That is reserved to the bearers of the Melchizedek priesthood.

13.1.31—*repentance*—Under the Law of Moses, that code of conduct administered by the Aaronic and Levitical priesthoods, the children of Israel were cautioned about the consequences of breaking any of the terms laid down in that compact between the House of Israel and their God. Part of the repentance process came in the form of the offering of animal sacrifice, which involved a great deal of profound imagery that was designed to point the believing Israelite toward the great atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

13.1.34—*baptism*—Although the Israelites frequently neglected this ordinance, it has always been part of the preparatory Gospel. The whole House of Israel received this ordinance symbolically as they passed through the divided waters of the Red Sea. John the Baptist was unhesitant in his cry to repent and be baptized when he called upon the inhabitants of the land of Israel to receive those blessings at his hand.

13.1.43—*this*—That is to say, the authority of the priesthood of Aaron.

13.1.52—*until*—As can be seen above, Oliver stated that the word used here is “that”, indicating purpose rather than closure.

13.1.54–56—*sons of Levi*—In reference to those who have inherited the
right to the priesthood through their literal lineage as members of that tribe of Israel, and to those who have divinely receive the authority by the laying on of hands under the direction of those who hold the keys of the Aaronic priesthood.

13.1.61—offering—It has long been correctly believed that there would come a time during the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times that animal sacrifice would be performed as part of the restoration of all things. When and where these offerings might be held, and for what length of time, is yet to be revealed to the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ.

14.0.1 At the time Oliver Cowdery was residing in Palmyra, New York, he made the acquaintance of a young man from Fayette, New York, by the name of David Whitmer. Oliver spoke to David about those things that he had learned from the neighbors of Joseph Smith’s family regarding the First Vision and the ancient record written upon plates that had been entrusted to the young prophet. Oliver was also able to provide more detail to his friend as he boarded with the Smith’s as part of his recompense as a teacher. He promised David that he would keep him informed as he learned more. When Oliver Cowdery finally made the decision to visit Joseph Smith in Harmony, Pennsylvania, he and Samuel Smith stopped at the Whitmer home in Fayette. The entire family of Peter Whitmer, Senior, became extremely interested in the great spiritual blessings that had been poured out upon Joseph Smith and further encouraged Oliver to send them continuing updates as to the progress of the work of translation. Oliver arrived in Harmony on 5 April 1829 and two days later commenced as Joseph Smith’s scribe, a position of responsibility that he would hold until the conclusion of the work in June 1829. During the intervening two months, Oliver wrote David Whitmer from time to time and on at least one occasion included a few lines from the text that had been translated, bearing his fervent testimony that he knew that which Joseph had been dictating to him was true. In the meantime, the forces of evil had been mustering their strength in Harmony and the spirit of persecution against Joseph and the ongoing translation intensified. Eventually, Oliver Cowdery wrote to his friend in Fayette, New York, and asked for aid that they might escape from the hostilities in their neighborhood. Through a series of miraculous events, David Whitmer was enabled to bring his wagon to the doorstep of the Smith home in Harmony only a few days after the arrival of Oliver’s letter. The brethren quickly loaded up the Smith’s effects and Oliver’s belongings and began the trek to Fayette, New York, a distance of about 130 miles. They arrived at the Whitmer home on 1 June 1829. The translation continued apace, Oliver, Emma Smith, and one or more of the Whitmers acting as Joseph’s scribe as the work was completed, probably shortly after 20 June 1829 (see 7.0.3). Given the tight schedule involved in the translation process, it seems unlikely that the revelations to David Whitmer and his brothers were received prior to 20 June 1829, although anytime after 1 June 1829 would have been possible.

14.0.2 David Whitmer was the fourth child of Peter and Mary Whitmer, born 7 January 1805. David and his brothers, John and Peter, were baptized for the remission of sin during the summer of 1829. It is clear that David also was blessed with the power and authority of God, the Melchizedek priesthood about that same time. David would serve as one of the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon and was one of the six men who formed the nucleus of the
Church of Jesus Christ on 6 April 1830. He and the other two witnesses, Oliver Cowdery and Martin Harris, would be commissioned to select the first members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in this dispensation. During a time of heavy persecution, David became disaffected from the Church, and his family eventually settling in Richmond, Missouri. His brother-in-law and longtime friend, Oliver Cowdery came to visit him in 1850, as he prepared to make his journey west to be with the main body of the saints in the Salt Lake Valley. He apparently encouraged David to do the same. Oliver, however, died in David Whitmer’s home on 3 March 1850. David remained in Richmond, Missouri, until own death on 25 January 1888.

14.0.3 The similarity of language and imagery of this revelation to others received about the same time should not be surprising. The focus of the servants of the Lord was fixed on a singular task. The translation and publishing of the Book of Mormon was paramount. This section appeared as Chapter XII in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 39 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

14.1 For centuries the world had weltered in ignorance and depravity because of the wickedness of the children of men. The prophet Isaiah saw that in the latter days a book would come forth that would dispel the foolishness of men who depended solely upon their own wisdom to interpret the nature of their existence and the purpose of this earth (see IS-C 29.9–24). This salutation began the revelations that the prophet received for his father and Joseph Knight during the previous months (see 4.1 and 12.1).

14.1.4–5—marvelous work—This is certainly in reference to the whole of the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Church and Kingdom of God, but in the immediate temporal context refers to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

14.2 The Apostles Paul and John used similar language to describe the effect of the word of God upon the heart and mind of the children of men: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of body and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (JST, Hebrews 4:12). Nothing in the history of the world, from the greatest cataclysmic events to the secret thoughts in the heart of the lowliest man can be hid from the Lord Jesus Christ or his appointed servants. The fullness Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is based upon personal revelation that was committed to the children of men through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. One cannot have faith unto salvation without personal revelation. No one can know if his repentance from all sin is sufficient without personal revelation. No one can know whether the ordinances of salvation and exaltation are effective in his life unless that fact is revealed to him through the instrumentality of personal revelation. Without the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, the Gospel of the Son of God is no better than the Law of Moses. The social Gospel means nothing without divine inspiration and instruction from God the Father to the disciple of Jesus Christ on a daily basis. The spirit of revelation is like unto the two-edged sword. Similar language is employed in earlier revelations given for the benefit of Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, and Joseph Knight (see 6.2, 11.2, and 14.2).

14.3 Jesus had used this particular metaphor in his explanation to the Apostles as to why he was unwilling to partake of the viands that they had obtained in the nearby Samaritan city of Sychar. The woman whom he had met at the well

<table>
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<th>verse</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 A great and marvelous work is about to come forth among the children of men.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 14:1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Behold, I am God; give heed to my word, which is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, to the dividing asunder of both joints and marrow; therefore give heed unto my word.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 14:2</td>
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<td>3 Behold, the field is white already to harvest; therefore, whoso desireth to reap let him thrust in</td>
<td>D&amp;C 14:2</td>
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<td>DHC 4 (38)</td>
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<td>EM 2:703</td>
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<td>D&amp;C 14:1–21</td>
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<td>DS 2 291</td>
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had returned to the city and had stirred the hearts and minds of the city there so that they were willingly seeking the Lord at the well. Thus, were the inhabitants of Sychar as a mature field of grain ready to be harvested. The disciples were then given the opportunity to bless and benefit a people whom they had not previously taught. In the latter days, angels and divinely inspired circumstances have prepared the way before the servants of the Lord in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time. Tens of thousands of the emissaries of the Lord are harvesting where they did not sow; this is typical of missionary work throughout the world.

14.3.3—field—The imagery is easily understood by those who have engaged in the agricultural arts.

14.3.19—sickle—A hook-shaped instrument with teeth used in the harvesting of grain by hand.

14.3.38—salvation—The children of men are anxiously engaged in their mutual salvation, or there is no salvation at all. Salvation and exaltation derive from divine service, from acquiring the sentiments which the Father and the Son have for the inhabitants of the earth. This can only come into the heart and mind of a man as he actively loves those around him, which love is expressed in his service to them.

14.4 At the heart of the whole matter of the ministry of Christ is the desire on the part of the prospective minister. Those who, in the integrity of their hearts, desire to bless the lives of their fellow men will be called by those in authority to bring the fulness of the Gospel into the lives of others, effectively bringing them unto Jesus Christ for salvation and exaltation.

14.5 An effective servant of God must needs be a prayerful one or he cannot possibly bring any soul unto Christ. It is His work and it must be done in His own way. No man can know the mind and will of the Father and the Son without communion with Him. The effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

14.6 David Whitmer would provide faithful and true to his witness of the Book of Mormon. In 1887, a few months prior to his death, David published a pamphlet entitled "An Address to All Believers in Christ" in which he reaffirmed all that he had previously testified regarding his experience as one of the Three Witnesses. Because of pride, contentions and disappointments, David Whitmer found himself outside the pale of the Church of Jesus Christ, separate and distinct instead of part of the Zion that had been established for the salvation of the children of men. In the final analysis, he was unwilling to receive the word of God, the divine counsel that would have sustained him in his darkest hour.

14.6.8—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst.

14.6.11—commandments—Only by keeping the commandments of God the Father can anyone enjoy the blessings and benefits of the Holy Ghost.

his sickle with his might, and reap while the day lasts, that he may treasure up for his soul everlasting salvation in the kingdom of God.

4 Yea, whosoever will thrust in his sickle and reap, the same is called of God.

5 Therefore, if you will ask of me you shall receive; if you will knock it shall be opened unto you.

6 Seek to bring forth and establish my Zion. Keep my commandments in all things.

D&C 14:6
DS 1 237
MD 854
EM 1:312
EM 4:1565
14.7 As are all the promises and covenants of the Lord God of Israel, David's pronounced destiny was conditional, based on his own moral agency. The blessings would come when the stipulations were observed. To receive eternal life is to inherit all that the Father and the Son are, in time and in eternity. These are the sons and daughters of Jesus Christ, joint heirs with him in all things.

14.7.8—endure—It is one thing to be aware of the truth of any event or teaching, it is quite another matter to have sufficient conviction of the heart and mind to conform one's life to that truth. It is a third issue to be sustained through every adversity until the end of one's mortal sojourn upon the earth without falling away from one's determination to observe that truth unflinchingly.

14.7.15—16—eternal life—Eternal life is that quality of immortality that God the eternal Father enjoys. All those who participate in the salvation of the body and the spirit, who receive exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom, are those who have partaken fully of the divine nature by living by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God and His appointed servants.

14.8 Here David is promised blessings that eventually would come to him. The Whitmer brothers may have been baptized by the time this revelation was given, and they may have had hands laid upon their heads for the gift of the Holy Ghost, but is clear that the language of the revelation implies that that greatest of earthly blessings had not as yet been received. The power and influence of the Holy Ghost would allow him and his fellow Witnesses to be received into the company of the angel Moroni, to view the plates and other Nephite artifacts, and to hear the voice of God testifying to them that the translation was accurate and confirmed to the mind and will of the Father and the Son. David would testify of these things the rest of his life. The Holy Ghost would also instruct him in the application of the principles of righteousness into his own life, and having overcome the spirit of the natural man, he could speak with conviction regarding effectual repentance. David Whitmer would also be graced by the power of the Melchizedek priesthood, sufficiently so that he could participate in the selection and ordination of the first Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in this dispensation.

14.9 No one can doubt the Savior's part in the creation of the world as we know it. The scriptures are replete with evidence in the affirmative. In the beginning, the Lord declared, "Let there be light!" and there was light. The forces of chaos and darkness could not gainsay the command; thus it has ever been. What is patently clear in the physical realm is also just as plain in the spiritual realm. Satan would have the children of men forever bound to him in fear and ignorance. The Lord Jesus Christ, however, would have his brothers and sisters willingly choose, in the full light of day, to love and worship the Father. Thus, unto every child who has been born upon this earth has been given the light of Christ by which they might find their way unto the fullness of that light, as it is revealed in the Gospel of salvation.

14.9.4—5—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

14.10 David's calling for the time being would be to sustain Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in their labor to complete the translation of the Book of Mormon. The society to which they belonged as citizens of the United States was understood as a Gentile society, derived from the Greco-Roman culture

7 And, if you keep my commandments and endure to the end you shall have eternal life, which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God.

8 And it shall come to pass, that if you shall ask the Father in my name, in faith believing, you shall receive the Holy Ghost, which giveth utterance, that you may stand as a witness of the things of which you shall both hear and see, and also that you may declare repentance unto this generation.

9 Behold, I am Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, who created the heavens and the earth, a light which cannot be hid in darkness;

10 Wherefore, I must bring forth the fulness of my gospel from the Gentiles unto the house of Israel.
that gave birth to what is now called Western Civilization. In the midst of this culture the Book of Mormon would be translated and published. From thence it would be carried by the servants of God unto the remnants of the House of Israel, the first remnant being the native American descendants of the ancient Nephite and Lamanite civilizations that existed upon this continent hundreds of years in the past.

14.10.13—*Gentiles*—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

14.10.18—*Israel*—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

14.11 As has been noted before, David Whitmer participated to a degree in helping to provide Joseph Smith and his family a safe haven in which he and his scribe might finish the work of the translation in relative comfort. There is a distinct possibility that David may have participated in the translation process by acting as Joseph’s scribe when Oliver needed rest. David’s role as one of the Three Witnesses has been discussed above, as well as his involvement with the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation. It is to be hoped that David Whitmer has since reflected correctly on his recalcitrance as a disciple of Jesus Christ and has returned to the path of righteousness.

14.11.5—*David*—In reference to David Whitmer, David Whitmer was the fourth child of Peter and Mary Whitmer, born 7 January 1805. David and his brothers, John and Peter, were baptized for the remission of sin during the summer of 1829. It is clear that David also was blessed with the power and authority of God, the Melchizedek priesthood about that same time. David would serve as one of the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon and was one of the six men who formed the nucleus of the Church of Jesus Christ on 6 April 1830. He and the other two witnesses, Oliver Cowdery and Martin Harris, would be commissioned to select the first members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in this dispensation. During a time of heavy persecution, David became disaffected from the Church, he and his family eventually settling in Richmond, Missouri. His brother-in-law and longtime friend, Oliver Cowdery came to visit him in 1850, as he prepared to make his journey west to be with the main body of the saints in the Salt Lake Valley. He apparently encouraged David to do the same. Oliver, however, died in David Whitmer’s home on 3 March 1850. David remained in Richmond, Missouri, until own death on 25 January 1888.

14.11.34—*Amen*—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

11 And behold, thou art David, and thou art called to assist; which thing if ye do, and are faithful, ye shall be blessed both spiritually and temporally, and great shall be your reward. Amen.
15.0.1 When David Whitmer returned from Palmyra, New York, to his home in Fayette, after having made the acquaintance of Oliver Cowdery, he communicated to the other members of his family the miraculous events that had been reported to him about the young prophet Joseph Smith and of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. The family responded favorably to David’s news and eagerly received Oliver Cowdery and Samuel Smith as these two journeyed from Palmyra to Harmony, Pennsylvania, to visit with Joseph Smith. Oliver promised to keep his friends informed by letter. When the persecution in Harmony intensified, Oliver contacted the Whitmers about the possibility of taking Joseph, Emma, and himself into their household so that the translation of the Book of Mormon could be completed in relative peace. To this the Whitmers readily agreed. On the first of June 1829, David and his charges arrived in the yard of the Whitmer home. From time to time, members of the Whitmer family aided Oliver in his scribal duties, John Whitmer undoubtedly among their number.

15.0.2 John Whitmer was the third child of Peter and Mary Whitmer, born 27 August 1802. With his brothers David and Peter, Junior, he was baptized for the remission of sins in June 1829. As the publishing of the Book of Mormon commenced, John was selected to serve as one of the Eight Witnesses, men who personally handled the plates from which the translation of the Book of Mormon was made. John Whitmer never deviated from his testimony. John Whitmer was among the first to join the Church of Jesus Christ after it was organized on 6 April 1830. He was ordained an elder on 9 June 1830 and within a few months was called upon to be the Church Historian. On the third of July 1834 John Whitmer and W.W. Phelps were called to serve as counselors to David Whitmer as the presidency of the Church in Missouri. After he and several others were excommunicated from the Church for apostasy, John Whitmer settled in Far West, Missouri, where he died 11 July 1878.

15.0.3 The similarity of language and imagery of this revelation to others received about the same time, particularly the one given to his brother Peter, should not be surprising. The focus of the servants of the Lord was fixed on a singular task. The translation and publishing of the Book of Mormon was paramount. This section appeared as Chapter XIII in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 40 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

15.1 John Whitmer was willing to serve the Lord Jesus Christ; it had been the desire of his heart for many years. At the heart of loyal service, however, is the submitting of one’s will to that of the Father and the Son, nothing wavering. Had John always attended to the voice of the Lord in all of his dealings with his fellow man and with the Church of Christ, he never would have found himself outside the pale of the Kingdom of God. There came a point in his ecclesiastical career that he thought more of himself than he did the prophet Joseph Smith and other constituted authorities.

15.1.4—John—In reference to John Whitmer. John Whitmer was the third child of Peter and Mary Whitmer, born 27 August 1802. With his brothers David and Peter, Junior, he was baptized for the remission of sins in June 1829. As the publishing of the Book of Mormon commenced, John was selected to serve as one of the Eight Witnesses, men who personally handled the plates from which the translation of the Book of Mormon was made. John Whitmer never deviated from his own will to that of the Father and the Son, nothing wavering.
testimony. John Whitmer was among the first to join the Church of Jesus Christ after it was organized on 6 April 1830. He was ordained an elder on 9 June 1830 and within a few months was called upon to be the Church Historian. On the third of July 1834 John Whitmer and W.W. Phelps were called to serve as counselors to David Whitmer as the presidency of the Church in Missouri. After he and several others were excommunicated from the Church for apostasy, John Whitmer settled in Far West, Missouri, where he died 11 July 1878.

15.1.11–12—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

15.1.17—Redeemer—It is likely that by the time that this revelation was received, John had already been baptized and, thus, had been cleansed from his sins through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Inasmuch as this revelation would continue in print throughout his life, it was a constant reminder to him that there was a way to re-associate himself with the Church and Kingdom of God on the earth.

15.2 This is an allusion to the Lord’s word being like a two-edged sword (see 6.2). The spirit of the Lord had been working on the heart and mind of John Whitmer over a period of months. By the time this revelation was given to him, he was one who had personally experienced the confirming power of the Holy Ghost in his life. This was a power that would not affect him only, but was one that would eventually influence the whole of humanity.

15.3 The sentiment here is similar to that expressed to Oliver Cowdery when he first came in contact with the prophet Joseph Smith (see 6.22–24). Like Oliver, John Whitmer had not openly discussed the innermost desires of his heart with any other mortal, yet Joseph Smith could articulate those desires with precision.

15.4 The Whitmer children had been raised as strict Presbyterians. There had been instilled into their hearts and minds a reverence for the Lord God of Israel. John Whitmer was a young man, ready to embark upon his life’s career, but he was at that time willing to do anything that the Father would require of him.

15.5 John’s willingness was acceptable. In addition, John apparently had been inspired from time to time to bare his testimony regarding the deep spiritual experiences that had transpired in his life before and after having been baptized. He had been fearless because his convictions had been founded upon the rock of revelation.

15.6 We may not know the full extent of John Whitmer’s affect upon the residents of his own home and that of his neighbors. It is significant, however, that the Sunday following the organization of the Church, several members of the immediate family were baptized in Seneca Lake. A week later several more submitted to the ordinance. No doubt John’s testimony contributed to their own developing convictions regarding the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, his authority, and his Church. John’s gift would prove to be a great blessing and benefit to the residents of Fayette, New York, and whithersoever the Lord would choose to send him. There is no greater counsel to be given to the children of men in this lost and fallen world than to put off the natural man and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

15.6.47—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is per-

D&C 15:6
EM 4:1565

2 For behold, I speak unto you with sharpness and with power, for mine arm is over all the earth.

3 And I will tell you that which no man knoweth save me and thee alone—

4 For many times you have desired of me to know that which would be of the most worth unto you.

5 Behold, blessed are you for this thing, and for speaking my words which I have given you according to my commandments.

6 And now, behold, I say unto you, that the thing which will be of the most worth unto you will be to declare repentance unto this people, that you may bring souls unto me, that you may rest with them in the kingdom of my Father. Amen.
fected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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<th>Section 16</th>
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<tr>
<td>Date: June 1829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place: Fayette, New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To: Peter Whitmer</td>
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16.0.1 When David Whitmer returned from Palmyra, New York, to his home in Fayette, after having made the acquaintance of Oliver Cowdery, he communicated to the other members of his family the miraculous events that had been reported to him about the young prophet Joseph Smith and of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. The family responded favorably to David’s news and eagerly received Oliver Cowdery and Samuel Smith as these two journeyed from Palmyra to Harmony, Pennsylvania to visit with Joseph Smith. Oliver promised to keep his friends informed by letter. When the persecution in Harmony intensified, Oliver contacted the Whitmers about the possibility of taking Joseph, Emma, and himself into their household so that the translation of the Book of Mormon could be completed in relative peace. To this the Whitmers readily agreed. On the first of June 1829, David and his charges arrived in the yard of the Whitmer home. From time to time, members of the Whitmer family aided Oliver in his scribal duties, Peter Whitmer, Junior, undoubtedly among their number.

16.0.2 Peter Whitmer, Junior, was the sixth child of Peter and Mary Whitmer, born 27 September 1809. With his brothers David and John, he was baptized for the remission of sins in June 1829. As the publishing of the Book of Mormon commenced, Peter was selected to serve as one of the Eight Witnesses, men who personally handled the plates from which the translation of the Book of Mormon was made. Peter Whitmer never deviated from his testimony. Peter Whitmer was among the first to join the Church of Jesus Christ after it was organized on 6 April 1830. Peter travelled with his friends Oliver Cowdery, Ziba Peterson, and Parley P. Pratt in the fall of 1830 to preach the Gospel to the Native Americans settled throughout the midwest and in the Unorganized Indian Territory. In 1831 he supported the saints in their attempt to establish Zion in Jackson County, Missouri. He settled for a time near Liberty, Missouri, north of the Missouri River. He died there of tuberculosis on 22 September 1836, faithful and true to his covenants.

16.0.3 The similarity of language and imagery of this revelation to others received about the same time, particularly the one given to his brother John, should not be surprising. The focus of the servants of the Lord was fixed on a singular task. The translation and publishing of the Book of Mormon was paramount. This section appeared as Chapter XIV in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 41 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

16.1 Peter Whitmer was willing to serve the Lord Jesus Christ; it had been the desire of his heart for many years. At the heart of loyal service, however, is the submitting of one’s will to that of the Father and the Son, nothing wavering. Peter always attended to the voice of the Lord in all of his dealings with his fellow man and with the Church of Christ, and as a result never found himself outside the pale of the Kingdom of God. There never came a point in his ecclesiastical career that he thought more of himself than he did of the prophet Joseph Smith and other constituted authorities.

16.1.—Peter—In reference to Peter Whitmer, Jun., the fifth child and fourth son of Peter and Mary Whitmer, born 27 September 1809 in Fayette, New York. He served as one of the Eight Witness to the Book of Mormon.
of Mormon. With Oliver Cowdery and other, Peter travelled from New York to the Unorganized Indian Territories to preach the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Native Americans located there. He married Vashti Higley on 14 October 1832 in Jackson county, Missouri, and later lived in Far West. He suffered great persecution at the hands of the enemies of the Church and as a result of exposure contracted tuberculosis, dying of that disease on 22 September 1836 in Liberty, Missouri.

16.1.11–12—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

16.1.17—Redeemer—It is likely that by the time that this revelation was received, Peter had already been baptized and, thus, had been cleansed from his sins through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

16.2 This is an allusion to the Lord’s word being like a two-edged sword (see 6.2). The spirit of the Lord had been working on the heart and mind of Peter Whitmer over a period of months. By the time this revelation was given to him, he was one who had personally experienced the confirming power of the Holy Ghost in his life. This was a power that would not affect him only, but was one that would eventually influence the whole of humanity.

16.3 The sentiment here is similar to that expressed to Oliver Cowdery when he first came in contact with the prophet Joseph Smith (see 6.22–24). Like Oliver and his brother John, Peter Whitmer had not openly discussed the innermost desires of his heart with any other mortal, yet Joseph Smith could articulate those desires with precision.

16.4 The Whitmer children had been raised as strict Presbyterians. There had been instilled into their hearts and minds a reverence for the Lord God of Israel. Peter Whitmer was a young man, ready to embark upon his life’s career, but he was at that time willing to do anything that the Father would require of him.

16.5 Peter’s willingness was acceptable. In addition, Peter apparently had been inspired from time to time to bare his testimony regarding the deep spiritual experiences that had transpired in his life before and after having been baptized. He had been fearless because his convictions had been founded upon the rock of revelation.

16.6 We may not the full extent of Peter Whitmer’s affect upon the residents of his own home and his neighbors. It is significant, however, that the Sunday following the organization of the Church, several members of the immediate family were baptized in Seneca Lake. A week later several more submitted to the ordinance. No doubt Peter’s testimony contributed to their own developing convictions regarding the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, his authority, and his Church. Peter’s gift would prove to be a great blessing and benefit to the residents of Fayette, New York, and whithersoever the Lord would choose to send him. There is no greater counsel to be given to the children of men in this lost and fallen world than to put off the natural man and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

16.6.47—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.
17.0.1 During the earliest years of the developing narrative of the Book of Mormon, the creation of the text that was engraved upon the Small Plates of Nephi, the notion of having three witnesses to verify the truth of all things was clearly articulated by the prophets. Nephi, for example, suggested that the words of Isaiah, those Nephi’s brother Jacob, and his own testimony were sufficient to establish the truth of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh (see 2 NE-C 11.1–4). In Nephi’s discussion on Isaiah 29, he testified that when the Book of Mormon was published in all of the world that three men would be selected in addition to the translator, who would bear witness to the world that they had been privy to the gift and power of God involved in the coming forth of the ancient Nephite record (see 2 Nephi 27.12–13). In these same verses Nephi alluded to the Eighth Witnesses as well. In the book of Ether, Moroni instructed the future translator of his father’s work that he was to perform the work precisely as he had been instructed, without deviating from that charge in the slightest degree. There would be those, however, who would be privileged to would be shown by the power of God the truth of all that had been written (see ET-C 5.1–4). It is hard to imagine Oliver Cowdery writing these things down while acting as scribe for the prophet Joseph Smith without having a strong desire to be one of the three who had been so prominently mentioned in the text of the Book of Mormon.

17.0.2 In the spring of 1828, Marin Harris offered his services as scribe to Joseph Smith. From 12 April 1828 to 14 June 1828, Martin wrote at the prophet’s dictation 116 pages of manuscript which contained all of Mormon’s book of Lehi and a portion of the book of Mosiah. After a lengthy period of petitioning, Martin Harris was given permission to carry the manuscript to his own home in order to convince his wife and others of his immediate family that he had been actively engaged in a good cause. Martin broke the terms of his covenant with the Lord and with young Joseph, and in short order allowed the manuscript to escape his custody. Needless to say, in the distress and sorrow that followed the catastrophe, Martin’s services were no longer required. After a time of severe repentance and reconciliation, Joseph found grace in the eyes of God and was reinstated back into the office which had been originally assigned to him. Having heard that Joseph Smith was once again in possession of Mormon’s plates and the Urim and Thummim, Martin Harris travelled to Harmony, Pennsylvania, to see for himself. Although we cannot determine precisely what Martin had hoped for, it became perfectly clear that he was not going to resume his duties as scribe. In the revelation that was given for Martin’s benefit in March of 1829, the Lord clearly indicated at some future time that there would be a need for three witnesses to accompany Joseph’s own testimony about the origin and veracity of the Book of Mormon (see 5.9–18). It is quite likely that Martin understood the allusion to the Three Witnesses and the possibility of his being numbered among them (see 5.23–28).

17.0.3 From the time of Oliver Cowdery’s first contact with the Smith family, David Whitmer had been an interested party in all that was developing toward the restoration of the Gospel and Church of Jesus Christ. The day that the Aaronic priesthood was restored by John the Baptist, on 15 March 1829, Joseph and Oliver were commanded to baptize each other in the waters of the Susquehanna River near Harmony, Pennsylvania. Through rather miraculous means, David Whitmer was instrumental in extricating Joseph, Emma, and Oliver from rather dire circumstances in Pennsylvania, by transporting the three to his father’s home in Fayette, New York. There the translation of the
Book of Mormon was completed, with members of the Whitmer family sometimes spelling Oliver in his scribal duties. It would not be surprising to discover that David Whitmer was acting as scribe for Joseph while the latter was translating portions of the Small Plates of Nephi that discussed the calling of the Three Witnesses. During the month of June as the translation was coming to a close, Hyrum Smith, David Whitmer, and Peter Whitmer, Junior, all expressed a desire to be baptized for the remission of sins, which they were in Seneca Lake by Joseph and Oliver. Any initial desires that David might have had about being one of the Three Witnesses would have been intensified by the bestowal of the gift of the Holy Ghost. At some point during June 1829, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris were together in the Whitmer home when the issue of the Three Witnesses came up. These three close associates of the prophet asked Joseph if they could not be allowed to be those who had been spoken of anciently. The following Section of the Doctrine and Covenants was in response to their request. This Section does not appear in the Book of Commandments of 1833, but it is to be found in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants in 1835 as Section 42.

17.1 A few days after this revelation was received, Joseph and his three friends went into the woods near the Whitmer home and knelt in fervent prayer. After considerable effort, each of the Witnesses were privileged to see the angel Moroni, holding the plates, turning them over one by one so that each man could view the engravings thereon. They each then heard voice of God saying: “These plates have been revealed by the power of God, and they have been translated by the power of God. The translation of them which you have seen is correct, and I command you to bear record of what you now see and hear.” This experience first transpired in the presence of Joseph, Oliver, and David. It transpired a second time in the company of Joseph and Martin, the latter having felt that his spiritual circumstances had inhibited the vision which they all desired, and who had departed from the other three further into the woods.

17.1.12—word—The Lord had been quite specific, both in the narrative of the Book of Mormon and in the revelations given through the prophet Joseph Smith, the conditions of faith and worthiness that would be required of those men chosen to be the Three Witnesses. Because of his involvement with the missing manuscript, Martin Harris always felt inadequate, a fact that undoubtedly plagued him while the foursome knelt in prayer in the Whitmer woods.

17.1.20—heart—The three men would receive nothing unless they were willing to take upon themselves the full weight and measure of this singular covenant. Again, Martin Harris had failed to keep the first great covenant offered to him, which failure resulted in the loss of the 116 pages of manuscript.

17.1.28—plates—Meaning the plates of Mormon from which they translation had been taken, the Small Plates of Nephi, and the sealed portion of the Nephite record.

17.1.33—breastplate—The breastplate had been preserved in the small depository in which Joseph had originally found the plates of the Book of Mormon. Attached to the breastplate by a slender metal rod, ensconced in a small compartment, were found the Urim and Thummim by which Joseph Smith was enabled to translate the inscriptions written in Reformed Egyptian, the written language of the ancient Nephite prophets. Joseph frequently wore the breastplate while he labored over the plates.

17.1.35—sword—The sword of Laban had been brought from Jerusalem by Nephi the son of Lehi, after the latter had been commanded by the
Lord to take the life of the former. The sword became the pattern by which all other swords among the Nephites were made. The sword was not hidden with Mormon’s plates and the breastplate in the small depository devised by Moroni on the top of the northwest corner of the hill Cumorah. It was kept in the large depository inside the hill Cumorah with all of the other records of the Nephites, together with many other artifacts that had been hidden there by Mormon during the final months of the Nephite war of attrition against the Lamanite armies. When the open vision of Moroni appeared to the Three Witnesses, the men were privileged to see the entire large depository with all of the artifacts arrayed about in the room. Oliver Cowdery in the company of the prophet Joseph Smith was actually allowed to enter into that depository and was therefore was possessed of a far more intimate knowledge of the Large Plates of Nephi and the other historical objects.

17.1.37—Laban—Laban was a near relative of Lehi who had custody of many of the artifacts that pertained to Lehi’s inheritance. Laban was a man filled with avarice and cunning such that when the request for the Brass Plates was made, he went out of his way to destroy Lehi’s sons and steal Lehi’s material wealth. Laban was killed by his own sword at the behest of the Lord God of Israel.

17.1.39–41—Urim and Thummim—There are at least three sets of Urim and Thummim about which the ancient scriptures speak. In the Bible, the ancient historians speak of that which Aaron possessed as part of his priestly attire. In the Book of Mormon, King Mosiah had a set of Urim and Thummim by which he was able to translate the record of Ether that had been discovered by the emissaries of King Limhi as they sought for the city of Zarahemla. When the brother of Jared ascended mount Shelem to have the Lord touch the sixteen stones that he had molten out of a rock to provide light for the friends and families of Jared and his brother while they traversed the sea in the journey to the promised land, the Lord provided another set of Urim and Thummim by which a future translator might be able to reveal to the world the great vision that the Brother of Jared had received of the premortal Christ. These were necessary inasmuch as the written language of the Jaredites would become unreadable after the demise of the Jaredite civilization. It is clear that the Urim and Thummim used to translate the Book of Mormon should be understood as being this latter set. We cannot tell if the set in King Mosiah’s keeping was the same as that given to the brother of Jared, although it seems likely. If they are one and the same, we have no record as to how they came to be in Mosiah’s possession prior to the finding of Ether’s record. If they are different, we have no idea as to the origin or the present disposition of Mosiah’s Urim and Thummim. At some point, the set given to the brother of Jared was mounted in a silver bow, like unto a pair of spectacles, which were then connected to the breastplate provided by Mormon and inherited by Moroni.

17.1.47–49—Brother of Jared—One of the greatest of prophets who ever lived upon the earth. He and Jared left the tower of Babel with their friends and their families to inherit a promised land which was located in a region of the world which we now refer to as the American continents. This civilization prospered for more than thirty generations until a civil war completely destroyed them, the final battle being fought on the summit of the hill Ramah, which was known as the hill Cumorah to the ancient Nephites.
17.1.65—*directors*—In reference to the Liahona, a brass ball which served as a type of compass to guide Lehi and his family as they journeyed on their way to the land promised them by the Lord God of Israel.

17.1.70—*Lehi*—The first prophet of the Lamanites and the Nephites who left the land of Jerusalem about the year 600 BC. Many of his experiences are recorded in the writings of his son, Nephi, engraved upon the Small Plates of Nephi.

17.1.80–81—*Red Sea*—After Lehi and his entourage left the land of Jerusalem, they journeyed down the eastern shore of the Red Sea until turning due east for the land of Bountiful on the southern reaches of the Arabian peninsula.

17.2 The blessing that would come to the Three Witnesses was a profoundly spiritual one, and could not be idly obtained. The day that the vision was received, Martin Harris was singled out by the Lord when the prophet spoke with great solemnity to him saying: “Martin Harris, you have got to humble yourself before your God this day, that you may obtain a forgiveness of your sins. If you do, it is the will of God that you should look upon the plates in company with Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer”. So far as the historical records indicate, both Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer had been baptized for the remission of sins almost immediately after that authority had been restored by John the Baptist on 15 May 1829. Martin Harris had apparently not received that ordinance, and would not until shortly after the Church of Jesus Christ was organized on 6 April 1830. Needless to say, his confidence would not have been the same as that of the other two men.

17.3 This blessing, as was stated above, was realized only a few days after this revelation was received. After they returned from the neighboring woods, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris sat down in the Whitmer home and drafted that which we presently have as the Testimony of the Three Witnesses, which has been published in every edition of Book of Mormon. They each signed their names on the original document.

17.4 Joseph and his friends returned from the woods between 3:00 and 4:00 in the afternoon. His parents were visiting Fayette at the time and were in the company of Mary Whitmer, David Whitmer’s mother, when Joseph came into the house. Joseph exclaimed to the three assembled, “Father, mother, you do not know how happy I am: the Lord has now caused the plates to be shown to three more besides myself. They have seen an angel who has testified to them, and they will have to bear witness of the truth of what I have said, for now they know for themselves that I do not go about to deceive the people, and I feel as if I was relieved of a burden which was almost too heavy for me to bear, and it rejoices my soul that I am not any longer to be utterly alone in the world.” For all of their other follies and foibles, the Three Witnesses never denied their testimonies of all that which had transpired that June day in 1829, shattering to a great degree the malicious accusations that had been raised against Joseph Smith during the previous nine years.

17.4.9–11—*Joseph Smith, Jun.*—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

17.4.15—*destroyed*—Whether by focused persecution or by the stress of having to carry the burden of the restoration on his own.

17.4.22–23—*righteous purposes*—The work and glory of the Father is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of the children of men.
since the days of Adam and Eve. In the latter days, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon would provide one of the major instruments of conversion and a significant inspiration for bringing about the exaltation of men and women who otherwise would have been utterly lost to the Kingdom of God.

17.5 Joseph’s experiences had been diverse, taking place in both the physical and temporal realm. When the angel Moroni first appeared to the prophet in September 1823, all that was presented to him that night was in open vision, much like that which the Three Witnesses experienced in June 1829. The subsequent visits of Moroni were similarly spiritual, as were the visits of the other messengers sent to prepare Joseph Smith for his task of translation. The Three Witnesses saw the angel, the plates, and the other Nephite artifacts in vision rather than handling them physically. This latter experience would be reserved for the Eight Witnesses with regard to the plates of Mormon.

17.5.14–16—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

17.6 This statement was but a preamble to that which they would experience a few days later. Oliver, David, and Martin would hear the voice of the Lord speaking the same to them, but by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost which could not be misinterpreted.

17.6.9—part—Two thirds of the plates in Joseph’s possession were sealed and therefore not translated at that time.

17.7 After the first vision in which the prophet conversed with the Father and the Son, Joseph Smith testified that he could not ignore the experience. He could not deny that which had transpired. The same was true with regard to the appearance of Moroni and the subsequent emissaries that were sent to him. He could not deny them because they were true. To have done so would have made him a son of perdition. The Three Witnesses were now in precisely the same circumstances.

17.8 By asserting to the world that they had indeed received their testimonies though divine instrumentality, the Lord would not allow their words to fail. Even though all three of these men eventually found themselves estranged from the prophet Joseph Smith and from the Church of Jesus Christ, yet in the end they were true and faithful to the words to which they had ascribed their signatures. Both Oliver and Martin returned to the fold through baptism and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. We have every expectation that they will be received in the eternities with everlasting joy. Although David Whitmer never formally accepted membership back into the Church of Christ, he never denied his affiliation with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. It is reasonable to assume that there has long since been an adequate reconciliation between these four men in the world of spirits, a reconciliation that will encompass the promises that they Lord made in this revelation.

17.9 Thus, the Lord Jesus Christ prepared these three men to be a comfort to the prophet Joseph Smith and to the countless millions who would eventually come in contact with the Book of Mormon. In the original edition of the Book of Mormon that appeared in March 1830, the testimony of the Three Witnesses appeared in the final pages of each volume. Today these same words

5 And ye shall testify that you have seen them, even as my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., has seen them; for it is by my power that he has seen them, and it is because he had faith.

6 And he has translated the book, even that part which I have commanded him, and as your Lord and your God liveth it is true.

7 Wherefore, you have received the same power, and the same faith, and the same gift like unto him;

8 And if you do these last commandments of mine, which I have given you, the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; for my grace is sufficient for you, and you shall be lifted up at the last day.

9 And I, Jesus Christ, your Lord and your God, have spoken it unto you, that I might bring it unto you, that I might bring about my righteous purposes unto the children of men. Amen.
appear in the opening pages of each copy of the Book of Mormon.

17.9.3—*Jesus Christ*—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

17.9.28—*Amen*—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

18.0.1 When John the Baptist appeared to the prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on 15 May 1829, the angel indicated that he was acting under the direction of Peter, James, and John who held the keys of the higher or Melchizedek priesthood. The higher priesthood anciently was called the Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God. It had existed upon the earth since the days of Adam and Eve and had been the means by which the children of men had entered into divine covenants with the God of Heaven. The exodus of the House of Israel from Egypt was directed by this priesthood and the fullness of the Gospel, the doctrinal manifestation of that power and authority, was to be taught to the Israelites while they attended to their duties at the base of mount Sinai. In their spiritually degenerate state, however, they refused to receive the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and, as a result, were provided with a preparatory Gospel, the Law of Moses, which was to be administered by the authority of a lesser priesthood which from that day forward would bear the name of its first high priest, Aaron the brother of Moses. The children of Israel were tutored in the principles of eternal by means of the law of carnal commandments until the time of the mortal ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. At the beginning of the Dispensation of the Meridian of Time, John the Baptist held the keys of the Aaronic priesthood. Jesus of Nazareth honored those keys by seeking out John and receiving the ordinance of baptism at his hands. The Savior organized his Church, however, by the authority of the Melchizedek priesthood, ordaining twelve men to hold the keys of this divine authority. The presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ was formed by three of the Twelve, Peter, James, and John.

18.0.2 While there is no uncertainty about the date for the restoration of the Aaronic priesthood, no specific date for the bestowal of the Melchizedek has been assigned. It is possible, however, to propose a time frame. Oliver Cowdery and Joseph Smith were told by John the Baptist that in due time the power of the greater priesthood would be restored by Peter, James, and John. In a revelation received in August 1830, the Lord specifically refers to that ordination in the past tense, indicating that the ordination had already taken place (see 27.12–13). Several months before, when the revelation to organize the Church of Jesus Christ in these latter days was given, the Lord indicated that Joseph Smith was to be ordained an Apostle and first Elder of the Church; Oliver Cowdery was also to be ordained an Apostle and the second Elder of the Church (see 20.2–3). It is clear, then, that by 6 April 1830, the day that the Church was formally organized, Joseph and Oliver had already received the keys of the priesthood by which these two ecclesiastical ordinations could be performed. In a letter written by Joseph Smith on 6 September 1842, the prophet makes reference to an otherwise unrecorded event during which Peter, James, and John declared themselves as having the keys of the kingdom (see *DC-C 128.20*). One can only conclude that the announcement

Section 18

**Date:** June 1829  
**Place:** Fayette, New York  
**To:** Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer

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D&C 18  
DHC 1 62  
DHC 2 180, 187, 195, 219  
FWR 26  
GD 175  
JC 770  
TSWK 139  
CR99-O 91  
EM 1:407, 408  
EM 2:505
was made because these keys were about to be transferred to the prophet. Joseph indicates that this communication took place in the wilderness between Harmony, Pennsylvania, and Colesville, New York, in proximity of the Susquehanna River. In the present revelation, received sometime in June 1829, Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer are told that they had been called with the same calling as Paul (see 18.9) and were subsequently given the responsibility to seek out those who would pertain to the first Quorum of the Twelve in this dispensation (see 18.37). They would do so early in the year 1835 and in company with Martin Harris, the Three Witnesses would ordain each of the Apostles in their turn. The question remains as to when Joseph and Oliver would have been near the banks of the Susquehanna River between 15 May 1829 and June 1829. It is a matter of historical record that David Whitmer retrieved Joseph and Emma Smith, together Oliver Cowdery, from Harmony, Pennsylvania, in the final days of May 1829, arriving in Fayette, New York, on or about 1 June 1829. The occasion of the bestowal of the Melchizedek priesthood, therefore, undoubtedly took place within two or three weeks after the appearance of John the Baptist.

18.0.3 It is important to remember that there is a distinction to be made between the priesthood of God and the offices of the priesthood as they are manifested in the Church of Jesus Christ. As the history of various dispensations clearly indicate, it is possible for a man to hold the authority of God whether or not the Church of Christ is in existence. Simply put, the priesthood can exist without the Church, but the Church cannot exist without the priesthood. Therefore, as we pursue the history of the opening of the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time, we may observe references to the priesthood in a variety of settings, not all of which pertain directly to the formal organization of the Kingdom of God among the children of men. This section appeared as Chapter XV in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 43 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

18.1 We are at a loss as to the precise content of the question that had arisen in the heart and mind of Oliver Cowdery. Some scholars, with reason, have suggested that Oliver was exercised about the restoration of the Melchizedek priesthood, that the promise made by John the Baptist had not as yet been fulfilled. Given the probable date of the appearance of the three ancient Apostles (see 18.0.2), the bestowal of the priesthood does not seem to be the issue. It is reasonable to assume, however, given the nature of the text that follows, that Oliver’s concern had to do with how the power of the priesthood was to be utilized, perhaps even an inquiry about when and where the Church of Christ was to be established. In March of 1829, the Lord had testified to Joseph Smith and Martin Harris that, in time, the Three Witnesses would be instrumental in bringing the Church out of obscurity (see 5.9–17). In Section 10 of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord clearly indicated that one of the purposes of the Book of Mormon was to prepare a people for the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation (see 10.52–56 and 10.67–70). The translation of the Book of Mormon was complete; the authority of God was once more upon the earth. What remained? Oliver had spent several months in the company of a man who did nothing unless he was commanded directly by revelation from the Father and the Son. In the text of this present revelation, he is gently reminded of that fact. The directions as to how they should proceed would be written down in the Lord’s own time, according to His economy.

18.1.11–12— Oliver Cowdery— As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the
18.2 From the time that Oliver Cowdery first came in contact with the prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord reminded him of the many times that Oliver had been inspired with the spirit of truth. He had been blessed with the gift of revelation (see 6.10–15). He had also received assurance that Joseph possessed the same gift to an even greater degree (see 6.21–25). Between them, Oliver and Joseph held the keys of the gift of revelation (see 6.28). Oliver rejoiced to be part of the translation of the Book of Mormon and although he did not succeed in performing as did Joseph, he was grateful for his role as scribe. The capstone of his testimony came in connection with the experience that he had with Martin Harris and David Whitmer when they heard the voice of God testifying that the translation was correct. Oliver knew in no uncertain terms that when the prophet spoke under the influence of the Holy Ghost, those things were binding upon his own heart and mind as the will of the Lord.

18.3 Oliver may have been a little impatient to move the work along, but he is reminded, as so many others before him, that the Lord’s work would be revealed to His servants the prophets first. Oliver is promised that the directions would not be capricious nor disorderly, but they would be dictated and written down, probably by himself when the time came.

18.3.24—written—One might conceivably suggest that the Lord is speaking of all that which had been committed to writing by the ancient prophets, and to a degree this would be correct. It is, however, the voice of the living prophet that governs the activities of the Church of Christ in any dispensation.

18.4 As the revelations came through the prophet Joseph Smith, the saints of the latter days would learn how to appropriately conduct themselves before the Lord and before their fellow men. By those means, the Kingdom of God would advance and the establishment of Zion would proceed without effective hindrance.

18.4.13—church—When the precise day for the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ was revealed, that revelation was dictated and written down beforehand.

18.4.15—gospel—The fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ had been written down in the text of the Book of Mormon which was about to be published to the world. The application of those same principles would be manifested in the various revelations that would accompany the opening of this dispensation.

18.4.18—rock—Although we may learn a great deal about the principle of revelation from reading the Old and New Testaments, together with the Book of Mormon, yet the published accounts of the dealings of the Lord with His servants in this current dispensation are by far and away more informative.

18.5 To follow any other course of action other than that which the Lord would deliver unto his servants would be to court disaster. The progress of the Church of Christ would be governed by an adherence to the principles of truth as they had been couched in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The path which should be followed by the saints that would guide them through the perils that would advance and the establishment of Zion would proceed without effective hindrance.

2 Behold, I have manifested unto you, by my Spirit in many instances, that the things which you have written are true; wherefore you know that they are true.

3 And if you know that they are true, behold, I give unto you a commandment, that you rely upon the things which are written;

4 For in them are all things written concerning the foundation of my church, my gospel, and my rock.

5 Wherefore, if you shall build up my church, upon the foundation of my gospel and my rock, the gates of hell shall not prevail against you.
attendant to the nature of this lost and fallen world would be illuminated by
the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, the Lord’s Comforter and Reveala-
tor. Any man or woman who holds fast to that spirit cannot fail to inherit
the fullness of the glory of the Celestial Kingdom.

18.6 Satan’s desire to destroy the children of God is continuing apace. Moral
and spiritual decay is everywhere present. If all men, however, would put off
the natural man and take the Holy Ghost for their guide in all things, the
power of the adversary would diminish and eventually disappear altogether.
The cry of repentance is a call to awake and arise from spiritual slumber, an
invitation to the children of men to become the sons and daughters of God.
The Gospel of Jesus Christ will be taken unto every nation, kindred, tongue,
and people regardless of any eternal covenants that may have been accepted or
rejected by their ancestors.

18.6.25—Gentiles—In reference to those who are perceived as having no
connection to the ancient covenants and blessings reserved unto the
posterity of the faithful.

18.6.31—Israel—In reference to those who can clearly demonstrate their
relationship to the saints of ancient days, whether through divine or
secular records.

18.7 Oliver had not quibbled about the timing or the manner of his own
baptism for the remission of sins. He had accepted it as a commandment from
the Father and the Son. Joseph simply had done as he had been instructed.
The instance served as a pattern that should be followed at all times and in all
places in terms as to how they should proceed with any innovations.

18.7.6—baptized—Oliver baptized the prophet Joseph Smith on the same
day that Joseph baptized Oliver, on 15 May 1829. This was done by
divine fiat from the lips of John the Baptist who had been sent to them
for this very purpose.

18.7.13–15—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the
restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No
one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord
Jesus Christ.

18.8 Although we may not know exactly what was troubling Oliver regarding
the nature of Joseph’s role in the opening of this dispensation, the Lord assures
Oliver that He knows what He is doing. Oliver had been a teacher by
profession, a somewhat educated man. Joseph on the other hand was a young
man who had not enjoyed a great deal of formal education. It may have been
that Oliver considered himself more qualified to serve in the great leadership
responsibilities that had been placed upon his friend’s shoulders. In the eyes of
the world that may have been true, but prophecy and foreordination reflected
the Lord’s perspective as to the innate talents and spirituality of His choice.

18.8.41—Joseph—Only weeks before, Oliver had written the lengthy pas-
sages from the Small Plates of Nephi in which Joseph the son of Jacob
had spoken of one of his own posterity that would be an instrument in
the Lord’s hands to work a great work in the latter days (see 2 NE-C
3.7–15).

18.9 The role of an Apostle is to invite all men everywhere to come unto
Christ and rejoice in the hope of his resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for
sin. They are also especial witnesses of the ministry of the Savior, exemplifying
their Master to the best of their ability.

18.9.3–4—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of

D&C 18:6
MD 381

6 Behold, the world is ripening in
inquity; and it must needs be that
the children of men are stirred up
unto repentance, both the Gentiles
and also the house of Israel.

7 Wherefore, as thou hast been
baptized by the hands of my ser-
vant Joseph Smith, Jun., according
to that which I have commanded
him, he hath fulfilled the thing
which I commanded him.

8 And now, marvel not that I
have called him unto mine own
purpose, which purpose is known
in me; wherefore, if he shall be
diligent in keeping my command-
ments he shall be blessed unto
eternal life; and his name is Joseph.

9 And now, Oliver Cowdery, I
speak unto you, and also unto
David Whitmer, by the way of
commandment; for, behold, I com-
mand all men everywhere to

D&C 18:9
DHC 1:41
DS 3:98
EM 2:886
EM 4:1739
Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also extensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

18.9.12–13—David Whitmer—David Whitmer was the fourth child of Peter and Mary Whitmer, born 7 January 1805. David and his brothers, John and Peter, were baptized for the remission of sin during the summer of 1829. It is clear that David also was blessed with the power and authority of God, the Melchizedek priesthood about that same time. David would serve as one of the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon and was one of the six men who formed the nucleus of the Church of Jesus Christ on 6 April 1830. He and the other two witnesses, Oliver Cowdery and Martin Harris, would be commissioned to select the first members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in this dispensation. During a time of heavy persecution, David became disaffected from the Church, he and his family eventually settling in Richmond, Missouri. His brother-in-law and longtime friend, Oliver Cowdery came to visit him in 1850, as he prepared to make his journey west to be with the main body of the saints in the Salt Lake Valley. He apparently encouraged David to do the same. Oliver, however, died in David Whitmer’s home on 3 March 1850. David remained in Richmond, Missouri, until own death on 25 January 1888.

18.9.36—Paul—The Latin name of Saul of Tarsus which he adopted as he began his missionary labors.

18.9.38—apostle—The Greek roots from which the term “apostle” derives originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language, it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles constitutes one of the leading governing bodies of the Church of Christ. From time to time, there have been ordained Apostles who have not pertained to that Quorum, but that circumstance has been somewhat infrequent in practice.

18.9.42—called—We quibble about the significance of this word and its use in this context. We are quite certain that Oliver Cowdery had already been ordained by Peter, James, and John to the Melchizedek priesthood, receiving with Joseph Smith the keys of that divine authority. We may ask ourselves if David Whitmer, one who had also been baptized prior to this time, had also been ordained. We do not know, although many have speculated that this was the case. By the time the Church was organized is seems clear that he had received that divine authority. One is also confronted with the problem of determining whether the Lord is speaking of Oliver’s ordination that had already taken place, or whether He was speaking of his calling and office in the Church of Christ that would be organized the following year. The tense and syntax will allow for either interpretation.

18.9.47—calling—We cannot doubt the meaning of this word at all. Oliver Cowdery was just as much of an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ as was Saul of Tarsus in his ministry as Paul the Christian missionary.

18.10 The work and the glory of the Father and the Son is to bring to pass the repent, and I speak unto you, even as unto Paul mine apostle, for you are called even with that same calling with which he was called.

D&C 18:9, 27–32, 35–37
EM 2:885
D&C 18:9–10
CR99-A 95

10 Remember the worth of souls D&C 18:10
immortality and eternal life of mankind. If the greatest of divine energy is concentrated in this labor, what may we say of the worth of any man, woman, or child who has ever breathed a breath upon this planet.

18.11 If the Son of Man has suffered the consequences for all transgression and sin, what is there that he does not know about our spiritual lives? He is intimately familiar with every sorrow, with every personal struggle, with every attempt to observe and keep the commandments of God. He is acquainted with our grief when we fail to do so, our despair and our disillusionments. He comprehends our fears of life and our fears of death. He understands our anxieties regarding our foolishness and poor judgment. Knowing us as he does, he seeks for our temporal and eternal happiness. For that reason, he came into this world as do all those who have kept their first estate. For that reason he proclaimed the fullness of the Gospel to a hardened and recalcitrant people. For that reason he established his Church and filled it with men who were authorized to continue to work of the redemption of the souls of the children of men. For that reason he submitted himself to the will of God in the garden of Gethsemane, and to the will of men on the cross at Calvary. He desires us to find love of the truth in his love for us.

18.12 As in Adam all men have incurred physical death, so also in Christ shall all men eventually come forth from the dust to inherit immortality. The resurrection serves as an outward token of the Savior’s victory over spiritual death. If he has indeed come forth from the tomb, should we not believe him when he says that he has provided for our redemption from hell as well? The purpose of the atoning sacrifice is to free the children of men from spiritual bondage, so that they might never be burdened again. True repentance is not merely a return to neutral ground; it is a pressing forward to greater obedience; it is an effectual determination to do nothing that would afflict the Lord Jesus Christ in any fashion.

18.13 Because he never committed sin, Jesus has retained an awareness of the fullness of joy. He is happy and he desires all to participate in the same felicity. A man or woman redeemed from the sorrow of sin begins to view the world in which they live with different eyes. They have compassion and love for the children of men just as the Savior does. Their families, friends, neighbors, and associates are blessed and encouraged in their presence, bringing peace, love, and harmony to the world. Nothing could please the Lord of Heaven more.

18.14 The servants of God are called upon to engage in the same work as their Master, that they too might comprehend the love and compassion that emanates from the Savior. The bearers of the priesthood learn love, patience, and compassion as they bear the burdens of the saints.

18.15 It is undoubtedly this principle that guided prophets like Mormon and Moroni when the Nephites were falling into spiritual depravity. They patiently taught those around them in the hope that there might be one of the wicked who might be sufficiently touched by their message that they might relent of their evildoing. Who can calculate the eternal significance of a repentant soul? Who can adequately determine when any man is eternally beyond the pale of the mercy and love of the Father and the Son? It is significant that the Lord emphasizes the nature of the joy, that it is in the mutual communion between the two who came into unity in the Gospel.

18.16 There is no joy in the Church and Kingdom of God, in time or in

11 For, behold, the Lord your Redeemer suffered death in the soul that repenteth, on conditions of repentance.

12 And he hath hath risen again from the dead, that he might bring all men unto him, on conditions of repentance.

13 And how great is his joy in the soul that repenteth!

14 Wherefore, you are called to cry repentance unto this people.

15 And if it so be that you should labor all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring, save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father!

16 And now, if your joy will be

is great in the sight of God;

CR95-A 70
CR97-A 65
CR99-A 67
CR00-A 71
CR01-A 18
CR01-O 65
EM 1:365
EM 4:1551
D&C 18:10, 15–16
CR96-A 65
D&C 18:10–11
DS 2.341
D&C 18:10–12
AF 84
DNTC 3 125, 300
DS 2 295
MA 55
EM 2:463
D&C 18:10–15
MD 555
D&C 18:10–16
DNTC 1 394, 420
DS 1 314
DS 3 118
EM 3:1392
D&C 18:11
AF 94
DNTC 1 775
JC 614, 620, 662
MA 150
MM 4 128
CR96-O 48
EM 2:725
D&C 18:11–12
AF 387
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DNTC 3 75
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JC 24
PM 337
D&C 18:11–13
CR99-A 95
D&C 18:12
AF 394
DNTC 3 386
PM 247
EM 2:731
D&C 18:13
TSWK 80
D&C 18:13–16
MD 397

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eternity, if there is no unity in the hearts and minds of those who have been redeemed from death and hell. The unity is not just with the Father and the Son, but with all those who have partaken of the divine nature, our fellow citizens among the saints. The more we can do here in mortality to learn to love and appreciate those who share this planet with us, the more we are prepared for eternal life. Earthly unity, mutual love, is the primary effect of missionary work. Our fundamental happiness in the eternities is geometrically proportional to the substantive, personal connections that we have made as we have progressed through mortality and have labored in the world of spirits.

18.17 Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer had been prepared in all things to serve as the emissaries of the Lord Jesus Christ. They had been imbued with truth, they were filled with the Spirit of God, and they had been ordained to the offices that would allow them to take the principles of salvation into all of the world.

18.17.5—gospel—In part the Gospel could be found in the writings of the Apostles and prophets of the Old and New Testaments. The fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, however, was to be found within the pages of the Book of Mormon which had just been translated.

18.17.10—rock—The gift and power of revelation as enhanced by the Holy Ghost was enjoyed by the faithful, particularly Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer. It was their capacity for spiritual insight that prepared them for their roles as Witnesses of the Book of Mormon.

18.17.13—salvation—Both Oliver and David had been baptized for the remission of sins and for that reason they were said to have been the recipients of salvation. Additionally, they were both perfectly willing to keep the commandments of God at all times and in all places, thus bringing the blessings of the atoning sacrifice directly into their lives.

18.18 In their missionary labors, in their ministry unto the children of men, Oliver and David would need to know at any given moment that which would be of best benefit to those with whom they were speaking. The power and influence of the Holy Ghost would guide them effectively in these matters. As they continued to keep the commandments of God, dedicating themselves to the salvation of mankind, their powers of discernment would continue to increase.

18.19 Having faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, in his atoning sacrifice for the children of men, inspires those with whom we come in contact. Hope for our own salvation from death and hell encourages those around us, that they too might find salvation and exaltation. Our mutual love for one another unifies our hearts and minds like unto Enoch and his people, and prepares us for the glory that awaits the saints.

18.20 The servants of God are called to teach the truth, pure and undefiled. Their duty is not to stir up the hearts of the children of men to anger.

18.20.4—church—The sectarian organizations of men which are based in part upon the principles of righteousness. They have little or no power, however, to persuade men to adhere fully to the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ because they lack both the priesthood of God and the power and influence that attends those who have received the gift of the Holy Ghost. There is little to be gained by antagonizing or ridiculing those who have desired truth but have only found a portion of it. Without faith, men fear; there is much fear in the hearts of those who have not partaken of the fullness of truth.

17 Behold, you have my gospel before you, and my rock, and my salvation.

18 Ask the Father in my name, in faith believing that you shall receive, and you shall have the Holy Ghost, which manifesteth all things which are expedient unto the children of men.

19 And if you have not faith, hope, and charity, you can do nothing.

20 Contend against no church, save it be the church of the devil.
18.20.9–12—church of the devil—The church of the devil is comprised of those who willingly partake of the same spirit for which Satan forfeited his first estate and was cast out of heaven. They are filled with pride, avarice, and a desire for unrighteous dominion over the bodies and minds of men. Lucifer and his hosts are to be dismissed without argument, without reviling. They are subject to the authority of God and cannot deny that power accompanied by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

18.21 Those who have received the ordinance of baptism by immersion for the remission of sin, are prepared to become the sons and daughters of the Lord Jesus Christ, as and members of his family, bear his name. In representing the teachings of the Savior to the children of men, we dare not deal in any duplicity nor can we engage in undue frivolity. The business of salvation is serious and enduring, and cannot be muddled with the sentiments of a lost and fallen world.

18.21.7—Christ—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendency to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

18.22 The power of repentance is in a man’s confidence in the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Without faith, it is extraordinarily difficult, nigh unto impossible in fact, to make positive and substantive spiritual changes in one’s own life. Once a disciple of Christ embarks upon the straight and narrow path to eternal life, he must press forward with that same expectation, holding fast to all that he knows to be true, until he has partaken of the fruit of the Tree of Life.

18.22.14–15—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

18.23 Who else in the history of this world has done anything effective to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of mankind? Without the power of the resurrection that is vested in the Son of God, the physical bodies of the children of men would have remained forever in the dust of the earth, no more to come forth unto life. The spirits of men would have remained forever in the world of spirits eventually becoming devils, angels to a devil. Without the atonement of Christ, no man could have been received into the presence of God the eternal Father without stain. All men would have been condemned...
in His presence because all men, save one, have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Jesus Christ suffered the consequences of personal sin, the eternal punishments that are affixed to the act of breaking divine law, because no man was capable of adequately suffering for them himself. No greater gift has been bestowed upon humanity than the embassage of His Only Begotten Son in the flesh.

18.23—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

18.24 From before the foundations of the earth, the Father’s plan has been understood by His sons and daughters. For this reason they have willingly come to this earth to partake of mortal life, that they might learn for themselves the strengths and weakness of the physical form. Wherein they successfully employed the principles of the Gospel into their practical sojourn upon the earth, they would be blessed and comprehend the good that accompanies obedience. Wherein they would embrace falsehood or succumb to the lusts of the flesh, they would learn for themselves the bitterness that invariably attends sin. Through the divine covenants established by the Father, those who have fallen into transgression might easily find redemption by calling upon the name of Jesus Christ in His appointed way.

18.25 Those who have received a forgiveness of sin, those who have embraced the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, those who have partaken of the divine nature through obedience to the commandments of God, know from whom they have received these glorious blessings. Those without faith in Christ will fear all that transpires around them and will be in the midst of unbridled distress and confusion.

18.26 The first four Apostles of this dispensation were Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris. None of them ever served as members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. The time would come, however, when the Three Witnesses would be called upon to seek out and ordain these special witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ. In their hands would be committed the taking of the Gospel unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. They would be called upon to forsake every other endeavor so that their primary task might be accomplished. Each succeeding member of that august body has received the same charge and has been proven in the furnace of affliction in their attempts to fulfill the mind and will of the Lord.

18.26.16—Gentile—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

18.26.19—Jew—That is, one who could trace his or her lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

18.27 How were the first members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of this dispensation to be recognized? They would be those who had willingly taken of the Gospel unto Gentile and unto Jew;

18.28 Wherefore, all men must take upon them the name which is given of the Father, for in that name shall they be called at the last day;

18.29 Wherefore, if they know not the name by which they are called, they cannot have place in the kingdom of my Father.

18.30 And now, behold, there are others who are called to declare my gospel, both unto Gentile and unto Jew;

18.31 Yea, even twelve; and the Twelve shall be my disciples, and...
accepted the principles and ordinances of the Gospel, who had proven themselves faithful members of the Church of Jesus Christ, who had been obedient to every task that had been placed upon their shoulders. During the following five year period, the Three Witnesses would easily identify those who should be called as Apostles. They would perceive it in their daily walk and talk. They would shine forth as bright and burning lights in the midst of a darkened world. The Lord would whisper to the Three Witnesses the truth that these twelve men had treasured up in their hearts that had prepared them for their calling.

18.28 The Apostles would be men who did not receive the Gospel half-heartedly. They were those who had accepted the blessings of God attendant to discipleship and they were willing to be on the receiving end of the slings and arrows devised by the wicked for their Master. They were to be personal representatives of the Savior in every conceivable way. They would joyfully impart that which they had received from him, and by the same token joyfully receive all that the world chose to bestow upon their persons because of their testimony of the truth, whether for good or for ill. The nations of the earth and the inhabitants thereof would be judged by Christ according to the treatment they rendered to his special servants.

18.29 We may point to the instructions given to the Apostles of old, both in Jerusalem and in the land of Bountiful, wherein the Lord specified the manner in which the labors of his servants should proceed.

18.29.9—me—Whether it is by his own voice or by the voice of his servants, it is the same. We may expect, however, that the Savior would personally confirm the ordination of each of his Apostles as they were called. This, no doubt, would prove satisfactory to them all.

18.29.20—written—Jesus had given instructions to his ancient servants as to how they should proceed after his departure. These can be found in the writings of the Bible and in the Book of Mormon. As the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time unfolded, however, the prophet Joseph Smith would receive additional revelations that would clarify and focus the efforts of the Twelve Apostles.

18.30 The fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ was to be found within the pages of the Book of Mormon, the holographic manuscript of which was literally before Oliver and David. The principles of eternal life as they were taught among the Nephites was to be the standard by which all truth was to be established. The Old and New Testaments would add to and strengthen the fundamental truths that had been taught to the Nephites. All ambiguity was to be disambiguated, all false doctrines were to be revealed, all darkness would be dispelled by the brightness of the truths they would find within the pages of the Book of Mormon.

18.31 In June of 1829, the Lord revealed his will to the future members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, six years before they would be called into service. These would be men who would perceive great weaknesses within themselves, weaknesses that would seem to disqualify them from serving in such a responsible office in the Church and Kingdom of God. So long as they refrained from sin, so long as they attempted to live by every word that proceeded forth from the mouth of God, they would be sustained and edified in their mortal stewardship. Some of these great and good men would fall by the wayside. We may only vainly speculate regarding the trials and tribulations that overcame them or the eternal consequences that have befallen them. The
lesson to be learned here is that they fell because they did not completely live for the grace that had been promised them.

18.32 The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles would have the responsibility to go into all of the world in order that the Gospel might be preached in every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. As the saints were gathered these special witnesses would organize them as the Lord directed, choosing appropriate and effective leadership, those who would receive the keys of their callings and who would continue to administer the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the absence of the Twelve. The Apostles were free to utilize those gifts and talents that had come to them by divine investiture and through life's experiences. They would teach and motivate, inspire and edify in every place to which their Lord would send them.

18.33 The Apostles form the foundation of the Church of Christ, it is true, but the Savior is the chief cornerstone, that which determines the placement and orientation of all of the others. He stands at the head of the Church and is intimately involved with the growth and development thereof, notwithstanding any talents, gifts, or considered opinions of those who serve him.

18.33, 3-4—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

18.34 In June of 1829 Joseph Smith spoke these words aloud; it is likely that Oliver Cowdery acted as the scribe for the prophet. Nearly six years would pass before there would be any individual would read them as to employ them to himself. Each man called to serve in the Quorum of the Twelve would have to learn for himself that it was the Lord who gave them to the prophet years before. As an Apostle, that testimony regarding the power of prophecy and revelation would have to be firm indeed.

18.35 The scriptures are not given by the will of men, but by the power of the Holy Ghost as it moved upon the minds and hearts of the servants of God. The inspiration of the Holy Ghost is timeless and does not diminish after five years or even after five thousand years. Thus, a man may read the words spoken to a prophet in a completely different time and place and perceive the truth of that scripture as certainly as the man who originally received it. Uninspired men typically denigrate God's power to speak to a person or a people before they are born, yet we may see in the sacred record countless instances of the Lord doing just that. Thus, it would be possible for the first Twelve Apostles of this dispensation to read these words five years after the fact of their being written down and enjoy the blessings of those instructions as if they had been present at the time they were spoken. In fact, that is exactly what the Lord expected of these men.

18.36 At first blush, a man might have some hesitancy in accepting the notion that the voice of the Lord might be heard while reading something that He caused to be written. It seems much easier to “hear” the voice of the Lord if His representative is actually uttering inspired words, if there is an actual auditory physical sensation transpiring at the same time the spiritual component is occurring. As the Lord assures us here, the same spiritually profound experience can take place in the quiet of one’s own room while pondering the language of the prophets in written form.

18.37 For almost six years the Three Witnesses looked upon the burgeoning

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<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
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<td>32 And, behold, you are they who are ordained of me to ordain priests and teachers; to declare my gospel, according to the power of the Holy Ghost which is in you, and according to the callings and gifts of God unto men;</td>
<td>D&amp;C 18:32 MD 599, 776</td>
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<td>33 And I, Jesus Christ, your Lord and your God, have spoken it.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 18:33–36 MM 3 403</td>
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<td>34 These words are not of men nor of man, but of me; wherefore, you shall testify they are of me and not of man;</td>
<td>D&amp;C 18:34, 36 CR98-A 42 D&amp;C 18:34–36 EM 3:1416</td>
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<td>35 For it is my voice which speaketh them unto you; for they are given by my Spirit unto you, and by my power you can read them one to another; and save it were by my power you could not have them;</td>
<td>D&amp;C 18:35–36 EM 3:1284</td>
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<td>36 Wherefore, you can testify that you have heard my voice, and know my words.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 18:37</td>
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<td>37 And now, behold, I give unto</td>
<td>D&amp;C 18:37</td>
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membership of the Church of Christ, all the time seeking for those whom the Lord had chosen to be His especial witnesses. William B. Smith, a younger brother of the prophet Joseph Smith joined the Church of Jesus Christ in June 1830 and was therefore the first of those who would one day be the initial Quorum of the Twelve to be baptized. Three months later, in September of 1830, Parley P. Pratt and his brother Orson received the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. A year later, in the summer of 1831 William E. McLellin received the saving ordinances and ordination to the priesthood. Shortly thereafter, while the prophet and his family were dwelling in the home of their parents in Hiram, Ohio, Luke S. and Lyman E. Johnson accepted membership in the burgeoning Church of Jesus Christ. A month later, in October 1831, Orson Hyde received baptism at the hand of his former mentor Sidney Rigdon. The following year in April 1832 both Brigham Young and his lifelong friend Heber C. Kimball accepted baptism. In June 1832 Thomas B. Marsh and David W. Patten obtained testimonies of the truth, as did John F. Boynton three months later in September 1832. The last of the first Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to align himself with the restoration, John E. Page, did so in August 1833. Thus, the Three Witnesses were able to watch these men under all manner of circumstances for at least a year and in some instances as many as four years. In addition, eight of these men suffered the trials and tribulations of Zion’s Camp in May and June of 1834 in the company of Joseph Smith and Martin Harris.

18.37.8—9 Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

18.37.13—14 David Whitmer—David Whitmer was the fourth child of Peter and Mary Whitmer, born 7 January 1805. David and his brothers, John and Peter, were baptized for the remission of sin during the summer of 1829. It is clear that David also was blessed with the power and authority of God, the Melchizedek priesthood about that same time. David would serve as one of the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon and was one of the six men who formed the nucleus of the Church of Jesus Christ on 6 April 1830. He and the other two witnesses, Oliver Cowdery and Martin Harris, would be commissioned to select the first members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in this dispensation. During a time of heavy persecution, David became disaffected from the Church, he and his family eventually settling in Richmond, Missouri. His brother-in-law and longtime friend, Oliver Cowdery came to visit him in 1850, as he prepared to make his journey west to be with the main body of the saints in the Salt Lake Valley. He apparently encouraged David to do the same. Oliver, however, died in David Whitmer’s home on 3 March 1850. David remained in Richmond, Missouri, until own death on 25 January 1888.

18.38 The desires of one’s heart and mind eventually are manifested in outward conduct and speech. Thus, the seeming delay in the formation of the first Quorum of Twelve Apostles; or better put, the revelation coming to the Three Witnesses nearly six years before the task was to be accomplished.

18.39 On 14 February 1835 in Kirtland, Ohio, a meeting was held in the schoolhouse where the names of the Apostles were announced. Lyman E. you, Oliver Cowdery, and also unto David Whitmer, that you shall search out the Twelve, who shall have the desires of which I have spoken;

38 And by their desires and their works you shall know them.

39 And when you have found them you shall show these things
Johnson, Brigham Young, and Heber C. Kimball were ordained by the Three Witnesses at that time. The next day Orson Hyde, David W. Patten, Luke S. Johnson, William E. McLellin, John F. Boynton, and William Smith were ordained by same threesome. On 21 February Parley P. Pratt arrived in Kirtland and was soon ordained by David Whitmer. Two months later Thomas B. Marsh and Orson Pratt returned from their missions and were ordained. The prophet Joseph Smith then organized the Twelve according to their age which thereby established their relative seniority in the Quorum. Thereafter, as additional men were called to fill vacancies, seniority would be determined by the date of ordination.

18.39.10—11—**these things**—That is to say, the contents of the present revelation were to be read to the newly called Twelve Apostles, a duty that befell Oliver Cowdery.

18.40 The meetings of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles are held with reverence and decorum befitting the servants of the Lord God of Israel. During their first meeting, held 28 March 1835, each of the brethren felt the need to beg forgiveness of the Father their previous attitudes of light-mindedness and vanity. They also petitioned the First Presidency that they might be more fully instructed in their responsibilities. Section 107 of the Doctrine and Covenants was the response.

18.40.2—**you**—We should probably assume that the Lord is referring not only to David Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery, but to the Quorum of the Twelve as well.

18.41 The relationship between the various presiding quorums of the priesthood would be clearly articulated in Doctrine and Covenant 107, the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve providing the two senior administrative bodies in the governance of the Church. The mission of the Twelve, and all of those who would serve at their behest, was unto the entire world, anywhere the God of Israel might send them. The principles of the Gospel in their simplest and purest form were to govern all that they said and did. There is no greater invitation that can be extended to the children of men than to repent and be baptized.

18.41.2—**you**—Again, we should probably assume that the Lord is referring not only to David Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery, but to the Quorum of the Twelve as well.

18.41.19—20—**Jesus Christ**—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

18.42 In the eyes of God the Father, every human being that has walked upon this earth is subject to salvation, subject to the same eternal principles that have redeemed the children of God from eternity to eternity. Neither gender nor age is of any true consequence in terms of the availability of redemption. Little children are alive in Christ; those who are accountable may find eternal life through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

18.42.22—24—**years of accountability**—The Lord has been quite specific about what constitutes accountability in His eyes. For normal children, a boy or girl becomes accountable before God at the age of eight.

18.43 No one can effectively serve the Lord God of Israel without being freed from the burdens of sin. Having once been liberated from the anguish and distress caused by the effects of transgression, we must press forward along the path of righteousness, at all times and in all places.

18.44 40 And you shall fall down and worship the Father in my name.

18.44 41 And you must preach unto the world, saying: You must repent and be baptized, in the name of Jesus Christ;

18.44 42 For all men must repent and be baptized, and not only men, but women, and children who have arrived at the years of accountability.

18.44 43 And now, after that you have received this, you must keep my commandments in all things;

D&C 18:40
AF 412
DS 115
D&C 18:41
DNCT 2 110
MD 630
D&C 18:42
MD 853
EM 2:833
18.44 The fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ could easily be found within the pages of the Book of Mormon. The hearts of the children of men would be positively affected by the spirit of God that would attend any honest reading of the text. The teachings of the ancient Nephite prophets would sink deep into their hearts and would motivate them to put off the natural man and walk in righteousness all of their days.

18.44.9—10—Marvelous work—This is certainly in reference to the whole of the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Church and Kingdom of God, but in the immediate temporal context refers to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

18.45 The blessings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ do not pertain to this lost and fallen world, even though we are privileged to receive many of them here. The blessings transcend the Celestial world and invite ascension into the blessings of the Millennial reign, and from there on to the glory of the Celestial Kingdom. There are no blessings which the world can promise that have any lasting meaning at all.

18.46 Once we have set our hand to the plow, we cannot turn our hands or our heads to the right hand or the left. We cannot look back over our shoulders at the Sodom and Gomorrah’s that we have left behind. As was said before, all that we do must be done with a full purpose of heart.

18.47 The judgment of God lies solely in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ, through the power of the priesthood vested in him by the Father. There is justifiable punishment for rebellion, but there is also mercy and compassion through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. This all men may know through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost.

18.47.3—4—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

18.47.22—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

44 And by your hands I will work a marvelous work among the children of men, unto the convincing of many of their sins, that they may come unto repentance, and that they may come unto the kingdom of my Father.

45 Wherefore, the blessings which I give unto you are above all things.

46 And after that you have received this, if you keep not my commandments you cannot be saved in the kingdom of my Father.

47 Behold, I, Jesus Christ, your Lord and your God, and your Redeemer, by the power of my Spirit have spoken it. Amen.

Section 19

Date: March 1830
Place: Manchester, New York
To: Martin Harris

19.0.1 Martin Harris was an early supporter of the prophet Joseph Smith and of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. He gave moral and monetary support to Joseph at times when there were forces afoot to destroy the labor which had been placed upon the young prophet’s shoulders. For two months in 1828, from April to June, Martin served as Joseph’s scribe while the latter translated the first portion of Mormon’s treatise on the spiritual history of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas. During that time 116 pages of holographic material was generated, essentially the book of Lehi and the first portion of the book of Mosiah. After much cajoling, Martin Harris eventually was given permission to carry the manuscript to his home in Palmyra, New York, under covenant to show the translation to no one save a few named individuals. Martin, however, broke the covenant and in short order lost possession of the sacred record, for which both he and Joseph were severely chastised. By 22 September 1828, Joseph had been forgiven for his part in the debacle and the plates, together with the Urim and Thummim, had been returned to him by the angel Moroni. Shortly thereafter, Joseph resumed the translation with Emma as his scribe. They did not progress much, no more
than sixteen pages of manuscript by the time that Martin Harris came to Harmony, Pennsylvania, to visit with the prophet in March 1829. No doubt Martin wished to be reinstated, but the Lord had provided another aide for Joseph Smith, in the person of Oliver Cowdery. After Oliver’s arrival, the translation was quickly finished; begun on 5 April 1829 it was completed by the third week in June 1829, at which time Oliver began a complete copy of the entire text. About that same time, Oliver Cowdery, Martin Harris, and David Whitmer were selected to serve as the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon, having visited with the angel Moroni and having been shown all of the ancient artifacts of the Nephite peoples in open vision. That spiritual testimony was confirmed by the voice of the Lord testifying that the translation was correct. In September 1829, E.B. Grandin began typesetting the text of the Book of Mormon and began printing the initial signatures of the volume. This would continue until March 1830 when the first copies were made available to the public.

19.0.2 Notwithstanding the fact that Martin Harris had been called upon to serve as one of the Three Witnesses and had enjoyed great blessings from the Lord, he apparently felt completely inadequate because of his betrayal of the prophet and the Lord two years before. At the time that the angel Moroni appeared to the Witnesses in Joseph’s company, Martin was certain that their initial petitions to the God of Heaven had proven fruitless because of his own personal lack of faith. For this reason he physically distanced himself from his friends and ventured further into the woods. Shortly after his departure, the angel appeared to the other three men. Joseph then went in search for Martin, and after finding him in fervent prayer, knelt with him until the angel appeared to the two. Martin was satisfied, grateful that he had been privileged to participate in such a glorious opportunity. Apparently, however, none of these experiences clarified for him the disposition of the Lord regarding the fiasco many months before. Therefore, in March 1830, a few weeks before the organization of the Church on 6 April 1830, Martin sought for enlightenment on the matter. This Section is the response, which clarifies in no uncertain terms the major follies in which Martin had engaged himself, not all of which can be found in the regular history of the Church and Kingdom of God. This section appeared as Chapter XVI in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 44 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

19.1 Martin should be comforted by the words that the Lord uses to describe himself here. There is salvation, there is redemption, there is an encompassing resolution to Martin’s distress.

19.1.3—Alpha—The first letter of the Greek alphabet. This constitutes a reprise of the Lord’s imagery used in his revelation to John the Beloved (see RV-C 1.8 and RV-C 21.6).

19.1.5—Omega—The last letter of the Greek alphabet. This constitutes a reprise of the Lord’s imagery used in his revelation to John the Beloved (see RV-C 1.8 and RV-C 21.6).

19.1.6—Christ—The Greek form of the Hebrew “Messiah”, essentially meaning, “the anointed one”.

19.1.12—beginning—An iteration in English of the idea represented by “Alpha”.

19.1.15—end—An iteration in English of the idea represented by “Omega”.

19.1.17—Redeemer—There is no redemption or salvation possible for mankind save through the atoning sacrifice and the power of the resurrection vested in the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 I am Alpha and Omega, Christ the Lord; yea, even I am he, the beginning and the end, the Redeemer of the world.

D&C 19:1
DHC 5 (40)
MD 31
D&C 19:1–2
AF 84
MA 55
19.2 In nothing did the Savior fail to meet the expectations of his Father. All of the enemies of the children of God were overcome in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. In his death and resurrection, Jesus provided immortality for every man, woman, and child who has ever lived or would ever live upon this planet. Through his atoning sacrifice, wherein he took upon himself the punishment for all personal and collective sin, all men might find eternal life through the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

19.3 Lucifer has attempted to usurp the power and throne of God even before the foundations of the earth were laid. He attempted to overthrow the second estate of Adam and Eve and their posterity by introducing sin into the world, by the which he hoped to commandeer the earth and all life within it. Yet, through his successful stewardship, Jesus has made legal claim to the earth and all of the denizens thereof. Satan has no place here and will be summarily dismissed when He reigns whose right it is to reign. The wickedness of this world will be utterly destroyed, either through complete repentance or by utter exile. The distinction between “works” and “deeds” is subtle, but theological application of the various terms is revealing.

19.3.18—world—The end of the world is not the destruction of the earth, but rather the destruction of the wicked, those who have chosen to emulate the spirit of this lost and fallen state of existence.

19.3.40—works—The Greek word which is usually translated as “works” derives from roots that mean to “act, toil, occupation”. The English word “works” derive from Germanic roots that mean “sacrifice, onerous expenditure of energy, pursuit, calling”.

19.3.43—deeds—The Greek words which are usually translated as “deeds” derive from roots that are similar to 19.3.40 and others that mean “miraculous powers, forces, able, possible, practice, act, function”. The English word “deeds” derive from Germanic roots that mean “product of responsible agency, illustrious acts, feats, transference of title”.

19.4 So long as a man remains personally responsible for his transgressions against the commandments of God, he will suffer personally the punishments that are affixed to those commandments. There is no statute of limitations in the economy of God. God is endless, His laws are endless, and the execution of His judgment is inescapable.

19.5 This is reminiscent of the commentary language used by the Savior with some of his parables (see MT-C 13.42 and MT-C 13.50). In the latter days, the wheat will be separated from the tares and there will be a separation between the good and bad fish. There will be sorrow and anguish indescribable among the wicked.

19.5.16—weeping—An indication of abject sorrow.

19.5.17—wailing—An indication of abject anguish.

19.5.19—gnashing—An indication of abject, frustrated anger.

19.5.30—left hand—An allusion to the Lord’s parable regarding the separation of the sheep and the goats at the final judgment, the goats being on the left hand (see MT-C 25.31–46)

19.6 There can be no question that for a time Martin Harris was an active participant among the ranks of the wicked (see 3.12–15 and 10.5–9). We do not know at what point Martin Harris became aware of the contents of Section 10 of the Doctrine and Covenants, but he certainly must have been deeply affected by the things that were said of him there. How much of the translation of the Book of Mormon had he been able to read prior to coming...
to the prophet? The first part of book is filled with references to the endless torment and damnation that will befall the wicked. We should not be surprised to learn that Martin Harris had already acquired a copy of the Book of Mormon and had read portions of it prior to showing up at the prophet’s residence in Manchester, New York. Hence, his deep and abiding concern.

19.6.18—written—Where is the phrase “endless torment” utilized in the scriptures? Only in the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants.

19.7 Eternal damnation is a poignant phrase, deeply disturbing to those who are the object of the punishment. Such chastisement is unavoidable in any time or venue. All men will be held accountable for their conduct. Notwithstanding that the punishment will be inflicted at some place and at some time, the punishment itself is not infinite. It does not need to be, because personal sin is not infinite.

19.7.5–6—eternal damnation—This phrase only appears in the scriptures two times, other than here (see MK-C 3.29 and 29.44). “Endless damnation and “everlasting damnation” are to be found in the Book of Mormon.

19.7.11—express—The English adjective “express” includes sentiments including, “plain, clear, direct, not ambiguous, not implied or left to inference, copied, resembling, an exact representation, intended for a particular purpose”.

19.8 The philosophies of men are filled with hyperboles; the theologies of men follow suit. The truth is not mysterious to those who are filled with the Holy Ghost.

19.8.8—mystery—The punishments and blessings of the Father and the Son are misunderstood and misinterpreted because the natural man generally has no idea as to the character, attributes, and perfections of deity. Thus, men generally are distracted by seeming inconsistencies between fairness and divine justice. Unenduring suffering for quantitative sin is irrational and certainly does not fit into a system of equity and fairness. It is true that if there had not been a redemption for sin, that men would have abided in the presence of devils forever. This state of affairs would have been logically intolerable. Hence, in the wisdom and fairness of God, the Messiah was sent into the world to balance the affairs of men such that they might choose for themselves whether they would be punished for their own sins, or whether they would exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repent of their evildoing, and receive the saving and exalting ordinances of the Gospel. Thus, all men choose the degree and the duration to which they will suffer for their transgressions against eternal law. There are those, however, who choose damnation, and that forever. These are the sons of perdition.

19.8.20—apostles—The brethren gathered were supposed to understand as did the ancient apostles, because at least four of them had already been ordained apostles: Joseph Smith and the Three Witnesses.

19.9 How does one dwell comfortably in the presence of God the eternal Father? Only those whose faith has been perfected by the truths of eternity find rest in the presence of the Lord. One must love God and in turn sense the love that He has for them. This comes by way of the simple principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

19.9.4—you—The revelation had come at the request of Martin Harris but was addressed to all those who qualified as apostles. We should prob—

7 Again, it is written eternal damnation; wherefore it is more express than other scriptures, that it might work upon the hearts of the children of men, altogether for my name’s glory.

8 Wherefore, I will explain unto you this mystery, for it is meet unto you to know even as mine apostles.

9 I speak unto you that are chosen in this thing, even as one, that you may enter into my rest.
ably consider the instruction given here and in the verses that follow until the Lord once again employs the singular pronoun “thee” in verse 25.

19.9.9–10—*this thing*—That is, they had been chosen as apostles to facilitate the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God, together with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

19.10 God the eternal Father and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, do not desire to be mysterious. In fact, it is quite the reverse. It is life eternal that we might know God and His Messiah and it is the work and glory of the Father and the Son to bring about the immortality and eternal life of mankind. Satan has filled the earth with mystery, the prime source being the spirit of rebellion and self-indulgence. Men have been persuaded that they are and will continue to be ignorant of their origins, believing every sort of absurdity instead of the truth.

19.10.8—*great*—This is not an exultance of mystery; it is a lament.

19.11 At the heart of our understanding is a knowledge of the correct nomenclature of God. “Eternal” in this phrase serves an unmarked possessive, as a nominative adjective.

19.12 At the heart of our understanding is a knowledge of the correct nomenclature of God. “Endless” in this phrase serves an unmarked possessive, as a nominative adjective.

19.13 God the Father desires His children to be happy. He knows that wickedness never was nor ever can be happiness. The cry of repentance is in every significance an invitation to happiness. In these latter days, the plan of happiness has been revealed through the prophet Joseph Smith. Therefore, no man in this dispensation can receive a fullness of joy save through gaining a fervent testimony of the dealings of the Father and the Son with the prophet. The Lord Jesus Christ placed Joseph as a witness of truth, a revealer of mysteries, as a bright and burning light in the latter days to draw the honest in heart to the Son of God. No man will effectively draw nigh to the Savior without passing by Joseph Smith. That is the decree of the Father and the Son and the witness of the Holy Ghost.

19.14 Not only had the men who were present for this revelation been blessed by previous revelations, they would continue to be blessed and edified at every turn. They would continue to grow into spiritual maturity as they hearkened to his voice, as will all those who seek the truth with a desire to live by its precepts.

19.15 To transgress the law of God is sufficient to receive the unflinching rebuke of Heaven. To persist in rebellion after the divine rebuke brings additional culpability far more grievous. The Lord is not hesitant to allow His children to suffer a portion of their deserved punishment for sin as a harbinger of that which must follow mortality without redemption. Once suffered, the sin is revealed for what it is, in no uncertain terms. Why would anyone, knowing what lies in store for his immortal soul after departing this life, choose to persist in the paths of sin? Obstinance! Pride! Spite! Self-loathing! All these are additional sins which are added to the aggregate. Mankind in general has been sheltered from the imposition of punishment for personal sin, but there will come a time when the full weight and measure of the law of God will be brought to bear upon the unrepentant.
19.16 This is the central message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. During the final hours of his mortal sojourn upon the earth, Jesus entered into a period of abject suffering unimaginable to those who still walk upon the earth. He took upon himself, in a manner incomprehensible to us, the full burden of responsibility for the wickedness of the children of men, those who will have lived at sometime during the mortal history of this planet.

19.17 Redemption from sin, escape from the consequences of our own misconduct, comes only through faith in the Savior, repentance from all further transgression, and the acceptance of the covenants that the Lord has extended to His children that they might enter into the Church and Kingdom of God for time and for all eternity.

19.18 This is a rehearsal of the account given by Luke in the New Testament (see LK-C 22.39–46). The Lord Jesus Christ was gifted in a multitude of ways, but preeminent among those gifts, that which distinguished him above all of his brethren is that he was the Only Begotten of the Father in the Flesh, the only mortal to walk the earth as the Son of God. As such, he had control over his physical life. No man could murder him, even though they would try time and again. When the time came for him to depart mortality, he surrendered his body to the grave. As he began to suffer the consequences of the personal sin of mankind, he was affected, body, mind, and spirit, to an extremity that we cannot begin to comprehend. There was understandable, momentary hesitancy, followed by a willing acceptance of the will of the Father.

19.19 In the midst of his agony he was strengthened and encouraged by an angel from heaven. He then pressed forward through the intentional distractions perpetrated by Lucifer and his minions throughout the long hours of that night and throughout the horrors of the crucifixion, until all of the sins of mankind had been accounted for. Salvation from death and sin was guaranteed for those who were willing to partake of it through the principles and ordinances governing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

19.20 Martin Harris knew for himself how it felt to be blessed by the power of the Holy Ghost, to sit in the presence of a prophet of God hour after hour writing down the testimonies of Apostles and prophets of God. He knew also the abject effects of sin, how pride and avarice can drive the influence of the Spirit of God from one’s life. He had continued to suffer the consequences of his wickedness, and notwithstanding some of his other divinely inspired experiences, he had continued to doubt himself, to feel deep sorrow and regret for the part he had played in the attempt to destroy the Lord’s servant. While he had made some strides toward forgiveness and redemption, all was not complete by any means. Many years would pass before complete reconciliation would be achieved. Needless to say, any others who might have been present at the time the prophet Joseph Smith received this revelation could also point to times in their lives when they lost contact with the spirit of the Lord. To a greater or lesser degree they would each speak with certainty about the misery and anguish through which they each had passed after they forfeited their privileges.

19.21 The Lord is not an elitist. He desires that all of His children receive the blessings prepared for them, but they must do so in the manner He has established for their benefit.

16 For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent;

17 But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I;

18 Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—

19 Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men.

20 Wherefore, I command you again to repent, lest I humble you with my almighty power; and that you confess your sins, lest you suffer these punishments of which I have spoken, of which in the smallest, yea, even in the least degree you have tasted at the time I withdrew my Spirit.

21 And I command you that you preach naught but repentance, and show not these things unto the world until it is wisdom in me.
received, in the Book of Commandments.

19.22 This imagery is redolent of that used by the Apostle Paul in his letters to the Corinthians and the Hebrews. Infants are not sufficiently mature to digest complex meals, no matter how beneficial they may be for adults. They are nurtured with their mother’s milk that they might be protected and properly nourished during the beginning weeks and months of their life following their birth. What is true in the physical realm is also true in the spiritual realm. We must learn line upon line and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, until we are able to comprehend the whole truth of eternity.

19.23 Humility is paramount to a disciple of Jesus Christ. We are in no position to question the wisdom and teaching of the Father and the Son. We are children by comparison, no matter what we may have convinced ourselves to the contrary. So long as we seek His divine protection, His inspiration, we will be securely ensconced in the arms of His love.

19.24 The Father and the Son are one. To hear from either is to hear from both. All that the Savior has accomplished in time and in eternity has been achieved because of his adherence to the plan of salvation that the Father put forth before the foundations of the earth were laid.

19.24.3—4—*Jesus Christ*—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

19.25 We may not speak with complete clarity here, save to say that certainly Joseph Smith is one of the neighbors alluded to here.

19.25.5—*thee*—Specifically in reference to Martin Harris. From verse 9, the instruction had been generalized. Here it becomes unique to Martin.

19.25.13—*wife*—This counsel does not speak well of Martin’s mental and emotional conduct. Some historians have pointed to possible liaisons that Martin may have contracted and even consummated, but we cannot at this point speak with certainty. There is no cause, however, to dig up the transgressions that have long since been repented of.

19.25.18—*life*—The motivations for these sentiments may only be speculated upon, although Martin Harris’ involvement with the missing manuscript debacle may be understood as certainly endangering all that Joseph Smith had been sent to the earth to do.

19.26 In the fall of 1829, E.B. Grandin was contacted by Oliver Cowdery and Martin Harris about the possibility of having the Grandin press be employed to publish the Book of Mormon. Eventually, Grandin agreed to print and bind five thousand copies for $3,000.00, using 151 acres of Martin Harris’ farmland as collateral. As the time came for payment, Martin hesitated. Hence, the counsel given here. Although the land was sold in April 1831, E.B. Grandin did not have the money in hand until a few months later, after the acreage was sold a second time.

19.26.23—25—*Book of Mormon*—The sacred record of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, composed by the prophet Mormon during the fourth century of the Christian era, using nearly a thousand years of preserved records of the Nephite civilization. Its resting place was revealed to the prophet Joseph Smith who was then permitted to translate the record into English by the gift and power of God.

22 For they cannot bear meat now, but milk they must receive; wherefore, they must not know these things, lest they perish.

23 Learn of me, and listen to my words; walk in the meekness of my Spirit, and you shall have peace in me.

24 I am Jesus Christ; I came by the will of the Father, and I do his will.

25 And again, I command thee that thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife; nor seek thy neighbor’s life.

26 And again, I command thee that thou shalt not covet thy own property, but impart it freely to the printing of the Book of Mormon, which contains the truth and the word of God—
19.27 The Lord had prophesied through His Nephite prophets that the Book of Mormon would come unto the remnant of the House of Israel by means of the Gentiles. It is quite likely that the key to the conversion of the Jewish population of the world will come about as a direct response to the Book of Mormon as it is introduced to them.

19.27.7—Gentile—The Greek word "Gentiles" means "foreigners" or "strangers", and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as "Gentiles" carries with it the notion of "massing" like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnant of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

19.27.15—Jew—The families of Lehi and Ishmael had come to the promised land from the environs of Jerusalem which made them political Jews even though they derived from the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim respectively. In addition, the Nephites and Lamanites were joined in the western hemisphere by those who had accompanied Mulek from the land of Judea to the land of Zarahemla shortly after the destruction of the city of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 589 BC. These were both political and tribal Jews.

19.27.19—Lamanites—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teachings of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

19.27.22—remnant—We ought not be distracted by the fact that the Lamanites are termed to be remnants of the Jews by the Lord. They are also remnants of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.

19.27.34—Messiah—A Hebrew word meaning the "Anointed One". Translated into Greek, this phrase becomes, in its anglicized form, "Christ".

19.28 Martin was not the only man of his age who had some difficulty offering vocal prayer in public, but in his own life this lapse was hindering his spiritual growth. It would directly impact any serviceability that he might otherwise have had; had he learned to be a prayerful man. A man’s willingness and ability to pray in public derives from his frequency of personal prayer, his familiarity with his God.

19.29 Martin Harris served a mission to the eastern states from 1832 and 1834, in partial fulfillment of this commandment from the Lord. After the prophet Joseph was killed, Martin Harris preached the Gospel and bore testimony of the Book of Mormon in England, although this service was not the result of a formal mission call by the Church. His testimony would prevail, however, in the tops of the mountains when he joined the saints in Utah toward the end of his life.

19.29.8—publish—A direct allusion to the fact that Martin’s financial contribution to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon would literally cause the Book of Mormon to go into all the world. Martin’s personal witness would accompany the text, but his own voice would be added to those of the other missionaries called to serve in the vineyard of the Lord.

19.30 We know little of Martin Harris’ teaching style, although one would hope that he followed the Lord’s counsel in all of his dealings with his fellow

27 Which is my word to the Gentile, that soon it may go to the Jew, of whom the Lamanites are a remnant, that they may believe the gospel, and look not for a Messiah to come who has already come.

28 And again, I command thee that thou shalt pray vocally as well as in thy heart; yea, before the world as well as in secret, in public as well as in private.

29 And thou shalt declare glad tidings, yea, publish it upon the mountains, and upon every high place, and among every people that thou shalt be permitted to see.

30 And thou shalt do it with all humility, trusting in me, reviling.
men. There is nothing to gain by partaking of the spirit of the world in sacred
matters.

19.31 As Martin would teach the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel
of Jesus Christ, there would be those who would desire to engage him in
discussions about the great diversity of religious opinions about the scriptures
and the philosophies of men. He was to avoid these inasmuch as the power
and influence of the Holy Ghost produces doctrinal and theological unity. His
role was to aid the children of men to partake of the divine nature through
faith in Jesus Christ and sincere repentance from all sin. Once forgiven,
an individual could become part of the body of Christ and enjoy the blessings of
truth in every venue. The scriptures would not be of any private interpretation
to the saints. If everyone would receive the Holy Ghost as they should, it would
reasonable to conclude that commentaries such as this would be unnecessary.

19.31.3—tenets—The English word “tenets” derives from Latin sources that
mean “he holds”. Among the sentiments expressed by this noun are the
following: “personal opinion, principle, dogma, doctrine, belief”.

19.32 It would be all that Martin Harris could do to live up to the counsel
that he received in this revelation. He would struggle in his familial relation-
ships, his friendships, and his association with the Church. Toward the end of
his life, however, he would draw near to those who loved him and desired his
best welfare. In those final months, he testified of that which he knew to be
true, particularly the Book of Mormon and of its divine origins.

19.33 Martin Harris would dance on the precipice of disaster for the rest of
his life. Most of his sorrow could have been averted had he hearkened to the
counsel he had received. The Lord had clearly pointed out wherein Martin’s
weaknesses lay and cautioned him directly to avoid certain approaches to his
daily walk and talk. By the time he desired to return to the faith, he was
financially incapable of making the journey on his own. His longtime friends,
however, saw to his needs.

19.34 That which would be used to finance the printing of the Book of
Mormon was only a portion of that which Martin Harris possessed, yet it was
a sizable sum of money that he had committed to the project. We may suspect
that there was some opposition expressed by his wife Lucy.

19.35 Indebtedness is a form of slavery that affects the heart and mind. At any
moment one’s world may be turned upside down by any sort of financial
reversal.

19.35.9—printer—The Book of Mormon was being printed by E.B. Grand-
din’s press in Palmyra. Grandin had been fearful all along that he
would not be recompensed for his services. Martin had used 150 acres
of his farmland as collateral.

19.36 This instruction was in conjunction with his missionary labors. When
the saints moved to the new Church headquarters in Kirtland, Ohio, Martin
accompanied them there, dividing his time between his labors in Ohio and
New York.

19.37 Martin had received personal revelation that transcended the affairs of
this lost and fallen world. He was an eyewitness to the power of God as vested
in the angel Moroni. He had heard the voice of God and had received a
testimony of the Book of Mormon that could not be taken from him. Who
not against revilers.

31 And of tenets thou shalt not
talk, but thou shalt declare repent-
ance and faith on the Savior, and
remission of sins by baptism, and
by fire, yea, even the Holy Ghost.

32 Behold, this is a great and the
last commandment which I shall
give unto you concerning this mat-
ter; for this shall suffice for thy
daily walk, even unto the end of
thy life.

33 And misery thou shalt receive
if thou wilt slight these counsels,
yea, even the destruction of thyself
and property.

34 Impart a portion of thy prop-
erty, yea, even part of thy lands,
and all save the support of thy
family.

35 Pay the debt thou hast con-
tracted with the printer. Release
thyself from bondage.

36 Leave thy house and home,
except when thou shalt desire to see
thy family;

37 And speak freely to all; yea,
preach, exhort, declare the truth,
even with a loud voice, with a
sound of rejoicing, crying—
better to announce that the Lord God of Heaven yet loved His children and
desired to bring them back into His presence?

19.37.23—Hosanna—The Greek form of a Hebrew cry of rejoicing mean-
ing "Oh! Save us!" Hosanna is the proper response to the cry of repentance.

19.38 The natural man looks to the material things of the earth to provide
security and satisfaction. Though a man were to possess all that this lost and
fallen earth has to offer, yet would there be a void, an emptiness in the heart
and mind of the possessor. We are eternal beings, creatures made of light and
truth. Only when we are nurtured by the spirit of truth do we feel any sub-
stantive contentment. The acquisition of the Spirit of God comes through
communion with Him, and that continually as we go about our business here
upon the earth. There is no want or need that cannot be assuaged by the
power and influence of the Holy Ghost.

19.39 Martin Harris had every reason to be joyful. The Lord God of Israel
knew who he was by name, and loved him sufficiently to lay out before him
the path that he should follow in order to obtain joy and rejoicing in mortality
and eternal life in the world to come.

19.40 A blind guide is worse than no guide at all. Given the experiences that
he had had, Martin Harris should have been able to lead others to Christ, but
without the influence of the Spirit of God he was as spiritually insensitive as
the rest of the children of men. Men and women would look to him for
instruction inasmuch as he had been conversant with the angels of Heaven.
He could testify that he had witnessed all of those glorious experiences
attributed to him, but without the inspiration of the Holy Ghost he could not
effectively tell these interested parties what to do next.

19.41 The proud are led about by their own vanity, presuming themselves to
be filled with light, truth, and wisdom. Pride, however, rejects counsel; the
proud cannot be taught anything. Martin Harris was among the oldest and
most experienced of the prophet Joseph Smith's early associates. Certainly his
was one of the most wealthy and respected of those who aligned themselves
with the Church and Kingdom of God. He and many others like him, assumed
that they would be held in great honor and esteem because of their position in
the world. A moment of reflection, however, would reveal the folly of this
pose. Joseph Smith was among the humblest of souls and yet had the grace of
God poured out mightily upon him. Joseph serves the archetype for this
dispensation representing the model of the effective servant of God. It is our
spiritual status before God that matters, not our station in life.

19.41.20—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is per-
fected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as
"Amen" derives from roots which mean "true". This word is one of the
many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hosanna, hosanna, blessed be the
name of the Lord God!

38 Pray always, and I will pour
out my Spirit upon you, and great
shall be your blessing—yea, even
more than if you should obtain
treasures of earth and corruptible-
ness to the extent thereof.

39 Behold, canst thou read this
without rejoicing and lifting up thy
heart for gladness?

40 Or canst thou run about
longer as a blind guide?

41 Or canst thou be humble and
meek, and conduct thyself wisely
before me? Yea, come unto me thy
Savior. Amen.

Section 20

Date: April 1830
To: Church

20.0.1 As a fourteen year old boy, Joseph Smith became exercised about his
immortal soul. According to most of the religious adults in his life, particularly
in and around the community of Palmyra, New York, unless one was con-
 victed of his sins and sought for redemption, then an eternal future of such a
man or woman was bleak indeed. Of the various forms of worship that existed
in 1820, only the Baptists, the Presbyterians, and the Methodists had an active

D&C 19:38
FPM 200
CR99-0 115
D&C 19:118
DNTC 3 222

AF 216
DHC 1 64
DHC 2 210
DHC 5 (35)
DS 1 230
presence in western New York. These three churches contended with one another, asserting that salvation would come to the children of men as they associated with the particular dogma which each of the three taught. Joseph had become partial to the Methodist line of thinking, but the confusion and turmoil among the various sects was incessant and disturbing to the young man. His study of the New Testament led him to believe that he could learn for himself the truth of the matter if he petitioned his Heavenly Father in fervent prayer. He therefore retired to a grove of trees near his family’s home and poured out his heart to God that he might know which of the churches he should join. What resulted is often referred to as the First Vision, or the appearance of God the eternal Father and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. In the course of the interview, Joseph Smith was told that none of the existing religious institutions actually provided the prospects of salvation. The Savior instructed him that he was to wait for further light and knowledge that would come to him in the process of time. Needless to say, when Joseph Smith communicated the essence of that which he had learned from God, the various ministers of the religions extant in his day took umbrage.

20.0.2 Three years later, after enduring widespread persecution at the hands of those who should have been far more understanding and sympathetic than they were, the prophet Joseph entertained another divine messenger in the person of Moroni, a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ who had dwelt upon the American continent some fourteen hundred years before. Moroni informed Joseph that in a small repository on a nearby hill, a record of the ancient inhabitants of the land was to be found and that in the process of time he would be given the opportunity to translate the record into English. In September of 1827, Joseph Smith acquired the plates. Through a series of events, some fortuitous and some unfortunate, the translation was completed and preparations were made of the publishing of the Book of Mormon. The first examples of the book appeared in Palmyra in March 1830. The translation process served as an education for the young prophet and his companions. Throughout the text of the Book of Mormon were references to the Church of Jesus Christ as it had existed in other dispensations from the earliest beginnings of the history of the world. The fullness of the Gospel of Christ was plainly taught as well, the principles and saving ordinances thereof.

20.0.3 As Joseph and his associates worked on the translation, they received revelations giving guidance and instruction in anticipation of the day in which the Church of Jesus Christ would be once more established upon the earth. All things, however, had to be done in their proper order. In the midst of the translation Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were inspired to ask God regarding the authority by which they might be baptized by immersion for the remission of sins. John the Baptist was sent to them, and he in turn ordained them and commanded them that they ought to baptize one another, which they did. Within a few days, Peter, James, and John appeared to the two young men and bestowed upon them the Melchizedek priesthood, together with the keys of the Apostleship which they had held in the Meridian of Time. Thus equipped, Joseph and Oliver were prepared in all things to restore the Church of Jesus Christ once more upon the earth. Yet, the timing of this event was to be exacting. Sometime during the first six days of April 1830, Joseph Smith and his friends were given explicit instructions as to how they should proceed, the text of which constitutes the present Section of the Doctrine and Covenants.

20.0.4 The Church of Jesus Christ was formally organized on Tuesday, 6 April 1830 with six founding members: Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery,
20.1 It is unnecessary to engage in a lengthy discussion regarding the various chronologies that have been proposed for the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. Most of these are embarrassing to anyone with even a basic understanding of the principles and historical facts involved. The fact of the matter is that, insofar as the current calendaring system is concerned, there is no authoritative way to determine the correlation between any of the ancient calendars and the modern ones. The ancients set the 25th of December as the birth date for the baby Jesus primarily for political reasons, and as a show of tradition as it has become, it is completely without historical warrant. Biblical historians have proposed various years for the birth of the Savior without even the faintest shred of evidence for their assertions. Resorts to astronomical phenomena have been proposed with a spectacular display of ignorance and misinformation. These, combined with faulty suppositions regarding the historical accounts of the day, have compounded the problem with stunning effect. The traditions of men conflated with the ruminations of self-proclaimed intellectuals have done nothing to bring any light to bear on the subject of the Savior’s birth. However, in one short verse, in the introduction to the Constitution of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation, the issue has been definitively laid to rest. What was the point of organizing the Church of Jesus Christ on a date that fell midweek, if it were not that the date was to have extraordinary significance to the Lord’s disciples in the latter days? Once we accept that the 6th of April was chosen because of its relationship to the birth of the Messiah, we need not quibble about the year. Jesus was not born in 7 BC, 4 BC, 3 BC, or any other year proposed by the academics of the world. The Lord could not be any clearer than he has been here. Jesus was born precisely 1830 years prior to the date set aside for the organization of the Church in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times. According to the calendar in use at the time this revelation was given, the date for the birth of Jesus Christ was 6 April 1 BC, there being no Zero year in this system.

20.1.7—Christ—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendency to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such
out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

20.1.20—since—Precisely, exactly 1830 years.

20.1.28—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

20.1.32—That is to say, since the day he was born as an infant in Bethlehem to his mother Mary.

20.1.42—Specifically, the corporate laws of the state of New York.

20.1.44—The narrative voice of this Section of the Doctrine and Covenants should probably be understood as that of the six men who formed the charter membership of the Church of Jesus Christ.

20.2 No one in this dispensation can avoid the power and authority vested in the prophet Joseph Smith. He is the Lord’s anointed for all those who pertain to the Church and Kingdom of God. No one can effectively come unto Christ in our day without a conviction that the Father and the Son called upon Joseph Smith and gave him commandments.

20.2.6—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

20.2.15—ordained—This ordination came at the hands of Peter, James, and John about 1 June 1829 on the banks of the Susquehanna River near Harmony, Pennsylvania.

20.2.17—The Greek roots from which the term "apostle" derives originally signified "I send a message". In Greek political language, it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles constitutes one of the leading governing bodies of the Church of Christ. From time to time, there have been ordained Apostles who have not pertained to that Quorum, but that circumstance has been somewhat infrequent in practice.

20.2.19—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

20.2.24—first elder—That is to say, the presiding elder of the Church of Jesus Christ, as well as the first elder chronologically in this dispensation.

20.3 Oliver Cowdery served as Joseph Smith’s companion in all of his trials and tribulations as the coming forth of the Book of Mormon transpired. He knelt beside Joseph when the Aaronic priesthood was bestowed upon them by John the Baptist. He was in Joseph’s company when the holy Apostleship was conferred. He was privy to countless revelations received by the prophet and most of the time served as scribe as they were dictated. The day that the Church was formally organized, Joseph Smith laid his hands upon the head of Oliver Cowdery and ordained him to be the second elder in the Church.

2 Which commandments were given to Joseph Smith, Jun., who was called of God, and ordained an apostle of Jesus Christ, to be the first elder of this church;

D&C 20:2–3
DHC 1 41
GD 194
JC 770
MD 55, 437
EM 1:337, 410

3 And to Oliver Cowdery, who was also called of God, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to be the second elder of this church, and ordained under his hand;

D&C 20:3–4
DHC 2 176
Oliver then ordained the prophet as the first elder. Both of these ordinations were effectual because of the Apostleship that both men held, authority that had come to them a year before at the hands of Peter, James, and John.

20.3.4—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

20.3.12—apostle—The Greek roots from which the term “apostle” derives originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language, it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles constitutes one of the leading governing bodies of the Church of Christ. From time to time, there have been ordained Apostles who have not pertained to that Quorum, but that circumstance has been somewhat infrequent in practice.

20.3.14-15—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

20.3.27—his—That is to say, Joseph Smith’s hand.

4 And this according to the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom be all glory, both now and forever. Amen.

D&C 20:5
MD 821
EM 1:410
D&C 20:5–6
DHC 5 (36)

20.4 Norwithstanding the fact that six men had gathered together to organize the Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth, yet the Lord made it clear that this was not a work accomplished by the will of men. It was to be his Church, a truth that none of them could ever afford to forget. All of the blessings that they had received and ever would receive, derived from the Son of God.

20.4.6—grace—No true disciple of Jesus Christ can believe that there is any aggregate of activities or performances that can bring us to God without the intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace does come, however, after all we can do to invoke that grace. They are simple acts, indeed, well within our abilities as mortal beings, thus once again manifesting the mercy of our God.

20.4.12–13—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

20.4.23—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”’. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

20.5 There is much to admire in the youth of the prophet Joseph Smith, but the boy found much to criticize as well, particularly after he had matured into adulthood and the sobering responsibilities of being a servant of God had distilled upon him.

20.5.8-9—first elder—That is to say, the prophet Joseph Smith.

20.5.15—remission—Joseph Smith went into the grove near his home seeking for the truth regarding the various claims that the religionists in his community were making regarding salvation. He felt guilty for his transgressions against the laws of God and wished to be forgiven. Considerable disagreement existed between the professors of the denominations in and around Palmyra, New York. He was at a loss as to which

5 After it was truly manifested unto this first elder that he had received a remission of his sins, he was entangled again in the vanities of the world;
of the paths he should follow. Hence, his direct petition to God the eternal Father. When the Father and the Son appeared to Joseph, they commanded him to join with none of the existing churches, but that he should wait until he received further instructions as to how he should proceed. At that moment, however, the Father frankly put Joseph’s mind at rest regarding his standing before heaven.

20.5.21—entangled—Joseph Smith is quite candid about the period of time between the First Vision and the appearance of the angel Moroni three years later. The nature of his testimony regarding the events that had taken place in the spring of 1820 had alienated those who had once been his friends. His associates during this short period were not considered the elite of the society.

20.5.25—vanities—Joseph’s desire for boyhood friends sometimes persuaded him to make unwise decisions regarding the company he kept. Their frivolity and frequent forays into activities unbecoming a prophet of God weighed down upon the young man’s mind and heart.

20.6 On the evening of 21 September 1823, Joseph had reached a point in his sojourn among the temptations of the world that he again began to feel deep concern about his standing before God. He again sought for forgiveness and consolation. Moroni would appear three times that night in Joseph’s room and then again in the morning as he was returning from the field in which he and his family were laboring.

20.6.17—angel—In the person of Moroni, the son of Mormon, who was the custodian of the spiritual record of the Nephite civilization that had been destroyed fourteen hundred years earlier.

20.7 Moroni’s instructions to the prophet Joseph Smith were quite pointed, not only as to the task which he was being given to complete, but also the cautions that would affect his relationships with the children of men. Joseph was given direction and a pace. In these he was able to focus his attention more diligently toward pleasing God rather than pleasing men. He still had some lessons to learn in the process, however.

20.8 Hidden with the plates of Mormon was the breastplate, a piece of body armor that had attached to it a set of seer stones known as the Urim and Thummim. A servant of God who has been given leave to use these sacred artifacts could receive direct revelation from the God of Heaven. It served as an instrument of truth, light, and perfection. The scriptures are replete with examples of similar instruments used by the servants of God in order to bring to light the workings of the Father and the Son among peoples whose civilization and language had been lost to mortal men. The particular Urim and Thummim provided the prophet Joseph Smith had been originally given to the brother of Jared before he and his friends and family had crossed the great deep to inherit the promised land that had been prepared for them. The seer stones survived the extinction of the Jaredites and were eventually entrusted to the keeping of Mormon and then Moroni. Moroni placed them in Joseph’s hands so that the record of his father might be translated into English from the Reformed Egyptian in which they had been written.

20.8.18–20—Book of Mormon—The sacred record of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, composed by the prophet Mormon during the fourth century of the Christian era, using nearly a thousand years of preserved records of the Nephite civilization. Its resting place was revealed to the prophet Joseph Smith who was then permitted to translate the record into English by the gift and power of God.

6 But after repenting, and humbling himself sincerely, through faith, God ministered unto him by an holy angel, whose countenance was as lightning, and whose garments were pure and white above all other whiteness;

7 And gave unto him commandments which inspired him;

8 And gave him power from on high, by the means which were before prepared, to translate the Book of Mormon;
20.9 Just as the Bible serves as a record of a fallen people, so also does the Book of Mormon.

20.9.7–8—*fallen people*—In reference to the posterity of Lehi, the remnants of which may be found among the indigenous inhabitants of the western hemisphere. The destruction of the Jaredites which took place nearly six hundred years before the birth of Jesus Christ is also alluded to here.

20.9.11—*fullness*—The fullness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ may be summarized as faith in the Son of God, repentance from all wrong-doing, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.

20.9.16–17—*Jesus Christ*—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

20.9.20—*Gentiles*—The Nephite prophets had long prophesied that when the records of their fathers came forth in the latter days, it would be by means of men who pertained to the Gentile nations that would inhabit the land. The Book of Mormon would not only benefit the posterity of Lehi and his sons, but all of the House of Israel wherever they may be found upon the earth.

20.9.24—*Jews*—The time will come when the testimony of the Book of Mormon will have a more powerful effect upon the hearts and minds of the Jews than any other book that will have been published.

20.10 Both the composition and the translation of the Book of Mormon were given by the inspiration of Almighty God. The Father testified to the Three Witnesses that the translation of the Book of Mormon was correct. These three accordingly testified that they had seen with their eyes and heard with their ears the truths that Joseph Smith had brought forth out of obscurity. These things had been manifested unto them by the power and glory of the angel Moroni.

20.20.20—*others*—Specifically, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris.

20.11 In the mouth of two or three witnesses the truth of any matter may be established. The revelation of the Book of Mormon gave credence to the fact that the Lord has always been willing to labor with any of the children of men who were themselves willing to receive instruction from Him. Thus, God has spoken to His servants in every time and place since the days of Adam and Eve. The witness of Joseph Smith and his companions was that for the ten years preceding the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ once more upon the earth, the Lord had actively interacted with His sons, preparing them for this very event.

20.12 Men change, but God does not. We may see in the writings that were produced in every dispensation the same mind and heart inspiring the children of men, lifting, edifying, and strengthening them so that they might be prepared to return to the presence of their Father. The same principles and ordinances were put in place to instruct and sanctify the disciples of Christ in the midst of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

20.12.13—*Amen*—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.
20.13 The inhabitants of the earth in the latter days will be left without excuse. Not only are the words of the ancient Apostles and prophets confirmed by the revelations poured out in the latter days, but the testimony of millions of saints have filled the earth that they, too, through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, know for themselves that God lives and that Jesus is the Christ.

20.13.24–25—*this work*—Certainly in reference to the Book of Mormon, but may be extended to include the entire labor involved in the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God.

20.14 How does a man qualify himself for eternal life? Is it not that he comes to know God the eternal Father and the Lord Jesus Christ? A man can draw nearer to God by adhering to the teachings contained in the Book of Mormon than any other book. Those of the latter days who would have eternal life must come to the realization that the Father has placed His servants among us, men and women whose testimonies are stronger than the cords of death.

20.14.5—*it*—Certainly in reference to the Book of Mormon, but may be extended to include the entire labor involved in the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God.

20.15 Those who reject the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the latter days will have done so because of their own deliberate choices. Men harden their own hearts, blind their own eyes, and stop up their own ears to the truth. This they do because the spirit of the natural man is upon them, appealing to the lusts of the flesh, the pleasures and vanities of a lost and fallen world.

20.16 Three of the six elders of the Church had been present when the voice of the Lord God of Israel had testified that the translation of the Book of Mormon was true and correct. We may assume that this witness would have been sufficient for the three to add their names in testimony to the work as it proceeded. We have no immediate record that identifies how and when Samuel and Hyrum Smith, together with Peter Whitmer Junior, heard the voice of the Lord regarding the events that were then transpiring. There is a distinct possibility that the six men enjoyed a substantial spiritual experience together in connection with this revelation.

20.16.11—*elders*—In reference to the first six members of the Church of Jesus Christ; namely, Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, Peter Whitmer Junior, Samuel H. Smith, and David Whitmer.

20.16.58—*Amen*—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

20.17 A cloud of witnesses had arisen in conjunction with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the Aaronic and Melchizedek priestships, and the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ in the latter days. Each progressive event bore witness to a loving and actively engaged Father in Heaven who was doing all in His power to inspire His children to choose Him and His Son, to forsake the vanities and corruption of the earth, and to walk in holiness in all things.

20.18 The heavens and the earth and the denizens thereof did not come into existence through happenstance. The earth was built as a habitation for the spirit children of God who would partake of mortality through the means

13 Therefore, having so great witnesses, by them shall the world be judged, even as many as shall hereafter come to a knowledge of this work.

14 And those who receive it in faith, and work righteousness, shall receive a crown of eternal life;

15 But those who harden their hearts in unbelief, and reject it, it shall turn to their own condemnation—

16 For the Lord God has spoken it; and we, the elders of the church, have heard and bear witness to the words of the glorious Majesty on high, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

17 By these things we know that there is a God in heaven, who is infinite and eternal, from everlasting to everlasting the same unchangeable God, the framor of heaven and earth, and all things which are in them;

18 And that he created man, male and female, after his own image and in his own likeness, created he
appointed by the Father of all. The human form is not an imagined one, but a figure that has accompanied deity from eternity to eternity. In the highest degrees of the Celestial Kingdom there are men and women who have overcome all things, who rejoice in the company of their posterity and the angels of Heaven. Those who dwell upon this earth, may also overcome every weakness and foible through faith in the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ and for that reason have willingly taken up their temporary abode upon this planet.

20.19 Do we not tend to become like those whom we admire? If we worship the children of men, we will never aspire to become like those who have become perfect every whit. God the Father has commanded us to worship Him alone, not because of any vanity on His part, but because He would have us be as He is, enjoying a fullness of happiness in the eternities. The children of men, even the most honorable and notable among them, are subject to the vicissitudes of mortality and ultimately will fall back into the dust from which their tabernacles of clay have come. Our aspirations should be holy and not mundane.

20.20 The law of salvation and exaltation required the worship of only true and living God of Heaven and earth. The sons and daughters of Adam and Eve chose to hearken to the voice of Satan, to rebel against the principles of righteousness, and from that time forward succumbed to the spirit of the natural man. They became sensual because they chose to not be spiritual; they became devilish because they willfully chose to reject the truth when it was presented to them.

20.21 With the transgression of Adam and Eve both physical death and the consequences of personal sin entered into the world. At the end of mortal life, the bodies of the children of men would return to the native elements from which they came and their spirits would resort to the world of spirits. No human being has had the power to restore the physical body to life, save for the Son of God who was given the keys of the resurrection. Had it not been for the resurrection from the dead, every spirit child who ever lived upon the earth would have been consigned to endless misery in the company of devils, eventually succumbing to the anxiety and distress suffered by all those who have offended the God of Heaven. For every act of rebellion, for every infraction against the laws of God, there is a punishment affixed, a punishment which no man on his own would willingly bear, even to save his own eternal future. The Lord Jesus Christ, however, submitted himself to the demands of a just God, taking upon himself the sufferings of mankind, that the debt for sin might be effectually paid through his sacrifice. With the redemption provided, men were again free to choose life or death for themselves. By exercising faith in Christ, by sincere repentance from personal sins, and by receiving the ordinances and covenants established by the Father for the benefit of His children. All men might be cleansed from the blood and sins of the world, rising triumphant from the grave to find a place within the mansions prepared for them by the Son of God.

20.22 The Lord Jesus Christ received a physical body in the same fashion as every other man, woman, and child has received a tabernacle of clay. His body, like our bodies, was subject to all of the trials and tribulations, pain and suffering, distresses and discomforts that accompany mortal life. The spirit of the natural man weighed down upon him just as it does upon all men. Yet, for all of the opposition arrayed against him in this lost and fallen world, Jesus

19 And gave unto them commandments that they should love and serve him, the only living and true God, and that he should be the only being whom they should worship.

20 But by the transgression of these holy laws man became sensual and devilish, and became fallen man.

21 Wherefore, the Almighty God gave his Only Begotten Son, as it is written in those scriptures which have been given of him.

22 He suffered temptations but gave no heed unto them.
chose to follow the path laid out before him by the Father.

20.23 In the midst of his suffering for the personal and collective sins of mankind, Jesus was taken and horribly abused by wicked men, servants of the evil one, who did all within their power to distract the Son of God from his appointed task. They cursed him, pummeled him, dragged him about from place to place, until finally in an act of desperation, they nailed his body to a cross. In nothing was Jesus dissuaded from doing his Father’s will; in nothing was he deflected from the object of his deep and abiding love. When once the burden placed upon him was successfully carried out, Jesus allowed his physical body to succumb to the effects of mortality. His remains were taken and laid in a tomb, while his spirit visited with his brethren in the world of spirits for a time. At the end of his short sojourn among the spirits of the dead, the spirit of the Savior entered into his dead body through the power and keys of the resurrection which had been vested in him by the Father. Less than three full days after he had commended himself unto the Father while in agony upon the cross, the Lord Jesus Christ came forth from the borrowed tomb as a glorified personage, prepared in every way to receive the blessings that had been promised to him long before the foundations of the earth were laid.

20.24 No other man in the history of this earth has qualified himself to dwell in the presence of the Father and His angel by virtue of his personal worthiness. The Lord Jesus Christ is the undisputed Heir of God, the only spirit child of the God of Heaven who has legitimate claim upon all that the Father has and is. As a result, the fate of the children of men has been placed into the hands of him who has made a sufficient sacrifice for sin. All men will stand before the judgment bar of Christ to be judged of their deeds performed in the flesh, whether they have been good or evil. What remains for men is their personal choice, whether they will have everlasting life in the presence of God or whether they will choose endless suffering in the company of Lucifer and his minions.

20.25 The plan of salvation and happiness is a simple one, easy to be understood. The burden placed upon the shoulders of the disciples of Jesus Christ is a comparatively light one. Why would anyone in the face of certain destruction, chose to ignore or rejected the extended hand of the Savior of mankind? The act of faith is an act of self-preservation.

20.26 The sectarians of the world have ever sought to proscribe the salvation of mankind, limiting the redemption of the faithful to a narrow band of adherents in time and space. The plan of the Father is far more comprehensive and just. Some religionists would have the whole of humanity before the birth of Jesus Christ consigned to endless woe because of the timing and location of their birth into mortality. Others would condemn any man who, for whatever reason, failed to receive the teachings of their principal theologians. Those who dwelt in times and places where their doctrines were unavailable would be, in their eyes, irretrievably lost to salvation. The fact of the matter is that the principles of truth and light were revealed to Adam and Eve while in the Garden of Eden. After the fall, these same teachings were reiterated by angels from heaven and taught openly to the children of men upon the earth by the servants of God who were filled with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. At times the rebellion and ignorance of the inhabitants of the earth was so great, that generations would pass without the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ being made available to those who might have accepted it. The Lord God of Israel, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, provided means

23 He was crucified, died, and rose again the third day;

24 And ascended into heaven, to sit down on the right hand of the Father, to reign with almighty power according to the will of the Father;

25 That as many as would believe and be baptized in his holy name, and endure in faith to the end, should be saved—

26 Not only those who believed after he came in the meridian of time, in the flesh, but all those from the beginning, even as many as were before he came, who believed in the words of the holy prophets, who spake as they were inspired by the gift of the Holy Ghost, who truly testified of him in all things, should have eternal life,
whereby even those who journeyed through mortality without the fullness of truth and light would one day have the opportunity to receive all that the Father had revealed to His children in every dispensation.

20.26.39—prophets—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

20.27 Salvation was not limited to those who actually walked and talked with Jesus of Nazareth during his mortal ministry in the land of Palestine. The Apostles and prophets of God ranged throughout the world of their day, preaching the Gospel and administering the ordinances of salvation unto all those who would come unto Christ in faith and repentance. Acceptance of the principles and ordinances of salvation and exaltation brought with them the keys of revelation, the gift of the Holy Ghost by which all men might know for themselves the will of the Father and the Son concerning them.

20.28 There are three who preside in eternity, setting the perfect pattern of the priesthood by which all things in time and in eternity are to be governed. These three are distinct individuals, but three whose hearts and minds are so closely knit together by the truths of eternity that it is virtually impossible to distinguish between them emotionally or intellectually. The Father is God, the President of all of existence. The Son stands with the Father and is His executor in all things. The Holy Ghost testifies of all that the Father says and does in such a fashion as no man can doubt the truth. The Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost set the prime example as to how the children of men should interact with one another, unified in heart and mind that there might not be any obstacles in the paths of righteousness, that the sons of God might enjoy eternal felicity without hindernent.

20.28.15—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as "Amen" derives from roots which mean "true". This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

20.29 Either a man partakes of salvation or he does not. Either he receives blessings from God the eternal Father or he does not. The philosophies of men offer all sorts of substitutions for the redemption of the souls of men, but in these there is no efficacy, no satisfaction. The simple principles and ordinances of the Gospel, their application into the lives of the children of men, are all that stand between men and their eternal destiny as the children of God. Any and every man can accept and obey, not just in expectation of the eternal reward that is promised, but with every assurance that by such explicit conduct every man might enjoy peace and happiness during the few short days in which he lives out his mortal life upon the earth.

20.29.15–16—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

20.30 Every man who has come to an awareness of good and evil upon this earth, save Jesus Christ only, has proven himself unworthy of the blessings of eternity. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The law of God condemns every soul to misery because of their willful actions against the mind and will of God. Through the mercy of Jesus Christ, however, a man might find a place within the economy of God, a legal heir of all that the Father has, a joint-heir with the Son of God.

27 As well as those who should come after, who should believe in the gifts and callings of God by the Holy Ghost, which beareth record of the Father and of the Son;

28 Which Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God, infinite and eternal, without end. Amen.

29 And we know that all men must repent and believe on the name of Jesus Christ, and worship the Father in his name, and endure in faith on his name to the end, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God.

30 And we know that justification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true;
20.30.8—*grace*—No true disciple of Jesus Christ can believe that there is any aggregate of activities or performances that can bring us to God without the intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace does come, however, after all we can do to invoke that grace. They are simple acts, indeed, well within our abilities as mortal beings, thus once again manifesting the mercy of our God.

20.30.14—15—*Jesus Christ*—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

20.31 Men find themselves bound down under the effects of personal sin, weighted down with grief and pain for their conduct unbecoming a son or daughter of God. Through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, the wages of sin may be compensated for, releasing the injured soul from all further punishment. It is one thing to be free from the consequences of sin, and quite another to have a perfected and exalted personality, one that has completely partaken of the divine nature. These divine attributes are not bestowed without effort; they are acquired through faithful obedience to the law of God. Those who love the Father and the Son strive to be like them in every way, hearkening to their enticements to righteousness. By keeping the laws and commandments of God we learn something of His character, perfections, and attributes.

20.31.15—16—*Jesus Christ*—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

20.32 There is a constant war between the eternal spirit of man and the natural desires and temptations that afflict the inhabitants of a lost and fallen world. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Unless a man is diligent, constantly seeking inspiration and guidance from the God of Heaven, he may find himself waning in his commitment, dwindling in his assurances, failing to observe to do all that the Father would have him do. Thus, it becomes all men who have found the truth to continually abide in the truth at all costs, until they have fulfilled the measure of their creation here upon the earth. For those who have strayed from the right way, there is repentance still.

20.32.11—*grace*—No true disciple of Jesus Christ can believe that there is any aggregate of activities or performances that can bring us to God without the intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace does come, however, after all we can do to invoke that grace. They are simple acts, indeed, well within our abilities as mortal beings, thus once again manifesting the mercy of our God.

20.33 In some respects, salvation is a joint effort. We covenant to support and strengthen one another in the principles of truth and righteousness. We are to be sympathetic and understanding of the weaknesses of our fellow beings, blessing in instances wherein it is possible to bless, that those in affliction might be lifted up from their distresses and comforted when they seem to be overwhelmed. The world is a fearsome place to confront alone; it is bearable when we are united together heart and mind for righteousness’ sake.

20.34 A man may be redeemed from the consequences of sin, he may have also have attuned his heart and mind sufficiently to the Spirit of God that he may have partaken in part of the divine nature, but no man’s feet are so firmly secure that he can afford to be cavalier in his relationship with his God.

31 And we know also, that sanctification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true, to all those who love and serve God with all their mights, minds, and strength.

32 But there is a possibility that man may fall from grace and depart from the living God;

33 Therefore let the church take heed and pray always, lest they fall into temptation;

34 Yea, and even let those who are sanctified take heed also.
20.35 A man imperils his own soul when he trifles with the things of God. We cannot pick and choose among the principles of salvation; we cannot be arbitary in our affections toward the Father and the Son. When the voice of God speaks on a matter that is the end of it. Men can neither question nor speculate about the significance of what has been taught. Any man filled with the spirit of God knows precisely that which he should do in order to please God, because the Holy Ghost is an unfailing witness to the word of God. Those who wrest the scriptures to please themselves and others do so at the risk of their salvation and exaltation.


20.35.29—scriptures—Meaning the Old and New Testaments, the Book of Mormon, and any other ancient record that has been preserved by the hand of the Lord for the benefit of man.

20.35.32—revelations—in reference to the revelations which were at that time being received through the prophet Joseph Smith. It would also include any other divinely inspired counsel revealed to the children of men. No one can afford to interpret them in accordance with the mind and will of men, for they derive from the mind and will of God. To do so would be an affront to all that is good and holy.

20.36 The elders of the Church of Jesus Christ testified as to their own personal and collective witnesses that the Father and the Son were actively engaged in the restoration of the children of men to their divinely appointed places in the eternities, if they would submit themselves to the principles and ordinances that govern eternity.

20.36.23—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as ‘Amen’ derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

20.37 The qualifications for membership in the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth are clearly laid forth. The people of Zion are of one heart and mind; they do not lift themselves above one another, but are loving and kind to one another. Therefore, the pride of the world must be forsaken. Those who take upon themselves the name of the Lord Jesus Christ receive also the covenant that in all things they will do whatsoever their Master would do under any and all circumstances. In their outward conduct, they have modified their daily walk and talk such that they have come to represent examples of Christian love and demeanor.

20.37.18—humble—Humility is a state of the mind and the heart that recognizes that one can proceed no further without additional light, knowledge, and power than that which one presently has.

20.37.24—desire—The desire for baptism arises when one realizes that the remission from sins can come in no other way than an appeal to the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Baptism is not a social event; it is an appeal for mercy and compassion.

20.37.32–33—broken hearts—A broken heart is one that suffers regret for actions unbecoming a son or daughter of God, abject sorrow for having offended the one whom one has come to love.

20.37.35–36—contrite spirits—A contrite spirit has utterly repudiated elitism. He sees himself as does God, equal in opportunity with all men to find eternal happiness and salvation.

20.37.41—church—For practical reasons, the Lord has assigned certain bearers of the priesthood to represent the entire membership of the

35 And we know that these things are true and according to the revelations of John, neither adding to, nor diminishing from the prophecy of his book, the holy scriptures, or the revelations of God which shall come hereafter by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, the voice of God, or the ministering of angels.

36 And the Lord God has spoken it; and honor, power and glory be rendered to his holy name, both now and ever. Amen.

37 And again, by way of commandment to the church concerning the manner of baptism—All those who humble themselves before God, and desire to be baptized, and come forth with broken hearts and contrite spirits, and witness before the church that they have truly repented of all their sins, and are willing to take upon them the name of Jesus Christ, having a determination to serve him to the end, and truly manifest by their works that they have received of the Spirit of Christ unto the remission of their sins, shall be received by baptism into his church.

D&C 20:35
D&C 20:36
D&C 20:37
AF 305, 311, 313
DNTC 2 97
MD 503
MD 364
DS 1 53
DS 2 18, 29, 329
MD 70, 161, 296, 297, 370, 447, 525, 656, 706
CR98-A 51
EM 1:411
D&C 20:37
CR95-A 46
CR96-A 60
CR96-O 81, 100
CR01-A 74
CR02-A 72
EM 1:93, 94,
Church of Jesus Christ, before whom those who would come unto Christ might express their convictions and their determination to walk in the paths of righteousness.

20.37.60–61—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

20.38 The officers and teachers of the Church of Jesus Christ have been put in place so as to bring about the perfection of the saints, through doctrine and service. As the Church rolls forth upon the earth, the various responsibilities assigned to the body of the priesthood are delegated, together with the keys of the priesthood, that the burdens of the Kingdom might be borne upon many shoulders.

20.38.15—Christ—Simply put, the name "Christ" is the Greek translation of the Hebrew "Messiah". In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean "anointed one". Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendency to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

20.38.17—apostle—The Greek roots from which the term "apostle" derives, originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were ordained Apostles by Peter, James, and John sometime between 15 May 1829 and 1 June 1829 on the banks of the Susquehanna River near Harmony, Pennsylvania. The Apostles hold the keys of the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world and are entitled to administer the ordinance of baptism for the remission of sins and for membership in the Church and Kingdom of God unto any and every man that believes in Christ and brings forth the fruits of repentance.

20.38.20—elder—An elder is a bearer of the Melchizedek priesthood, or rather, the Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God.

20.39 A man may bear the priesthood of God, be authorized to teaching the principles of eternal life to his fellow men, and perform the ordinances of salvation for those with whom he had been called to labor. He may not, however, be authorized to pass that power and authority on to others, regardless of his personal righteousness or that of those to whom he might be willing to commit said authority. Only those who have been graced with the keys of the priesthood5 that the burdens of the kingdom might be borne upon many assigned to the body of the priesthood are delegated, together with the keys of the priesthood5 toget
priesthood may extend the rights of the priesthood to others. Those holding the keys may authorize others who do not bear the keys to perform an ordination. An Apostle holds all of the keys of the priesthood. Every officer in the Church of Christ may easily point to the man bearing the keys of the priesthood who authorized his place and calling.

20.40 There is no more sacred ordinance in the Church and Kingdom of God than that of administering the symbols of the suffering and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The performance of this ordinance is reserved to the Apostleship, save in those instances where others have been authorized to do so through the delegated keys of the priesthood of God.

20.40.15—Christ—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendency to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

20.41 A man may be baptized for the remission of sins and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost without becoming a member of the Church of Jesus Christ. We may easily point to Oliver Cowdery and Joseph Smith who had received both ordinances prior to the organization of the Church of Christ on 6 April 1830. When the Church organization is in place, however, a single ordinance of baptism will suffice for both purposes; that is to say, for the remission of sins and for formal membership in the Church of Christ. The same may be said of the ordinance of confirmation and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. Entrance into the Church and Kingdom of God is authorized by Apostolic keys, whether in person or whether by delegation.

20.41.19—baptism of fire—The baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost is like unto the baptism by immersion in water. It constitutes a tangible testimony borne to the spirit of man that the God of Heaven in mindful of him and approves of his course of life as a willing disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ.

20.42 The Apostles preside in the Church and Kingdom of God and therefore are the servants of all.

20.42.3—teach—To teach is to present the truths of eternity by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, so that the children of men are persuaded to come unto Christ for redemption and exaltation. Any deviation from the manner set forth by the Lord does not constitute teaching, but is merely an exchange of information.

20.42.4—expound—The meaning of the English word “expound” derives
from Latin roots which imply “explain, lay open the meaning, to clear of obscurity, interpret, examine”.

20.42.5—exhort—The meaning of the English word “exhort” derives from Latin roots that mean “to encourage, embolden, cheer, advise, excite, warn, caution, stimulate to exertion”.

20.42.6—baptize—The Apostles are to do all within their power to see to it that the children of the disciples of the Church have access to the ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ when they come to the age of accountability.

20.42.8—watch—The Apostles are the guardians of the faith, the purveyors of the truth, and the arbiters of the doctrines of the Kingdom, until all of the saints are of one mind and one heart, and dwell in righteousness.

20.43 The whole Church is blessed by each individual member as he or she is moved upon by the power and influence of the gifts bestowed by the spirit of God. When anyone is called to a position within the Kingdom of God, he or she has hands laid upon their head so that they might be blessed by inspiration and graced with those blessings which pertain to their particular circumstances and the circumstances which pertain to those for whom they have responsibility.

20.44 Where there is an Apostle present, he presides and directs the affairs of the Church in that place. Needless to say, the authority to conduct the meetings of the Church can be duly delegated by means of the keys of the priesthood vested in the Apostleship.

20.45 This has ever been the counsel given to those who would adequately serve their fellow men. A man of his own free will and choice may do many things to bless and benefit those around him, but to do so in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, he must have the mind of Christ, an awareness that is only accessible through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. All things within the Church of Christ must be done according to his mind and will or it is not his Church.

20.46 There is but one divine authority upon the earth rendered unto the children of men, for there is but one God. The power and authority of God, however, is delivered unto every man according to his gifts and talents. The various offices in the Church are place so as to allow men the opportunity to serve each other after the same manner as the Son of God served his brothers and sisters in the flesh. The Melchizedek priesthood encompasses all of the rights, powers, and privileges that the Father has granted unto His children. Within the bounds and limitations of the priesthood of God, there are offices which are more properly oriented toward the affairs of the Spirit of God. By the same token there are those offices which are generally given to guide and direct the temporal affairs of the Church. Regarding these latter, the offices of the Aaronic priesthood are particularly adapted. The priests, teachers, and deacons of the Aaronic priesthood have duties that are specifically designed to bless outwardly, in a clearly visible manner which can be observed by all. Only in this aspect do their duties differ from the responsibilities of the Melchizedek priesthood. The manner in which the priest teaches, exhorts, expounds, baptizes, and administers the sacrament should differ not a whit from that which an Apostle does, and if done properly has no less effect upon the hearts and minds of the children of men.

20.46.6—preach—The English word “preach” derives primarily from Latin sources which imply "greeting, proclaim, inculcate in public

43 And to confirm the church by the laying on of the hands, and the giving of the Holy Ghost;

D&C 20:43
AF 166

44 And to take the lead of all meetings.

45 The elders are to conduct the meetings as they are led by the Holy Ghost, according to the commandments and revelations of God.

46 The priest’s duty is to preach, teach, expound, exhort, and baptize, and administer the sacrament,

D&C 20:46
AF 167, 178
JC 778
EM 1:411
D&C 20:46–47
EM 3:1132
D&C 20:46–49
MD 599
D&C 20:46–59
DS 1 319
DS 3 103
EM 1:411
D&C 20:46–60
DS 3 112
discourse". Whereas teaching may be either public or private, preaching is primarily a public matter.

20.47 The Apostles are called to serve in all of the world, to cry repentance among every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. They are to set the example of piety before the disciples of Jesus Christ in every place. The priests have a similar responsibility, but generally confined to a particular geographical location. Their teachings and counsel should be no less poignant and persuasive than that of an Apostle, for they should be guided and directed in all that they do by the same spirit that inspires the presiding councils of the Church and Kingdom of God. Their counsel and guidance should not be neglected or ignored.

20.48 Note that while a priest may ordain others of his own order, he cannot do so for any of the Melchizedek priesthood, thus establishing clearly the limitations of the Aaronic priesthood.

20.49 Where there is no Apostle present to guide and direct the affairs of the Church, a bearer of the Melchizedek priesthood may be called upon to do so. In the absence of a bearer of the Melchizedek priesthood, a priest of the Aaronic priesthood may be authorized to conduct the meetings of the saints.

20.50 Within the priesthood of God there is protocol and order; there can be no confusion or misunderstanding. There is no jostling for position or aspiration for preeminence, but rather a clearly outlined procedure in any eventuality. Every man learns his duty and then performs in that duty according to the guidelines established by Him whose right it is to reign.

20.51 It is the prayers of the saints that strengthen the bearers of the priesthood in their callings and responsibilities. As the officers of the Church are sustained by the faith of the disciples, they have an increased capacity to bless and benefit those for whom they have charge.

20.52 There is one Lord, one faith, and one covenant of salvation. All that is established by the hand of the Lord is to bring about the immortality and eternal life of mankind. The Son has received the power and authority of the Father in order to participate directly in this divine labor. The Son has, in turn, called and ordained others so that they too might rejoice in the grand enterprise of the salvation and exaltation of the children of men. The Father has invited His children to participate with Him because He knows that the fullness of joy in the eternities is best experienced in the company of others.

20.53 The teacher in the Aaronic priesthood is to be no less watchful for the welfare of the Church as the Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. Their task is essentially the same. Even though his duties appear to be less than that of a priest, elder, or Apostle, yet his calling and service is to be no less poignant or effective.

20.54 The teacher in the Aaronic priesthood is to be a paragon of righteousness in all things. He must be in a position to testify against iniquity by not being iniquitous himself. His own feelings must be under control, his own heart filled with the power and influence of the Spirit of God that he might be in a position to bring reconciliation into the lives of those that are at odds with one another. He must be an example of truth, mercy, compassion, and kindness.

47 And visit the house of each member, and exhort them to pray vocally and in secret and attend to all family duties.

48 And he may also ordain other priests, teachers, and deacons.

49 And he is to take the lead of meetings when there is no elder present;

50 But when there is an elder present, he is only to preach, teach, expound, exhort, and baptize,

51 And visit the house of each member, exhorting them to pray vocally and in secret and attend to all family duties.

52 In all these duties the priest is to assist the elder if occasion requires.

53 The teacher’s duty is to watch over the church always, and be with and strengthen them;

54 And see that there is no iniquity in the church, neither hardness with each other, neither lying, backbiting, nor evil speaking;
20.55 The teacher has a duty to the unity of the community to which he belongs. The saints gather so that they might be edified and blessed together, rather than singly. They gather that they might come to appreciate the diverse gifts and blessings that the Lord has poured out upon His children. They are gathered that they might serve and strengthen one another.

20.56 In the absence of an Apostle, an elder, or a priest, the teacher is designated to act under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost to guide and direct the affairs of the Church of Christ.

20.57 The teachers need not be without companions in the ministry, and are therefore adequately provided for in the persons of the deacons. Much of the business of the disciples of Jesus Christ can be conducted by these faithful bearers of the priesthood of God.

20.58 The entrance into the Church of Christ, ordinances of baptism and confirmation, cannot be performed by the teachers or the deacons. Nor are they authorized to bless the emblems of the sacrament for the benefit of the saints. We may see a similar division of labor among the ancient Levites. Only the priests were allowed to offer up the sacrifices on the altars of the House of Israel. Only the priests may ordain other men to the offices of the Aaronic priesthood.

20.59 It is a great privilege indeed to be authorized to have the words of eternal life upon one’s lips, to be a herald of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to extend the promises that have been the hope of all mankind since before the foundations of the earth were laid. There is no greater honor in all of time or eternity.

20.59.16—Christ—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the term means “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendency to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

20.60 When a man is ordained to the priesthood or to any of the callings within the priesthood, he is called of God and blessed according to the wisdom and grace of the Father. The one officiating, acting as voice in the ordination, is to be filled with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, that there might be a free flow of intelligence from the Father to the one receiving the ordination and blessing. Thereby, the ordained man learns something of his qualifications to serve in the capacity to which he had been assigned. He
learns something of his Father’s sentiments towards him as His son. He learns something of the course that he should follow in order to be a blessing to those with whom he is to serve. He learns that he will not be left to labor alone, no matter how isolated his tasks may seem.

20.61 When there were but six members of the Church of Christ, the prospect of meeting four times a year to mutually inform one another as to their conduct during the intervening time may have seemed excessive, particularly when some of the brethren received assignments that took them rather far afield. As the Church organization grew, however, it became clear that the edification of the entire Church by gathering everyone together would soon prove unwieldy. The ecclesiastical units of the Church and Kingdom of God have been modified from time to time and the nature of their administration has been adapted to the needs and desires of the saints throughout the world. Conferences of one sort or another are held continuously, whether for the benefit of the smallest branch or for the entire membership of the Church of Jesus Christ. These are organized and conducted according to the dictates of the Holy Spirit.

20.61—Christ—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendency to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

20.62 The administration of the Church of Jesus Christ is accomplished through the common consent of the disciples of the Lord. Whether for the appointment of new or changing priesthood leadership, for the installation of auxiliary organizations, or for the acceptance of new or ongoing policies and procedures, the voice of the saints is sought for a sustaining vote. These affairs are typically regulated as the conferences are held throughout the world, at all times and in all places.

20.63 When a man is appointed to receive an office of the priesthood or a specific calling within the ecclesiastical organization of the Church, his name is presented to the conference to which the calling or ordination pertains that he might be sustained by the body of the conference. His ordination or setting apart is duly recorded. Those who have callings that cause them to appear before the nations of the earth as duly authorized representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ are given certificates that describe the nature and extent of their authority. Those who have been authorized to perform ordinances outside of their local ecclesiastical units are given recommends by those who hold the

61 The several elders composing this church of Christ are to meet in conference once in three months, or from time to time as said conferences shall direct or appoint;

62 And said conferences are to do whatever church business is necessary to be done at the time.

63 The elders are to receive their licenses from other elders, by vote of the church to which they belong, or from the conferences.

D&C 20:60–67
DS 3 124
MD 150

D&C 20:61
FWR 54, 159
D&C 20:61–62
FWR 150
EM 1:308
EM 2:878

D&C 20:63
DS 1 255
D&C 20:63–64
FWR 2
D&C 20:63–64, 84
EM 1:410
D&C 20:63–65
DS 3 96
keys of authority regarding those ordinances so that the priesthood bearer may have witnesses as to his personal worthiness to serve.

20.64 When any man is ordained to an office in the priesthood, whether of the Melchizedek or the Aaronic order of the priesthood, he is issued a certificate under the authority of the one possessing the keys of that priesthood which authorized his ordination. The ecclesiastical unit in which the ordination took place also keeps a historical record of any and all ordinations that have taken place within its geographical boundaries, that a duplicate record might be available to confirm all of the business that has been conducted regarding that priesthood bearer. Today, all of these records may be easily accessed in any part of the world if a question arises.

20.65 Again, it is by the voice of common consent that any man serves in the Church of Jesus Christ. No man can presume to impose his authority over any body of men or women without their wholehearted acceptance of him. It is difficult to imagine any situation today in which a man would be ordained without a sustaining vote of some kind being made.

20.66 During the early years of the restored Church of Christ, there were instances in which the Gospel was introduced into a community where there had been no authorized servant of the Lord Jesus Christ before. When the first men and women of that community submitted to the requirements of the Gospel, there were none to call upon to sustain them in their membership or any ordinations that might have followed. In these cases, those who held the keys of the priesthood in general, the Apostles and other presiding officers, were authorized to ordain men to the priesthood of God without a sustaining vote. As the body of Christ in that location grew, however, all things would ultimately be confirmed by those who willingly took upon themselves the covenants of Christian discipleship.

20.66.3–4—presiding elders—In reference to those who held the general keys of the priesthood of God. In this case, a direct reference to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.

20.66.5–6—traveling bishops—In April of 1830 there were no bishops of any kind extant in the Church, but in time bishops would be selected to preside over the congregations of the saints throughout the world. As we might suppose, the travelling bishops spoken of here refer to what would now be called the Presiding Bishopric of the Church.

20.66.7–8—high councilors—In reference to the travelling high councilors which would come to be known as the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, they who hold the keys of the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

20.66.9–10—high priests—Within the operations of the Church of Christ, men are frequently called upon to preside in isolated areas where the fullness of Church organization has not yet been established. These men hold the keys of the priesthood in that region of country and are authorized to administer the priesthood for and in behalf of the people.

20.66.12—elders—Occasionally, bearers of the Melchizedek priesthood have been authorized to enter into areas where the Gospel has not been present before and are endowed such as to conduct the affairs of the Kingdom in the absence of those who could give their common consent.

20.67 No man receives the keys of the priesthood of God without there being an approving council that already possesses those keys in their fullness. Thus, no man can ascend to the presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ without

D&C 20:64
EM 1:411
D&C 20:65
DHC 7 (24)
DNTC 3 320
DS 1 255
DS 3 106
MD 549, 597
EM 1:89, 250, 297
EM 2:603
EM 3:1415
D&C 20:65–66
DHC 5 522
D&C 20:65–67
DHC 1 173
DNTC 2 30
D&C 20:66
EM 1:119

64 Each priest, teacher, or deacon, who is ordained by a priest, may take a certificate from him at the time, which certificate, when presented to an elder, shall entitle him to a license, which shall authorize him to perform the duties of his calling, or he may receive it from a conference.

65 No person is to be ordained to any office in this church, where there is a regularly organized branch of the same, without the vote of that church;

66 But the presiding elders, traveling bishops, high councilors, high priests, and elders, may have the privilege of ordaining, where there is no branch of the church that a vote may be called.

67 Every president of the high priesthood (or presiding elder), bishop, high councilor, and high
the common consent of those who hold the presiding keys. By the same token, no man can be ordained to any general office of the Church without first receiving the sustaining vote of those who have been previous sustained in like manner. It is according to the economy of God that all general officers of the Church and Kingdom of Jesus Christ to be sustained at some point by the body of the Church in a general conference of the membership.

20.68 The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ cannot be professed in ignorance. Needless to say, a man or woman will not be baptized if they are faulty in their understanding of the principles of redemption and righteousness. It would be difficult in the extreme for anyone to effectively covenant to be obedient to laws and commandments about which they know little or nothing. Hence, the Lord has instituted policies and procedures in His Church and Kingdom such as to prosper the children of men in their search for the truth and to encourage their acceptance of the fullness of immortality and eternal life through the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God. Receiving the emblems of the sacrament is no light matter. Having the blessings attendant to the bestowal of the gift of the Holy Ghost is no trifle.

20.68.30—Christ—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendency to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

20.69 We witness of the truth ensconced in our hearts by the things that we say and by the things that we do. In these outward ways, we imply that we are worthy to partake of the sacrament and that we are prepared for the gifts of the Spirit of God. The broken bread and the cup of Christ have no meaning in the lives of the wicked. To partake unworthily of them is to invite destruction of the mind and heart of the believer. The gift of the Holy Ghost is given to an individual member of the Church that he or she might better serve those around them, by having the mind of Christ at all times and in all places. The miracles of endurance and kindness that have found mention in the scriptures are expected in the lives of the saints of latter days. We are to be one with them in all things.

20.70 Little children are alive in Christ and as such enjoy all of the blessings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that a sanctified soul would. They are numbered with the saints because they are, themselves, saints of the Most High. Little children are given names and are blessed according to the dictates of the Holy Ghost so that they might be cared for and edified as they grow into maturity to be ordained by the direction of a high council or general conference.

68 The duty of the members after they are received by baptism.—The elders or priests are to have a sufficient time to expound all things concerning the church of Christ to their understanding, previous to their partaking of the sacrament and being confirmed by the laying on of the hands of the elders, so that all things may be done in order.

69 And the members shall manifest before the church, and also before the elders, by a godly walk and conversation, that they are worthy of it, that there may be works and faith agreeable to the holy scriptures—walking in holiness before the Lord.

70 Every member of the church of Christ having children is to bring them unto the elders before the church, who are to lay their hands upon them in the name of Jesus
by their parents and by all those who constitute the Church of Jesus Christ.

20.70.7—Christ—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendency to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even through certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

20.71 The years of accountability have been established by the Lord as being about the time of the eighth birthday of a child. There are natural exceptions to this general rule, but guideline serves the needs of the vast majority of those who are born into this world. By the time a boy or a girl achieves his or her eighth year, he or she can easily distinguish between good and evil, can feel sorrow for wrongdoing, and can make informed decisions regarding the course of action they would follow in order to obtain happiness.

20.71.10—Christ—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendency to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even through certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

20.72 Before a man or woman can be baptized they must first be capable of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith derives from intellectual awareness of the life and teachings of the Savior, coupled with whisperings of the Spirit of God to the heart and mind of him who would believe. With revelation from the Father and the Son comes the realization that one has not yet achieved the potential signaled by his eternal nature. A man becomes aware wherein he has offended God and those things which he ought to do in order to be reconciled

71 No one can be received into the church of Christ unless he has arrived unto the years of accountability before God, and is capable of repentance.

72 Baptism is to be administered in the following manner unto all those who repent—
with Heaven. The effort to correct wrongdoing is empowered by the man’s faith in Jesus Christ, in expectation of his redemption from sin and in the hope that the remainder of his mortal existence might be please God. A man with this expectation and hope is prepared for baptism.

20.73 Baptism is received by all those who would become part of the family of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who are baptized by immersion for the remission of sins, are children of Christ, sons and daughters bearing his name for all time and eternity. The ordinance of baptism symbolizes explicitly this rebirth, as if a disciple had entered into his mother’s womb. When he is within the waters of the font in the act of baptism, every part of his person is completely submerged, including the clothing he is wearing, else the symbolism would not be outwardly perfect. Baptist also symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of the Son of God. It is in baptism that we ourselves are prefigured in our own resurrection through the power vested in Jesus Christ. The names of four individuals are invoke in the words of the ordinance; three of the four are already deities, the fourth is a saint in anticipation of becoming an Heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ.

20.73.2—person—Those who are authorized to perform this sacred ordinance have been called by revelation and by the laying on of hands by those who hold the keys of the priesthood of God. There are no exceptions, notwithstanding the desire and good intentions of all of the parties concerned. Men who hold the power to baptize are directly connected by ordination to those named in the scriptures who held this authority by divine fiat.

20.73.12–13—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

20.73.18—down—The bearers of the priesthood must always exercise the same humility as those for whom they perform these ordinances.

20.73.66—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

20.74 It is in baptism by emersion for the remission of sins that any man or woman entrusts himself or herself into the hands of a just God. There is no other way defined by which we can obtain a complete reconciliation with the Father and the Son.

20.75 Partaking of the emblems of the body and blood of Jesus Christ is essential to the continual growth of the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the sacrament the sons and daughters of Christ are encouraged to live uprightly and are fortified against the efforts of the adversary to discourage them.

20.75.9—often—In general, this word has been defined by the policy of the Church of Jesus Christ to mean once a week, typically on the first day of the week which is called Sunday. There have been other days appointed from time to time according to the wisdom of God and the circumstances of the disciples of Christ.

20.75.15—wine—As will be seen, potable water has been likewise used in representation of the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ.

20.75.22—Jesus—The Anglicized form of the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew name, Oshea or Joshua. At its root, “Jesus” means “Savior”.

20.76 As the priests of the Aaronic priesthood once offered up sacrifice in

73 The person who is called of God and has authority from Jesus Christ to baptize, shall go down into the water with the person who has presented himself or herself for baptism, and shall say, calling him or her by name: Having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

74 Then shall he immerse him or her in the water, and come forth again out of the water.

75 It is expedient that the church meet together often to partake of bread and wine in the remembrance of the Lord Jesus;

76 And the elder or priest shall
similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, so also are they permitted to represent that same sacrifice with the emblems chosen by the Lord to represent his atonement. The bearers of the Melchizedek priesthood are fully prepared to administer any of the ordinances of the Aaronic priesthood.

20.76.19—kneed—There have been instances in the history of the Church and Kingdom of God when the physical attitude of the congregation receiving the emblems of the sacrament has differed from the physical attitude of the ones administering the tokens of the atonement. In all instances, however, it is the humility of all concerned that is paramount, humility which is best exemplified in attitude of prayer.

20.77 These words constitute the prescribed prayer in English that is used in administering the bread which has been broken by the priests in preparation for the passing of the sacrament. The fundamental terms of the covenant of Christianity are embraced in its phrasing and should not be deviated from in any fashion.

20.77.15—16—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

20.77.42—body—The broken bread represents the body of the Lord Jesus Christ which in death was subject to disintegration in the tomb. Our own physical bodies are subject to those same mortal effects, the elements of our tabernacles separating from one another as the life force departs. The promise is, however, that where there has been dissolution, there will be regeneration; where there has been separation there may be unity once more.

20.77.64—name—This constitutes a renewal of the covenant associated with baptism, and of every other ordinance in the Gospel of Jesus Christ which prepares us to become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.

20.77.70—remember—Sin is most generally incurred when we forget who we are and to whom we owe our most sacred allegiance. Jesus is our guide, our exemplar whose glory and perfections ought to be kept before our eyes at all times and in all places.

20.77.75—commandments—The commandments of God are to be observed every whit, that we might learn how it is that God is as He is. We cannot hope to partake of the divine nature if we are not willing to do those things that the divine nature represents.

20.77.87—Spirit—Upon receiving the ordinance of baptism for the remission of sins, we are then blessed to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, the sure light and guide that has been promised to the faithful. If we take the Holy Spirit as our guide, hearkening constantly to his whisperings, we will in no way fail to acquire all that is necessary to be exalted in the Kingdom of our God.

20.77.91—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

20.78 When the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was first administered to the children of men, a single cup was used, one that was passed from disciple to disciple symbolizing the unity of the hearts and minds of the disciples of Jesus in their faith and testimony of the Son of God. Under certain circumstances, for purposes according to the economy of God, this practice persists. Generally speaking, however, given the nature of the congregations of the Church of Christ throughout the world, other means have been used to facilitate the

78 The manner of administering the wine—he shall take the cup also, and say:

D&C 20:76–77
AJ 177

77 O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it, that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son, and witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them; that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.

D&C 20:77
DNTC 1 723
DNTC 2 473
MD 233
PM 127, 340
CR95-O 42
CR96-O 78, 80, 81, 82, 100
CR98-A 87
CR98-O 50, 52
CR02-A 72
EM 2:744
D&C 20:77, 79
CR95-A 32
CR95-O 90
CR98-A 19
EM 1:299
D&C 20:77–79
DS 2 339, 345
MD 167, 236, 540, 587, 773
EM 1:38

D&C 20:78–79
AF 177
impacting the symbol of the blood of Jesus Christ to those who would renew their covenants with the Lord God of Israel. This, of course, in concert with the mind and will of the Lord.

20.79 These words constitute the prescribed prayer in English that is used in administering the water or wine which has been prepared for the passing of the sacrament. The fundamental terms of the covenant of Christianity are embraced in its phrasing and should not be deviated from in any fashion.

20.79.16—17—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

20.79.22—wine—As will be seen, water has also been authorized to represent the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. The prayers used in the congregations of the saints have been modified to reflect this particular exception.

20.79.42—sheek—In reference to the agony that began in the garden of Gethsemane, when the full weight of the punishment for the sins of mankind fell upon the Son of God. That suffering was so great that it caused the Savior to bleed from every pore. His suffering would continue throughout that last night of his mortal life and until he expired upon the cross, after having completely dealt with the consequences of sin.

20.79.78—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

20.80 Having once taken upon oneself the covenant of discipleship to the Lord Jesus Christ, transgressing the laws of God deliberately is unthinkable. However, errors in judgment and predilections of all kinds may still afflict and torment the erstwhile disciple. Some of these may require official sanctions, while others may be dealt with according to the blessings of the Spirit of God. In all things, those with broken hearts and contrite spirits will find forgiveness and reconciliation.

20.80.7—Christ—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendency to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

20.81 In the early days of the Church of Christ in this dispensation, the
responsibility to maintain accurate records befell those bearers of the priesthood who were charged with keeping a history of the Church in a particular geographical area. From time to time, representatives of the divers ecclesiastical units would send transcripts of all that had transpired during a given period of time. All ordinances pertaining to the membership of the Church, the priesthood bearers, and the officers of the branch were collected and correlated with all that had gone on before.

20.81.14—Christ—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendency to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

20.82 In an age of electronic media, it is possible for those responsible for the recording of ordinances to communicate the events that have taken place in a particular location quickly and accurately to the presiding elders of the Church. Needless to say, between 6 April 1830 and the present, there have been a series of progressively more accurate means to make effectual reports to the general authorities of the Church. No matter where an individual member of the Church of Christ may find himself in the world of men, it is possible for those who preside in that geographical region to be immediate apprised of the member’s worthiness to labor in the vineyard of the Lord. Typically, this process of constantly updating the records of the Church is handled by clerks who have been especially called and set apart for the task.

20.83 Transcripts of disciplinary councils held throughout the world are also kept on file in order that no wickedness might impose itself upon the innocent and ignorant of the Church and Kingdom of God. Conduct unbecoming a disciple of Christ does not pass unnoticed, even if the man or woman were to distance themselves from the place where their transgressions and sins were perpetrated.

20.84 Again, in the process of time, various formal means for introducing the faithful, active members of the Church to the priesthood leaders of another part of the world have been devised. Today, this is generally accomplished through electronic means, records of membership including all information regarding ordinances to the priesthood and the performance of the various ordinances of salvation and exaltation being made available to those who have a need to be acquainted with the affairs of an unknown person or family. Those who have proven sufficiently worthy to attend the Temples of the Most High, are also easily identified by any local priesthood leader. Thus, a man or several churches, composing the church of Christ, to send one or more of their teachers to attend the several conferences held by the elders of the church,

82 With a list of the names of the several members uniting themselves with the church since the last conference; or send by the hand of some priest; so that a regular list of all the names of the whole church may be kept in a book by one of the elders, whomsoever the other elders shall appoint from time to time;

83 And also, if any have been expelled from the church, so that their names may be blotted out of the general church record of names.

84 All members removing from the church where they reside, if going to a church where they are not known, may take a letter certifying that they are regular members and in good standing, which certificate may be signed by any elder or priest if the member receiving the letter is personally acquainted with
woman in the Lord may be recognized in any part of the world to which he or she may travel and be received in full faith and fellowship by the saints of God without fear or prejudice.

21.0.1 The Lord Jesus Christ had revealed to the prophet Joseph Smith the precise time, the very day in fact, when the Church of Christ should once more be organized upon the earth. To that intent, six select men gathered at the home of Peter Whitmer, Senior, together with many others who were well acquainted with the progress of the Kingdom of God during the previous months and years. Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Samuel Smith, Hyrum Smith, David Whitmer, and Peter Whitmer, Junior, sustained the proposition that the Church be established according to the will and direction of the Lord, and in conformity with the law of the land in which they lived. This transpired on 6 April 1830. As part of the revelation given to provide instruction as to how the brethren should proceed, Joseph and Oliver were singled out to serve as the first and second elders of the Church of Christ. Joseph was to ordain Oliver and the Oliver was to ordain Joseph. This, after the six men accepted the proposition by a sustaining vote of common consent. The emblems of the sacrament of Christ were blessed and passed to each of the six members of the Church. Then each member had hands laid upon his head and was confirmed a member of the newly organized Church, together with the bestowal of the gift of the Holy Ghost. The early records of the Church indicate that during this same meeting, the newly confirmed members of the Church were ordained to offices within the Church according to the dictates of the Spirit of God.

21.0.2 One question that will be dealt with in conjunction with Section 21 of the Doctrine and Covenants has to do with the nature of the baptism performed prior to the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ. Both Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery had been baptized by proper authority for the remission of sins on 15 May 1829, nearly a year before the Church was formally organized. Several others present at the Whitmer home on 6 April 1830 had also been properly baptized by either Joseph Smith or Oliver Cowdery. There is also reason to believe that when the Melchizedek priesthood was restored a few days after the restoration of the Aaronic priesthood, that the gift of the Holy Ghost was bestowed upon those who had been previously baptized, although the records of that time are somewhat wanting. It is also clear that several of the brethren in the room on 6 April 1830 had also been blessed with the same authority as was held by Joseph and Oliver. David Whitmer and Martin Harris were undoubtedly of this number. Notwithstanding all that had transpired before the sixth of April, the organization of the Church required a renewal of the covenants that had once been entered into together with the establishment of the covenants that defined the Church of Jesus Christ. Was the baptism performed on 15 May 1829 sufficient for membership in the Church of Christ that would not be organized for another eleven months? Without question Joseph and Oliver had been baptized for the remission of sins, but the added dimension of Church membership lay in the balance. The question remains as to whether or not Joseph, Oliver, and other men who had been previously baptized for the remission of sins were again baptized for their formal membership in the Church of Christ at a time more consistent with the actual date of organization. We cannot speak with certainty, but we should not be surprised if a baptismal ordinance for membership was performed for the six men who constituted the charter members on
21.0.3 A man may bear the holy priesthood of God independent of the Church of Jesus Christ. Oliver Cowdery and Joseph Smith’s ordinations by John the Baptist and the three senior Apostles of the primitive Church of Christ serve as perfect examples of the principle. Once the Church was organized, the powers of the priesthood could be put directly to work in behalf of the membership of the Church. Joseph and Oliver’s offices in the Church and Kingdom of God were consistent with the authority that they had previously received, but as officers within the Church they had been and would continue to be sustained by the voice and prayers of the saints. Thus, on 6 April 1830, various officers and offices of the priesthood were established and confirmed upon the heads of the members of the Church, for and in behalf of the Church. This section appeared as Chapter XXII in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 46 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

21.1 In the initial stages of the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ in this last dispensation, the formal structure was, of course, quite simple. As the membership of the body of Christ increased, other officers and teachers would be established for the benefit of the saints. The prophet Joseph Smith would be involved in other quorums within the Church, but these titles articulated here would be given to none others than his immediate successors.

21.1.6—record—Eventually a Church Historian would be called and set apart in the person of John Whitmer. In the meantime, Oliver Cowdery had served as Joseph’s scribe in the translation of the Book of Mormon and in recording the various revelations that had been received.

21.1.13—thou—in reference to Joseph Smith, Junior. In later verses of this Section, Oliver Cowdery is addressed directly.

21.1.18—seer—As the word implies, a seer is one who has visions of matters which are typically unobserved by the children of men. A seer’s spiritual eyes are open to eternity, in the past, present, and future. Frequently, perhaps most often, a seer’s capacity is enhanced by divinely provided artifacts called the Urim and Thummim, such as those that were provide Joseph Smith in order to accurately translate the Book of Mormon into English from the Reformed Egyptian written language in which the Nephites had preserved their records.

21.1.20—translator—at first blush we might conclude that Joseph was considered a translator because of his work on the Book of Mormon. In addition, of course, he would be the means by which the record of Abraham would be brought to light. He would have the privilege of producing what is today called the Joseph Smith Translation of the Old and New Testaments. Above and beyond all of these linguistic tasks, Joseph also had the responsibility of presenting the mind and will of the Lord God of Israel to the children of men, also an act of translation. In the process of time, all of the keys required for salvation and exaltation would be restored to the earth from Heaven through Joseph’s instrumentality, certainly consistent with the literal meaning of the word “translator”.

21.1.22—prophet—a prophet is one who has the testimony of Jesus. No one in this dispensation has been more personally acquainted with the Lord Jesus Christ than the prophet Joseph Smith.

21.1.24—apostle—Joseph Smith’s ordination to the Apostleship took place shortly after John the Baptist bestowed the keys of the Aaronic priesthood. Peter, James, and John, the ancient Presidency of the Church of

1 BEHOLD, there shall be a record kept among you; and in it thou shalt be called a seer, a translator, a prophet, an apostle of Jesus Christ, an elder of the church through the will of God the Father, and the grace of your Lord Jesus Christ,

D&C 21:1
DS 2 201
FWR (11)
MD 47, 135, 592, 700
CR95-A 48, 65
EM 1:113, 411
EM 2:589, 647, 770
EM 2:831
EM 3:1194
D&C 21:1, 4–5
CR00-A 30
D&C 21:1, 5
EM 1:411
D&C 21:1–2
EM 3:1127, 1165
D&C 21:1–5
EM 4:1693
D&C 21:1–7
MD 606
Jesus Christ in the Meridian of Time, appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on the banks of the Susquehanna River, sometime between 15 March and 1 June 1829 and conferred the keys of the Melchizedek priesthood upon them.

21.1.26–27—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

21.1.29—elder—As a bearer of the Melchizedek priesthood, Joseph Smith was entitled to this sobriquet. In addition, he had been set apart as an officer in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; he was the be called the First Elder of the Church just as Oliver Cowdery was to be called the Second Elder of the Church.

21.1.42—grace—No true disciple of Jesus Christ can believe that there is any aggregate of activities or performances that can bring us to God without the intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace does come, however, after all we can do to invoke that grace. They are simple acts, indeed, well within our abilities as mortal beings, thus once again manifesting the mercy of our God.

21.2 That the prophet Joseph Smith was graced with charisma and other winsome personality traits no one can seriously question, but his genius, that supernal ability to inspire those around him was a gift that derived from the power and the influence of the Holy Ghost. The direction that the Church was to take in any given moment was not merely a product of intellectual cogitation on the young prophet’s part; it was an informed decision derived from the Father and the Son as communicated to Joseph Smith by means of the Spirit of God. The foundation of the Church of Christ was built upon the bedrock of revelation. The revelations came as the result of the whisperings of the Spirit to the prophet and his companions as they performed the will of the Lord God of Israel.

21.3 In this statement the Lord testifies to the burgeoning membership of the Church of Christ that all had been done in accordance with His will. Again the date and year are clearly articulated even though this particular revelation was received only minutes after the first regular sacrament meeting. What could be plainer to the minds of men than the significance of that particular day?

21.4 Some men may bristle at the thought that there is to be one man who speaks for and in behalf of the Lord. Those who do so are afflicted with pride. The Lord will anoint whom He will anoint and the disciples of Christ are called upon to demonstrate their faith and spirituality in doing all that they can to see to it that the anointed one is successful in all that he does in righteousness.

21.4.5—thou—Here the membership of the Church is referred to in the second person singular, in anticipation of their perfect unity in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

21.4.25—walking—We might quibble about who is supposed to be walking in holiness before God in this instance, whether the Church or the prophet. A moment’s reflection, however, would settle the seeming ambiguity as no ambiguity at all.

21.5 Whether by the Lord’s voice or the voice of His servants, it is the same. In what fashion can the two be different? Either a man speaks by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost or he does not. Those who are filled with the

2 Being inspired of the Holy Ghost to lay the foundation there-of, and to build it up unto the most holy faith.

3 Which church was organized and established in the year of your Lord eighteen hundred and thirty, in the fourth month, and on the sixth day of the month which is called April.

4 Wherefore, meaning the church, thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me;

5 For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith.
power and influence of the Holy Ghost will know for themselves when the
prophet is acting as a prophet. Those who have forfeited their right to the
Comforter through transgression are in no position to judge the servants of
the Lord in any event.

21.6 The storms of life have little or no effect upon the house that is built
upon the rock of revelation. The winds may blow, the rains may descend, and
the floods may rise, but the power of divine revelation points the way to safety
and peace. When we hearken to the voice of the servants of God we cannot
fail to achieve eternal life.

21.6.9—*hell*—Hell is a place of anxiety and uncertainty, whether speaking
of spirit prison or the circumstances in which the wicked find them-
selves during mortal life. The power and influence of the Holy Ghost
dispel the effects of the evil one, and comfort the saints even in their
darkest trials and tribulations.

21.6.25—*darkness*—Satan rejoices in the dark, and fears the light of Celestial
day in which he is revealed for what he is. In the midst of truth and
light, Satan is impotent.

21.6.32—*heavens*—The servants of sin are bent on destroying the servants
of the Most High. Sinners are easily intimidated by the natural forces of
this world which they do not understand. When the heavens and the
earth shake, the children of men become distressed and frequently
abandon all other affairs in order to preserve their lives. In many
instances the lives of the disciples of Christ have been preserved because
their enemies have been distracted from their wickedness.

21.7 The city of Enoch was established prior to the great flood as a refuge
from the deadly corruption that was sweeping the earth. Eventually the city of
Zion was translated and was caught up into heaven. In the Dispensation of the
Fullness of Time, a similar task is required of the disciples of Jesus Christ: to
prepare the earth for the second coming of Jesus Christ and to usher in the
Millennial reign which will restore the earth to its paradisiacal glory, an effect
equally to translation.

21.7.7—*Him*—That is to say, the prophet Joseph Smith.

21.7.16—*Zion*—It has been the goal of every prophet since the beginning
of the world to teach the principles of the Celestial Kingdom and to
invite the children of men to live by them.

21.8 The prophet had been instructed in the principles of righteousness begin-
ning that spring morning in 1820 when the Father and the Son first appeared
unto him in the sacred grove. As he was instructed in history of the Nephite
people, both by direct revelation and through the blessings associated with the
translation of the Book of Mormon, Joseph came to understand the desir-
bility of having the world prepared against the evil day, that a people might
be prepared to serve as a gathering point for the honest in heart. Joseph knew
the consequences if such a people were not gathered, if such a city was not
established as a refuge in the latter days: the whole earth would be utterly
wasted at the Savior’s coming. Joseph Smith had learned for himself on mul-
tiple occasions that it was possible to be forgiven of one’s personal sins and
follies. That which he could obtain through faith and humility was possible
for others to obtain. His compassion for the children of men was such that he
desired with his whole soul that mankind would willingly accept the blessings
of the covenants that had been revealed in these latter days.

21.8.5—*Zion*—It has been the goal of every prophet since the beginning
of the world to teach the principles of the Celestial Kingdom and to

6 For by doing these things the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God
will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good,
and his name’s glory.

7 For thus saith the Lord God: Him have I inspired to move the cause of Zion in mighty power for
good, and his diligence I know, and his prayers I have heard.

8 Yea, his weeping for Zion I have seen, and I will cause that he shall mourn for her no longer; for his
days of rejoicing are come unto the remission of his sins, and the mani-
festations of my blessings upon his works.

D&C 21:6
MD 304
CR01-A 83
EM 2:703

D&C 21:7–8
MD 854

21.9 At the heart of all that Joseph Smith would inspire in his fellow men was thecertitude of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the power ofthe atoning sacrifice. Without the testimony of Jesus there was nothing thatthe inhabitants of the earth could do to avoid utter destruction when the Lordappeared in glory. Joseph Smith has seen with his own eyes the glorious presenceof the Father and the Son. He had witnessed the coming of the angelMoroni and had experienced illumination at the angel’s hands. He wasfamiliar with the personalities of the Old and New Testaments and with the charac ters who were instrumental in preserving the records which testified of the labors of the Lord with the ancient inhabitants of the western hemisphere. Coupled with his eyewitness account to which he remained faithful all of his mortal days, was the inward testimony which sustained him through the many trials and tribulations which befell him throughout his young life. The promise that was made to those who had not had such glorious views as had Joseph was that the same spirit, the Holy Ghost, which buoyed up the prophet Joseph Smith in his darkest hours would be made available to every saint that came unto Christ. All men might know as surely as did the young prophet that their course in life can be and may very well be acceptable to God through obedience to the principles and ordinances revealed through Joseph Smith.

21.9.36—Jesus—The Anglicized form of the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew name, Oshea or Joshua. At its root, “Jesus” means “Savior”.

21.10 This very instruction had been carried out earlier in the day as the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ was taking place.

21.10.1—Wherefore—Inasmuch as Joseph Smith was to take the lead in the Church of Christ as the first elder, it was vital that he be anordained Apostle within the Church. Both he and Oliver were already especial witnesses of Christ because of the keys that had been bestowed upon them nearly a year before.

21.10.3—behooveth—The English word “behooveth” derives from Germanic roots that mean “have need of, morally or ethically necessary, befitting or proper for, worthwhile, advantageous, to be obliged”. 

21.10.12—13—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

21.10.15—apostle—Oliver Cowdery had been ordained an Apostle with the prophet Joseph Smith sometime between 15 May 1829 and 1 June 1829, on the banks of the Susquehanna River by the ancient disciples of Jesus Christ, Peter, James, and John.

21.11 Joseph was ordained the first elder and an Apostle of Jesus Christ in the Church by virtue of the keys of the priesthood that had been bestowed upon Oliver Cowdery by Peter, James, and John. By the same token, Oliver Cowdery was ordained the second elder and an Apostle in the Church of Christ by virtue of those same keys that had been bestowed upon the prophet Joseph Smith. Note that the Lord is quite clear as to who should preside in the Kingdom of God, a fact which Oliver at times forgot to his own hurt.

21.11.31—Christ—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean
“anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendency to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

21.12 The first public discourse given by any member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints transpired on the Sunday following the organization of the Church, on 11 April 1830. That discourse was delivered, as might be anticipated, by Oliver Cowdery. Oliver would have ample opportunities to teach the simple principles of the restored Gospel of Christ to the children of men and administer the ordinances of salvation to those who came to believe the truth. In the fall of 1830, he with a number of his brethren was sent into the western portions of the land in order to preach the Gospel to the native Americans who were ensconced in various territories and reservations. These native Americans, as clearly stated in the Book of Mormon, constituted part of the posterity of the Lamanites, the Nephites, and the Mulekites. These were remnants of the House of Israel that had been scattered throughout the world and included those who pertained to the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Judah.

21.12.18—Gentiles—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

21.12.30—Jews—The people of the land of Zarahemla were originally descendants of a band of Jews who had escaped the destruction of the land of Jerusalem shortly before the city was overthrown by the Babylonians about the year 589 BC. After the posterity of Lehi came in contact with the people of Zarahemla about the year 200 BC, the two peoples became as one.

21.12.32—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

22.0.1 When the Lord Jesus Christ entered into his public ministry, he sought out John the son of the priest Zachariah in order to receive the ordinance of

12 And the first preacher of this church unto the church, and before the world, yea, before the Gentiles; yea, and thus saith the Lord God, lo, lo! to the Jews also. Amen.

Section 22

Date: April 1830
Place: Manchester, New York

D&C 22
AGQ 4 96
baptism at the hands of the last of the faithful bearers of the Aaronic priesthood. John the Baptist was a direct line descendant of Aaron and had received the keys to that priesthood when he was but a child. Upon the death of John at the hands of King Herod, the last legitimate high priest of the Aaronic priesthood was taken from the earth. For nearly 1,800 years the inhabitants of the earth received no ordinances by virtue of the holy priesthood that had been ensconced in the family of the patriarch Levi.

22.0.2 As the prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were nearing the end of the Nephite account of the visit of the Son of God to the ancient inhabitants of the western hemisphere, they were inspired to seek counsel of the Lord as to how they should fulfill the commandment given by Mormon to repent and be baptized. On 15 May 1829, as they knelt in prayer on the banks of the Susquehanna River near the town of Harmony, Pennsylvania, a resurrected personage appeared to them, announcing that he was the same man to whom the New Testament referred as John the Baptist. He declared that he was acting under the direction of the three ancient Apostles, Peter, James, and John, and had been instructed to bestow upon them the keys of the Aaronic priesthood. After doing so, John instructed Joseph and Oliver to baptize one another, which they did moments later. John further testified that Peter, James, and John would soon come themselves and give them further instructions as to how they should proceed. By 1 June 1829, these blessings too had been realized.

22.0.3 During the ensuing months, many other interested parties received baptism at the hands of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Some of those who were privy to these ordinances have testified that as many as 80 individuals may have been baptized during the year prior to the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ. We may assume as well, that many of these had hands laid upon their heads for the gift of the Holy Ghost. On 6 April 1830, the Church of Jesus Christ was formally organized according to the laws of the state of New York in the home of Peter Whitmer, Senior. Only six men were selected to be the charter members of the Church, the least number that was allowed under the law for a religious organization. According to the records made at the time, nearly fifty people were in the Whitmer home when the prophet and his companions sustained one another in their actions.

22.0.4 One of the questions that must have arisen at the time was whether the baptisms that had been performed before the organization of the Church would suffice after the Church was organized. They had been performed by men who held the keys of the priesthood, by men who enjoyed the confidence of heaven. Yet, the ordinance had been performed with the understanding that it was for the remission of sins. The same may be said of the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. Those ordinances were limited in their scope because there was no Church into which they could be baptized or confirmed until 6 April 1830. We have no record of the six charter members having been baptized at a time close to the first part of April, although all six were confirmed members of the Church during that first official meeting of the Church. Thereafter, those who were to be officers in the Church were ordained and set apart for their ministries. Those who entered into the Church from that point on did so by baptism, regardless of any ordinances that they might have received prior to that time. Needless to say, if those who had received baptism for the remission of sins at the hands of those who held the keys of the priesthood had need to be baptized again for membership in the Church, those who had pertained to any other religious organization that had
initiatory ordinances who definitely have cause to be baptized and confirmed into the restored Church of Jesus Christ. This clarification constitutes the essence of this Section of the Doctrine and Covenants. This section appeared as Chapter XXIII in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 47 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

22.1 Prior to the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ, only a certain number of blessings might be bestowed upon the heads of the children of men. With the restoration of the holy priesthood and the establishment of the Savior’s true and living Church, the fullness of the covenants was restored as well. Those seeking more than they already had would be required to do all that was necessary to qualify for those additional blessings, which in this case meant being baptized for membership in Christ’s Church.

22.1.8—9—old covenants—Primarily in reference to the legitimate baptisms and bestowals of the gift of the Holy Ghost that had taken place between 15 May 1829 and 6 April 1830. We can see, however, that the desires for discipleship, even within the societies created by men in the absence of the true Church of Jesus Christ might be understood here as well.

22.1.18—19—this thing—That is to say, the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ in these latter days. All other voluntary commitments to God and His Son had been honored to a degree prior to this time, but after 6 April 1830, all of the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ had to be derived from authority that had been placed within the Church by the Lord through His servants.

22.1.21—this—That is to say, the baptism that brought membership into the Church and Kingdom of God, an ordinance that had been performed in behalf of the saints since the days of Adam and Eve.

22.2 Those who would find grace in the sight of God must conform themselves to His will. In this case, He has commanded all men to repent and be baptized. Although there be a thousand societies that claim the power to redeem the souls of men, the fact remains that there is only one, the one in which the priesthood of God has been placed by prophecy and the laying on of hands.

22.2.22—23—strait gate—The strait or narrow gate of the Gospel of Jesus Christ always has been symbolic of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, and a preparatory ordinance for entering into the Church and Kingdom of God.

22.2.26—28—law of Moses—The law of Moses provided a preparatory Gospel founded in faith, repentance, and baptism by immersion for the remission of sins. It was in itself true, but incomplete. Therefore, all those who joined the Church of Jesus Christ in the Meridian of Time, received the ordinance of baptism at the hands of the Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ regardless of whether they had been Jews or Gentiles.

22.2.32—33—dead works—Any ordinances performed without the authority from God have not life in them. Therefore, any ordinances of the Gospel received while in the midst of the congregations of the children of men have no effect upon eternity and leave the adherent lifeless in the eternal sense of salvation and exaltation.

22.3 Before the restoration of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ took place, the honest in heart sought for peace of mind and heart, attempting to find forgiveness of sin in the various religious institutions that had been established by the children of men. None of these brought complete satisfaction and as a result there was continual unrest in the midst of sectarianism. The abundant

1 BEHOLD, I say unto you that all old covenants have I caused to be done away in this thing; and this is a new and an everlasting covenant, even that which was from the beginning.

2 Wherefore, although a man should be baptized an hundred times it availeth him nothing, for you cannot enter in at the strait gate by the law of Moses, neither by your dead works.

3 For it is because of your dead works that I have caused this last covenant and this church to be built up unto me, even as in days of old.
life promised by the Savior did not exist upon the earth in its fullness. The constant companionship of the Comforter could not be found. The honest in heart pled for the tender mercies of the Lord to be poured out upon them, and in the process of time, the desired blessing was realized. Who, then, should quibble about the laws and commandments of the Lord God of Israel regarding the saving ordinances of the Gospel?

22.4 The gate that opens upon the path of eternal righteousness is strait; it is narrow and confined to a singular location. The saints of God rejoice in it precision, the clarity with which it is presented, and the detail which provides security in our active faith.

22.4.19—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

23.0.1 Each of the five men to whom the Lord addresses his counsel in this Section had been instrumental in bringing forth the Book of Mormon and in establishing the Church and Kingdom of God once more upon the face of the earth. Oliver Cowdery had been Joseph’s closest companion in the translation process since the beginning of April 1829 and had been selected as one of the Three Witnesses of the Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith, Senior, Hyrum Smith, and Samuel H. Smith served as three of the Eight Witnesses. Oliver, Samuel, and Hyrum constituted half of the charter membership of the Church of Jesus Christ on 6 April 1930. Joseph Smith, Senior, had been an ardent supporter of his son since the time of the First Vision and had correctly counseled him on several occasions as his ministry began to unfold. He and his wife Lucy were baptized on the day that the Church was organized. By the time this revelation was received, all five of these men were bearers of the Melchizedek priesthood.

23.0.2 Between the time of the Moroni’s first visit to the young prophet Joseph Smith in September 1823 and the point where Moroni finally entrusted the plates to the prophet’s care, Joseph spent a great deal of time working as a common laborer for some of the prominent citizens in the vicinity. Among these were Josiah Stowell and Joseph Knight, Senior. Joseph Knight owned a flour mill in the vicinity of Harmony, Pennsylvania, and from time to time hired Joseph Smith to work for him. At the Knight family home in Colesville, New York, he became acquainted with Mr. Knight’s two sons, Newel and Joseph, Junior, to whom he confided much of that which he had experienced as a young man living in Palmyra, including the First Vision and the coming of the angel Moroni. The entire Knight family became quite fond of the young prophet and on many occasions had proved themselves faithful friends. When the time came for Mormon’s record to be retrieved from the hill Cumorah, both Josiah Stowell and Joseph Knight were present at the Smith home in Palmyra, having arrived a day or two before. Joseph Knight’s horse and wagon were used by Joseph Smith and his wife to go to the hill Cumorah for the prophet’s meeting with the angel Moroni. After Joseph Smith was attacked various times as he brought the plates to the Smith home, Josiah Stowell, Joseph Knight, went with the prophet’s father to apprehend the men who had assaulted the young man. After Joseph and Emma moved by to Harmony, Pennsylvania, from Palmyra, Joseph Knight and his family expended time and means in providing for Joseph and Emma as the trans-

4 Wherefore, enter ye in at the gate, as I have commanded, and seek not to counsel your God. Amen.

Section 23

Date: April 1830
Place: Manchester, New York
To: Joseph Smith, Sen., Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, Joseph Knight, Sen., Samuel H. Smith

D&C 23
DHC 1 80
MD 670
EM 1:408
EM 3:1058

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23.0.3 When the first edition of the Book of Commandments was published in 1833, each of the individuals was addressed in a separate Chapter, numbering XVII through XXI. All five revelations were ascribed the date of 6 April 1830. In the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants published in 1835, the five revelations were combined into one, Section 45, with the generalized date of April 1830 as part of the headnote. Why the editors abandoned the specificity of the date in that year we cannot say.

23.1 Oliver Cowdery was a true friend to the prophet Joseph Smith and would continue so for many years. There came a time, however, in which he thought far more of himself and the role he had played in the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and in the establishment of the Church of Christ than was justified. In his pride, Oliver became easily offended at the chastisement that he received and soon found himself outside of the Kingdom of God, without covenants, without keys, and without eternal prospects of any kind. To his credit, Oliver eventually humbled himself and was received by baptism back into fellowship with the saints of the Most High on 12 November 1848 by Orson Hyde in Kanesville, Iowa. He died shortly thereafter on 3 March 1850 at the home of David Whitmer in Richmond, Missouri. David was the brother of Oliver’s wife Elizabeth Ann.

23.1.6—Oliver—In reference to Oliver Cowdery. As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

23.2 The only way that Oliver could make his calling known unto the world and before the Church was to attend to the duties which befell him as the second elder of the Church and its first preacher. On Sunday 11 April 1830, at the first public meeting of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation, Oliver was the primary speaker, testifying of the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and of the restoration of the keys necessary to perform those ordinances. Six individuals joined the Church through baptism after the meeting at the hands of Oliver Cowdery in Seneca Lake. The following Sunday, another seven individuals were baptized after the meeting, including the young woman who would become Oliver’s wife, Elizabeth Anne Whitmer. Oliver would rise to his feet on many occasions to address the saints and undoubtedly would have been a tremendous force for good during the closing years of Joseph Smith’s ministry had he remained faithful to his covenants and had hearkened to the counsel of the Lord in all things. When Oliver returned to the Church in 1848 he reportedly declared that the congregation there in Kanesville, Iowa, was the largest assembly he had ever addressed in his life.

23.2.27—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the
many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

23.3 In May of 1829, Hyrum Smith came to Harmony Pennsylvania, to visit his brother Joseph, as the translation of the Book of Mormon was nearing completion. Hyrum no doubt wished to be an active participant in the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, particularly as it was to be found within the pages of the Book of Mormon. The Lord counseled him at that time, however, to bide his time, to wait until he had published Book of Mormon in his hand, until he had received the ordinances that would make his a worthy receptacle of truth and light, and until the Church of Jesus Christ had been once more established upon the earth (see 11.12–18) On 6 April 1830 all of these things had transpired and Hyrum now wished to know what he should be about as a faithful member of the Church and as a bearer of the holy priesthood. Hyrum’s faithfulness would continue throughout his life, until the day that he fell as a martyr at Carthage Jail, only moments before his brother expired. With the apostasy of Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum was called to assume all of the responsibilities that once befell the second elder of the Church, including holding the keys of the ministry as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hyrum also served as the presiding Patriarch of the Church upon his father’s death.

23.3.6—Hyrum Smith—Hyrum was the elder brother of Joseph Smith, born on 9 February 1800. Although more than five years Joseph’s senior, Hyrum was completely faithful to all that Joseph testified had transpired in his boyhood. He served as one of the Eight Witnesses of the Book of Mormon and as the eldest of the six men who formally organized the Church of Jesus Christ on 6 April 1830. He served in many capacities in the Church and Kingdom of God before his death as a martyr on 27 June 1844 in Carthage, Illinois.

23.3.45—forever—The ministry of Hyrum Smith would not end with his death, but would continue in the world of spirits and after the resurrection.

23.3.51—family—There can be no misunderstanding as to the meaning of this phrase. In the process of time as the Church continued to grow in faith, testimony, and numbers, significant officers were added by the Lord. On 18 December 1833, Joseph Smith, Senior, was called to serve as the first Patriarch to the Church. This particular calling befell Hyrum, his eldest living son, when Father Smith died in September 1840.

23.3.52—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

23.4 Samuel was anxious to do whatsoever the Lord Jesus Christ would have him do and thus the request to know what his duties in the Church and Kingdom of God were to be. Samuel must have been somewhat disappointed that he was not as yet commissioned to preach the Gospel before the world. He had been the third person baptized in this dispensation, was one of the Eight Witnesses of the Book of Mormon, and had been included as one of the six founding members of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation. His wait would not be long, however. On 13 June 1830, Samuel was sent out with several copies of the Book of Mormon. He considered this mission to be a bit of a failure, but the various copies which he made available to the inhabitants of the country through which he passed would be instrumental in the conversion of many faithful Latter-day Saints, including Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball.

3 Behold, I speak unto you, Hyrum, a few words; for thou also art under no condemnation, and thy heart is opened, and thy tongue loosed; and thy calling is to exhortation, and to strengthen the church continually. Wherefore thy duty is unto the church forever, and this because of thy family. Amen.

4 Behold, I speak a few words unto you, Samuel; for thou also art under no condemnation, and thy calling is to exhortation, and to strengthen the church; and thou art not as yet called to preach before the world. Amen.
23.4.9—Samuel—In reference to Samuel H. Smith. A younger brother of the prophet Joseph Smith. He is often referred to as the third person baptized with proper authority in this dispensation following Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. He was one of the Eight Witnesses of the Book of Mormon and is credited with being the first formal missionary of the Church. When Joseph and Hyrum were murdered in Carthage, Illinois, Samuel was relentlessly pursued by elements of the mob, which resulted in extreme fatigue and susceptibility to a fever which shortly thereafter took his life on 30 July 1844.

23.4.40—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as "Amen" derives from roots which mean "true". This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

23.5 In February 1829, Joseph Smith, Senior, came to Harmony, Pennsylvania, from Palmyra, New York, to inquire as to how the translation of the Book of Mormon was progressing. Joseph’s father had been fervent in his support of the young prophet from the opening days of this dispensation and had encouraged him in every distress. At the time of his father’s visit, Joseph received what is now known as Section 4 of the Doctrine and Covenants, wherein was presented the qualifications for all those who wished to serve in the Church and Kingdom of God. This was not a just a revelation to be generally understood by the total membership of the Church as to how they should conduct themselves in their missionary service. This was a reflection of the deep and abiding desire of Joseph Smith, Senior, to be part of the ministry to which his son had been called.

23.5.9—Joseph Smith, Sen.—No one had been more supportive of the young prophet in his ministry than his own father. From Joseph’s first experience with the God of Heaven in the spring of 1820, Joseph Smith, Senior, had believed the accounts of the various interviews that his son had related to the family and had encouraged him to do all that he had been instructed to do by the various divine emissaries sent to him by the Lord. The prophet’s father was born in Topsfield, Massachusetts, on 12 July 1771. Among other assignments, Joseph Smith, Senior, served as an assistant counselor to the First Presidency and as the first Patriarch to the Church. He died 14 September 1840 in Nauvoo, Illinois.

23.5.37—forever—The ministry of Joseph Smith, Senior, would not end with his death, but would continue in the world of spirits and after the resurrection.

23.5.38—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

23.6 Joseph Knight, Senior, had been acquainted with the Smith family for many years, and was moderately informed as to the various experiences of the prophet Joseph Smith almost from the time that the prophet experienced them. He was receptive and desirous to know more. He wished to be of service to his young friend and was instrumental in providing Joseph Smith means so that the work of the translation of the Book of Mormon might continue unabated. In May 1829, during one of his many visits to Harmony, Pennsylvania, the elder man asked the younger to inquire of the Lord how he could best employ his time and means. What we now have as Section 12 of the Doctrine and Covenants was the result. It is clear that there would come a

5 Behold, I speak a few words unto you, Joseph; for thou also art under no condemnation, and thy calling also is to exhortation, and to strengthen the church; and this is thy duty from henceforth and forever. Amen.

6 Behold, I manifest unto you, Joseph Knight, by these words, that you must take up your cross, in the which you must pray vocally before the world as well as in secret, and in your family, and among your friends, and in all places.
time when Joseph Knight would be called upon to do more than merely provide for the temporal needs of the prophet and his family.

23.6.6—Joseph Knight—Joseph Knight, Sr. was born 26 November 1772 in Oakham, Massachusetts. He and his wife Polly Peck Knight moved to Colesville, New York in 1808. While Joseph Smith was working for Josiah Stowell in Colesville, the elder knight became acquainted with the young prophet and soon became an ardent supporter. He was baptized a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in June 1830 and his entire family followed suit. The Knights migrated to Ohio, Missouri, and the Illinois. Joseph Knight Senior died at Mount Pisgah, Iowa, during the trek west on February 2, 1847.

23.6.17—cross—At the heart of the matter is the Lord’s counsel that Joseph should be completely willing to express the desires of his heart to God in every venue in which he might find himself. This must have been a somewhat difficult task, given the nature of the imagery.

23.7 In June 1830, shortly after the first formal conference of the Church of Jesus Christ, Joseph Smith and several of his companions journeyed to Colesville, Broome County, New York to visit with the Knight family and several others who were anxiously waiting the opportunity to receive the fullness of the Gospel of Christ into their lives. Strenuous efforts were made to keep the ordinance of baptism from taking place, including the destruction of a dam that had been built for the purpose. The baptisms were postponed until the following day, 28 June 1830, during which the prophet’s own wife Emma, and the elder Joseph Knight were received into the Kingdom of God through the ordinance of salvation. Joseph Knight and his family would constitute the core of the Colesville Branch, which would settle for a short time in Thompson, Ohio, and then would be among the first to settle in Jackson County, Missouri, at the inception of the city of Zion. They were driven from the state of Missouri with the rest of the saints, settling for a time in Nauvoo, Illinois, before beginning the trek to the Great Salt Lake valley. Joseph Knight, Senior, died 2 February 1847 at Mt. Pisgah, Iowa, a faithful member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

23.7.29—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

7 And, behold, it is your duty to unite with the true church, and give your language to exhortation continually, that you may receive the reward of the laborer. Amen.

Section 24

Date: July 1830
Place: Harmony, Pennsylvania
To: Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery

D&C 24
DHC 1 101
MD 670
EM 1:408
EM 2:574
gated pride and bigotry on the part of the accusers. During this time of tribulation and persecution, Joseph and Oliver pursued their study of the scriptures, receiving as an open revelation, that which can now be found in the Pearl of Great Price as Moses Chapter 1. Upon arriving home in July 1830, Joseph Smith received this present revelation. The instructions are directed personally to Joseph, as the tense and number of the narrative indicates, but there were items for the benefit of Oliver Cowdery as well. In the first edition of the Book of Commandments this fact is clearly articulated, the headnote state that this was “a revelation to Joseph, and also to Oliver”. Subsequent publications have merely stated that the revelation was given to “Joseph and Oliver”. In nothing does this distract from the revelation itself. This section appeared as Chapter XXV in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 9 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

24.1 Joseph Smith had been called to be the Lord’s servant, first by the Father and the Son, and then later by the angel Moroni. The administrations of John the Baptist, together with those of Peter, James, and John had given him great strength in bearing with the adversity that transpired during the early years of his ministry. The Lord had visited with him from time to time, giving Joseph explicit counsel as to what he should do to avoid destruction at the hands of his enemies. Thus, the Book of Mormon saw the light of day in March 1830 and a month later the Church of Jesus Christ was once more formally organized upon the earth.

24.1.2—thou—While it is possible to logically include Oliver Cowdery’s experiences as being part of the Lord’s counsel here, yet the pronoun being used is the second person singular, pinpointing the addressee as Joseph Smith.

24.1.10–12—Book of Mormon—The sacred record of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, composed by the prophet Mormon during the fourth century of the Christian era, using nearly a thousand years of preserved records of the Nephite civilization. Its resting place was revealed to the prophet Joseph Smith who was then permitted to translate the record into English by the gift and power of God.

24.1.26—afflictions—We may point to almost innumerable moments of persecution and tribulation that began in the spring of 1820 with the appearance of the Father and the Son. Certainly there vicious attempts on the person of the prophet in connect with the translation of the Book of Mormon. But the emphasis here must surely be on the preceding several days as the prophet was being hailed from courtroom to courtroom and being accused of all sorts unbecoming conduct, as he was slandered in public by his enemies.

24.1.52—darkness—The greatest blessing that Joseph received in this lost and fallen world was the inspiration of the Holy Ghost which clearly was a lamp unto his feet in all things and a comfort to his soul in the midst of deepest distress.

24.2 We are not privy to every error in judgment that the young prophet made during his early ministry, but certainly his unbridled trust of Martin Harris was one of them. We need not pry through unwarranted speculations into Joseph Smith’s life in order to identify any other lapses. The Lord was willing to forgive those weaknesses, follies, and sins; we should be of the same mind.

24.3 More and more of the time of the prophet Joseph Smith and that of Oliver Cowdery was going to be consumed by the demands of the nascent...
Church of Christ. It must have been a frightening proposition to throw himself upon the mercy, compassion, and faith of the Latter-day Saints. The faithful in Christ would be blessed beyond measure as they temporally supported and sustained Joseph and Oliver in their spiritual labors. As will be seen, there were troubles brewing that needed Joseph’s personal attention.

24.3,9–10—thy fields—Joseph and Emma lived upon a small plot of ground of about 13 acres purchased from his father-in-law, Isaac Hale, that bordered on the Hale’s farm. We are not told of the nature of the planting, whether, wheat, oats, or barley. In any event, the persecutions in New York and the demands of the ministry caused the planting to be outside of the ideal dates for doing so.

24.3.22—Colesville—A small community in south-central New York, about 23 miles north of Harmony, Pennsylvania. The Colesville Branch of the Church of Christ was comprised primarily of the friends and family of Joseph Knight, Senior.

24.3.23—Fayette—A small community northwest of Colesville and Harmony, approximately one hundred miles from the former and 85 miles from the latter. The Fayette Branch of the Church had grown up in the faithful atmosphere of the Peter Whitmer, Senior, home.

24.3.25—Manchester—A small community in central New York that lies northwest of Colesville between Fayette and Palmyra, thirty miles from the former and seven miles from the latter. The Manchester Branch of the Church of Jesus Christ coalesced around the family of Joseph Smith, Senior.

24.4 The members of the Church of Christ in these three small communities had expressed their faith and confidence in the veracity of the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the priesthood, and the organization of the true and living Church. Did that faith and confidence translate into temporal matters? Would the saints perceive that the Gospel of Jesus Christ permeates every aspect of life? If they did not, the great curse would be that they would lose that which they had obtained through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost and would be left to witter in a wilderness of sin and degradation.

24.5 Joseph’s primary responsibility in the Church was to provide guidance to the membership of the Church until they had obtained sufficient personal spirituality that they might have the mind of Christ in all things. The prophets receive revelation so that the saints might learn to recognize the Spirit of God when it moves upon them, for in those whisperings of the Spirit there will be nothing contrary to that which the Lord has revealed to His servants. For the most part, the revelations included in the Doctrine and Covenants fell from the lips of the prophet Joseph Smith, reflecting the mind and will of the Lord, His guidance to the disciples of Christ in a lost and fallen world. No other man in this dispensation has shed more light upon the word of God than the prophet Joseph Smith. No one has been more clear, more articulate, or more insightful than he who was chosen by the Lord to open this last dispensation.

24.6 Although the process of revelation requires some study and preparation, yet the moment of comprehension arrives when the Spirit of God descends upon the mind and heart of the prophet. Anyone who has been guided and directed by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost understands perfectly the meaning of this verse. More than any man living, Joseph Smith knew what it was like to have the words of eternal life upon his lips. He knew from personal experience what would happen to those who hearkened to the voice of the Lord; he knew exactly what would transpired of the counsel of the Lord

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<td>D&amp;C 24:3, 9</td>
<td>EM 2:850</td>
<td>190</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 But if they receive thee not, I will send upon them a cursing instead of a blessing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 And thou shalt continue in calling upon God in my name, and writing the things which shall be given thee by the Comforter, and expounding all scriptures unto the church.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 24:5</td>
<td></td>
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<td>6 And it shall be given thee in the very moment what thou shalt speak and write, and they shall hear it, or I will send unto them a cursing instead of a blessing.</td>
<td>DS 1 15</td>
<td>MD 149</td>
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God of Israel were rejected or neglected.

24.7 Joseph Smith had been an agrarian his entire life; this was what he knew best. He knew how to provide for himself and his family in this fashion. The Lord, however, was commanding him to step forward into a world of conduct that was entirely new to him. He was to be the instrument by which men’s hearts would be knit one to another. He would be called upon to settle doctrinal differences, some of which had been long-standing for millennia. The Lord assured him that he would be equal to the task.

24.7.9—Zion—It has been the goal of every prophet since the beginning of the world to teach the principles of the Celestial Kingdom and to invite the children of men to live by them.

24.8 In July of 1830 Joseph Smith was 25 years old. For ten of those years he had been mocked, criticized, and condemned. Strangers and neighbors had banded together to heap affliction and derision upon him. They had attempted to take his life, even when he was of tender years. With the news of the “golden Bible” spreading forth in the region of country where he lived, increasing assaults upon his person intensified. When the plates were entrusted to him by the angel Moroni, the persecution continued unabated as the wicked sought to deprive him of that which had been divinely provided. In the weeks previous to this revelation, the opposition to the Church of Jesus Christ and its officers had manifested itself in a series of vexatious lawsuits and hearings. All of this, of course, was primarily inspired by the prince of darkness, he who has been the enemy of the righteous since before the foundations of the earth were laid. For all that had taken place during those ten years, the Lord clearly testifies here to Joseph, that he should not expect kinder treatment from the world. Joseph, however, would be able to bear up under the burdens which would come upon him because he was supported and sustained by the Lord God of Heaven.

24.9 The previous two or three years had clearly demonstrated that Joseph would not be successful in those concerns with which he was most familiar. The planting, nurturing, and harvesting of crops had been continually interrupted or postponed because of pressing issues concerning the translation and publishing of the Book of Mormon. Even the latest planting of his fields had taken place at a time which did not bode well for a plentiful harvest. He was either too late or too early, depending on the nature of his crops. With regard to the nurturing and growth of the Church of Christ, there was no one who could adequately take his place. He was unique, a uniqueness that he would have to embrace wholeheartedly if he were to accomplish that which he had been sent upon the earth to do.

24.9.24—wherewith—That is to say, both spiritual and material means would be made abundantly available to him.

24.9.37–41—laying on of hands—This in conjunction with the ordaining of brethren to serve in the various offices of the Church of Christ. There were many others who were entitled to bestowed the gift of the Holy Ghost.

24.9.43—confirming—Rather than speaking of the ordinance of the Gospel that follows baptism, the Lord addresses Joseph’s responsibility to edify and strengthen the saints in their commitment to the Kingdom of God on the earth, particularly at this time, the three communities of Colesville, Fayette, and Manchester.

24.10 Again, it is important to remember that the revelation is directed to

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<td>7</td>
<td>For thou shalt devote all thy service in Zion; and in this thou shalt have strength.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 24:7 MD 854</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Be patient in afflictions, for thou shalt have many; but endure them, for, lo, I am with thee, even unto the end of thy days.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 24:8 CR95-O 19 CR96-A 35 CR98-A 98</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>And in temporal labors thou shalt not have strength, for this is not thy calling. Attend to thy calling and thou shalt have wherewith to magnify thine office, and to expound all scriptures, and continue in laying on of the hands and confirming the churches.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 24:9 CR96-A 98</td>
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Joseph Smith. Oliver’s instructions came through the prophet as part of Joseph’s instructions. This is not to say that Oliver could not receive revelation for himself. The Lord is simply setting the protocol as to how the various officers of the Church should look to those who preside for confirmation as to how they are performing their duties. Oliver was the first preacher of this dispensation. He may have felt that he was the only preacher in the beginning. That may have been the case, but the Lord testifies to Oliver that he will not suffer from overexposure so long as he is filled with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost as he attends to his duties as a presiding officer.

24.10.4—Oliver—in reference to Oliver Cowdery. As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

24.11 This is a second caution regarding the potential for dispiriting pride to have its way with Oliver Cowdery (see 23.1). Oliver ought not to have overly concern himself with the things of this world, whether of wealth, fame, or power. Yet these things would be his undoing.

24.12 So long as Oliver Cowdery was faithful to his covenants he was a masterful orator, a compelling speaker whose words penetrated the hearts and minds of all those who heard him. Some his gifts were natural; some of them had been acquired through his various occupations. His real strength lay in his initial willingness to be led and guided by the whisperings of the spirit of God. Hardly anyone knew more than did Oliver regarding the text of the Book of Mormon, he having written most of the narrative twice, during its translation and in preparation for its publishing. He was not oblivious to the teaching in the Old and New Testaments, and this knowledge coupled with the inspiration of the Lord God of Israel made him almost unassailable as a teacher of righteousness.

24.13 Manifestations of the spirit of God and of the power of the priesthood had been abundant among the early saints, but here the Lord suggests wisdom and caution. One of the causes of the deep distresses that had come upon the prophet during the previous weeks came in conjunction with miracles that had taken place in the home of Joseph Knight, Senior, and others which became fodder for the mockers that served as legal proceedings in South Bainbridge and Colesville. One of the great taunts given by the prosecutors was to produce like miracles for the benefit of the courtroom. No doubt there were those who thought that would have been a good idea, a way to put to rest all opposition against the rise of the Church and Kingdom of God on the earth. The Lord reminds the saints that the acceptable miracles are provided to preserve life, not to prove doctrinal points.

24.14 There exists an established pattern regarding the particular afflictions mentioned in the previous verse.

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<td>11</td>
<td>In me he shall have glory, and not of himself, whether in weakness or in strength, whether in bonds or free;</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>And at all times, and in all places, he shall open his mouth and declare my gospel as with the voice of a trump, both day and night. And I will give unto him strength such as is not known among men.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Require not miracles, except I shall command you, except casting out devils, healing the sick, and against poisonous serpents, and against deadly poisons;</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>And these things ye shall not do, except it be required of you by them who desire it, that the scriptures might be fulfilled; for ye shall do according to that which is written.</td>
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D&C 24:13–14
AF 234
MD 345, 507

D&C 24:14
AGQ 1 148
DS 3 175
24.15 This is a reprise of instructions that the Savior had given his Apostles as he dwelt in mortality with them in the land of Palestine.

And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city. And they went out, and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them. (Mark 6:10–13)

There is no greater condemnation that a servant of God can pronounce against a person than that which is suggested here. The formalities of such a dismissal need not overly concern us, except to say that the powers of the priesthood are not to be trifled with and the performance of one’s duties should not be coupled with pride or taking personal offense.

24.16 The Lord had commanded Joseph Smith that he was to be patient in all of his afflictions and that he should endure them (see 24.8). One would suppose that invoking the vengeance of the Lord capriciously would not constitute the sort of patience that the Lord was encouraging here. Yet, it is certain that the abuse of the servants of God would not be endlessly tolerated. This would come to the forefront several years later as the saints were driven from Jackson County, Missouri, and then from the entire state. The prophet’s petition to the Lord in behalf of the beleaguered membership of the Church becomes quite poignant in light of the Lord counsel here (see DC-C 121.1–6).

24.17 During the previous weeks the prophet and his friends had been hailed before the courts of South Bainbridge and Colesville in an attempt to discredit Joseph Smith and destroy the burgeoning Church of Jesus Christ. Joseph was acquitted on all counts, much to the chagrin and discomfiture of his enemies. The wicked would continually go to the authorities of the county and state in order to oppress the disciples of Jesus Christ and were at times successful at persuading public officers of their own caliber to afflict and torment the Church under the pretense of law. Time has clearly identified their conduct for what it is and their reputations as adjudicators has been smeared with the same tar brush by which they hoped to besmirch the saints.

24.18 These are instructions similar to those given by the Savior to his twelve Apostles as he sent them forth into Galilee and other provinces in Palestine to teach the Gospel.

And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor

15 And in whatsoever place ye shall enter, and they receive you not in my name, ye shall leave a cursing instead of a blessing, by casting off the dust of your feet against them as a testimony, and cleansing your feet by the wayside.

16 And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall lay their hands upon you by violence, ye shall command to be smitten in my name; and, behold, I will smite them according to your words, in mine own due time.

17 And whosoever shall go to law with thee shall be cursed by the law.

18 And thou shalt take no purse nor scrip, neither staves, neither two coats, for the church shall give unto thee in the very hour what thou needest for food and for raiment, and for shoes and for money, and for scrip.

D&C 24:15
DNTC 1 327
JC 345
MD 831
MM 2 313
MM 3 115

D&C 24:18
DNTC 1 326
MM 2 314
MM 3 115
D&C 24:18–32
MD 724
D&C 24:36–37
MD 26
hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the
dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for
the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that
city. (Matthew 10:7–15)

To travel independent of resources seems foolhardy, but given the nature of
the task and the test of faith involved, the Lord’s instructions are completely
consistent with the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

24.18.6—purse—An accouterment for carrying money while traveling.
24.18.8—scrip—An accouterment for carrying food while traveling.
24.18.10—staves—There are manuscripts in which the word used here
does indeed refer to walking sticks. There are others, however, that
imply that the walking sticks were also thought of as defensive weapons.
It would seem almost unnecessary to point out that men on the Lord’s
erand must be wise, but harmless as well.
24.18.13—coats—An indication that luggage would be unnecessary as
well.

24.19 The pruning of any vineyard or orchard involved removing deadwood
or otherwise unproductive parts of the vines and trees. The membership of the
Church would demonstrate how closely they adhered to the principles of the
Gospel by the degree to which they were inspired by the power and influence
of the Holy Ghost. Being filled with the spirit they would not suspect Joseph
and Oliver of malfeasance or ridicule them in their poverty. They would know
for themselves that the Lord had given them their marching orders and would
therefore provide the elders with whatsoever they needed. Those who con-
ducted themselves inappropriately would soon find themselves disassociated
from the living branches of the Church of Jesus Christ. As in the days of the
ancient Apostles, there would come a time in which the emissaries of Christ
would be commanded to provide themselves with their own material needs.

24.19.37—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is per-
fected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as
“Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the
many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

25.0.1 Emma Hale Smith was an help meet for her husband Joseph. She knew
almost from the moment that she met him that Joseph would prove to be a
blessing to her, her children, and to all those who associated themselves with
him. He was a young man brimming with enthusiasm, confidence, and the
power and influence of the Spirit of God. She realized almost immediately,
however, that not everyone perceived him in the same light as she did. Her
own parents initially objected to Joseph and discouraged her burgeoning
intimacy with the young prophet. On 17 March 1827, Emma and Joseph
were married in South Bainbridge, New York, and lived in the Smith home in
Manchester, New York, where they resided for nine months, during which
time Joseph recovered the plates containing the narrative of the Book of
Mormon from the angel Moroni. In December of 1827, Joseph and Emma
removed from Manchester back to her parents’ home in Harmony, Penn-
sylvania. Isaac Hale found the fact that he was not permitted to see the plates
or the other Nephite artifacts intolerable and eventually Joseph and Emma
were compelled to move onto a small piece of land adjacent to the Hale farm.
While living in their small home, Emma had occasion to become aware of the
physical nature of the plates, although she never ventured to look upon them,
at her husband’s request. Generally, the plates were covered within a cloth bag which she moved from place to place while cleaning and attending to other domestic affairs.

25.0.2 There must have been some inconvenience involved in having Martin Harris in the house during the spring of 1828 as the initial stages of the translation began. Emma was heavy with her first child, Alvin, and was having some difficulty. The loss of the 116 pages of holographic manuscript of the book of Lehi took place about the time Emma delivered her son, a child who died almost immediately. The distress of having lost a child combined with the loss of the manuscript and the spiritual gifts associated with the translation process were difficult for Emma as well as Joseph. The restoration of the plates and the Urim and Thummim brought some comfort to the little family, but the loss of Alvin remained as a deep distress to their hearts and minds. During this time, much of their provisions of food and other commodities were being provided by family and friends, notably Joseph Knight, Senior. Persecution from those who had once been numbered among their former friends and associates caused Oliver Cowdery and the Smiths to leave Harmony and make their way to Fayette, New York, where they dwelt in the home of Peter Whitmer, Senior, until the work of the translation of the Book of Mormon was complete.

25.0.3 Six or seven weeks after the Church of Jesus Christ was formally organized, Emma was baptized by Oliver Cowdery near Colesville, New York, on 28 June 1830, about the time Joseph and other members of the Church were passing through an extraordinary series of frivolous lawsuits. Emma could only watch as her husband was haled from one courthouse to another. In the midst of these afflictions, the Lord saw fit to counsel with Emma and the present revelation was the result. This section appeared as Chapter XXVI in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 48 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

25.1 Emma had accepted membership in the Church of Jesus Christ only a few days before this revelation was given. She had been baptized for the remission of sins and shortly thereafter had hands laid upon her head as she was confirmed a member and also received the command to receive the Holy Ghost.

25.1.4—voice—The faith of Emma, of course, would have to transport her mind and heart past the voice of her own husband who was dictating the revelation that she was receiving.

25.1.15–16—Emma Smith—Emma Hale was born 10 July 1804 in Harmony, Pennsylvania. She met the young prophet Joseph Smith in 1825 when Joseph was working for Josiah Stowell. They were married in 1827. Emma served in many capacities in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, not the least of which was as the President of the Relief Society in Nauvoo, Illinois. After the prophet’s death in 1844, Emma continued residing in Nauvoo. She later married Louis Bidemon in 1848 and thereafter became intimately connected with the Reorganized Church. She died in Nauvoo in 1879.

25.1.32–34—sons and daughters—The atoning of Jesus Christ and the accompanying covenants unite the disciples of Jesus Christ with the Savior in a parent-child relationship. Therefore, when Jesus as the First-born of the Father receives all that the Father has as His heir, the sons and daughters of Christ become joint-heirs with him.

1 HEARKEN unto the voice of the Lord your God, while I speak unto you, Emma Smith, my daughter; for verily I say unto you, all those who receive my gospel are sons and daughters in my kingdom.

D&C 25:1
AF 468
FWR 47
MD 180
EM 4:1673
D&C 25:1–3
DNTC 3 410
MD 217
<table>
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<th>Text</th>
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<td>25.2</td>
<td>There is hardly a greater bless in all of the world than to know the mind and will of the Father regarding your status before Him. There is no greater joy than to know that your course of conduct in life is pleasing unto Him.</td>
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<td>25.2.28—life—</td>
<td>Emma was not ignorant of the various attempts that had been made of the life of Joseph Smith from the time of the First Vision in the spring of 1820. She had been privy to the hostilities of those living in and around Palmyra as Joseph was preparing to obtain the plates from the angel Moroni. She knew how the truth had stirred up the hearts of her own parents and others who lived in and around Harmony, Pennsylvania. And finally, she had witnessed the brutal treatment that her husband had received at the hands of officers of the law as the antagonists of the Church attempted to sway public opinion against the saints. It is almost impossible to imagine that Emma never became anxious about her own circumstances, insomuch as she was the wife of the young prophet.</td>
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<td>25.2.36—Zion—</td>
<td>Emma was received openly by the saints of God no matter where she and her husband found themselves. There was very little that she could legitimately point to as pertaining to herself. The homes that she lived in and the commodities that she partook of were typically derived from the generosity of the membership of the Church. In many respects, Emma was one of the first beneficiaries of the Celestial law of Zion.</td>
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<td>25.3</td>
<td>A few days before, Emma had received the covenants of salvation unto herself by being baptized and confirmed a member of the Church of Jesus Christ. Any transgressions that she may have committed or any doubts that she might have had prior to this time would no longer be required at her hands.</td>
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<td>25.3.11—12—elect lady—</td>
<td>The prophet Joseph Smith pointed to this particular phrase when Emma Smith was elected the first president of the Relief Society by her sisters in Nauvoo. This, of course, is only a small portion of the meaning that the Lord assigns to His phrasing here. In many respects, the Lord was testifying to Emma that she would be provided with sufficient strength during her mortal sojourn that she would ultimately be found at the side of Joseph when the latter was received into Celestial glory. We might more easily understand the significance of this promise if we rephrased the wording to read “calling and election” together with all that implies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>We cannot know at this point precisely how or when Emma may have murmured about her lot in life. It is very much in the realm of possibility that she had not done so previous to this time, notwithstanding the many trials and tribulations she had passed through. The implication here is that Emma was to understand that things were not going to get much better with the passage of time. We may also perceive the Lord’s mercy for Emma expressed here. She would not have the outward experiences that her husband would enjoy, but by the same token she would not be in the direct line of fire from the machinations of the enemies of the prophet and the Church as would be her husband.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25.4.11—seen—</td>
<td>We may easily point to the plates and the Urim and Thummim here the possible objects of Emma’s murmuring, but that may not be to what the Lord is referring. Emma had not been privy to any of the magnificent visions and blessings that had befallen her husband. She was not as his side during the First Vision or the appearance of Moroni. She did not witness the bestowal of the Aaronic or Melchizedek priesthoods. She had not been selected to be one of the Three or</td>
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2 A revelation I give unto you concerning my will; and if thou art faithful and walk in the paths of virtue before me, I will preserve thy life, and thou shalt receive an inheritance in Zion.

3 Behold, thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou art an elect lady, whom I have called.

4 Murmur not because of the things which thou hast not seen, for they are withheld from thee and from the world, which is wisdom in me in a time to come.
Eight Witnesses, even though she did have some personal tactile evidence of the existence of the plates. The evidences of the truth that Emma would receive during her lifetime would be by association with her husband, an ever-increasing cloud of testimony illuminating every aspect of the prophet’s mind and heart with which she was intimately familiar. As he grew in knowledge, wisdom, and understand, she would as well.

25.5 Given the nature of the succeeding fourteen years, we may conclude that the task to which Emma was set was difficult indeed. Joseph was called upon to canvas the territory throughout most of the United States, attempting to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to strengthen the saints of the Most High, and to encourage public officials to redress the wrongs that had been perpetrated upon the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Emma was more than tolerant of Joseph’s absences from their home and encouraged him in his labors to advance the Kingdom of God upon the earth. There were burdens placed upon Joseph’s shoulders which are almost impossible to contemplate, and although she could not share them, she could comfort her husband and encourage him as he labored in the vineyard. She was not expected to comprehend every decision and every policy that was established for the benefit of the saints, but she was expected to exercise great faith and spiritual sensitivity along the way.

25.5.15–17—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

25.6 At this point in their marriage, Emma was free to travel from place to place with her husband. That is the reason that she found herself in Colesville, New York, in June of 1830. The Lord approved this practice for as long as it was practical, assigning Emma tasks that she at which she was adept, thus freeing the second elder of the Church to receive other assignments at the Lord’s hands.

25.6.19—scribe—After the fiasco involving Martin Harris and the 116 pages of manuscript, Joseph Smith was censured for a time by the Lord during which time he lost the gift of translation and the Nephite artifacts were retrieved from him. When Joseph was restored to his former place of trust by the Lord in the fall of 1828, the prophet began again to work with the plates in an attempt to resume the translation. In this effort, Emma acted as his scribe, even though this was in addition to her other tasks as a housewife. Progress, needless to say, was inevitably slow. During the first week in April 1829, Oliver Cowdery appeared on the prophet’s doorstep and in short order became Joseph’s immediate assistant in the work of the translation of the Book of Mormon. When the overall translation was completed, Oliver was commissioned to make a complete copy of the manuscript. He was often the prophet’s representative in the publishing house of E.B. Grandin. As revelations were solicited and received, Oliver faithfully recorded them. This practice would continue until Oliver left on the Church’s full-time mission to the posterity of Lehi that took place in the fall of 1830. In March 1831, John Whitmer would be officially called to serve as the Church Historian, presumably with some of the scribal tasks being assigned to him on a permanent basis. During the intervening months between July 1830 and March 1831, it is to be assumed that Emma frequently served as Joseph’s scribe.

5 And the office of thy calling shall be for a comfort unto my servant, Joseph Smith, Jun., in his afflictions, thy husband, in the spirit of meekness.

6 And thou shalt go with him at the time of his going, and be unto him for a scribe, while there is no one to be a scribe for him, that I may send my servant, Oliver Cowdery, whithersoever I will.

D&C 25:6
EM 1:411
25.6.37–38—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

25.7 In a world and culture where women were not recognized as being capable of instructing the public in matters of virtue and scriptural content, Emma’s tasks were almost unique. There is no question that she took up this assignment with some enthusiasm, particularly among her sisters in the Church of Jesus Christ.

25.7.5—ordained—While one of the primary meanings of the English word “ordain” does refer to the bestowal of ecclesiastical authority or priesthood upon a prospective minister, its fundamental meaning means to “set in order, arrange, appoint, regulate, manage”. It can also mean to “order by divine fiat or supreme authority, decree, command”.

25.7.10—expound—The meaning of the English word “expound” derives from Latin roots which imply “explain, lay open the meaning, to clear of obscurity, interpret, examine”.

25.7.14—exhort—The meaning of the English word “exhort” derives from Latin roots that mean “to encourage, embolden, cheer, advise, excite, warn, caution, stimulate to exertion”.

25.8 Emma Smith had been baptized on 28 June 1830 at the hands of Oliver Cowdery in Coleville, New York, while the prophet and his wife were visiting there to strengthen the membership of the Church. The saints gathered for an evening service at the house of Joseph Knight, Senior, for the purpose of confirming all those who had been baptized previously. As the meeting commenced, Joseph was arrested by a local constable and eventually carted off to South Bainbridge for trial. Thus began a series of erstwhile legal procedures that lasted four or five days. At the end of the hearings, it was concluded that nothing had been proven against the prophet and he was released, returning to his friends and family in Colesville and then travelled back to Fayette, New York, where the Smith’s had made their home. As a result of these interruptions, Emma Smith had not been confirmed a member of the Church. When Newel Knight and his wife came to visit Joseph’s home in Harmony, Pennsylvania early in the month of August 1830, the Knights, the Smiths, and John Whitmer held a Sacrament meeting especially for the purpose of administering the confirming ordinance and the bestowal of the Holy Ghost for the two sisters. It is clear from the wording of the present Section, that by the time of this revelation, the blessings had not yet been bestowed.

25.8.23—writing—As Joseph’s scribe and also as the editor of the Church’s first hymnal.

25.9 Any anxiety that Emma may have had about the safety of the prophet Joseph Smith is hereby allayed. Joseph would be present with her in her labors in the Kingdom. He would be available to her as she attended to her assignments. He was, after all, the president of the whole Church, including herself. She could freely call upon him as she went about her assigned duties. If she required revelation to guide her, that would also be forthcoming through him, just as it would be for any other member of the Church who sought his counsel.

7 And thou shalt be ordained under his hand to expound scriptures, and to exhort the church, according as it shall be given thee by my Spirit.

8 For he shall lay his hands upon thee, and thou shalt receive the Holy Ghost, and thy time shall be given to writing, and to learning much.

9 And thou needest not fear, for thy husband shall support thee in the church; for unto them is his calling, that all things might be revealed unto them, whatsoever I will, according to their faith.
25.10 The riches that the world had to offer the children of men were nothing more than dust and ashes. Emma would learn through her life with the prophet, that the wickedness of men would continually deprive her of material blessings. She would have little to call her own. She would most often find havens of rest in the homes of the saints or those of the honest in heart. She would reside in multiple residences through her journeys in Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois. Material wealth would elude her, as the Lord prophesied here. In the midst of her sorrow, only the promise of eternal life with her husband had any substantive appeal.

25.11 By revelation, the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, Emma Smith would edit the first hymnal used in the Church of Jesus Christ. It would be published in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1835 on the presses of Frederick G. William. It was comprised of 90 hymns, set in verse form without music. It also included an index at the back of the book. Most of the hymns were taken from existing hymnals of the day available in eastern Ohio. Forty or so of the hymns were original compositions provided by members of the Church, most prominently the poet William W. Phelps. The introductory note, presumably written by Emma Smith, is as follows:

In order to sing by the Spirit, and with the understanding, it is necessary that the church of the Latter Day Saints should have a collection of “Sacred Hymns,” adapted to their faith and belief in the gospel, and, as far as can be, holding forth the promises made to the fathers who died in the precious faith of a glorious resurrection, and a thousand years' reign on earth with the Son of Man in his glory. Notwithstanding the church, as it were, is still in its infancy, yet, as the song of the righteous is a prayer unto God, it is sincerely hoped that the following collection, selected with an eye single to his glory, may answer every purpose till more are composed, or till we are blessed with a copious variety of the songs of Zion.

25.12 Music constitutes a powerful motivating force in the lives of the children of men. All forms of music, however, are not edifying, they do not always draw the soul of men toward heaven. Some music stirs up only animal instincts, other sorts inspire frivolity and vulgarity. Sacred music combined with inspired lyrics can evoke the Spirit of God, bring comfort to the troubled heart, and lift the souls of the children of men into a greater affinity with their eternal Father. It does not take much experience to distinguish between the types of music that sustain and support the spirit of the natural man, and those compositions which help to cast out wickedness from among us.

25.13 Emma Smith had been received into the Church of Christ through baptism, after manifesting faith and repentance. She had taken upon herself the name of Jesus Christ, with a commitment to remember him always and keep his commandments. She had been willing to mourn with those that mourn, comfort those in need of comfort, to feed and clothe the hungry and naked, and in all things witness of her divinely inspired compassion and love in the name of Christ.

25.14 Emma Smith was a woman of strong convictions. She knew the difference between good and evil. She recognized bigotry and blind prejudice when she saw it. It would have been difficult indeed, even under the best of circumstances, for her to stand idly by while innocent men and women were abused and persecuted. In the midst of those afflictions, her husband a marked man,
it would have been all that she could have done to patiently and repeatedly pick up the pieces of her life and move forward in faith. The Lord, however, counseled her to cultivate meekness and avoid the pride that might have caused her to lash out at those around her. She would find solace in the faith and fortitude of her husband; his example would be as a shining light illuminating her life during times of great darkness and despair.

25.15 Certainly this constituted a clear warning to Emma regarding her future status in eternity. It is just as clear that our personal salvation is based upon similar principles. No living man can declare anything regarding Emma Smith’s eternal fate. Pointing at her weaknesses and seeming failures does nothing to bring salvation or exaltation into the lives of others. She suffered during her lifetime in a manner that is completely foreign to the experiences of most people on this planet. She was a spiritual counterpart to the prophet Joseph Smith and therefore a great and noble soul. Human foibles and follies did not define her life. Her life, therefore, should not be defined by them. We should not be surprised to discover that any and all deviations from the perfect course of life she might have lived have long since been reconciled between her and her Savior.

25.16 Perhaps we might see in the general counsel given to Emma, like counsel that could be given to the wives of those who serve in notable positions in the Church and Kingdom of God today.

25.16.14—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

26.0 During the latter part of June 1830, Joseph and Oliver had been embroiled in a series of vexatious lawsuits perpetrated by the wicked living in and around Colesville and South Bainbridge in New York. Once those were effectively resolved, Joseph was acquitted on all counts, Joseph, Emma, and Oliver returned to the Smith home in Harmony, Pennsylvania. On this occasion, John Whitmer travelled with them in anticipation of Oliver’s assignments that would take him to Fayette, New York. When Joseph was visiting the various branches of the Church and Emma was able to be with him during those trips, she was appointed to serve as his scribe when Oliver was otherwise occupied. When Emma and Joseph were at home, the burdens of housekeeping were too demanding for Emma to provide scribal assistance to the prophet. This had been proven to be the case in the fall of 1828 and the early spring of 1829 after Joseph had lost the services of Martin Harris and before the arrival of Oliver Cowdery. Hence, John Whitmer’s presence in Harmony. John Whitmer had been baptized in June 1829 by Oliver Cowdery shortly after the restoration of the priesthood. He had served as one of the Eight Witnesses of the Book of Mormon. He had been present on the day that the Church of Jesus Christ was formally organized in his father’s home in Fayette, New York. Joseph and Oliver had every reason to entrust John with the tasks which would befall him in Harmony with the prophet. This section appeared as Chapter XXVII in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 49 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

26.1 Between the two general conference of the Church of Jesus Christ, Joseph was engaged in a number of projects and activities, most of which are
mentioned here in the text of the revelation. The preparation of the revelations and the revision of the Bible were actively pursued during this time. Joseph spent considerable time in Colesville and South Bainbridge in conjunction with his ministerial labors, sometime as the object of ridicule and persecution. Joseph and John would find themselves in Fayette, New York, before the appointed time of the conference, however, because of some dissention within the Church in that community. After the needed reconciliation had taken place, Joseph returned to Harmony where he continued laboring in the tasks that the Lord had assigned to him in this revelation. In the latter part of August 1830, Joseph and Emma moved their home to Fayette with the aid of Joseph Knight, Senior.

26.1.19—scriptures—In the prophet’s history, he indicates that one of the purposes for his returning to Harmony was to arrange and copy the revelations that he had received from time to time. John Whitmer’s task was to act as his scribe in order that the revelations might appear in a fair hand. The previous month, Joseph had received what we now have as Moses chapter 1 in conjunction with his consideration of the Old and New Testaments. This study would eventually develop into what is now known as the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible.

26.1.29—Colesville—A small community in south-central New York, about 23 miles north of Harmony, Pennsylvania. The Colesville Branch of the Church of Christ was comprised primarily of the friends and family of Joseph Knight, Senior. At the time, the Colesville Branch was the closest to the prophet’s home.

26.1.37—land—That is to say, the 13 ½ acres which belonged to the Smith family in Harmony. In a previous revelation, the prophet had been instructed to plant his fields before embarking on his travels to the various branches of the Church (see 24.3). We do not know how much of this had been accomplished by the time this revelation had been received.

26.1.49—west—Fayette, New York, was located north and west of Harmony, Pennsylvania. In terms of the state of New York itself, Fayette was located in what has been traditionally called western New York.

26.1.54—conference—The first conference of the Church of Jesus Christ was held on 9 June 1830 in Fayette, New York, to which about 90 members attended. The second conference was held in Fayette on 26 September 1830.

2 And all things shall be done by common consent in the church, by much prayer and faith, for all things you shall receive by faith, Amen.

D&C 26:2
AF 118
DHC 5 522
DS 1 255
DS 3 96, 124
MD 150
CR96-A 7
EM 1:89, 297, 395
EM 3:1188
D&C 26:6–7
JC 276
D&C 26:7
MD 598
He will not deprive the children of men of their potential to voluntarily become as He is, for they cannot become as He is nor can they enter into the place where He resides without consciously and willing choosing righteousness over wickedness. Every principle, ordinance, and covenant of the Gospel of Jesus Christ takes this into consideration. Men and women are invited to become part of the Church and Kingdom of God. They are invited to receive divine instruction through the servants that God has provided the faithful. They are invited to pursue a course of action during mortality that will prepare them to bear the eternal glory that is to be poured out upon those who have partaken of the divine nature. Therefore the membership of the Church is frequently called upon to express their willingness to submit to the wisdom and love of the Father and the Son as they sustain the various officers who preside and conduct the affairs of the Kingdom of God on the earth. At any time a citizen of the Kingdom may choose to disagree with the decisions being made. His concerns may be aired and his feelings manifested. If no reconciliation can be made, the objector may at anytime exercise his moral agency and withdraw from the society of those with whom he does not agree. At the heart of the matter is that the nature and requirements for pertaining to the Church and Kingdom of God are established by the King, not the people. There is no general election to determine what the rules are. Common consent has to do with whether a man or a woman is willing to live in accordance within the established atmosphere of the divine community. If not, he or she may go elsewhere, to a place more in keeping with their sensibilities.

26.2.26—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

27.0 The process of revelation, its ongoing nature, is illustrated in the manner in which the current text of this Section was received. As was indicated above (see 25.8), the machinations of the wicked in Colesville and South Bainbridge during the weeks previous to this revelation had hindered the confirmation ceremony that should have befallen Emma Smith on the day of her baptism on 28 June 1830. This was postponed until the early part of August 1830 during the visit of Newel Knight and his wife to Harmony, Pennsylvania. A sacrament meeting was proposed and Joseph set out to obtain wine for the sacrament. As he set out to accomplish his task he was immediately met by an angel who instructed him to proceed differently. At that time, Joseph wrote down what are now verses 1 though 4, a portion of verse 5, the whole of verse 14, and a portion of verse 15. The following September the additional material was composed, although we do not know exactly what prompted its composition. During this time, Joseph Smith and John Whitmer were organizing and refining the various revelations that had been received up to that point (see 26.1.19). We might correctly suppose that by September they were reviewing the revelation that they had received the month before and the additional text was generated to more fully expand the ideas and principles that had been hinted at in the original instructions given by the angel. There is also a distinct possibility that Joseph had not written down everything that the angel had told him in early August because of time constraints and was then prompted a month later to include the entire conversation as he reviewed what had been preserved. This section appeared as Chapter XXVIII in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 50 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.
27.1 This is, of course, the actual voice of the angel who had been sent to communicate to Joseph Smith how he was to proceed as far as the sacramental wine was concerned. This is a perfect example of divine investiture of authority. The angel here speaks as if he were the Lord Jesus Christ, as do all divinely appointed servants of God.

27.1.6—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

27.2 When viewed historically, the Lord’s declaration regarding the emblems of the sacrament becomes somewhat luminous. There have been few ancient societies that enjoyed a continual flow of potable water. As communities grew, the danger to the water sources increased. Drinks made from grapes, whether fermented or not, were generally less likely to spread contaminants that might be found in surface water. Using wine in the public meetings of the Church provided a symbol that was not only visually consistent with the imagery evoke, but it was considerably safer than using open water sources. As time has passed and sanitary conditions have improved, the use of water in the sacrament services of the saints has prevailed. Additionally, the use of water has become far more respectful of the limited resources of the disciples of Christ. The same may be said of the sacrament emblems used to represent the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. When the Lord introduced this ordinance to his Apostles at the meal prior to his death and resurrection, he used the unleavened bread that had been prepared as part of the Passover celebration that was in progress. Here was a precedent, but not all subsequent sacrament services have used unleavened bread. A careful consideration of the matter would reveal that a man would be hard-pressed to find a type of bread that would perfectly represent the physical body of the Lord Jesus Christ. Should the bread be white or wheat? Should it be made from rye or oats? Of course the polemics are laughable. What if a people were, for some reason, completely deprived of bread of any kind, as were many of the saints after the wars in Europe and elsewhere? Need they wait for a certain kind of foodstuff before they could renew their covenants in the midst of trial and tribulation? The Lord tenderly anticipated the distresses of the latter days, the circumstances of the righteous, their poverty and isolation. The blessings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ are available to all of the disciples of Jesus Christ, at any time, at any place, and under any circumstances, according to their faith and the influence of the Holy Ghost that would come upon them.

27.3 We do not know where Joseph Smith proposed to buy the wine that he would use for the sacrament service for the five members of the Church who had come together to seek the blessings of heaven. It is clear, however, that there was an inherent danger in obtaining sacramental wines from those who might have been inclined to tamper with them. Joseph could not always tell who his enemies were, as his history clearly demonstrates. The inhabitants of Harmony, Pennsylvania, however, were not a whit behind their brothers in wickedness who lived in Colesville, South Bainbridge, and other parts of the land where the saints had gathered.

27.3.15—strong drink—We cannot speak with authority whether Joseph had ever bought strong drink, or spirituous liquors, from any vender at any time. We have to remember, however, that the proscriptions against strong drink and other deleterious substances would not become formalized until February of 1833 when that which is called the Word of Wisdom was revealed to the Church. In any event, strong drinks would not be part of any sacramental service in the

1 LISTEN to the voice of Jesus Christ, your Lord, your God, and your Redeemer, whose word is quick and powerful.

2 For, behold, I say unto you, that it mattereth not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink when ye partake of the sacrament, if it so be that ye do it with an eye single to my glory—remembering unto the Father my body which was laid down for you, and my blood which was shed for the remission of your sins.

3 Wherefore, a commandment I give unto you, that you shall not purchase wine neither strong drink of your enemies.

D&C 27:1–4
DS 2 338
D&C 27:1–5
AF 178
D&C 27:1–12
DNTC 1 725
D&C 27:1–14
MM 4 57
D&C 27:2
AGQ 1 85
CR96-O 82
CR01-A 30
EM 3:1211, 1244
D&C 27:2–4
AF 176
AGQ 3 2
D&C 27:3
EM 2:953
27.4 We do not know exactly how Joseph and Emma prepared their sacramental wine for their meeting, but they did so that day and proceeded with their observance of the sufferings of the Savior and the ordinances in behalf of Sisters Knight and Smith. No doubt this caution was disseminated throughout the various branches of the Church at the time and the saints heartened to the voice of the Lord in these matters. How they obtained their new wine in the early days of the Church we may only surmised, but it is likely that someone in each geographical area was given the assignment to prepare the sacrament wine each time the saints gathered. Once the saints had immigrated to the Salt Lake Valley and environs, certain communities were given the responsibility to prepare sacramental wine for the entire Church.

27.4.11—new—The implication here is clear. Nonalcoholic beverages were preferred over those containing alcohol.

27.5 This part of the Section foreshadows the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Millennial reign of the Savior. The Lord indicates all those who will be part of the gathering of the saints and the celebrations that will transpire during those thousand years, including the administration of the sacrament.

27.5.28—earth—At this point, the revelation written down in August 1830 breaks off, and the content from this point to verse 14 is material added to the revelation in September 1830.

27.5.31—Moroni—in reference, of course, to the son of Mormon who appeared to the prophet Joseph Smith on many occasions as preparations were being made for the translation and publishing of the Book of Mormon.

27.5.41–43—Book of Mormon—The sacred record of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, composed by the prophet Mormon during the fourth century of the Christian era, using nearly a thousand years of preserved records of the Nephite civilization. Its resting place was revealed to the prophet Joseph Smith who was then permitted to translate the record into English by the gift and power of God.

27.5.46—fulness—as defined elsewhere, the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is comprised of faith in Christ, sincere repentance from all sin, baptism by immersion for the remission of sin, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.

27.5.52—whom—That is to say, the angel Moroni.

27.5.63–65—stick of Ephraim—in reference to the Book of Mormon as it was symbolically eluded to by the prophet Ezekiel (see EZ-C 37.15–17).

27.6 As Adam was the father of all living and held the keys of the priesthood of God for his immediate and extended family, so also was Noah the father of all living in his day, particularly after the great flood. It is clear that his tasks have been extended beyond the course of his mortal life.

27.6.4—Elias—as will be seen below, the Elias spoken of here is Gabriel or the patriarch Noah, he who brought all life through the great flood (see 27.7 and LK-C 1.5–19). He ought not to be confused with the prophet Elijah or any of those who were given the title of "Elias" because of their particular assignments in the dispensation of the Meridian of Time and in the dispensation of the Fullness of Time.

27.6.17—restoration—While we might point to the fullness of the Gospel, the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthood, and the Church of Christ as a

4 Wherefore, you shall partake of none except it is made new among you; yea, in this my Father's kingdom which shall be built up on the earth.

5 Behold, this is wisdom in me; wherefore, marvel not, for the hour cometh that I will drink of the fruit of the vine with you on the earth, and with Moroni, whom I have sent unto you to reveal the Book of Mormon, containing the fulness of my everlasting gospel, to whom I have committed the keys of the record of the stick of Ephraim;

6 And also with Elias, to whom I have committed the keys of bringing to pass the restoration of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began, concerning the last days;
fulfillment of Elias’ task, yet it is clear that the entire restoration of the earth to its paradisiacal glory is what is intended here. Gabriel is overseeing those events which will usher in the Millennial reign.

27.6—prophets—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

27.7 By the time this revelation had been received, John the Baptist had been raised from the dead and had appeared to the prophet Joseph Smith. On 15 May 1829, John was sent to Joseph and Oliver Cowdery in answer to their petition regarding baptism for the remission of sins. John laid his hands upon their heads and bestowed the keys of the Aaronic priesthood upon them, thereafter commanding them to baptize each other.

27.7.3—John—This is, of course, he who was known anciently as John the Baptist.

27.7.7—Zacharias—Zacharias was a righteous heir of Aaron, and as such would have been the High Priest of Israel had the people and their leadership partaken of the same righteousness. Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth were in their old age when John was born.

27.7.9—Elias—In the interview as recorded in the gospel according to Luke, the angel identified himself as the angel Gabriel (see LK-C 1.19).

27.7.35—Elias—This is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Elijah. Elijah became in his day the great archetype for those who would be forerunners (see MT-C 3.1.8). There were many who served before Elijah’s day in the same function, and many who have served since, but none were greater. To avoid unnecessary confusion, let it be understood that there have been a number of men named Elijah or Elias whose duties ought not to be equated with that of the title “Elias”. Likewise, inasmuch as prophecies are designed to have multiple fulfillments, let no one limit the use of the title “Elias” to John the Baptist only. We may also look at John the Baptist as a restorer, similar in his duties in the Meridian of Time, as is Gabriel in the Fullness of Time.

27.8 The scriptures are quite clear, particularly in the writings of the Apostle Paul, that no man can take upon himself the authority of the priesthood, but must be called and ordained by prophecy and the laying on of hands of those who hold the keys of the ministry of the Gospel (see HB-C 5.1–6). The last legal administrator of the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood was John the son of Zacharias.

27.8.2—John—This is, of course, he who was known anciently as John the Baptist.

27.8.7–9—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

27.8.11–12—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

27.8.21–22—first priesthood—The second priesthood, that which is after the order of Melchizedek, was bestowed upon the heads of Joseph and

7 And also John the son of Zacharias, which Zacharias he (Elias) visited and gave promise that he should have a son, and his name should be John, and he should be filled with the spirit of Elias;

8 Which John I have sent unto you, my servants, Joseph Smith, Jun., and Oliver Cowdery, to ordain you unto the first priesthood which you have received, that you might be called and ordained even as Aaron;

D&C 27:7
AF 150
AGQ 4 194
D&C 27:7-13
EM 1:388

D&C 27:8
DNTC 3 156
DS 3 80
JC 769
MD 9, 11
EM 1:337
Oliver only a few days after the first was presented to them. The ancient Apostles, Peter, James, and John appeared to the two men on the banks of the Susquehanna River, revealing unto them the keys of the Apostleship, including the right and power to organize the Church of Jesus Christ once more upon the earth.

27.8.36—Aaron—The brother of Moses who was given the keys of the presidency of the priesthood bestowed upon the tribe of Levi. Technically, the Aaronic priesthood is the presiding body of the Levitical priesthood.

27.9 The hearts of the children would yearn after the promises extended to their fathers while in the midst of their righteousness. The fathers would yearn for the salvation of the children, recognizing that the fundamental blessings of eternity are couched in the immediate and extended family.

27.9.3—Elijah—Elijah was alluded to above in connection with John the Baptist’s role as a forerunner of the Lord Jesus Christ’s mortal ministry (see 27.7.35). The reference here is to Elijah’s role as prophesied by the prophet Malachi, that Elijah would be called upon in the latter days to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers (see ML-C 4.5–6). The foundation for the fulfillment of this prophecy was laid when the prophet Elijah appeared to the prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple on 3 April 1836, bestowing upon them the keys of this last dispensation, initiating the great work that would ultimate result in the salvation and exaltation of the righteous members of the family of Adam and Eve.

27.9.10—keys—These powers and authority are directly connected with the sealing together of one generation to another, specifically those which have not been enjoying the blessings of the covenants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob previously.

27.9.43—curse—The curse would be that the entire population of the earth from the days of Adam and Eve down to the last moments of the Millennial reign of Jesus Christ would have no claim upon the eternal inheritances reserved for them by God the eternal Father. The earth in this sense, and all that transpired upon it, would be utterly wasted.

27.10 It is clear that Joseph understood his inherited role in the rolling forth of the Kingdom of God throughout the world from almost the very beginning of his ministry. He was a direct-line descendant of Abraham though the loins of Joseph and Ephraim. Needless to say, these four men have a vested interest in the inhabitants of the earth being prepared for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The promises that they had received from God regarding their posterity would come to fruition in the latter days. The righteous among their posterity would diligently seek for those same blessings.

27.10.4—Joseph—The heir of the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, inasmuch as he was the firstborn son of Jacob and Rachel. The posterity of his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, has been the mainstay of the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ at the beginning of this Dispensation of the Fullness of Times.

27.10.6—Jacob—With his brother Esau, the twin sons of Isaac and Rebecca. Jacob faithfully sought for the patriarchal blessings that his brother despised and ultimately acquired them.

27.10.8—Isaac—The only son of Abraham and Sarah, a faithful heir of all of the blessings of his righteous father.

27.10.10—Abraham—The father of the faithful who sought for the
blessings that had been promised to Adam because of his righteousness. These blessings passed through the flood with Noah and had been rejected by many of Abraham’s generation.

27.11 There is no human being ever born on this planet that has not been a direct descendant, a son or daughter, of Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve were made lords over all of the earth, designated to preside over all living things forever. There was no man born on the earth before Adam; he therefore is the oldest of all men, the ancient of days.

27.11.4—Michael—The archangel Michael led the hosts of Heaven against the rebelling minions of Lucifer before the foundations of the earth were laid, and was instrumental in causing Satan to be cast out of the presence of God. This same Michael was foreordained to be the Ancient of Days; that is to say, the first man upon the earth, the oldest of all mortals, even the man Adam.

27.11.6—Adam—In almost every respect, Michael or Adam, was like unto the Son of God, in faithfulness and purity. Hence, the decision to place him at the head of mortal men, a faithful prince placed at the beginning of time. The archangel Michael led the hosts of Heaven against the rebelling minions of Lucifer before the foundations of the earth were laid, and was instrumental in causing Satan to be cast out of the presence of God. This same Michael was foreordained to be the Ancient of Days; that is to say, the first man upon the earth, the oldest of all mortals, even the man Adam.

27.12 When John the Baptist appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on 15 May 1829, he announced that he was acting under the direction of the Lord’s three chief Apostles. He also declared that while he would give unto them the keys of the Aaronic priesthood by which they could baptize each other, the power to bestow the gift of the Holy Ghost was an authority beyond his priesthood, and that in short order the three Apostles would come to them and bless them with more comprehensive authority. Within two weeks, sometime before 1 June 1829, this blessing was realized. With the keys of the Apostleship, Joseph and Oliver were able to take the lead in the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ which took place on 6 April 1830. Although they were never formally members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and a few other early adherents of the Gospel of Jesus Christ received the commission to serve as especial witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ. There can be no question that each of the Three Witnesses, they who had been commissioned to select and ordain the first Quorum of Apostles in this dispensation, held those same keys.

27.12.4—Peter—In another place, in a significantly superior manuscript, Simon Barjona’s name is changed to Peter, “a stone”, which Jesus clearly states is to be understood as “a seer”. Simon’s future role as the presiding authority of the Church of Jesus Christ is anticipated in the name change and at the same time an encouragement to Peter that he must needs be the kind of man who perceives the hearts and minds of his fellows that he might strengthen and edify them. He also must be sensitive to the promptings of the Spirit of God that his eyes might be open to the mind and will of God, that he might serve as a witness to that which the Lord God has proposed for the children of men and the saints of God.

27.12.6—James—Like Simon and Andrew, James and John were sons of the same man, Zebedee the fisherman. "James" is a transliterated form of the Hebrew name "Jacob" by way of Greek. With his brother John, 11 And also with Michael, or Adam, the father of all, the prince of all, the ancient of days;

D&C 27:11
DS 2 69
DS 3 13
JC 142
MD 17, 34, 492
CR00-A 108
EM 1:15, 17
D&C 27:11–13
DHC 1 40

12 And also with Peter, and James, and John, whom I have sent unto you, by whom I have ordained you and confirmed you to be apostles, and especial witnesses of my name, and bear the keys of your ministry and of the same things which I revealed unto them;

D&C 27:12
AF 22
DS 387
JC 219, 220
MD 47, 55
EM 1:61
EM 1:337, 388
EM 2:449, 716, 885, 886, 969
EM 3:1013, 1220
D&C 27:12–13
DNTC 1 401
DNTC 3 284, 506
DS 1 161, 174
DS 3 14, 98, 147
JC 769
MD 36, 137, 201, 412, 437, 478, 572, 635, 636
MLM 118
MM 3 68
CR96-O 8
CR00-A 9
EM 1:41, 398
EM 2:758
he served as a companion and counselor to Simon Peter in the presidency of the Church of Christ in the Meridian of Time. He was of a volatile personality in his youth, particularly when those who he loved were threatened or insulted. For that reason he was given the sobriquet, "Boanerges", in that he was one of the "Sons of Thunder". Some have suggested that he was the author of the Epistle of James, but the evidence is not certain. Because of some confusion with at least two other Apostles named James, we are not exactly certain the nature of his martyrdom.

27.12.8—John—in reference to John the Beloved, one of the original Twelve Apostles chosen by the Lord Jesus Christ during his mortal ministry. John is responsible for the texts of the Gospel that bears his name, three short letters, and the book of Revelations, all contained within the pages of the New Testament.

27.12.26—Apostle—The Greek roots from which the term "apostle" derives, originally signified "I send a message". In Greek political language it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were ordained Apostles by Peter, James, and John sometime between 15 May 1829 and 1 June 1829 on the banks of the Susquehanna River near Harmony, Pennsylvania. The Apostles hold the keys of the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world and are entitled to administer the ordinance of baptism for the remission of sins and for membership in the Church and Kingdom of God unto any and every man that believes in Christ and brings forth the fruits of repentance.

27.13 The prophet Joseph Smith stands at the head of this last dispensation, placed there by the hand of Jesus Christ. All that was revealed through the prophet Joseph Smith was given to bind the hearts and minds of the disciples together that they might establish Zion, the city of our God.

27.13.2—Whom—Certainly in reference to Joseph Smith, and perhaps to other men who had received similar priesthood keys.

27.13.32—Gather—Any keys, powers, or authority that have ever existed upon the face of the earth since the days of Adam and Eve will be consolidated into the Kingdom of God that has been established to prepare the world for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory. The second coming will also precipitate the great resurrection, in which the elements that have composed the bodies of the saints from one generation to another will also be gathered that the righteous dead might come forth from the earth to rule and reign with the Savior for a thousand years.

27.14 Here the text written down in August 1830 that broke off in the middle of verse 5 above, resumes. The promise here is that all those who have observed to keep their covenants throughout the history of the earth will have a place during the Millennial reign of the Savior.

27.15 The Savior refers to the whole armor of God by which the righteous are able to survive the slings and arrows of the adversaries. There yet remained fourteen years of persecution that Joseph would be required to pass through. He would need every scrap of protection afforded him.

27.15.12—Loins—Here the August 1830 text breaks off again, and the emendations of September resume. The last portion of the August...

13 Unto whom I have committed the keys of my kingdom, and a dispensation of the gospel for the last times; and for the fulness of times, in which I will gather together in one all things, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth;

14 And also with all those whom my Father hath given me out of the world.

15 Wherefore, lift up your hearts and rejoice, and gird up your loins, and take upon you my whole armor, that ye may be able to withstand the evil day, having done all, that ye may be able to stand.
writing will appear in the middle of verse 18.

27.15.19—armor—This constitutes reprise of the analogy made by Paul the Apostle while writing to the Ephesians (see EP-C 6.10–18).

27.15.28—evil—The Greek word which Paul used which is here translated as “evil” derives from roots that mean “hurtful, evil effect or influence, calamitous, ill, diseased, culpable, derelict, vicious, facinorous, mischief, malice, guilt, devil, sinner”. Joseph would face all of these.

27.16 All but the last phrase of this verse is quoted by the Lord directly from the King James version of Ephesians 6. Truth and righteousness cannot be spared. A disciple of Jesus Christ is nothing but a cringing hypocrite without them. A man fully informed in the principles of eternal life and salvation, the fullness of the Gospel of Christ, is prepared at any time to go anywhere his Lord would send him. In his peregrinations, the minister of God is seldom footsore, for he is sustained and protected in his travels by the knowledge that he is participating in the work and glory of the Lord. He is at peace, carries peace with him, and imparts that peace unto all who will hearken to his voice.

27.16.5—loins—The Greek word which is here translated as “loins” derives from roots that mean “hip, procreative power”. This is more than just a belt, but a skirt of protective material that wrapped about the waist, covering the thighs front and back. A true saint will be forthright and truthful in all matters connected with the bearing of children. He will always love and honor his companion, nothing wavering, that the family into which children come will be filled with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, the spirit of truth. Moral turpitude is not truth; it is a lie of the worst dye.

27.16.15—righteousness—Righteousness is a product of the heart, a conscious decision to obey the Lord God of Israel in every instance. Protected by personal righteousness, a man might dare to stand unafraid in the face of ridicule or oppression, knowing that he cannot be fundamentally injured by his enemies.

27.17 A continuation of the Lord’s citation from Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. Faith protects the disciple from the efforts of the adversary to stir him up unto anger. The saint is confident that all injustice and inequality will one day be dealt with fairly, compensation fully measured out to those who have been ill used. A man thus equipped has no need to return fire in kind.

27.17.3—shield—The Greek word which Paul used which in the King James version is translated as “shield”, refers to an large oblong wooden framework covered with skins, sometimes called a “scutum”. It was the first defense of the warrior, deflecting most of the weapons of war arrayed against him, particularly missiles of all kinds.

27.17.15—fiery—The Greek word which Paul used which in the King James version is translated as “fiery” derives from roots that mean “kindle, be ignited, glow, be refined, inflamed with anger, greed, or lust; poisonous”. Satan’s thrusts at the disciples of Christ emanate from his own frustration and rebellion. He is the one who is enflamed, filled with anger, greed, and lust. Needless to say, his followers have drunk from the same bitter cup.

27.18 The first twelve words of this verse constitute a continuation of the citation from Ephesians. What greater protection is there in all of the world than to know that your course of life has proven acceptable to God? That knowledge is the third vital ingredient for faith unto salvation in the Celestial Kingdom of Heaven. One thus equipped can think clearly and decisively, with

16 Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, which I have sent mine angels to commit unto you;

17 Taking the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked;

18 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of my Spirit, which I will pour out upon you, and my word which I reveal unto you, and be agreed as touching all
eternity in mind, while dwelling in the midst of a lost and fallen world, one filled with temptation, corruption, and death.

27.18.9—sword—The Greek word which Paul used which in the King James version is translated as “sword” refers to a “short sword”, “dirk”, or “knife”. There is considerable controversy as to how the “machaira”, our word here, differed from the “xiphos”, which is also frequently translated as “sword”. We would probably be not far off the mark to conclude that it was more of a defensive weapon designed for close combat rather than an assault weapon. The word of God is never used as an offensive weapon. It is used only to fend off error and falsehood.

27.18.13—which—That is to say, the Spirit will be poured out upon the prophet. Having the continual counsel of the Holy Ghost would indeed bring about salvation.

27.18.22—word—Paul refers to the sword of the Spirit as the word of God and this is no doubt in reference to that sword.

27.18.30—agreed—Petitions to the Lord God of Israel are not to be capricious or divisive. The progress of the Church would be in conjunction with the willingness of the saints to accept the word of the Lord as it was given through His appointed servants. This would be a lesson soon learned by the members of the Church in Fayette, New York.

27.18.40—and—This six-word phrase constitutes the last of the text written down by the prophet Joseph Smith in August 1830.

27.18.50–51—caught up—In reference to the righteous rising from the earth to meet the Lord Jesus Christ in the midst of the air as he descends to beginning his thousand-year personal reign upon the paradisiacal earth.

27.18.60—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 28

Date: September 1830
Place: Fayette, New York
To: Oliver Cowdery

D&C 28
DHC 1 110
FWR 4
MD 150, 532, 670
EM 1:408
EM 2:505

28.0.1 This particular Section of the Doctrine and Covenants refers to two separate, but related, incidents that had taken place in the months before the revelation was given. After the trials in Colesville and South Bainbridge had resulted in the prophet Joseph Smith being acquitted of all charges, Emma and Joseph, in the company of Oliver Cowdery and John Whitmer left for Harmony, Pennsylvania, where they would continue to work in the compilation and revision of the various revelations that the Lord had given to the Church. Shortly after their arrival at home, Oliver Cowdery determined to return to the home of Peter Whitmer, Senior, in Fayette, New York. While in Fayette, Oliver thought that he had found an error in what is now Section 20 of the Doctrine and Covenants. The second elder of the Church said that he perceived priestcraft in what is now verse 37. The text of that verse follows.

And again, by way of commandment to the church concerning the manner of baptism—All those who humble themselves before God, and desire to be baptized, and come forth with broken hearts and contrite spirits, and witness before the church that they have truly repented of all their sins, and are willing to take upon them the name of Jesus Christ, having a determination to serve him to the end, and truly manifest by their works that they have received of the Spirit of Christ unto the remission of their sins, shall be received by baptism into his church. (D&C 20.37)
It is difficult to imagine what particularly offended Oliver’s sensibilities, save for the fact that someone in the Church would have to determine whether or not a person had really manifested sufficient works to be baptized. Of course, Oliver’s background was such that the thought of any man having authority to determine another’s spirituality was contrary to Christianity, particularly the Protestant brand of Christianity. Although one of two men who held the keys of the Kingdom of God upon the earth, Oliver Cowdery was still a novice at the fullness of the truth and was having some difficulty with some principles that flew in the face of the traditional aspects of apostate Christianity. To complicate the matter more severely, Oliver commanded the prophet Joseph Smith in his letter to change the wording of the revelation, an action which in and of itself smacked of priestcraft on Oliver’s part. Joseph Smith’s reply was straightforward and succinct. From whence did Oliver obtain the authority to command the change of any revelation that had been given by the mouth of God? When Joseph went to Fayette, New York, in order to find out what had caused the fracas, he discovered that none of the Whitmer family were willing to discuss the matter. Eventually Christian Whitmer allowed Joseph to calmly discuss the matter with him calmly and was soon convinced that there was nothing the matter with the sentence in Section 20. Christian and Joseph then labored with the rest of the family, including Oliver Cowdery, in spite of the spirit of their disagreement, and in relatively short order all were once more in complete agreement with the revelation as it stood. Joseph observed that this was a great lesson for all of the dangers of presumption and rash judgment and of the importance of humility and meekness before God.

28.0.2 The second event that involved the generation of the text of Section 28, concerned the activities of one Hiram Page. Hiram’s error is understandable even though it was completely unacceptable. Joseph Smith had made use of the Urim and Thummim during the translation of the Book of Mormon. This translation artifact from the Nephites was comprised of two stones set in a silver bow, like the lenses of a pair of eyeglasses. Through these Joseph Smith could look and read the translation as it was to be written by his scribe. In addition, Joseph had found a chocolate-colored stone while digging a well for Josiah Stool which had similar properties as the Urim and Thummim. The Whitmers, including their son-in-law Hiram Page, were familiar with all of the details surrounding both instruments. How and where Hiram found his black “peep stone” we have no record, but he did receive a series of revelations by means of that stone, revelations which for some reason the Whitmer family and other members of the Fayette branch of the Church were willing to believe. The influence of the stone became so great that Joseph thought it best to inquire of the Lord as to how they should proceed. The false revelations might have been easily dismissed had they been frivolous, but the gist of what was revealed was in complete variance from the revelations that had been received through the prophet for the guidance and direction of the Church. Satan, in his effective deception of Hiram and the others, had also anticipated the work to establish Zion, its location and the manner in which it was to be built up. At the fall conference of the Church to be held 26 September 1830, Oliver Cowdery and others would be called upon to journey westward to the Unorganized Indian Territory to take the Book of Mormon to the Lamanites. At the same time they would be commissioned to locate the site for the City of Zion. Hiram Page’s revelations contravened that entire mission. Hence, the revelation as we have it here. This section appeared as Chapter XXX in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 51 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.
28.1 In an earlier revelation Oliver had been identified as an Apostle and as the second elder of the Church of Jesus Christ (see 20:3). Joseph’s role as the prophet, seer, and revelator had also been clearly described and that Oliver would receive his ordination in the Church and Kingdom of God through Joseph’s keys (see 21:11). Oliver’s particular assignment was to be the first preacher of the Church (see 21:12). Oliver had been present at the time Joseph had received the keys of the Aaronic priesthood from John the Baptist. He had also been a Joseph’s side when Peter, James, and John had delivered the keys of the holy Apostleship. There were times in Oliver Cowdery’s ministry when he forgot his place in the Kingdom, that he was the second elder while Joseph was the first. This eventually would be his undoing. At the heart of his ability to attend to his duties in the Church was the necessity to maintain the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. He did not do so and as a result found himself at odds with the prophet.

28.1.6—Oliver—In reference to Oliver Cowdery. As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

28.2 This is not to say that others of the saints could not be privy to the truth by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. The Lord’s intent is to have the membership of the Church, and Oliver Cowdery in particular, to know that revelation for the entire Church would come from only one man. It is clear that Oliver did not understand this principle when he wrote to Joseph from Fayette, New York, commanding him to change the wording of D&C 20. Oliver had presumed too much. As will be seen below, Hiram Page had presumed too much as well, and in his arrogant lapse was easily deceived.

28.2.25–27—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

28.2.34—Moses—There were those close to the prophet Moses who thought themselves equal to the Lord’s servant. Both Miriam and Aaron, the older sister and brother of Moses, spoke against Moses testifying of their own powers of revelation, for which arrogance and criticism Miriam was smitten by the Lord with leprosy. The Lord testified to the two siblings that the Lord reserved His personal appearances to Moses, notwithstanding the nature of their own spiritual gifts (see NU-C 12.1–15). The allusion to Moses should have constituted fair warning to Oliver Cowdery.

28.3 Oliver Cowdery clearly understood the difference between the Melchizedek and Aaronic priesthoods, and the fact that Joseph had been compared to Moses while he had been compared to Aaron left absolutely no question as to who presided in the Church and Kingdom of God. Aaron had been an excellent spokesman for his younger brother and Oliver was more than capable of representing the mind and will of the Lord in public discourse.

28.3.17—Aaron—The brother of Moses who was given the keys of the presidency of the priesthood bestowed upon the tribe of Levi. Technically, the Aaronic priesthood is the presiding body of the Levitical priesthood.

1 BEHOLD, I say unto thee, Oliver, that it shall be given unto thee that thou shalt be heard by the church in all things whatsoever thou shalt teach them by the Comforter, concerning the revelations and commandments which I have given.

2 But, behold, verily, verily, I say unto thee, no one shall be appointed to receive commandments and revelations in this church excepting my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., for he receiveth them even as Moses.

3 And thou shalt be obedient unto the things which I shall give unto him, even as Aaron, to declare faithfully the commandments and the revelations, with power and authority unto the church.
28.4 Oliver’s venue lay in the spoken word. He would be supported in every discourse, in every address, and in every debate so long as he was filled by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. Oliver was learning to distinguish between the spiritual influences that affected him from time to time. His touchstone was the spirit that was upon him during the many weeks that he spent writing the text of the Book of Mormon as that narrative fell from the lips of the prophet of God. When he felt that same spirit, he was free to address the saints according to the dictates of the Holy Ghost. Needless to say, if he did not feel that same spirit whispering along, he was to remain silent.

28.5 The calling of the prophet Joseph Smith was to write by commandment, inasmuch as he was representing the mind and will of the Lord to the disciples of Christ and the children of men everywhere.

28.6 This, of course, is in direct reference to the episode where Oliver attempted to do this very thing with regard to the revelations given in what is now known as Doctrine and Covenant 20.

28.7 Oliver had been duped by the arguments of the Whitmers on one occasion and now was falling from grace with his acceptance of the revelations of Hiram Page. No man could know of the mind and will of the Lord until the Lord gave that information to the man who was His designated channel.

28.7.10—mysteries—The mysteries are those principles of eternity which the mind of mortal man in a lost and fallen world cannot discover for himself.

28.7.16—sealed—The Book of Mormon had been sealed by the angel Moroni at the end of his earthly ministry. Neither the acquisition of the plates nor their translation could be affected until the prophet Joseph Smith had been properly prepared and authorized to do so.

28.7.23—another—In this particular case, as the history of the Church has clearly illustrated, the prophet’s successor would be Brigham Young.

28.8 During the general conference of the Church held 26 September 1830, the practical aspects of Oliver’s mission to the Lamanites were formalized. Peter Whitmer was called to serve as one of those to accompany him (see 30.0), together with Parley P. Pratt and Ziba Peterson (see 32.0). On 15 October 1830, the four companions left Fayette, New York. After arriving at Palmyra, New York, they acquired several copies of the Book of Mormon from Martin Harris and visited with the prophet Joseph Smith. As part of their commitment to the establishment of Zion, the four signed a covenant that they had drafted to raise a pillar at the place where the temple of God would be built. Between Palmyra and the Unorganized Indian Territory there were several reservations where the brethren paused to preach the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the restoration of the priesthood of God. Near Buffalo, New York, they visited with the Catteraugus Indians, leaving a copy of the Book of Mormon with them. They spent time in Kirtland, Ohio, where Sidney Rigdon and several prominent members of his congregation were baptized and ordained. Frederick G. Williams, a new convert, asked if he might join the four men on their mission, a request that was honored. Near Sandusky, Ohio, they preached to the Wyandot Indians. After four months of hardships and privation, the four elders finally reached the western frontier of the state of Missouri. Peter Whitmer and Ziba Peterson obtained employment in Independence, Missouri, and the other three elders visited with the Shawnee and Delaware Indians. The brethren were particularly well-received among the Delawares causing jealousy and consternation among the Indian

4 And if thou art led at any time by the Comforter to speak or teach, or at all times by the way of commandment unto the church, thou mayest do it.

5 But thou shalt not write by way of commandment, but by wisdom;

6 And thou shalt not command him who is at thy head, and at the head of the church;

7 For I have given him the keys of the mysteries, and the revelations which are sealed, until I shall appoint unto them another in his stead.

8 And now, behold, I say unto you that you shall go unto the Lamanites and preach my gospel unto them; and inasmuch as they receive thy teachings thou shalt cause my church to be established among them; and thou shalt have revelations, but write them not by way of commandment.

D&C 28:6
CR96-A 7
D&C 28:6–7
MD 97
D&C 28:7
JC 362
MD 410
EM 2:781, 913, 977
D&C 28:8
EM 1:337
EM 2:802, 805
D&C 28:8–10
DHC 1 110, 118
agents and the local residents. The military authorities then forbid the missionaries to continue their work with the Lamanites. He five men then preached to the people of Independence where they achieved some success. On 15 February 1831, Parley P. Pratt began his return journey to Kirtland, Ohio, having been authorized the day before to represent the mission to the prophet Joseph Smith and the rest of the Church.

28.8.14—Lamanites—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

28.8.42—revelations—Oliver would be guided by the promptings of the Holy Ghost throughout his mission. As the president of that mission he would receive counsel from the Lord for and in behalf of his companions. But his role was not to establish doctrine of the Kingdom; his revelations would not constitute commandments to the whole of the Church of Jesus Christ. Only the revelations that were given through the prophet Joseph Smith could have bearing on the entire Church.

28.9 It seems apparent that one of the topics included in the spurious revelations that Hiram Page had been receiving through his "peep stone" was the location of that Zion which would be built upon this continent. Oliver Cowdery and the rest of the Whitmer family had believed in these revelations. The irony here was that it would eventually be the privilege of Oliver Cowdery to identify the very place that the city of Zion would be established during his mission to the Lamanites. Hiram Page's revelations were subverting Oliver's own divine appointment as the Lord emissary.

28.9.20—Zion—It has been the goal of every prophet since the beginning of the world to teach the principles of the Celestial Kingdom and to invite the children of men to live by them.

28.9.41—borders—that is to say, the borders of the United States between Missouri and the Unorganized Indian Territory.

28.9.44—Lamanites—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

28.10 The general conference of the Church lasted three days, from the 26th to the 28th of September 1830. There would be a lengthy discussion regarding revelatory protocol, including the specific problem with Hiram Page and his "peep stone". Once again, the Church would sustain the notion that Joseph Smith was to be the spokesman for the Lord God of Israel. He was to preside in any meeting where he was present and the messages that he delivered would constitute the walk and talk of the saints until the next general conference. The Church of Jesus Christ has followed this pattern ever since.

28.10.8—after—Before the conference ended, Peter Whitmer received his call to serve with Oliver Cowdery in the mission to the Lamanites (see 30.5–8). During the first few days of October 1830, several of the brethren who had attended the conference expressed a desire to accompany the two elders on their mission to the west. The Lord then revealed that Parley P. Pratt and Ziba Peterson were to be called and set apart for that task (see 32.0).


9 And now, behold, I say unto you that it is not revealed, and no man knoweth where the city Zion shall be built, but it shall be given hereafter. Behold, I say unto you that it shall be on the borders by the Lamanites.

10 Thou shalt not leave this place until after the conference; and my servant Joseph shall be appointed to preside over the conference by the voice of it, and what he saith to thee thou shalt tell.
upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

28.11 This could not have been an easy objective for Oliver, especially since he had been an erstwhile supporter of the revelations that had been received through the "peep stone". There was no one else, however, who could have accomplished the task in the short period of time required.

28.11.7—brother—Not only in the Gospel sense. Hiram Page had already married Catherine Whitmer several years before. In 1832 Oliver would marry Elizabeth Ann Whitmer. The engagement between Oliver and Elizabeth was not already in place, although this revelation would certainly be a foreshadowing of that which would come to pass one day.

28.11.8–9—Hiram Page—In October 1825, Hiram Page married Catherine Whitmer, and therefore was a brother-in-law to the Whitmer brothers and eventually to Oliver Cowdery. Hiram was an early disciple, serving as one of the Eight Witnesses of the Book of Mormon. He was baptized with his wife on 11 April 1830 and was ordained a teacher on 9 June 1830 as one of the first officers of the Church of Jesus Christ. His course of life was similar to that taken by many of the Whitmer siblings. Although he never denied his testimony of the Book of Mormon, he did find himself excommunicated from the Church in 1838. He became part of William McLellin's Church of Christ in 1847. On 12 August 1852, Hiram Page died in his home in Excelsior Springs, Missouri, of injuries received in an accident with a heavy wagon.

28.11.27—stone—We know little or nothing regarding this particular stone, save that it was black. After the matter of the false revelations had been cleared up, the stone itself was crushed to powder and the revelations received through it were reportedly burned.

28.12 At the heart of the argument against Hiram Page and his revelations was the fact that the Lord had already declared in previous revelations that Joseph Smith was to be the person through whom the entire Church of Christ would receive instructions. Joseph was an Apostle and first elder of the Church (see 20.2). The Church was to give heed to Joseph's words as if directly from the Savior's mouth (see 21.4–6). Joseph was a seer, in part because he had been called upon to use the Urim and Thummim to translate the Book of Mormon. The question before all was when had Hiram been called upon to serve as a seer in the Church and Kingdom of God.

28.13 No man can serve in the Kingdom of God without the sustaining voice of the membership of the Church. This is not democracy; it is simply a matter of moral agency. Hiram Page had not been called to be a seer by the voice of God, nor had he been ordained to do the same by those holding the keys of authority of the priesthood of God. No conference of the Church of Christ had been called to install Hiram in that capacity. All that he had done had been independent of the God of Heaven, and therefore could have been inspired by only one other source.

28.14 Oliver Cowdery's efforts actually bore fruit before the general conference of the Church was convened on 26 September 1830. During the conference, the stone and its revelations were discussed at length, the result of which was that Hiram Page and the entire conference renounced the stone and the revelations that had been received by its means. Thereafter the Holy Ghost was present with them, together with deep sentiments of peace, faith,
hope, and charity abounding.

28.14.25—Lamanites—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teachings of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

28.15 The direction of the mission to the Lamanites was committed into the hands of Oliver Cowdery. With that commission he was entitled to receive revelations for himself and for his companions.

28.16 Oliver Cowdery was the first preacher of the Church of Jesus Christ and in that capacity it was incumbent upon him to testify of those things which he had learned as scribe to the prophet Joseph Smith. He would be blessed in his heart and in his mind as well that he might know precisely what to say in order to keep before the people with whom he came in contact, the simple principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

28.16.18—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

29.0.1 Joseph Smith and his family had departed from Harmony, Pennsylvania, in the face of growing opposition and persecution from the residents of the area, including his wife’s family. During the last few days of August 1830, Joseph Knight, Senior, helped Joseph and John Whitmer load up all of the Smith possessions, and transported them in his wagon to the Whitmer residence in Fayette, New York. On arrival, Joseph discovered that Oliver Cowdery and most of the saints in Fayette had been deceived by a series of revelations that Hiram Page had received by means of a “peep stone”, a devilish imitation of the Urim and Thummim. With some effort, the origin of the revelations was sorted out and Hiram and the others who had been involved completely renounced the writings and the stone itself, both being destroyed. The subject of some of the so-called revelations had to do with the location of the city of Zion. In Section 28, the Lord laid that matter to rest, the assignment to locate the place for the latter-day temple being given to Oliver Cowdery as he pursued his mission to the Lamanites. The present revelation was given about the same time, a few days before the commencement of the second general conference of the Church of Jesus Christ on 26 September 1830.

29.0.2 We cannot be entirely certain what precipitated this revelation except for the historical setting and a few hints that appear in the early holographs of this Section. It is probable that there were other questions raised by the spurious revelations that Hiram Page had received by means of his “peep stone” that had not been completely laid to rest. The building up of the city of Zion is one of those seminal events that herald the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. It would not be a stretch of the imagination that Satan had attempted to corrupt the minds and hearts of the Whitmers by means of strange twsistings of the truth so that they might be led away from the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the correct preparations necessary for the advancement of the Kingdom of God upon the earth. In headnote of the earliest holograph that we have of Section 29, the issue appears to be a difference of opinion regarding the fall and death of Adam. Inasmuch as the saints were expected to be of one mind
and one heart in matters of doctrine and practice, the nine people present made it a matter of prayer. This serves as a testimonial that the Whitners were desirous not to fall into the same trap that they had succumbed to when the revelations of Hiram Page first appeared.

29.0.3 The headnote to the earliest holograph of Section 29 indicates that there were six elders and three members in attendance when the revelation was received. With the extant records before us, we cannot identify all with certainty, but we can speculate some. Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and John Whitmer were certainly among the number present. All four had been ordained elders by this time, John Whitmer having been ordained on 9 June 1830. At this point we cannot tell who the other two elders were, nor can we be sure of the identity of the three members, nor even if they were male or female. What is intriguing about this revelation and the circumstances that brought it about, is that although the initial question would be answered, the Lord provided considerably more material than the simple answer to that which had puzzled the brethren originally. We may surmise that the original question could not be answered without laying a more substantive foundation of doctrine than that which they possessed. We should not be surprised to learn that many of the issues raised by the false writings obtained by Hiram Page were also laid to rest in this Section. In any event, Oliver Cowdery and his companions would have a wonderful presentation of latter-day revelation as they wended their westward among the Gentiles and the Lamanites during the fall of that year. This section appeared as Chapter XXIX in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 10 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

29.1 The saints of the Most High are willing to hearken to the voice of the Master in any venue. The difficulty for the nine who were listening to the voice of the prophet Joseph Smith was that they had had some difficulty distinguishing between the voice of the spirit of God from the voice of the evil one. Certainly this revelation would prove to be far more satisfying than anything that Hiram Page had transcribed by means of his “peep stone”. By these sorts of comparisons, the disciples of Jesus Christ would learn to distinguish between good and evil.

29.1.4—voice—Whether it is the Lord’s voice or the voice of His servants, it is the same. The membership of the Church had already accepted the premise, and this by covenant, that when Joseph Smith spoke on matters concerning the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth, that constituted the mind and will of God the eternal Father. The voice which was heard by the nine saints in attendance was that of the prophet, but they were under covenant to know for themselves that he spoke the truth by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost.

29.1.6—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

29.1.9—Redeemer—Only in and through the power of the resurrection vested in the Lord Jesus Christ can any living being return from the bondage of physical death. Only in and through the atoning sacrifice of the Savior may anyone find release from the consequences of personal sin.

29.1.11—Great I AM—This divine title of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has ever been associated with Jehovah, the premortal name of the Lord Jesus Christ (see EX-C 3:14)

29.1.15—arm of mercy—This not only represents an arm of comfort,
an arm within whose embrace one can find peace, it is also an arm of
great power by which all of the enemies of the children of God are
vanquished.
29.1.2—*sins*—At the heart of the matter is not only the redemption from
sin in behalf of the nine individuals in the Whitmer home at that hour,
but the redemption from all sins that had ever been committed by
the children of men since the beginning of time, including those transgres-
sions of Adam and Eve that brought about the fall and the current
conditions which define this lost and fallen world.

29.2 The establishment of the city of Zion is in conjunction with the gather-
ing of Israel. This community will exist because men and women will learn to
be of one heart and one mind, to have no poor among them, and to live by
every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God. This has been the goal
of every prophet that has ever lived upon the surface of this planet. It is to be
assumed that those in attendance at the meeting which produced the present
revelation had forsaken alternative voices to that of the Lord and were pre-
pared to listen to that which would be presented to them as a result of their
fervent prayer.

29.2.9—*hen*—The Savior used similar metaphorical language in the last
days of his mortal ministry in Jerusalem (see *MT-C* 23.37–38)

29.3 No doubt Oliver Cowdery had been concerned about his role in the
condemnation of the passage in Section 20 of the Doctrine and Covenant (see
28.0.1). His involvement with Hiram Page’s spurious revelations must have been just as disconcerting after the truth of the matter was clearly manifested.
The Whitmer family had also been heavily involved in both fiascos and had
been grieved of heart. This verse must have proven to be a great relief to them.

29.3.17—*therefore*—The spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation had fallen
upon the entire household, the consequence of which was that they
were now prepared to receive the mind of the Lord regarding the events
leading up to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

29.3.23—*remember*—Glorious and apt counsel to a strong willed and
prideful group of saints. In the end, almost all of the Whitmers and
their extended family would find themselves outside of the Church and
Kingdom of God.

29.4 The six elders of the Church of Jesus Christ were commissioned to take
the principles of the Gospel unto the children of men. Oliver Cowdery and
Peter Whitmer, Junior, would embark upon a 1,500 mile missionary journey
to preach the principles of salvation to the Lamanites and to any others who
were honest of heart that they would meet along the way. This would not be a
gloomy task if they retained the influence of the Holy Ghost in the minds and
in their hearts. If they would preach by the power and influence of the Holy
Ghost, they would wake up the world as heralds of the coming Christ.

29.5 So long as a disciple of Christ can keep before his mind and heart the
revelations of the Lord, he may know at any given moment that his course of
life is acceptable to God. With such assurance it is possible for that man to be
cheerful and full of joy under any circumstance, even when his life is in peril.
The saints in Fayette, New York, had great cause to be optimistic about their
prospects inasmuch as the Lord had bestowed great blessings upon them as
they had supported the servants of God in their ongoing ministry.

29.5.13—*midst*—Although the saints could easily point to the inspiration
of the Lord through the Spirit of God as a comfort and a cheer for

2 Who will gather his people even

as a hen gathereth her chickens

under her wings, even as many as

will hearken to my voice and

humble themselves before me, and
call upon me in mighty prayer.

3 Behold, verily, verily, I say unto

you, that at this time your sins are

forgiven you, therefore ye receive

these things; but remember to sin

no more, lest perils shall come

upon you.

4 Verily, I say unto you that ye

are chosen out of the world to
declare my gospel with the sound
of rejoicing, as with the voice of a

trump.

5 Lift up your hearts and be glad,

for I am in your midst, and am

your advocate with the Father; and

it is his good will to give you the

kingdom.

D&C 29:2
AF 336
D&C 29:2–45
DNTP 3 473

D&C 29:3
DNTP 1 178
DNTP 3 278
MD 294
MM 2 53

D&C 29:5
AGQ 1 14
AGQ 3 58
DNTP 1 244
DS 1 229
DS 1 26
MD 25
PM 611
them in an oppressive and deceptive world, yet at the heart of the
Savior’s meaning is the power of the priesthood, that authority which
gives men the ability to speak for the Father and the Son, just as Joseph
Smith was doing on that day late in the month of September 1830.

29.6 Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery had witnessed this principle in opera-
tion many times. The nine individuals gathered in the Whitmer home could
perceive that transpiring before their eyes.

29.6.5—written—This constitutes a reprise of that which had been pro-
mised the Apostles of the Savior, that if they would be unified, the Lord
would be in their midst (see MT-C 18.19–20). The same promise was
reiterated to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery at the time that Oliver
began his role as the prophet’s scribe in April 1829 (see 6.32).

29.7 Every bearer of the priesthood of God is to be a participant in the work
and glory of the Father, to testify to the inhabitants of the earth, to gather
the honest in heart through the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus
Christ, and to inspire unity in the minds and hearts of the children of men.
The honest in heart are not difficult to find, for they recognize the kindred
spirits who are seeking them out.

29.8 Within a few weeks after the second general conference of the Church of
Jesus Christ, Oliver Cowdery and his three companions would leave Fayette,
New York, and make their way westward to present to the various Native
American tribes the fullness of the Gospel as it is found in the Book of
Mormon. They would also have the opportunity to preach the principles of sal-
vation to many of the settlers who had inherited the land, thus engaging in
their fundamental calling to seek out the elect from among the Jews and the
Gentiles. In conjunction with his proselyting assignment, Oliver was also
tasked with the responsibility of locating the place to which the elect would be
gathered. In the process of time and travel, he would locate that center place
near Independence, Missouri. Zion was to be a place of safety, a place of
refuge from the trials, afflictions, and terrors of the last days that would be
fulfilled as the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ neared.

29.9 The image of the harvest and the fate of those have no place in the
Kingdom of God is repeatedly employed in the scriptures, particularly in the
writings of Isaiah and Malachi, and in the pages of the Book of Mormon.

29.9.16—ripe—This is part of a harvest metaphor that points to the Mil-
ennial reign of Jesus Christ. The ripened grain is harvested and
gathered into the garnerers, and then the field is burned, destroying all
that remains of the crop that once stood there.

29.9.29—stubble—This is the part of the plant that has no value in the
harvest. The dried roots and the stems that remain after the harvesters
cut away the sheaves encumber the ground. These being burned, the
field can again be cultivated and planted with the grain that had been
preserved.

29.9.42—wickedness—There will be no wicked upon the earth during the
Millennium. All who dwell upon the earth will be of a Terrestrial heart
and mind. Those who persist in holding to their Telestial nature will be
ushered into the spirit world until the time of the final judgment.

29.10 The opening of the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times signaled
the approaching hour of the Savior’s glorious descent from heaven attended by his
angels and the saints of God. In a world filled with wickedness and cynicism,

6 And, as it is written—Whatso-
ever ye shall ask in faith, being
united in prayer according to my
command, ye shall receive.

7 And ye are called to bring to
pass the gathering of mine elect; for
mine elect hear my voice and
harden not their hearts;

8 Wherefore the decree hath gone
forth from the Father that they
shall be gathered in unto one place
upon the face of this land, to pre-
pare their hearts and be prepared in
all things against the day when
tribulation and desolation are sent
forth upon the wicked.

9 For the hour is nigh and the day
soon at hand when the earth is ripe;
and all the proud and they that do
wickedly shall be as stubble; and I
will burn them up, saith the Lord
of Hosts, that wickedness shall not
be upon the earth;

10 For the hour is nigh, and that
which was spoken by mine apostles
must be fulfilled; for as they spoke

D&C 29:6–12
AF 311

D&C 29:7
DHC 5 (38)
DNCTC 3 330
MD 218
MLM 202
TSWK 553
D&C 29:7–8
AF 337, 343
EM 1:249
EM 2:436, 536
D&C 29:7–9
EM 2:605, 922
D&C 29:8
JC 777
MD 809
MLM 295
EM 2:604, 710
EM 3:1162
D&C 29:8–9
FPF 141
D&C 29:8–10
AGQ 1 110
D&C 29:8–11
MLM 548
D&C 29:9
DNCTC 3 109
DS 3 57
MD 494, 496, 593
EM 3:1131
D&C 29:9–10
DS 3 63
MD 733
D&C 29:9–11
DS 3 57
JC 783
MM 3 476
D&C 29:9–13
DNCTC 1 396
MD 494
D&C 29:9–21
there are hosts of the children of men who have been blinded by the devil, having ears dull of hearing, and through their own willful surrender to the spirit of the natural man have hardened their hearts and minds against the whisperings of the spirit of God.

29.10.5—nigb—Although we might not be able to testify of the exact day or the hour of the Lord’s return to the earth, the fulfillment of the prophecies that have been made about the second coming are readily visible to those with eyes to see.

29.10.13—apostles—John the Beloved speaks at length regarding the events that lead up to the thousand year reign of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Millennium itself (see RV-C 20). Paul and the Gospel writers all record their anticipation of the coming of the Savior in glory and power.

29.11 The appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ in the heavens will stir the hearts of the children of men. Some will be filled with fear and anger, their machinations to rule with blood and horror upon this earth having been frustrated. Others will be filled with indescribable joy and love, having their faith in the servants of God confirmed in every detail. The wicked will be summarily dismissed into a state of misery for a thousand years, while the honorable and the faithful will be nurtured and preserved while the final preparations for the salvation, perfection, and exaltation of the earth are made.

29.12 At every turn there are judgments in the lives of the children of men, nearly all of which have come about because of the willing choices that men have made. Frequently, the nature and disposition of eternity is revealed to the hearts and minds of men by which men are permitted to judge themselves, whereby they are able to choose the will of God rather than the temptations associated with the spirit of the natural man. Occasionally, the judgment of God is imposed upon mankind, individually and collectively, so that men might learn from their own experience the wisdom of obedience and the folly of rebellion. Then there are times of what might be termed catastrophic judgment. Physical death is one of those times, when each man, woman, and child who passes out of this life is faced with the substance of reality, that which they have created for themselves as a result of their choices, their moral agency. Some will suffer greatly because of what they have forfeited; others will rejoice in the company of the faithful. The second coming will provide the inhabitants of the earth with one of these seminal moments of catastrophic judgment, but not the last.

29.12.16–17—firm decree—The Lord Jesus Christ had declared by his own voice that the judgment that would transpire at the second coming would be conducted by the original Apostles selected by the Savior during his mortal ministry. “And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, shall, in the resurrection, when the Son of Man shall come sitting on the throne of his glory, ye shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (JST, Matthew 19:28).

29.12.26—apostles—The Greek roots from which the term “apostle” derives, originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were ordained Apostles by Peter, James, and John sometime between 15 May 1829

so shall it come to pass;  

11 For I will reveal myself from heaven with power and great glory, with all the hosts thereof, and dwell in righteousness with men on earth a thousand years, and the wicked shall not stand.

12 And again, verily, verily, I say unto you, and it hath gone forth in a firm decree, by the will of the Father, that mine apostles, the Twelve which were with me in my ministry at Jerusalem, shall stand at my right hand at the day of my coming in a pillar of fire, being clothed with robes of righteousness, with crowns upon their heads, in glory even as I am, to judge the whole house of Israel, even as many as have loved me and kept my commandments, and none else.
and 1 June 1829 on the banks of the Susquehanna River near Harmony, Pennsylvania. The Apostles hold the keys of the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world and are entitled to administer the ordinance of baptism for the remission of sins and for membership in the Church and Kingdom of God unto any and every man that believes in Christ and brings forth the fruits of repentance.

29.12.52–54—pillar of fire—Thus have the angels of God appeared to the inhabitants of the earth. All those who accompany the Savior in his descent from heaven will be enveloped in a pillar of fire. The earth itself will be completely covered with this same glory as it is restored to its paradisiacal glory, the Terrestrial state that existed at the time of its creation.

29.12.58—robes—In scriptural language, these robes are invariably described as being white.

29.12.62—crows—These twelve men are kings and priests unto the most high God.

29.12.73—judge—In the minds of the fearful, judgment almost always implies condemnation. The true meaning of the word, especially as it is used in this context, suggests deliverance from oppression, tribulation, and sorrow. The saints who dwell on the earth at the time of the second coming will be deemed worthy to stay by the Twelve, having the testimony of the Holy Ghost in their favor.

29.12.78—Israel—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

29.13 The comparison of the dead in Christ with the House of Israel that had been liberated from the house of bondage in Egypt is apt here. The faithful in Jesus Christ would, at the sounding of the trumpet, come forth from their graves and from the world of spirits, having been set free from the constraints imposed upon them as the result of physical death. The reunion of the body and the spirit will be only the beginning of the complete unity that the righteous will find themselves party to during the Millennium and in the Celestial Kingdom of God.

29.13.3—trump—The Apostle Paul speaks specifically of the trump of the resurrection (see 1 CO-C 15.52–54) as do prophets in the Book of Mormon.

29.13.13–14—Mount Sinai—The Lord God of Israel proposed that the House of Israel draw near to Him while they dwelt at the foot of Mount Sinai, the signal being the sounding of a trumpet. There were thundering, lightnings, fire, smoke, and a great quaking of the earth as the Lord descended upon the mountain. The people were terrified.

29.13.31–33—died in me—that is, those who had entered into the covenants of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and who had remained faithful unto the end of their mortal lives.

29.13.37—crown—Like the Apostles, these men and women had become kings and queens, priests and priestesses in the Kingdom of God, through their faithfulness.

29.13.43–44—clothed upon—Certainly in reference to the robes of righteousness, but in addition the glory of the Celestial kingdom was to be theirs as well.

29.14 In the Savior’s rehearsal of the events that would transpire between his physical death and the time of his second coming, the Lord referred speci—

13 For a trump shall sound both long and loud, even as upon Mount Sinai, and all the earth shall quake, and they shall come forth—yea, even the dead which died in me, to receive a crown of righteousness, and to be clothed upon, even as I am, to be with me, that we may be one.

14 But, behold, I say unto you that before this great day shall
specifically to particular signs (see MT-C 24.29). There have been gallons of ink spilled regarding the causes of the celestial manifestations attendant to the appearance of the Lord. What appears to be the case is that there will be a period of time in which, like the Nephites at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus, the inhabitants of the earth will be in the dark, seeing neither sun, moon, nor stars. Whether this darkness will come as the result of natural or manmade causes we are not told. How long the manifestation will last is not revealed. One’s own imagination might generate sufficient images of disaster and tragedy to satisfy the most morbid, but perhaps we ought to consider the possibility that the conduct of the righteous, their humility and faith, might ameliorate the most dire of possibilities.

29.14.15—sun—Some scholars have suggested that the loss of sunlight transpires because of atmospheric problems. Again, whether these are natural effects due to volcanism, the greenhouse effect, or a radical change in earth’s orbit around the sun, we do not know. Neither has the word of the Lord confirmed that man’s inhumanity to man will be the direct cause. Therefore, worldwide nuclear war is not necessarily a prerequisite for the Second Coming. The impenetrable darkness of Egypt at the time of the Exodus of Israel, the three hours of darkness at Calvary, the three days of darkness in the Americas prior to Jesus’ appearance to the Nephites, and many other recorded instances in the Scriptures clearly indicate that the God of Heaven may speak and there be light, and He can speak and there be darkness. Quibbling over the mechanism is bootless.

29.14.21—moon—Some have attempted to equate this instance with that recorded in the second chapter of Joel which was subsequently cited by Peter, John, and Moroni; that is, that there would be times when the moon should be turned to blood. While there may be a relationship between the two effects, the absence of the light of the moon and the light of the moon being blood red are two different things. There is no question that Joel prophesied of various times and places when the moon would appear as blood, some of which have already taken place and others which may yet lie in the future. Without being dogmatic, might we hold off the equation of the two effects for the sake of the language given in the Savior’s prophecy which is really quite specific: that the moon would show no light at all. The absence of the moon light could be accounted for by all of those causes articulated in 29.14.15.

29.14.29—stars—Commentators and other enthusiasts have gone to great lengths to impose their views on what actually happens as the stars “fall from heaven”. Some have suggested that the time of the Second Coming would be accompanied by extraordinary showers of meteors and comets. Others have asserted that the night sky would be such that it will appear as if every star had fallen down because they would not be visible, for much the same reasons as given for the sun and the moon not shedding their light upon the earth. More astute men have suggested that perhaps the return of the various portions of the earth that had been translated away at different times in the earth’s history would satisfy this specific portion of the Savior’s prophecy. Still others have speculated that perhaps erratic movements in the earth’s orbit or unsteadiness in its rotation would give the appearance to an earthbound observer that the stars were careening to the earth. All of this is entertaining and not without merit, yet the simplest conclusion to be drawn in this instance, as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, that there would come a time when the stars would not be visible from the face of come the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall be turned into blood, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and there shall be greater signs in heaven above and in the earth beneath;
the earth. Again, we are not privy to the mechanism by which this is brought to pass.

29.15 Some of this abject fear and sorrow will derive from ignorance, wondering what is transpiring in the heavens above and the earth beneath. These souls suffer the sting of impending death which is the fear of the unknown. They do not know what awaits them when they pass out of mortality. Some of the anguish depicted here will be expressed by those who thought that they had more time in mortality to work their will upon their fellow men. These are they who have been deceived by the devil, thinking that they find happiness in their wickedness. They are frustrated and distressed souls. Others will feel the suffering of the damned, because having once had in their possession the fullness of the truth and then afterward succumbing to the enticements of the world and those of the evil one, they realize far too late what they might have had if they had remained upon the straight and narrow path of salvation and exaltation. These latter are the most miserable of all.

29.16 The Apostle John records in his Revelation of several instances when hail would fall from heaven and distress the nations. On one occasion the hail fell, destroying a third of all vegetable life on the earth (see RV-C 8.7). In another place he spoke of great hailstones that weight nearly a hundred pounds each (see RV-C 16.21). Neither of these would bode well for the prospective fruits of a farmer’s labor. In addition, we might easily turn to the seventh plague poured out upon Egypt just shortly before the Exodus of the House of Israel (see EX-C 9.22–26). The trees were ruinously pruned by the hail, the flax and barley destroyed. The wheat and the rye were spared, however, because the plague came as the growing season was beginning. This agricultural tragedy occurred in every province of Egypt, except in the land of Goshen where the children of Israel were enconced. It would seem reasonable to assume that if the saints of the latter days were likewise spared, that the minds of the wicked might be focused on the blessings that were patently visible, that they might ponder the implications of such an event. Other scholars have suggested that these effects might be fulfilled as part of a ballistic war, the artillery and other weapons being likened to hail and fire, mingling with the blood of the targets. Such combat is hard on vegetation.

29.17 Notwithstanding the fulfillment of the prophecies made by the servants of God since the days of Adam and Eve, the wicked will ignore these cautionary tales and persist in pursuing the desires of their hearts until it is everlastingly too late. Every man may be subject to the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ through faith in the Son of God, coupled with sincere repentance from all sin and full compliance with the established ordinances of the priesthood, including baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost. There is no other way in which a man or a woman can receive a remission of sins and thereby receive the blessings that the Father has set aside for them. The rebellious will find nothing but sorrow and exile for their willful behavior.

29.18 Again, this is a reprise of that which befell the Egyptians who refused to allow the House of Israel to depart from the land and from hundreds of years of abject slavery. This was the fourth of the ten plagues that afflicted the Egyptians in their recalcitrance. Again, the plague befell all of Egypt except for the land of Goshen where the Israelites dwelt. We may except that a similar division will take place between the saints of the most high and the obstinately wicked in the latter days.

15 And there shall be weeping and wailing among the hosts of men; D&C 29:15
MD 732, 834

16 And there shall be a great hailstorm sent forth to destroy the crops of the earth. D&C 29:16
MD 726

17 And it shall come to pass, because of the wickedness of the world, that I will take vengeance upon the wicked, for they will not repent; for the cup of mine indignation is full; for behold, my blood shall not cleanse them if they hear me not. D&C 29:17
DS 1 133
DS 2 23, 134
DS 3 2, 42
MD 146, 379, 821, 836
MLM 502

18 Wherefore, I the Lord God will send forth flies upon the face of the earth, which shall take hold of the inhabitants thereof, and shall eat their flesh, and shall cause maggots to come in upon them; D&C 29:18
DHC 5 (39)
DNCTC 5 161
D&C 29:18–19
MD 725
MM 2 44
D&C 29:18–20
MLM 466
29.19 This general destruction of the flesh of mankind of the latter days was prophesied in part by the prophet Zechariah.

And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. (Zechariah 14:12)

This would certainly be brought about in death, as the bodies of the wicked were subjected to the effects of natural dissolution. But the implication of Zechariah’s prophecy is that they will consume alive, apparently much in the same way as was Herod Agrippa (see AC-C 12.20–23).

29.20 John the Beloved spoke of the supper of the great God which would take place at the end of the siege of the city of Jerusalem by the nations of the earth. The whole host was smitten, that their dead bodies filled the land of Israel. The fowls of the air were invited by the angel of the Lord to devour what remained (see RV-C 19.17–18). The devastation of the wicked would reach far beyond the land of Palestine and their remains would be consumed by the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel give similar accounts.

29.21 In his vision of his father’s dream, the prophet Nephi saw that the devil would lay the foundation of this church (see 1 NE-C 14.9–17). The principle and defining point of the great and abominable church is its proposition that God does not actively communicate with His children, that there is no such thing as continuous revelation. Those who constitute the membership of that church are the spiritually dead, the unregenerate. As the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was placed in the Garden of Eden as an opposition to the Tree of Life, as the Fountain of Filthy Waters stood opposite to the Fountain of Living Waters in Lehi’s Dream, the whorish mother of abominations is juxtaposed to the Church of Jesus Christ, a body of believers who are faithful, filled with light and life. John the Beloved saw this same blasphemous corruption and recorded his description of her in his Revelation (see RV-C 17.1–18).

29.21.31—Ezekiel—It is worth a detailed study of the book of Ezekiel to discover the nature of the abominations spoken of and where they are to be found in the latter days.

29.21.33—prophet—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

29.22 John the Beloved describes the conditions that will prevail after the end of the thousand years of Christ’s personal reign here upon the paradisiacal earth. Satan would be loosed from his prison because there would be men willing to be influenced by him (see RV-C 20.7–10). The ultimate fall of the wicked alive in those days would be perilously swift.

29.22.33–34—little season—A short period of time immediately following the Millennium during which the final confrontation between good and evil will transpire. The earth will then pass through a transformation similar to death and resurrection and will become a glorified Celestial sphere, a perfect habitation for the sons and daughters of God. We do not know exactly how long this period of time will be, but we

19 And their tongues shall be stayed that they shall not utter against me; and their flesh shall fall from off their bones, and their eyes from their sockets; D&C 29:18–21

20 And it shall come to pass that the beasts of the forest and the fowls of the air shall devour them up. D&C 29:20

21 And the great and abominable church, which is the whore of all the earth, shall be cast down by devouring fire, according as it is spoken by the mouth of Ezekiel the prophet, who spoke these things, which have not come to pass but surely must, as I live, for abominations shall not reign. D&C 29:21

22 And again, verily, verily, I say unto you that when the thousand years are ended, and men again begin to deny their God, then will I spare the earth but for a little season; D&C 29:22
29.23 Immediately after the creation, the earth was a Terrestrial sphere, one in which there was no death or disease. Adam and Eve would have remained in the Garden of Eden forever if they had not partaken of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Having partaken of the fruit, however, our first parents introduced a dramatic change in the affairs of this planet. The earth fell from the presence of God the Father, becoming a Telestial world rife with afflictions of all kinds. We live in this lost and fallen world. With the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory, however, the earth will be restored to its paradisical glory, essentially becoming as it was prior to the fall. At the end of the Millennium, the earth will pass through a process quite similar to death and resurrection, the result of which will be the glorification and exaltation of this planet as a Celestial world, the eternal habitation of the saints of the Most High. John the Beloved witnessed the transformation of the earth from a Telestial sphere to a Terrestrial one at the time of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. He also testified that the earth would receive a second transformation, one that would cause it to become a Celestial residence for the faithful in Christ. This change would be similar to death and resurrection for the earth.

29.24 For all those who have qualified themselves through the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, those who dwelt upon the earth whether in its Celestial state or in its Terrestrial state, will pass through resurrection, receiving Celestialized bodies filled with light, truth, and the glory of eternity. They will become fit residents of this glorious sphere. It is clear that means will also be provided for all other forms of life to have a place upon the earth as well.

29.25 In the resurrection, all things will be restored to their perfected and proper forms. Regardless of the vicissitudes of life, accidents of nature, or the viciousness of those who would reign with blood and horror, nothing pertaining to the son or daughter of God will be lost or forgotten, even to the number of hairs grown on the head of every man, woman, and child. All will be restored to its proper and perfect frame, nothing lacking in the resurrection.

29.26 The first resurrection began with the Lord Jesus Christ, he who holds the keys of death and hell. With him came forth many of the saints, to stand as witnesses of the power of the resurrection for and in behalf of all men. The disciples in Palestine received the witness given by their resurrected kin; the Nephites also were the beneficiaries of a similar event in the land of Bountiful. It is to be assumed that there were others raised among the other remnants of the House of Israel scattered throughout the world unto whom the Savior ministered after his own resurrection. Notwithstanding the diversity of locations where these resurrections took place, they were few in number. Since the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ into heaven, there have been others of the servants of God who have been raised from the death to attend to assignments that could only be performed by them. Hence, when Moroni appeared to the prophet Joseph Smith in September of 1823, he was a resurrected being. The same is true of John the Baptist, and the Apostles Peter and James. The first general resurrection of the dead will take place at the second coming of the Savior. The righteous who have slept in Christ will come forth from the earth to receive him at his coming. Those who live during the Millennium will participate in the first resurrection as well, changing from mortality to
immortality in the twinkling of an eye. The resurrection spoken of here in this verse, will be the second general resurrection which will liberate those who did not qualify to come forth in the first resurrection. These will include the sons of men who only qualified for salvation in the Celestial Kingdom. Also, there will be those who will come forth in the second resurrection who will inherit no degree of glory, but who will be cast out into outer darkness with Lucifer and his hosts. These will be the sons of perdition.

29.26.14—Michael—This archangel is, of course, he who dwelt upon the earth as Adam, the father of all living. It seems refreshing consistent to have him sound the trump of resurrection for all of his posterity.

29.27 The Lord’s declaration here regarding the final judgment of all of mankind is reminiscent of the parable of the Sheep and the Goats that the Savior tells just prior to his crucifixion and death. Even though the Savior told the parable to help the disciples understand the order of events at the time of his second coming, the parable also has application at the end of the Millennium as well. While the longer term blessings of exaltation lie before the faithful, those who are inherit the fullness of the Celestial Kingdom, the kingdom spoken of here is the Kingdom of God which will be upon the earth for a thousand years. That this Kingdom had been anticipated from a time before the foundations of the earth were laid is clear. As the earth was created in six days and a seventh day was set aside for a time to rest from all of the labor that had been performed, so also the earth. For six thousand years of the earth’s temporal existence there has been a state of degradation and pollution extant. The seventh thousand years is to be in sharp contrast to that which has preceded it. Those who take part in that glorious time will have been faithful in their commitments to live their lives in accordance with the fullness of the Gospel as revealed in these latter days. The just spirits of these men and women will have been held in reserve since the Grand Council in Heaven to come forth in such a time, to provide leadership and service to the nations of the earth who will also be part of the kingdom established by Jesus.

29.28 During the Millennium, the righteous will have a place among the saints and angels who will dwell upon the earth. Satan will be bound for a thousand years and will have no power or influence among the inhabitants of the Terrestrial world. No mortal voice will hearken to his whisperings, no temptation will take hold in the hearts of the children of men. Satan and his minions will find themselves held captive in the world of spirits, bound in the Spirit Prison there, to suffer anxiety and frustration while the Millennial glory bears sway. Those who have not prepared themselves through repentance and the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ will be ushered into that place of despair as well. In the judgment after the Millennium the final disposition of all mankind will be declared and the wicked will not find a place with those who have been blessed with truth and light. Just as they were isolated from the righteous during the thousand year reign of the Savior, so also will they find themselves exiled to a place of eternal torment.

29.29 The anguish of mind and heart of the eternally condemned cannot be comprehended by man. The unrelenting punishment for rebellion cannot be fathomed by those who desire to dwell in the presence of God. There will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth by those who have been frustrated in all of their attempts to overthrow the Father and the Son. They suffer too inasmuch as they have not been able to persuade all of the children of men to join them in their misery. One wonders at why the Lord testifies here that he had never ever suggested that Satan and his minions, together with the sons of
29.30 The nine members of the Church of Jesus Christ wished to have a complete understanding as to the destiny of angels, men, and devils, yet the Lord had not and would not reveal the fullness of the destiny of his children. In part, it was because man in his finite state as a mortal is not fully equipped to comprehend the nature of eternity. In addition, the joy of the righteous and the suffering of the damned in eternity is too vast for the children of men to receive; metaphorically speaking, their cup of understanding is far too small.  

29.30.31–34—first shall be last—The Lord used this phrase frequently during his mortal ministry. In some instances, the issue was pride; that those who thought well of themselves, as the first among many, would find themselves without honor when the final judgment was rendered. Thus, Peter was rebuked for his concern about preeminence (see MT-C 19.27–30). The parable of the Laborers in the Field reemphasized that principle with his disciples (see MT-C 20.1–16). In the Book of Mormon, Nephi is taught that although the Jews were considered the covenant people, in the latter days the Gentiles would receive the fullness of the Gospel first because of their willingness to believe (see 1 NE-C 13.42). This should not have been lost on the Whitmers on either count. They had been among the very first to support the restoration of the Gospel, yet they would find themselves outside of the Church and Kingdom of God before their mortal lives were over. Oliver Cowdery was second only to the prophet in power and authority, but he would forfeit all because of his pride. When he did finally return, he stated that he desired no position in the Church, but just to have the association of the saints of God. These are cautionary tales indeed.

29.31 We are presently not in position to comprehend completely the methodology by which all things have come into existence. It is clear, however, that the power of the physical creation was vested in the Lord Jesus Christ in the premortal existence when, as the Firstborn, he was known as Jehovah.

30 But remember that all my judgments are not given unto men; and as the words have gone forth out of my mouth even so shall they be fulfilled, that the first shall be last, and that the last shall be first in all things whatsoever I have created by the word of my power, which is the power of my Spirit.

D&C 29:30
MD 845
D&C 29:30–31
PM 199
D&C 29:30–50
AGQ 5 81

31 For by the power of my Spirit created I them; yea, all things both spiritual and temporal—

D&C 29:31
AF 42
JC 35
29.31.7—Spirit—With regard to the creation of the spirit children of the
Father, we may suppose that He personally functioned as the creator.
Certainly His will was involved as the rest of the spirit creation came
into existence. We have no detailed account as to how these things
came to be; we only know that before the physical creation was brought
about, a complete spirit creation took place. Insofar as the physical
creation is concerned, His firstborn spirit child, he who would be the
Savior of all mankind, was charged with others in preparing the earth as
a habitation for the spirit children of God.

29.32 All physical existence upon this planet has a spiritual counterpart that
was brought into existence long before the physical creation came into being.
As the physical creation appeared, the spiritual aspect was placed within it to
give it stable organization and intelligence. All temporal existence, however, is
fleeting, and finally, in the process of time, everything that has pertained to
this lost and fallen world will become disassociated from its spiritual counter-
part through death. Then, through the power of the resurrection vested in the
Son of God, the physical body and its spiritual counterpart will be rejoined,
and that eternally. Once immortality has been achieved, the finally disposition
of all life will be pronounced, determining the eternal destiny of all things, a
judgment that is fundamentally driven by the spiritual development of each
being that has dwelt here. Thus, immortality and eternal life is provided to all
those that desire it.

29.33 The Lord always speaks to his children in language that they can
understand, that they might know the truths of eternity, even if only in part.
Our minds and hearts are presently focused upon the nature of our existence
upon this lost and fallen planet. We remember little or nothing about our
circumstances before we were born into mortality. If we were possessed of our
premortal memories, we would undoubtedly comprehend far more than we do
now. The Father and the Son, however, are in the midst of eternity. The past,
present, and future are constantly before them, as one eternal now. Their
perception of the universe, therefore, is radically different from our own.
Norwithstanding the vast disparity between our comprehension and God’s,
He is perfectly willing to reveal the truth unto those who are unified in their
desire to know. The unity of the saints is produced by their obedience to the
principles of the Gospel, which in turn makes the disciples particularly
susceptible to the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, the facilitator of all
revelation.

29.33.38—Agreed—Those in attendance at this gathering of the saints in
the Whitmer home had already put aside the divisiveness that occurred
through the presumption Hiram Page and others.

29.34 At this point in the revelation, the Lord begins to address directly, the
original question regarding Adam’s transgression and death that had precipi-
tated the union in prayer of the nine saints gathered in the Whitmer home.
There are commandments from God that seem designed to govern the
thoughts of men. There are others which clearly are calculated to govern the
outward conduct of men. From the Lord’s perspective, however, the outward
conduct of men makes indelible changes upon their spirits. In fact, the whole
preparation for eternity is founded upon how the body influences the eternal
spirit that dwells within it. The commandments were delivered unto mankind
to aid the children of men in their course toward eternal life. Each command-
ment has associated with it a divine characteristic. Obedience to the com-
mmandments brings about a growth toward that particular attribute of the

32 First spiritual, secondly tem-
poral, which is the beginning of my
work; and again, first temporal,
and secondly spiritual, which is the
last of my work—

33 Speaking unto you that you
may naturally understand; but unto
myself my works have no end,
neither beginning; but it is given
unto you that ye may understand,
because ye have asked it of me and
are agreed.

34 Wherefore, verily I say unto
you that all things unto me are
spiritual, and not at any time have I
given unto you a law which was
temporal; neither any man, nor the
children of men; neither Adam,
your father, whom I created.

D&C 29:34
AGQ 4 208
AGQ 5 125
DS 1 100
EM 2:808, 854
EM 3:1230
D&C 29:34–35
AGQ 5 81
CR98-O 114
EM 2:435
EM 3:1089
Father. Disobedience brings about an alienation from the divine nature. Therefore, whatever the Lord God has required of us, we should know and understand that it is in our best eternal interest to do as we have been commanded. We may not always know the precise connection between the outward law and the inward growth. This is where our faith aids us in our obedience.

29.34.38—Adam—In almost every respect, Michael or Adam, was like unto the Son of God, in faithfulness and purity. Hence, the decision to place him at the head of mortal men, a faithful prince placed at the beginning of time. The archangel Michael led the hosts of Heaven against the rebelling minions of Lucifer before the foundations of the earth were laid, and was instrumental in causing Satan to be cast out of the presence of God. This same Michael was foreordained to be the Ancient of Days; that is to say, the first man upon the earth, the oldest of all mortals, even the man Adam.

29.35 We may look to the first man for a perfect representation of the principle that the Lord is teaching the early members of the Church of Christ. When Adam and Eve were first placed in the Garden of Eden, they were informed about the two trees that grew in the midst of it. The Tree of Life was available to them, but they were not to touch the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The rationale for not partaking of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge was that they would die as a result. Death was a concept completely incomprehensible to our first parents. It was a principle which they could not observe anywhere in their domain. While partaking of the fruit did produce consequences of a rather stark nature, as the earth and its denizens physically changed, yet the most serious result of their disobedience was their spiritual separation from God, their alienation from their eternal Father in Heaven. This correlation between the physical and spiritual realms is consistent in all that the Father and the Son have instructed the inhabitants of the earth to do.

29.36 Joseph Smith had begun the inspired translation of the Bible in June of 1831 with what we now have as Moses 1 in the Pearl of Great Price. By October 1830 he had arrived at the end of what we now know as Moses 5. In chapter 4 of Moses the Lord reveals much of the premortal rebellion affected by Satan, including the appeal for lordship over the entire creation of the Father (see MO-C 4:1–4). We do not know how many of those in attendance in the Whitmer home were privy to the contents of that translation, but here they all receive a partial understanding of the events that transpired prior to the creation of the earth.

29.36.7—Adam—In almost every respect, Michael or Adam, was like unto the Son of God, in faithfulness and purity. Hence, the decision to place him at the head of mortal men, a faithful prince placed at the beginning of time. The archangel Michael led the hosts of Heaven against the rebelling minions of Lucifer before the foundations of the earth were laid, and was instrumental in causing Satan to be cast out of the presence of God. This same Michael was foreordained to be the Ancient of Days; that is to say, the first man upon the earth, the oldest of all mortals, even the man Adam.

29.36.18—before—Although we may see in this preposition the locative meaning, that is to say that Lucifer was in the Garden of Eden and was therefore able to tempt Adam and Eve, yet it is clear that we should understand this phrase as having to do with time. That is to say, that Satan existed before Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden.

35 Behold, I gave unto him that he should be an agent unto himself; and I gave unto him commandment, but no temporal commandment gave I unto him, for my commandments are spiritual; they are not natural nor temporal, neither carnal nor sensual.

36 And it came to pass that Adam, being tempted of the devil—for, behold, the devil was before Adam, for he rebelled against me, saying, Give me thine honor, which is my power; and also a third part of the hosts of heaven turned he away from me because of their agency;
29.36.26—Give—Lucifer tried to lay claim upon the throne of God because he proposed a plan that would result in every one of the spirit children of God returning to the Celestial Kingdom after their sojourn upon the earth.

29.36.36—third part—A full third of all of the spirit children of God the eternal Father who were destined to come to this earth from their time of probation, were led away by Lucifer because of the fear that he instilled in their hearts. John the Beloved spoke of these premortal events in his Revelation (see RV-C 12.1–4).

29.36.51—agency—Had God the eternal Father been of the same mind as Lucifer, He would have taken away the agency of His children so that they would not follow the enemy of all mankind. But even in this rudimental state as spirit children, they were free to choose life or death.

29.37 Because of the rebellion of Lucifer and his followers, there was war in Heaven. Michael was the foremost in defending truth and righteousness in that conflict of words. Eventually all those who took the part of Satan were expelled from the premortal councils and found themselves in exile. Since the creation of the earth, they have attempted to usurp the authority of the children of men upon this planet just as they attempted to usurp the power and authority of God in heaven (see RV-C 12.7–9). They have, unfortunately, been somewhat more successful here.

29.38 Hell is both a place and a state of mind. Satan and his followers are continually in a state of misery because of the judgment of God which they have brought upon themselves. They are constantly in a state of agitation and anxiety, fearing the inevitable decree that will banish them forever into outer darkness, an eternal hell. In the meanwhile they suffer as damned spirits. Their suffering is likewise shared by those who have died in their sins and find themselves in a spirit state, imprisoned in the world of spirits. That suffering and that prison are also termed hell.

29.39 So long as Adam and Eve remained unscathed in the Garden of Eden, they were innocent, knowing neither good nor evil. All they experienced in the Garden was joy, beauty, and life everlasting. They had no comparison by which they could evaluate their circumstances. Once they began to experience the effects associated with their transgression, they learned for themselves that their time in the Garden was a blessed one. They realized this because their experience in the Terrestrial world was not. Where once they enjoyed a place of moderate weather, they were now tormented by the seasons of the year. Where once they partook of fruits that came forth spontaneously at every hand, they now had to labor incessantly in order to provide for themselves. Where once they enjoyed perfect health in every hour, they were subjected to the various maladies, diseases, and afflictions that torment mortal men in a lost and fallen world. They had once succumbed to the temptations of Satan and in part had learned something of his wickedness in comparison with the goodness and righteousness of their God. They would learn more of Lucifer’s malignancy as they watched the majority of their posterity succumb to his wiles.

29.40 We need not rehearse completely the events that led to the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Suffice it to say that they did partake of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. As a result they and the entire physical creation of the earth were transformed. Where they had once been in a Terrestrial paradisiacal state, they were now in a fallen Terrestrial state.

37 And they were thrust down, and thus came the devil and his angels:

38 And, behold, there is a place prepared for them from the beginning, which place is hell.

39 And it must needs be that the devil should tempt the children of men, or they could not be agents unto themselves; for if they never should have bitter they could not know the sweet—

40 Wherefore, it came to pass that the devil tempted Adam, and he partook of the forbidden fruit and transgressed the commandment, wherein he became subject to the
Satan had gained an ascendancy over Adam in part because of the natural effects of sin, primarily that of guilt. Having broken the law of God, Adam and Eve had come to know the principle of fear. Lucifer had no hesitancy in using that fear to his advantage. In the midst of Adam’s afflictions in the Celestial world, Satan insinuated himself, blaspheming the name of God at every opportunity, mocking and deriding every good thing that our first parents attempted to do. It was a distressing time, particularly as their children refused to hearken to their teachings.

29.40.10—Adam—In almost every respect, Michael or Adam, was like unto the Son of God, in faithfulness and purity. Hence, the decision to place him at the head of mortal men, a faithful prince placed at the beginning of time. The archangel Michael led the hosts of Heaven against the rebelling minions of Lucifer before the foundations of the earth were laid, and was instrumental in causing Satan to be cast out of the presence of God. This same Michael was foreordained to be the Ancient of Days; that is to say, the first man upon the earth, the oldest of all mortals, even the man Adam.

29.41 The Lord had testified to Adam and Eve in the beginning that if they were to partake of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil they would die. The Lord specified that they would die in the very day that they did do. From a temporal point of view they did not die that very day. Adam living more than nine hundred years in the fallen Celestial world. From the Lord’s point of view, however, the physical death of Adam took place within the Lord’s timeframe, inasmuch as a day to the Lord is as a thousand years to the children of men upon this planet. In some eyes this seems to stretch the point a little; no doubt Satan used this difference between the Lord’s and Adam’s telling of time to his advantage as he persistently insisted that he had been telling the truth all along; that is, that Adam and Eve did not die as a result of partaking of the fruit. The point of this entire presentation, however, was to teach the saints in Fayette, New York, that while the Lord’s commandments have physical aspects to them, the heart of the matter is spiritual. Thus, when Adam and Eve first partook of the forbidden fruit they immediately began to feel the pangs of spiritual death, the fear of having been caught disregarding the word of God. When they were subsequently driven out of the Garden, cherubim and a flaming sword were placed at the entrance to keep the pair from returning to their first residence. They were, therefore, banished from the presence of God, a circumstance that would become exacerbated as the earth was physically removed from the place where it had been created. The spiritual death of Adam and Eve was immediate; they sensed it as it happened.

29.41.17—Eden—The Missouri River and its tributaries drain a vast area, no less than eight of the United States and portions of two Provinces of Canada. From this we might conclude, with no further evidence, that Eden comprised most of the territory east of the present day Rocky Mountains. The Garden of Eden which was located eastward in that land, corresponds geographically to that which we currently refer to as Jackson County, Missouri.

29.41.33–34—first death—The separation from God constituted the first death experienced by Adam and Eve. It is the same as the last death; that is, the death that Lucifer and his followers experience as they are thrust out into outer darkness, their eternal hell.

29.42 Much of the foregoing and a great deal of that which follows in these verses are found within the teachings of the Book of Mormon to one degree or will of the devil, because he yielded unto temptation.

41 Therefore, I, the Lord God, caused that he should be cast out from the Garden of Eden, from my presence, because of his transgression, wherein he became spiritually dead, which is the first death, even that same death which is the last death, which is spiritual, which shall be pronounced upon the wicked when I shall say: Depart, ye cursed.

42 But, behold, I say unto you that I, the Lord God, gave unto D&C 29:41

AGQ 5 108
DHC 5 (39)
DNTC 2 122
DS 2 12, 131
GD 451
MD 175
EM 2:485
EM 3:1407
D&C 29:41–42
DNTC 2 247
DS 1 26
EM 1:217
D&C 29:41–43
DS 1 112
D&C 29:41–44
AGQ 1 77
AGQ 5 104
DS 2 326
GD 15
D&C 29:41–46
MD 130

D&C 29:42
DHC 5 (38)
another. Lehi clearly taught that the mortal days of Adam and his posterity were prolonged that they might repent while in the flesh (see 2 Ne 2:27). In other words, they were given an opportunity to overcome as much of the spiritual death as they could before the physical death overcame them. Adam, for one, was obedient to the commandment to offer up the firstlings of the flock even though he did not initially understand its purpose. The Lord then sent His angel to explain the connection between the sacrifice of animals and the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father (see MO-5:4–9). Other angels were sent among the posterity of Adam and Eve to aid them in their attempt to relieve the effects of the spiritual death (see MO-5:58–59). By this time the Whittmers would have had much of these teachings before them in the Book of Mormon and in the translation of the Bible being revealed through the prophet Joseph Smith.

29.42.14—Adam—In almost every respect, Michael or Adam, was like unto the Son of God, in faithfulness and purity. Hence, the decision to place him at the head of mortal men, a faithful prince placed at the beginning of time. The archangel Michael led the hosts of Heaven against the rebelling minions of Lucifer before the foundations of the earth were laid, and was instrumental in causing Satan to be cast out of the presence of God. This same Michael was foreordained to be the Ancient of Days; that is to say, the first man upon the earth, the oldest of all mortals, even the man Adam.

29.43 Had the way toward the Garden of Eden not been guarded by the cherubim and the flaming sword, Adam and Eve at some point would have been sorely tempted to partake of the fruit of the Tree of Life. In this act they would have destroyed any hope that they might have had to overcome the spiritual death to which they had become subject. In addition, they would have halted any possibility to inherit anything greater than a lost and fallen Celestial world as their inheritance in eternity, for they would have immutably fixed their condition forever by partaking of the Tree of Life. Thus, men would have a set time given to them during mortality, during which they would do all that they could to overcome the natural man and partake of the divine nature. At the end of that probationary time, their bodies would waste away and perish as the spirit left its tabernacle of clay and departed into the world of spirits. In the paradise of God, the righteous would continue to learn and grow in wisdom and understand. In the spirit prison, the wicked would feel the full weight and measure of having squandered their mortality on frivolous and meaningless conduct. The promise of the Father was that there would come a day, in His economy, that the spirits of the dead would be rejoined to their resurrected bodies of flesh and bone. The righteous would receive kingdoms of glory. The wicked would not fare as well.

29.44 The most compelling of all the commandments of God, and certainly the most general, is to repent from all sin. No man or woman can enter into the presence of God and His angels burdened with the weight of sin. The separation of Adam and Eve from the Father and the Son was as much for their protection as it was their punishment. Those who refuse to be redeemed from sin will suffer the consequences of that decision for all of eternity.

29.45 We may not articulate completely the causes for the apostasy of the children of God. The truth of the matter is that all of the spirit children of our Father in Heaven came into existence the same way. They are all beings derived from truth and light. The sons and daughters of God prosper when

Adam and unto his seed, that they should not die as to the temporal death, until I, the Lord God, should send forth angels to declare unto them repentance and redemption, through faith on the name of mine Only Begotten Son.

43 And thus did I, the Lord God, appoint unto man the days of his probation—that by his natural death he might be raised in immortality unto eternal life, even as many as would believe;

44 And they that believe not unto eternal damnation; for they cannot be redeemed from their spiritual fall, because they repent not;

45 For they love darkness rather than light, and their deeds are evil, and they receive their wages of whom they list to obey.

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they are directly associated with truth; they dwindle when they come in contact with darkness. Why would a divine creature choose to depart from light and truth? We cannot know precisely, except to say that it is a matter of choice, perhaps seemingly insignificant choices made in the depths of the eternal past. Because they continue to choose poorly, however, they cannot experience anything but greater sorrow and isolation from their eternal family. It is clear that many of these have simply given up rather than retrace their steps. Despair, fear, mounting anger and frustration dog them continually until they pass beyond the pale of redemption. They then become the enemies of all mankind.

29.46 Little children who have not reached the age of accountability are redeemed in a different fashion than those who can discern between good and evil. The teachings given here are quite similar to those provided by Moroni when he included one of his father’s letters in the narrative of the Book of Mormon (see MR-C 8.1–26). If a child dies before the age of accountability, he or she is considered as being without sin, being incapable of making a conscious decision to rebel against that which is good or to embrace that which is evil. Passing out of this life, such innocence might have been corrupted by Lucifer and his cohorts in the world of spirits over time, but those spirit children are protected by the direct intervention of the Lord Jesus Christ.

29.47 Adam had incurred the punishment of God because he and Eve had partaken of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. They suffered a separation from God the Father and were compelled to leave the Garden of Eden to dwell in the lone and dreary world, subject to the temptations of Lucifer and his minions. The Lord placed an enmity between Satan and the little children of Adam and Eve, that the devil would have no influence of any kind over them until they reached the age of accountability, and only then when they consciously rebelled against the principles of truth and righteousness. Thus, the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve could not be coerced into wickedness, notwithstanding the transgression of their parents. That has remained true ever since. Little children hardly know their right hand from their left. How much have they learned about good and evil? How can they be held to a standard that they cannot comprehend? The Lord has revealed that for most children, awareness of good and evil and the ability to consciously choose one over the other do not occur until they are at least eight years of age. Until that time, the mercy and grace of Christ’s atoning sacrifice protects and preserves them against the demands of the law of God and against the temptations of Satan.

29.48 The purity and innocence of little children were to be the benchmarks for the parents, and not the reverse. The primary task of parents is to do all that they can to prepare their children for accountability that they might vigorously put aside the temptations of the flesh, putting off the natural man that would be revealed to them as they became aware of good and evil in this lost and fallen world. The parents were to oversee the spiritual rebirth of their children.

29.48.2—it—The antecedent for this pronoun is undoubtedly the redemption of Christ mentioned above in verse 46.

29.49 The commandment from the very beginning of time has been that the children of men should repent and attend to the ordinances of salvation. It is the desire of the Father than His children overcome the effects of spiritual death and enter back into His presence free from all guilt and stain associated with…
with the world. Therefore, He sent His only begotten Son into the world to provide the means by which both the physical death and the spiritual death might be overcome by the power of the resurrection and the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, all men might have immortality and eternal life.

29.50 The civil laws of men allow for no ignorance of those laws. A citizen of any given land is expected to comprehend the principles upon which his citizenship is based. Ignorance of the law does not and cannot mitigate infractions of the law. Thus, no man can excuse himself for his civil disobedience in this fashion. God the Father, however, judges His children according to the light and knowledge which they possess. The greater the understanding, the greater the expectation. An infant is in no position to consciously obey or disobey and therefore cannot be condemned. Before any man or woman can receive the ordinance of baptism, he or she must needs express faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is most clearly manifested in the act of repentance. Repentance is only possible when one realizes that his or her life is in disarray. The realization is only possible to those who have been taught the principles of righteousness. Baptism without knowledge, faith, and repentance is meaningless. Mormon clearly taught in his epistle to Moroni that all those who are without the law cannot be condemned by the law. Once a man is taught the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, however, he must needs submit to the will of God if he is to find redemption (see MR-C 8.22).

29.50.29—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 30

30.0.1 The second general conference of the Church of Jesus Christ was held for three days beginning on 26 September 1830 in Fayette, New York. During the conference the events surrounding the revelations that Hiram Page had received by means of his “peep stone” were thoroughly investigated. Eventually Hiram, together with the whole body of the Church present, condemned the stone and the writings. Both were destroyed. One of the subjects of the erstwhile revelations was the location of the city of Zion. Just prior to the beginning of the conference the Lord revealed to Oliver Cowdery that it would be his task to be the first saint to preach the fulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the posterity of Lehi (see 28.8). It was also made clear that he would be an instrument in the hands of the Lord to point out, by the spirit of revelation, the place where the great Temple was to be built near the borders of the Lamanites (see 28.9–10). Near the end of the conference, apparently at the behest of the three Whitmer brothers, this revelation was given through the prophet Joseph Smith.

30.0.2 When this Section of the Doctrine and Covenants was received, the text addressed to each of the Whitmers was considered a separate commandment. They are inscribed as such in the earliest holographs available. In the first edition of the Book of Commandments, they were printed as three separate Chapters, XXXI, XXXII, and XXXIII. Beginning with the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants in 1835, the three short pieces were combined into one Section, number 52, and has continued to be combined to the present day.
30.1 We may only speculate about the involvement of David Whitmer in the events that led to the disaffection of the saints in Fayette, New York, at the time Hiram Page was receiving revelations by means of his “peep stone.” It would seem reasonable to assume, however, that David’s acceptance of Hiram’s revelations was far too swift and complete for a man who should have been filled with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost.

30.1.6—David—in reference to David Whitmer. David Whitmer was the fourth child of Peter and Mary Whitmer, born 7 January 1805. David and his brothers, John and Peter, were baptized for the remission of sin during the summer of 1829. It is clear that David also was blessed with the power and authority of God, the Melchizedek priesthood about that same time. David would serve as one of the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon and was one of the six men who formed the nucleus of the Church of Jesus Christ on 6 April 1830. He and the other two witnesses, Oliver Cowdery and Martin Harris, would be commissioned to select the first members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in this dispensation. During a time of heavy persecution, David became disaffected from the Church, he and his family eventually settling in Richmond, Missouri. His brother-in-law and longtime friend, Oliver Cowdery came to visit him in 1850, as he prepared to make his journey west to be with the main body of the saints in the Salt Lake Valley. He apparently encouraged David to do the same. Oliver, however, died in David Whitmer’s home on 3 March 1850. David remained in Richmond, Missouri, until own death on 25 January 1888.

30.2 David Whitmer had been involved with the prophet Joseph Smith for almost the same length of time as Oliver Cowdery and had been an early participant in all of the blessings of the Lord as they had been revealed, including the ordinances and powers of the priesthood. David was a bearer of the Melchizedek priesthood and an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. With Martin Harris and Oliver Cowdery, he had been selected to serve as one of the Three Witnesses of the Book of Mormon, having visited with the angel Moroni and having heard the voice of God testify as to the truthfulness of the translation made by the prophet Joseph Smith. He had been called to serve as one of the first six members of the Church of Jesus Christ when it was formally established in 6 April 1830. David should have known better, spiritually, the source of Hiram Page’s revelations. It seems quite clear that David Whitmer had been given indications that all was not right with the “peep stone” but for some reason had ignored those promptings. He had resisted the counsel of the prophet Joseph Smith at some point as well, preferring the writings of his brother-in-law.

30.2.23—ministry—See 14.3–11.

3.3 David’s recalcitrance had earned for him a rather stern rebuke from the Lord and a period of time during which he could reflect upon the choices that he had made that had produced his disaffection from the prophet and from the Spirit of the Lord. In many respects, this course of action by the Lord is quite similar to that which followed Joseph Smith’s excessive trusting in the promises of Martin Harris (see 3.3–8). David Whitmer no doubt knew of the episode and yet did not seem to learn the fundamental principles associated with it.

30.4 Oliver Cowdery and Peter Whitmer, Junior, would leave shortly after the general conference for the western regions of the United States in order to carry the Book of Mormon and the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to

1 BEHOLD, I say unto you, David, that you have feared man and have not relied on me for strength as you ought.

2 But your mind has been on the things of the earth more than on the things of me, your Maker, and the ministry whereunto you have been called; and you have not given heed unto my Spirit, and to those who were set over you, but have been persuaded by those whom I have not commanded.

3 Wherefore, you are left to inquire for yourself at my hand, and ponder upon the things which you have received.

4 And your home shall be at your father’s house, until I give unto you further commandments. And you
the inhabitants thereof. We do not know if David had desired to go with
them, but it seems likely, given his role as one of the Three Witnesses. John
Whitmer was called on a mission to serve throughout Seneca County (see
30.10). The general conference appointed David Whitmer to serve as Church
Historian while Oliver was actively engaged in proselyting.

30.5 Peter Whitmer, Junior, was the sixth child of Peter and Mary Whitmer,
born 27 September 1809. With his brothers David and John, he was baptized
for the remission of sins in June 1829. As the publishing of the Book of Mor-
mon commenced, Peter was selected to serve as one of the Eight Witnesses,
men who personally handled the plates from which the translation of the Book
of Mormon was made. Peter Whitmer never deviated from his testimony.
Peter Whitmer was among the first six men to form the Church of Jesus
Christ when it was organized on 6 April 1830. In 1831 he supported
the saints in the attempt to establish Zion in Jackson County, Missouri. He settled
for a time near Liberty, Missouri, north of the Missouri River. He died there
of tuberculosis on 22 September 1836, faithful and true to his covenants.
Peter Whitmer had been told in an earlier revelation that the thing that would
be of the greatest worth unto him was to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In
this calling he is given the desire of his heart.

30.5.6—Peter—In reference to Peter Whitmer, Jun., the fifth child and
fourth son of Peter and Mary Whitmer, born 27 September 1809 in
Fayette, New York. He served as one of the Eight Witness to the Book of Mor-
mon. With Oliver Cowdery and other, Peter travelled from
New York to the Unorganized Indian Territories to preach the restored
Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Native Americans located there. He mar-
rried Vashti Higley on 14 October 1832 in Jackson county, Missouri,
and later lived in Far West. He suffered great persecution at the hands
of the enemies of the Church and as a result of exposure contracted
tuberculosis, dying of that disease on 22 September 1836 in Liberty,
Missouri.

30.5.12—journey—On 15 October 1930, Oliver and Peter, in the com-
pany of Parley P. Pratt and Ziba Peterson, left Fayette, New York, on
their mission to the Lamanites. They travelled the fifteen hundred miles
from Fayette to Independence, Missouri, during which they were the
means of bringing salvation to hundreds of the honest in heart. As the
date brethren had passed through Kirtland, Ohio, one of their converts,
Frederick G. Williams, asked if he might join their mission to the west.
His desire was granted. The mission eventually arrived in Independence
on 13 January 1831 where Peter Whitmer and Ziba Peterson found
temporary employment to provide for the missionaries’ temporal needs.
The other three brethren went into the Unorganized Indian Territory
and taught both the Shawnees and the Delawares before being told by
the military that they could not continue. On 14 February 1831, theive missionaries held a conference during which Parley P. Pratt was
selected to return to Fayette, New York to report the results of their
mission thus far. He left for home the next day. The other missionaries
remained in Missouri until the arrival of Joseph Smith in the middle of
July 1831. So far as we can tell, Peter Whitmer remained in Missouri
for the rest of his life. He married Vashti Higley on 14 October 1832,
became the father of two children there. Helped settle Far West,
Missouri, and later died in Liberty, Missouri.

30.5.16—Oliver—In reference to Oliver Cowdery. As the Assistant Presi-
don of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibil-
ity of preparing the various revelations that had been received through

shall attend to the ministry in the
chuch, and before the world, and
in the regions round about. Amen.

5 Behold, I say unto you, Peter,
that you shall take your journey
with your brother Oliver; for the
time has come that it is expedient
in me that you shall open your
mouth to declare my gospel; there-
fore, fear not, but give heed unto
the words and advice of your
brother, which he shall give you.
the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

30.6 Peter Whitmer was a faithful companion to Oliver Cowdery, doing all things within his power to aid and support the president of the mission as they travelled from place to place. Not only did he endure the trials and tribulations during the journey to Missouri, a goodly portion of which took place during the winter months of 1830 and 1831, he also suffered at the hands of the mobs in Jackson County and other communities of the saints during the great persecutions that persisted in the state of Missouri.

30.6.39—Lamanites—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

30.7 Oliver Cowdery was indeed the second elder of the Church, but there had been some misunderstanding of his role in the presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ. It was at the Whitmer home that Oliver presumed to write to the prophet Joseph Smith regarding the wording of a portion of what is now known as Section 20 of the Doctrine and Covenants. This part of the revelation to Peter Whitmer was a gentle reminder that while Oliver would preside during the mission, yet Joseph Smith was the president and prophet of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth.

30.7.23–25—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

30.8 From all that we can tell from the records that remain, Peter Whitmer was faithful and true in all of his dealings with his fellow men and with his God. We have no reason to doubt that he has received the promise of eternal life as was foreshadowed in this revelation.

30.8.2—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

30.9 Like his brother Peter, John Whitmer had sought the counsel of the Lord through the prophet Joseph Smith regarding that which would be of most worth for him to do while he was in mortality. The answer to John’s petition was almost exactly the same as that of his brother. Preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ would be the activity that would bring him the most joy (see 15.6).

30.9.8—John—John Whitmer, like his brothers David and Peter, was an early adherent to the teachings of the prophet Joseph Smith. He was baptized by Oliver Cowdery in June 1829 for the remission of sins, nearly a year before the Church of Jesus Christ was formally organized. He was called upon to serve as one of the Eight Witnesses of the Book of Mormon, a witness that he never recanted notwithstanding his disaffection from the Church in March 1838. He served as the prophet Joseph Smith’s scribe on numerous occasions, especially when Oliver Cowdery was not available. He was appointed Church Historian and served in that capacity for many years. John joined the burgeoning

6 And he ye afflicted in all his afflictions, ever lifting up your heart unto me in prayer and faith, for his and your deliverance; for I have givenu unto him power to build up my church among the Lamanites.

7 And none have I appointed to be his counselor over him in the church, concerning church matters, except it is his brother, Joseph Smith, Jun.

8 Wherefore, give heed unto these things and be diligent in keeping my commandments, and you shall be blessed unto eternal life. Amen.

9 Behold, I say unto you, my servant John, that thou shalt commence from this time forth to proclaim my gospel, as with the voice of a trump.
saints in Jackson County, Missouri in 1831 and suffered through the persecutions that took place as the saints and Missourians came into conflict one with the other. He helped facilitate the purchase of lands north of the Missouri River as a place of refuge for the beleaguered Latter-day Saints from Jackson County in both Clay and Caldwell Counties. He served in the Stake Presidency in Missouri with his brother David, but was eventually excommunicated for “unchristianlike conduct” by the High Council on 10 March 1838. He remained antagonistic to the leadership of the Church and would not deliver up the records that he had preserved and generated as Church Historian. He eventually died in Far West, Missouri on 11 July 1878.

30.10 Unlike his brother Peter, John Whitmer was not required to go very far afield from his family home. Yet his labors were extensive enough that the general conference determined to have David Whitmer serve as the Church Historian until John’s mission was fulfilled.

30.10.9–10—Philip Burroughs—Philip was a wealthy man who lived in Seneca County, New York, not far from the home of Peter Whitmer, Senior. We do not know the exact date when Philip Burroughs was baptized but it seems clear that he was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ from the earliest days. It appears that he had some difficulty departing from New York when the Church moved farther west to Kirtland, Ohio, and then to Missouri.

30.11 John Whitmer arrived in Jackson County, Missouri, in the latter half of 1831. He took an active role in the settling of the saints in the little communities that were founded there. He was called to serve as one of the seven high priests selected to preside over the saints in that part of the Lord’s vineyard.

30.11.8—Zion—The establishment of Zion had been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. In this dispensation, one of the major meanings of the term “Zion” was in reference to the city that would be built upon this continent that would serve as one of the capitals of the Kingdom of God on the earth. Oliver Cowdery pointed out the site for this city and the Lord latter confirmed the selection. John Whitmer was an active participant in all that transpired among the saints in Missouri from 1831 to 1838.

30.11.36—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

31.0 Thomas B. Marsh came in contact with the restoration of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ during a journey that he had been inspired to take from Boston, Massachusetts, into western New York. While visiting Lyonstown, New York, he heard of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and was directed to inquire for more information in Palmyra where the book was being published. In the printing house of E.B. Grandin, Thomas met with Martin Harris who gave him a proof copy of the first sixteen pages of the Book of Mormon. This was in the early fall of 1829. Upon returning to Boston, Thomas showed the pages to his wife, and shortly thereafter they began a year-long correspondence with Oliver Cowdery and Joseph Smith. When the Church of Jesus Christ was formally organized on 6 April 1830, Thomas and Elizabeth Marsh determined to join the saints in New York. They did so in

10 And your labor shall be at your brother Philip Burroughs’, and in that region round about, yea, wherever you can be heard, until I command you to go from hence.

11 And your whole labor shall be in Zion, with all your soul, from henceforth; yea, you shall ever open your mouth in my cause, not fearing what man can do, for I am with you. Amen.

Section 31

Date: September 1830
To: Thomas B. Marsh

D&C 30:11
MD 854
EM 3:1392

D&C 31
DHC 1 116
FWR 31
EM 1:408
EM 2:505

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September 1830 where he was baptized by David Whitmer on the third day of that month. A few days later he was ordained an elder by Oliver Cowdery. In 1831, Thomas Marsh and his family moved with the Church to Kirtland, Ohio. After years of faithful service as a successful missionary, Thomas was called to serve as a member of the first Quorum of Twelve Apostles in this dispensation, and shortly thereafter as the President of that Quorum. In 1838, Thomas B. Marsh found himself at odds with Joseph Smith and others. As a result of making accusations against the Church in Missouri, he was excommunicated, spending the next twenty years as hardly more than a vagabond. In 1857, Thomas made his way from Missouri to Utah due to a series of miracles in his behalf. He spoke of his many afflictions and his desire to be forgiven. A proposal was made that Thomas B. Marsh be received in full fellowship through baptism and confirmation which was unanimously approved. He died in Ogden, Utah, in January 1866. This section appeared as Chapter XXXIV in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 53 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

31.1 In the fall of 1829, Thomas B. Marsh received a large printed page of the containing the first sixteen pages of the Book of Mormon from Martin Harris. He carried this home with him to Boston, Massachusetts, where he and his wife Elizabeth poured over the account of Lehi family which comprises the first six and half chapters of the present edition of the book of I Nephi. They were touched by what they read, the spirit bearing testimony to them that the work was true. They wished to join themselves with the Kingdom of God and when the Church of Christ was formally organized they disposed of their business holding and their home in order to move their family to Palmyra, New York. They accepted baptism and the other ordinances required of the faithful disciples of Christ. At that time, Thomas and Elizabeth Marsh were willing to do anything that the Lord required of them through His servants.

31.1.1—Thomas—In reference to Thomas B. Marsh. In 1829 Thomas was given to understand that a young man in western New York had been visited by an angel, the result of which was the translation of a set of gold plates. Thomas Marsh then traveled to Palmyra where he met both Martin Harris and Oliver Cowdery. He obtained a printer’s proof of the first sixteen pages of the Book of Mormon. This he shared with his wife and finding that they both felt that the book was inspired of heaven, they moved to Palmyra in September 1830 where he was baptized by David Whitmer. In the spring Thomas and his family moved with the saints to Kirtland, Ohio, at the command of the Lord. There he was ordained a high priest. After having demonstrated his willingness to live by the word of the Lord, Thomas B. Marsh was called to serve in the first Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on 25 April 1835. He served as the President of that Quorum until he fell into apostasy over a trivial matter. He was excommunicated 17 March 1839. He later returned to the Church of Jesus Christ in July of 1857. He died in Ogden, Utah, in January 1866.

31.2 The eldest son of Thomas and Elizabeth Marsh, Edward B. Marsh, was nine years old at the time that the family traveled from Massachusetts to western New York. Thomas may have hoped that all of his family members who had reached the age of accountability would be received into the Church. Although we cannot speak with certainty as to whether all of the Marsh children accepted the fullness of the Gospel during their lifetimes, it is certain that all of the ordinances have been performed in their behalf if they did not. We may suppose that Thomas suffered somewhat from the loss of his mother

1 THOMAS, my son, blessed are you because of your faith in my work.

2 Behold, you have had many afflictions because of your family; nevertheless, I will bless you and your family, yea, your little ones; and the day cometh that they will believe and know the truth and be one with you in my church.

D&C 31:2–3, 5–6
CR01-A 33
while still a child, and perhaps felt some guilt because of his having run away from home at a tender age. By the time that this revelation was received, both of Thomas’ parents were dead and he was somewhat estranged from his siblings.

31.2.10—family.—We may not know exactly the circumstances that caused the Lord to make this observation about Thomas Marsh. It is a matter of historical record that Thomas ran away from home when he was fourteen years of age, his mother having died when he was nine. We have no idea as to the nature of his relationship with his brothers and sisters, all of whom were older than he. His relationship with his wife Elizabeth Godkin appears to have been positive during the early years of their marriage, and certainly at the time they came in contact with the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. At least one small child born to the couple had died shortly after birth, but there may have been others. When they joined the Church, their sons Edward Barton and James G. were ages nine and seven respectively. We do not know exactly how the relationship between the parents and the children were at that time, but it seems likely that they were young enough not to be particularly rebellious. Neither do we know what if any opposition that the Marshes may have received from the Godkin side of the family.

31.3 Thomas B. Marsh had been ordained an elder only a few days after he had been baptized into the Church. He was, therefore, anxious to be about his ministry. Thomas Marsh would be the means of bringing many saints into the Kingdom of God throughout the United States and Canada.

31.3.9—hour.—The time table of the Lord differs somewhat from what we might expect. The present revelation was received in September 1830; the revelation that would call Thomas B. Marsh on his first mission to Missouri would take place on 7 June 1831 in Kirtland, Ohio. During the intervening months Thomas spent his time first settling his family for a while in Fayette, New York, and then moving with the body of the Church to Kirtland, Ohio. His first missionary companion was to be Ezra Thayre (see 52.22). Ezra was not prepared, neither temporally or spiritually, to leave immediately as was Thomas, so another companion was appointed him, Selah J. Griffin (see 56.3–8).

3. Lift up your heart and rejoice, for the hour of your mission is come; and your tongue shall be loosed, and you shall declare glad tidings of great joy unto this generation.

31.4 The curriculum to be used while preaching the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ was to be the Book of Mormon and the other revelations that had been received through the instrumentality of the living prophet. So today, the established Standard Works of the Church of Jesus Christ, together with the words of the living prophets, seers, and revelators of God are at the very heart of all that which should be taught to the prospective citizens of the Kingdom of God.

31.4.13–15—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

31.4.27—reap.—A familiar metaphor in the scriptures referring to the gathering of the House of Israel into the garner of the Lord through the preaching of the Gospel of Christ.

31.4.33—white.—That is to say, the field of grain is not green, but the heads of the field are completely ripened ready to be bundled into sheaves by the harvesters.

31.4.37—burned.—After the harvest is complete, the remaining stubble
and dried roots in the ground of the field are burned in order to prepare for another planting.

31.5 In his missionary labors, Thomas Marsh could look forward to the blessings of the Lord that would be poured out upon him. First, he would be forgiven of his sins. Second, he would have everlasting joy with those to whom he would teach the fullness of the Gospel. Finally, he would find his family restored to him at the last day. We have no reason to expect any less for him than these articulated blessings, notwithstanding his subsequent follies.

31.5.5—sickle—A hook-shaped instrument with teeth used in the harvesting of grain by hand.
31.5.22—sheaves—The bundles of grain stalks and heads that the harvester gather as he works his way through a ripened field. These symbolize, of course, the souls that the missionary has gathered out from the world.
31.5.33—hire—We may speak of the profound gratitude and mutual love that will exist eternally between the missionary and those whom he successfully teaches.
31.5.36—family—Because of his labors for and in behalf of the children of God, the Lord would preserve and protect Thomas’ own family against the evil day.

31.6 This is a blessing that many of the missionaries have received as they have forsaken all and have gone into the mission field to seek out the honest in heart. Their families have been nurtured and watched over in a manner far superior to anything that might have been done by the missionary himself.

31.7 Thomas Marsh would see the fruits of his labors. Many would hearken to his words of counsel, his testimony of the truth, and his eloquent messages regarding the prospects of eternity for those who would humble themselves in faith and repentance, calling upon the atoning blood of Jesus Christ for salvation and exaltation.

31.7.20—church—It would be difficult to point to a specific location where Thomas B. Marsh was the primary contributor to the establishment of a Branch of the Church. Yet his far-reaching labors as a missionary and his service as an Apostle aided in building up the Kingdom of God upon the earth almost from the very beginnings thereof. The church that he had a hand in establishing, then, would be The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

31.8 Thomas would have an active role in bring the saints of the Most High first to Fayette, New York, then to Kirtland, Ohio, and then to Jackson County, Missouri. When the troubles began in Missouri, which brought about the expulsion of the saints from their communities in Jackson County, Thomas was instrumental in helping the saints reestablish themselves in Clay county, north of the Missouri River, and eventually in Caldwell County at Far West. To this end, he traveled throughout Tennessee and Kentucky raising funds to buy property and supplies for the disciples of Jesus Christ.

31.9 Thomas B. Marsh’s role as a mediator was put to the test when he was selected to represent the saints before the officials of Clay County, Missouri. He was as patient and kind as might be hoped for on both sides. Yet, there came a time in the midst of troubles when a simple matter escaped him and essentially destroyed his effectiveness as a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

31.9.5—revile—In his dealings with the world outside the Church of Jesus Christ, Thomas was patient. Sometimes he felt other emotions as he...
31.10 In representing the membership of the Church to the inhabitants of Clay County, Missouri, Thomas Marsh was not particularly compelling. In terms of the disagreement between his wife and Sister Harris, there could have been a great dealing of healing encouraged, but that was not forthcoming at that time. Before his apostasy, however, Thomas B. Marsh was a sterling example of how a priesthood leader could bless and strengthen those around him.

31.11 So long as Thomas B. Marsh cultivated the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost, he was an effective disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ and an effective leader of the Latter-day Saints. Once he offended the spirit and it withdrew from him, he was left unto himself, spiritually and temporally. In the midst of his afflictions, he sought the counsel of the Lord in the printing house in Far West, Missouri. There he received and wrote down a three to five page revelation regarding his circumstances. He subsequently read the whole of it to Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, his fellows in the Quorum of the Twelve. In the revelation, the Lord told Thomas to support and sustain the prophet Joseph Smith. He refused to do so and as a result lost the spirit of the Lord and fell into apostasy.

31.12 Sincere prayers bring about revelation. As a beneficiary of revelation, the promptings of the Spirit of God, a man can be led through the most difficult of times. He can know who is possessed of the truth. He knows whether to turn to the left or the right, or push straight forward. Without the Holy Ghost, a man is adrift on the open sea with neither sail nor rudder.

31.13 How could a man ever fail to merit exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom if he enjoys the company and confidence of the Father and the Son? Such a man, receiving counsel at the hands of those who love and sustain him cannot fail. Thomas B. Marsh was an heir to the glory of God, entrusted with the holy priesthood of the Son of God, and called to serve as a minister of salvation to the world. Thomas rejected the counsel that he had received from his Father and for nearly twenty years found himself experiencing sorrow and isolation from that which was good and holy. Only in his return to the company of the saints did he find peace.

31.13.25—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the

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10 Behold, I say unto you that you shall be a physician unto the church, but not unto the world, for they will not receive you. D&C 31:10 CR00-O 53

11 Go your way whithersoever I will, and it shall be given you by the Comforter what you shall do and whither you shall go. D&C 31:11 MD 149 D&C 31:11–13 CR01-A 53

12 Pray always, lest you enter into temptation and lose your reward. D&C 31:12 EM 3:1118

13 Be faithful unto the end, and lo, I am with you. These words are not of man nor of men, but of me, even Jesus Christ, your Redeemer, by the will of the Father. Amen. D&C 31:13 MA 56 D&C 31:15 CR97-A 100

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body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

31.13.35—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

32.0 At the time when Hiram Page was receiving revelations by means of a “peep stone” that he had in his possession, Oliver Cowdery was appointed by the Lord to take his brother aside and help him and the other members of the Whitmer family to know that these things were not of God. One of the topics of the spurious revelations was the location of the city of Zion. Oliver and the others who had been deceived by the “peep stone” were clearly told that the building up of Zion would be done in His own way. Oliver was informed as to his involvement in the process. He would be instrumental in identifying this sacred spot as part of his mission to take the Book of Mormon and the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Lamanites, particularly those located on the western frontier in the Unorganized Indian Territory (see 28.8–10). All this transpired just prior to the three-day general conference held in Fayette, New York, beginning on 26 September 1830. During the conference, the question was raised as to how many other elders should accompany Oliver Cowdery on his mission. As a partial result of the inquiry, Peter Whitmer was called to be Oliver’s companion (see 30.5–8). A week or so later, Parley P. Pratt and Ziba Peterson were added to the contingent by means of the present revelation. This section did not appear in the Book of Commandments, but was included as Section 54 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

32.1 Parley P. Pratt was a faithful servant of the Lord Jesus Christ who carried the principles of the Gospel throughout the United States, Canada, England, South America, and the Pacific Islands. He was called to serve in the first Quorum of the Twelve Apostle in this dispensation. He would become a prolific religious writer and poet before his martyrdom on 13 May 1857 in Van Buren, Arkansas.

32.1.6–8—Parley P. Pratt—Parley Pratt was born 12 April 1807 in Burlington, New York. His early family life was marked by attendance to a strict moral value system coupled with hard work. As a teenager he found himself attracted to the Baptist church. After his marriage to Thankful Halsey in 1827, he settled in the wilderness west of Cleveland, Ohio. In 1829, Sidney Rigdon and others of the Campbellite faith came into his region of country. Rigdon’s teachings being far more consistent with the Old and New Testaments, Parley accepted membership in that religious community and became one of its ministers. In the late summer of 1830, as he was traveling toward his parents’ residence with his wife, he was impressed to stop in Newark, New York. There he saw and read for the first time, the Book of Mormon. He left Newark immediately for Palmyra and from thence to Manchester where he spent time with Hyrum Smith who answered all of his inquiries. Hyrum took Parley to Fayette, New York, where he met with Oliver Cowdery. About 1 September 1830, Parley P. Pratt was baptized in Seneca Lake by Oliver and immediately ordained an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ. Parley then rejoined his family in Columbia county, New York, where he taught and baptized his brother Orson. Shortly thereafter he returned to Fayette for the conference that com-
menced on the 26th of September 1830. Here he met the prophet Joseph Smith for the first time. He then received his mission call to serve with Oliver, Peter and Ziba Peterson.

32.2 Parley P. Pratt shared his many adventures on this mission in his autobiography, most of which are written in a delightfully humorous style. One of the seminal experiences, however, was his contact with his former mentor, Sidney Rigdon, in Kirtland, Ohio. After being invited into the Rigdon home, Parley extended a copy of the Book of Mormon to his friend, announcing that it was a revelation from God. After two weeks of personal study and prayer, Sidney received his personal testimony that the record was true and accepted baptism. Many of his fellow disciples among the Campbellites followed in his footsteps, shifting the demographic center of the Church to Ohio, rather than New York.

32.2.17–18—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also extensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

32.2.20–22—Peter Whitmer, Jun.—Peter Whitmer, Jun. was the fifth child and fourth son of Peter and Mary Whitmer, born 27 September 1809 in Fayette, New York. He served as one of the Eight Witness to the Book of Mormon. With Oliver Cowdery and other, Peter travelled from New York to the Unorganized Indian Territories to preach the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Native Americans located there. He married Vashie Higley on 14 October 1832 in Jackson county, Missouri, and later lived in Far West. He suffered great persecution at the hands of the enemies of the Church and as a result of exposure contracted tuberculosis, dying of that disease on 22 September 1836 in Liberty, Missouri.

32.2.28—Lamanites—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

32.3 As one reviews the missionary labors of the four men who left Fayette, New York, in the fall of 1830 for the western frontier of the United States, it is clear that the Lord God of Israel was with them every step of the way. They were led to the honest in heart wherever they went, and the Spirit of the Lord descended upon them and upon their audiences as they preached the principles of salvation and exaltation. Attempts were made to incarcerate them. The jealousies of wicked men manifested themselves in diverse manners as they taught the inhabitants of the land through which they passed. All that they had been commanded to do they achieved.

32.3.2–3—Ziba Peterson—Richard Ziba Peterson was baptized on 18 April 1830, along with several members of the Whitmer family, by Oliver Cowdery in Seneca Lake. By June 1830 he had been ordained an elder in the Church of Jesus Christ. Ziba shared the trials and tribulations of his fellow missionaries on their journey toward the western frontier of the state of Missouri. While in Missouri he administered the principles and ordinances of the Gospel to the residents. On 1 August 1831, Joseph Smith received a revelation in Jackson County, Missouri, in which Ziba

2 And that which I have appointed unto him is that he shall go with my servants, Oliver Cowdery and Peter Whitmer, Jun., into the wilderness among the Lamanites.

3 And Ziba Peterson also shall go with them; and I myself will go with them and be in their midst; and I am their advocate with the Father, and nothing shall prevail against them.
32.4 This was a subtle reminder that any work similar to that which had been perpetrated by Hiram Page would be unacceptable. The missionaries were to teach from the scriptures. The Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the revelations received by the prophet Joseph Smith were to constitute their text on any and every occasion. While they were not to profess new revelations of doctrine, yet they were commanded to receive revelation regarding that which they had in their possession. They could expect that they would be inspired to understand that which had already been revealed, so that they could respond to every question that might be raised by those attending to their words. The same is also true today for the servants of the Most High.

32.5 The four missionaries had been given sufficient counsel in order to be successful in the ministry to the Lamanites and the Gentiles with whom they would come in contact.

32.5.7–8—these words—that is to say, the words of the present revelation. 32.5.17—Amen—the harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as "Amen" derives from roots which mean "true". This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

33.0 As the Church grew and various men and women were called to serve in Church capacities, others of the saints were desirous to know how they could best participate in the advancement of the Kingdom of God. The instructions given to these two individuals, for the most part fell on deaf ears. Great promises awaited Ezra Thayer and Northrop Sweet, but they were seldom in tune with the spirit of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, being far more concerned with temporal matters than with spiritual ones. Northrop Sweet became estranged from the Church within a year of having been baptized. Ezra Thayer stumbled along in modest activity until the death of the prophet Joseph Smith at which time he chose to not follow the leadership of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. This section appeared as Chapter XXXV in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 55 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

33.1 We do not have a complete understanding as to the effect of the Gospel of Jesus Christ on the hearts and minds of these two men except that they were both deeply moved by the teaching of the elders of the Church. They both initially wished to serve as the Lord would have them serve and therefore turned to the prophet Joseph Smith for personal revelation on the matter.

33.1.8—Ezra—Ezra Thayer was born in Randolph, Vermont, moving to the Palmyra, New York, region in the 1820s where he built bridges, dams, and mills. We do not know exactly when he first heard of Joseph Smith and the events that transpired to the boy prophet, but it seems unlikely that Ezra was completely ignorant of the accounts of the First

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4 And they shall give heed to that which is written, and pretend to no other revelation; and they shall pray always that I may unfold the same to their understanding.

5 And they shall give heed unto these words and trifle not, and I will bless them. Amen.

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Section 33

Date: October 1830  
Place: Fayette, New York  
To: Ezra Thayer, Northrop Sweet

1 BEHOLD, I say unto you, my servants Ezra and Northrop, open ye your ears and hearken to the voice of the Lord your God, whose word is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow, soul and spirit; and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.
Vision and of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon during that time. Notwithstanding any knowledge he may have gleaned from his acquaintances prior to the organization of the Church, he did not receive baptism until 10 October 1830 after hearing Hyrum Smith discourse on the Book of Mormon. In June 1831, the prophet Joseph received another revelation in which Ezra Thayre was instructed to join Thomas B. Marsh on a mission to Missouri (see 52.22). His hesitancy in preparing himself required Thomas Marsh to request another companion which was granted (see 56.3–8). In 1832, however, Thomas B. Marsh and Ezra Thayre served a mission together in New York. Ezra contracted cholera while travelling with Zion’s camp to Missouri in 1834. He fully recovered from that affliction. His troubles in Missouri were many, suffering periods of distress and turmoil in his personal and ecclesiastical life. He settled in Nauvoo, Illinois, after the saints were driven from Missouri. He was an active participant in Joseph Smith’s campaign for the presidency of the United States. The death of the prophet Joseph Smith in June of 1844 appears to have been too much for what spiritual sensitivity that Ezra possessed. He became affiliated with dissident members of the Church. In 1849 he went to Michigan, formally associating himself with the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ in August 1860. There is some dispute as to when and where Ezra Thayre died.

33.1.10—Northrop—Northrop Sweet became a member of the Church of Jesus Christ in 1830, apparently baptized by Parley P. Pratt prior to his departure with the other missionaries bound for western Missouri. Northrop’s tenure in the Church of Jesus Christ was shortlived, however. In Kirtland, Ohio, Northrop became affiliated with Wycom Clark and others who attempted in 1831 to form “The Pure Church of Christ” in opposition to the Church of Jesus Christ to which they had once belonged. They did not prosper and Northrop Sweet thereafter is unmentioned in the annals of the Church.

33.1.34–35—two-edged sword—The Apostles Paul and John used similar language to describe the effect of the word of God upon the heart and mind of the children of men: “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of body and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discriminator of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (JST, Hebrews 4:12). Nothing in the history of the world, from the greatest cataclysmic events to the secret thoughts in the heart of the lowliest man can be hid from the Lord Jesus Christ or his appointed servants. The fullness Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is based upon personal revelation that was committed to the children of men through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. One cannot have faith unto salvation without personal revelation. No one can know if his repentance from all sin is sufficient without personal revelation. No can know whether the ordinances of salvation and exaltation are effective in his life unless that fact is revealed to him through the instrumentality of personal revelation. Without the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, the Gospel of the Son of God is no better than the Law of Moses. The social Gospel means nothing without divine inspiration and instruction from God the Father to the disciple of Jesus Christ on a daily basis. The spirit of revelation is like unto the two-edged sword. Unfortunately, both Ezra Thayre and Northrop Sweet suffered in the spiritual realms of their lives and did not enjoy the full weight and measure of the Holy Ghost.
33.2 In the earliest holographic version of this revelation, the headnote suggests that Ezra and Northrop were inquiring after their call to the ministry. The Lord is clear that their service to humanity would best be accomplished as they taught by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, for nothing short of that would pierce the hardened hearts of the children of men. No amount of human sophistry or astute argumentation could effectively open the ears and the eyes of the willfully deaf and blind.

33.2.30—crooked—A crooked generation is created as the result of weaknesses in the personal and cultural lives of the children of men in the face of temporal challenges.

33.2.32—perverse—The fundamental meaning of perverse is that of corruption, turning the wrong way, or destroying. It also implies stubbornness, obstinacy, and a willful determination in opposing that which is right.

33.3 Jesus had used this particular metaphor in his explanation to the Apostles as to why he was unwilling to partake of the viands that they had obtained in the nearby Samaritan city of Sychar. The woman whom he had met at the well had returned to the city and had stirred the hearts and minds of the city there so that they were willingly seeking the Lord at the well. Thus, were the inhabitants of Sychar as a mature field of grain ready to be harvested. The disciples were then given the opportunity to bless and benefit a people whom they had not previously taught. In the latter days, angels and divinely inspired circumstances have prepared the way before the servants of the Lord in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time. Tens of thousands of the emissaries of the Lord are harvesting where they did not sow; this is typical of missionary work throughout the world.

33.3.4—field—The imagery is easily understood by those who have engaged in the agricultural arts.

33.3.14–15—eleventh hour—The imagery here is taken from the parable of the Lord Jesus Christ regarding the laborers in the field, some of whom had been hired in the morning, and others later in the day. The last laborers hired came to the field at the eleventh hour or about 5:00 in the afternoon (see MT-C 20.1–16). One would hope that those hired during the last hour would be anxious to prove their worth to their employer.

33.4 It is fascinating how clearly the Lord foreshadows the problems that would confront Ezra Thayre and Northrop Sweet as they made their way in the world. Northrop Sweet should have known better than to follow after a man like Wycam Clark, a man who was obviously willing to practice the arts of priestcraft in order to obtain and authority over other men. Ezra Thayre wandered in darkness after the death of the prophet Joseph Smith because he could not perceive that those who opposed Brigham Young and the Apostles were also engaging in all of the wiles of priestcraft. The motives of the children of men in this lost and fallen world are always suspect and the only way that the truth of the matter may be discerned is through the revelations of the Holy Ghost.

33.4.8—whit—The English word “whit” derives from roots that mean “the smallest part or particle imaginable”. This earth is a lost and fallen world as are all of the inhabitants thereof.

33.4.20—few—This should have been a red flag for these two men that for them their greatest challenges would be from those who claimed membership in the Church of Jesus Christ.

33.4.29—priestcrafts—Priestcraft is to set oneself up before the people as a

2 For verily, verily, I say unto you that ye are called to lift up your voices as with the sound of a trumpet, to declare my gospel unto a crooked and perverse generation.

3 For behold, the field is white already to harvest; and it is the eleventh hour, and the last time that I shall call laborers into my vineyard.

4 And my vineyard has become corrupted every whit; and there is none which doeth good save it be a few; and they err in many instances because of priestcrafts, all having corrupt minds.
light instead of Christ, and to create divisions among the people of God in order to benefit oneself (see 2 NE 28:28–30).

33.5 In March of 1829, the Lord used similar language as the prophet Joseph received a revelation for and in behalf of Martin Harris (see 5:14). At that time nothing of the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ had taken place, not even the priesthood of God had been bestowed. Clearly, however, the Lord fully intended that to take place in short order.

33.5.10—church—The Church of Jesus Christ was to prepare the world for the Millennial reign, a period of time during which the conditions of the Terrestrial Kingdom will prevail upon the earth. During the Millennium much will be done to prepare the children of God for the Celestial Kingdom. In the eyes of the uninspired, the growth and authority of the Church of Christ will appear to be a threat. However, the Kingdom of God will prevail.

33.5.20—wilderness—An allusion to the writings of John the Beloved wherein he testified that after the days of the mortal ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ that the Church would be taken from the earth for 1,260 years. The Church is represented by a woman bright as the sun, standing on the moon, with a crown of twelve stars upon her head (see RV-C 12:1–6).

33.6 On 6 April 1830, six men constituted the entire membership of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation. By the time of the second general conference of the Church, there were still less than three hundred. Missionary work had been limited, mostly in small communities in western New York and Pennsylvania. The first formal mission of the Kingdom of God left within a few days of the giving of this revelation, but it was not directed at the four corners of the earth, but rather the western wilderness of the United States. As the Church continued to grow, so also would the venues for the preaching of the Gospel. Eventually, every nation, kindred, tongue, and people would hear the message of salvation from the lips of those who would be instrumental in bringing the Church of Jesus Christ out of the wilderness, clear as the moon, fair as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

33.6.8—elect—The elect are those who have received the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, exercising faith in his atoning sacrifice by fully repenting of all that which they have done to offend the God of Heaven. Additionally, they have entered into a covenant in which they are determined to live by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God. They are men and women who have been tested by adversity, who have borne the weaknesses and afflictions of this fallen world in anticipation of perfection and exaltation. They are those to whom the God of Heaven has testified, whispering to their souls in no uncertain terms, that they have pleased Him and will find mercy at His hands, exaltation and eternal lives.

33.7 As has been noted several times before, Jesus had used this particular metaphor in his explanation to the Apostles as to why he was unwilling to partake of the viands that they had obtained in the nearby Samaritan city of Sychar. The woman whom he had met at the well had returned to the city and had stirred the hearts and minds of the city there so that they were willingly seeking the Lord at the well. Thus, were the inhabitants of Sychar as a mature field of grain ready to be harvested. The disciples were then given the opportunity to bless and benefit a people whom they had not previously taught. In the latter days, angels and divinely inspired circumstances have prepared the way
before the servants of the Lord in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time. Tens of thousands of the emissaries of the Lord are harvesting where they did not sow; this is typical of missionary work throughout the world. Ezra Thayre and Northrop Sweet were invited into the Lord’s vineyard to participate in the blessings that befall the faithful servants of God.

33.7.10—field—The imagery is easily understood by those who have engaged in the agricultural arts.

33.7.20—sickle—A hook-shaped instrument with teeth used in the harvesting of grain by hand.

33.7.26—might—The use of the word “might” in the English language constitutes a reference to the will or the conscious agency of a man as much as it does to his physical power.

33.7.27—mind—This is in reference to a man’s intellectual abilities, his powers of observation and analysis.

33.7.29—strength—Certainly in reference to a man’s physical endurance, but likewise applicable to his character and integrity.

33.8 The promise of receiving the blessings of the son of Lehi was not insubstantial. Nephi as a relatively young man was a stalwart disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose visions encompassed the whole of human history. He was led to greatness by the spirit of the Lord within his own family, and became an icon of righteousness for those who loved God. No man successfully opposed him in the performance of his divinely mandated duties. He was a man of many miracles in providing for those around him. Ezra Thayre had come into the Church because of a sermon delivered by Hyrum Smith on the Book of Mormon. This revelation was a tacit reminder that he could find eternal stability by adhering to the teachings of that book.

33.8.15—Nephi—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

33.8.21—Jerusalem—There has been much speculation as to the linguistic heritage of the name of the Holy City. Simply said, the name literally derives from roots which mean together, “flowing peace” or “established in peace”. The great city of Salem, built in the days of Melchizedek and Abraham, was a Zion society and may have indeed enjoyed the same destiny as that of the city of Enoch. Any city, “established in peace” is by definition, the City of the great King.

33.9 No man can fail at his divinely appointed tasks while supported by the God of Heaven. Any fear that Ezra and Northrop might have had to enter into the service of the Lord should have been swept away by this marvelous promise.

33.9.14—sheaves—The bundles of grain stalks and heads that the harvester gathers as he works his way through a ripened field. These symbolize, of course, the souls that the missionary has gathered out from the world.

33.10 In every dispensation given to the children of men, there has always been an emissary sent to prepare the way before the establishment of the body which would be charged to administer the power of God committed to earth. The clear commission of Ezra Thayre and Northrop Sweet was to announce the truth and bestow the blessings of God upon every man who would submit to the rigors of the Gospel of Christ. All this was to be done in the same spirit that motivated John the Baptist. As he prepared the way before the mortal

8 Open your mouths and they shall be filled, and you shall become even as Nephi of old, who journeyed from Jerusalem in the wilderness.

9 Yea, open your mouths and spare not, and you shall be laden with sheaves upon your backs, for lo, I am with you.

10 Yea, open your mouths and they shall be filled, saying: Repent, repent, and prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;

D&C 33:9–11
DNTC 1 325
DNTC 3 399
MM 2 314
PM 339

D&C 33:10
MD 417
EM 2:703
DNTC 33:10–13
DNTC 1 389
MLM 127
MM 2 13
Messiah, they were to go forth preparing the way before the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ

33.10.11—**repent**—Repentance is not merely an intellectual acceptance of the logic of a theological proposition. It is a full, open-hearted, acceptance of the implications of the teachings of Christ that bear on the conduct of one’s life. In addition, repentance is a determination to acquire all of the divine attributes of the Son of God at the expense of every celestial and terrestrial aspect of our being. It is a departure from insanity, a forsaking of all that degrades and condemns man in the eyes of God. It is, in a real way, an expression of our faith as to who we are: the sons and daughters of God. As He is, so we can and ought to become. It is a way of living that transcends obedience; it is an approach to life that strengthens our capacity to obey.

33.10.27–29—**kingdom of heaven**—Ezra and Northrop were to announce that the Kingdom of heaven was at hand. In a substantive way, the power of God would be in their hands, for the Kingdom, or authority of God, would be bestowed upon them before they went into the world. By accepting baptism at the missionaries’ hands, the children of men would be drawn to the Christ, and they would easily recognize him at his coming because he would speak and act by that same spirit that motivated the servants of God that preceded him.

33.11 This cry of repentance and the invitation to baptism by immersion for the remission of sins has been the clarion call of every servant of God since the days of Adam and Eve. Once purified, the disciple of Jesus Christ may be sanctified by the blood of the atoning sacrifice and prepared as a worthy vessel to receive the full weight and measure of the power and influence of the Holy Ghost.

33.12 The servants of the Lord must hold up the example of the Lord Jesus Christ as a light unto the world. To put forth any other man for any other purpose than to glorify God is to engage in priestcraft, a wickedness that Ezra and Northrop were warned about earlier in the text of the revelation (see 33.4).

33.13 This serves as a reprise of the counsel that the Savior gave to the Apostle Peter (see **MT-C 16.18**) and to the prophet Joseph Smith as he struggled without the blessings of the spirit of God (see 10.67–69). The first steps of exercising faith unto repentance and entering into the first covenants of the Gospel of Christ constitute the beginnings of salvation and exaltation. Those who have come unto Christ in his appointed way are then given the opportunity to partake of the divine nature, to become as the Father and the Son are. This is not a light matter nor does it transpire in a day. A man must continue to press forward in faith, with an eye single to the glory of God. By so doing, the man begins to perceive himself and his fellow men as does God. He slowly but surely becomes a fountain of living waters to those around him, nourishing and sustaining the children of men as does the Father of all. He eventually become impervious to the temptations of the devil and the attractions of the natural man, finding joy and rejoicing in his service to his God and his brethren. All this transpires as he hearkens to the voice of the spirit of God as it whispers along, providing instruction from hour to hour.

33.14 All of the early contentions within the Church of Jesus Christ came as a direct result of erstwhile members of the Church thinking themselves superior to the prophet Joseph Smith. Often this arrogance came about because of a
failure to consult the revelations that had been provided by the Lord, revelations that they had wholeheartedly accepted at the time they were given. Ezra and Northrop would fall into this folly; they would be led astray because they did not consult the word of the Lord as it had been given.

33.15 If they were true and faithful to their covenants the time would come when they would receive the power and authority to preach the truths of the everlasting Gospel and to perform the ordinances that established the eternal covenants between the children of men and the God of Heaven. Once baptized, a disciple is confirmed a member of the Church of Christ, with the promise that he or she will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost if they will receive him.

33.16 What could possibly have been more clear? The servants of God were to take their teachings from the word of God, those revelations past and present that contained the power of God unto salvation for those who would believe that which had been preserved by the pens of the prophets, seers, and revelators. The Holy Ghost invigorates every aspect of the human condition, the mind, the heart, and the physical frame. The abundant life only comes through the blessings of the spirit of God and that spirit only dwells with that man who is willing to live by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God.

33.16.3—Book of Mormon—The sacred record of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, composed by the prophet Mormon during the fourth century of the Christian era, using nearly a thousand years of preserved records of the Nephite civilization. Its resting place was revealed to the prophet Joseph Smith who was then permitted to translate the record into English by the gift and power of God.

33.17 This is an allusion to the parable of the Savior given during the final hours of his mortal ministry (see MT-C 25.1–13). While the parable can have wider application, it is clear that the Parable of the Ten Virgins refers to the membership of the Church, the malfeasance and faithfulness associated with discipleship in the last days. Without going into all of the evidence that makes the conclusion certain, we may merely rest assured that this parable of the Ten Virgins is about members of the Church and Kingdom of God on the earth as the time of the Second Coming approaches. Whether the virgins lived in the first century after Christ’s birth or the twenty-first century, the parable has its immediate application. That the Lord Jesus Christ will one day return to rule and to reign upon the earth for a thousand years is certain. Those of faith and testimony wait upon him through their adherence to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel. Hence, the ten virgins. As the poet says, “The world is with us too much and too soon.” In our day-to-day labors, caught up in the affairs of the world, we may not be a vigilant as we ought. We sleep, spiritually speaking, particularly as our waiting upon the Lord is tried by time. The scriptures tell us that in the last days there would be those who would declare, “The Lord delayeth his coming”, and fall into a kind of stupor which would be tantamount to losing one’s confidence in the once-accepted truths. Similar lethargy developed during the period of time just prior to the birth of the Lord Jesus when the faithful Nephites’ lives were threatened because of their belief in the signs given by Samuel. Many were discouraged and disappointed, and feared for their families and for their own lives. Ezra Thayre and Northrop Sweet likewise would be hard-pressed to keep their lamps burning, inasmuch as they engaged in activities that would snuff out the influence of the Holy Ghost in their lives.
33.17.9—trimmed—The Greek word which is translated in Matthew 25 as “trimmed” derives from roots which mean to “decorate, adorn, arrangement, garnish, put in proper order, snuff (a wick). The Greek roots also give rise to our English word “cosmos”. Absolutely everything was to be put in order with regard to the lamps. Whether made of clay or brass, each ancient lamp was equipped with an absorbent wick which would draw the olive oil to the tip or the “spout” of the lamp. A properly prepared wick end could burn for a long time when supplied with sufficient oil. The lamps, however, had apparently all burned out, and it was necessary to remove the burned portion of the wick and refill the reservoir of each so that proper lighting would be possible.

33.18 Not only is the time of the Lord’s appearance in the heavens drawing much closer than ever before, but from the moment of that appearance until the time of the separation of the righteous from the wicked will be quite short as well. If one is not keeping the commandments as the great signs of his coming are manifested, there will not be enough time to fully prepare to be among those who dwell with him upon the earth during the Millennium.

18 For behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, that I come quickly. Even so. Amen.

Section 34

Date: November 4, 1830
Place: Fayette, New York
To: Orson Pratt

D&C 34
DHC 1 128
EM 1:408
EM 2:505

34.0 The younger brother of Parley P. Pratt, Orson Pratt was raised in the same spiritual and religious atmosphere as his sibling, and in many respects was like-minded. His family circumstances were such that he sought employment at an early age, working mostly as a farm laborer. He was self-educated for the most part, but emphasizing mathematics, bookkeeping, grammar, surveying, and geography he became quite learned in these practical arts and sciences. In his later years he spent considerable time acquainting himself with astronomy, theology, and languages. In the fall of 1829, just as he was turning 18 years of age, Orson frequently sought guidance in prayer, resorting to the fields and woods for private communion with his Father in heaven. After a year of fervent petitioning God for enlightenment, Orson listened to his brother Parley, a newly ordained elder in the Church of Jesus Christ when the latter came to the neighborhood where he was residing. Orson was subsequently baptized on 19 September 1830, his nineteenth birthday, at his brother Parley’s hands in Canaan, New York. Orson’s faithfulness in the Church and Kingdom of God would number him among the first Apostles called and ordained in this dispensation. Except for a five-month period in late 1842, Orson Pratt would serve in the Quorum of the Twelve for 46 years. He died 3 October 1881 as the last surviving member of the original Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. This revelation was given to Orson Pratt when he asked Joseph Smith to inquire of the Lord what his duty was. This section appeared as Chapter XXXVI in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 56 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

34.1 Orson Pratt had been baptized six weeks before and was anxious to know how his life could best be spent in the service of his Master.

34.1.2—son—Those who take upon themselves the name of Jesus Christ, committing to keep his commandments and remembering him always in all places and at all times, are the begotten sons and daughters of the Savior of mankind and are heirs of God and joint-heir with Jesus. Orson—In reference to Orson Pratt, the younger brother of Parley P. Pratt, Orson Pratt was raised in the same spiritual and religious atmosphere as his sibling, and in many respects was like-minded. His family circumstances were such that he sought employment at an
early age, working mostly as a farm laborer. He was self-educated for the most part, but emphasizing mathematics, bookkeeping, grammar, surveying, and geography he became quite learned in these practical arts and sciences. In his later years he spent considerable time acquainting himself with astronomy, theology, and languages. In the fall of 1829, just as he was turning 18 years of age, Orson frequently sought guidance in prayer, resorting to the fields and woods for private communion with his Father in heaven. After a year of fervent petitioning God for enlightenment, Orson listened to his brother Parley, a newly ordained elder in the Church of Jesus Christ when the latter came to the neighborhood where he was residing. Orson was subsequently baptized on 19 September 1830, his nineteenth birthday, at his brother Parley’s hands in Canaan, New York. Orson’s faithfulness in the Church and Kingdom of God would number him among the first Apostles called and ordained in this dispensation. Except for a five-month period in late 1842, Orson Pratt would serve in the Quorum of the Twelve for 46 years. He died 3 October 1881 as the last surviving member of the original Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. This revelation was given to Orson Pratt when he asked Joseph Smith to inquire of the Lord what his duty was.

34.1.19–20—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

34.2 Without the covenant of the Father, without the Gospel of salvation and redemption, there is no life or expectation of life. Without the resurrection, the body and the spirit of man remain separated in misery for all eternity. Without the remission of sins, the suffering of Christ for the personal violations of the Law of God, there would be no hope for reconciliation, no possibility of returning with joy into the presence of our Heavenly parents. The power to overcome the effects of the Fall of Adam and the devastating consequences of rebellion was embodied in the Savior who conquered both death and hell through his personal righteousness and the power which the Father placed within him when he embarked upon his mortal sojourn upon the earth.

34.2.2—life—There is no other name given under Heaven by which mankind might be saved. The promise, the covenant, the Gospel of the Father has been manifested to men on the earth in only one person. Through that promise of the Father all men may have eternal life, even as many who will.

34.2.5—light—It is through the Gospel of Jesus Christ that the purpose of life in made clear. Through the covenants by which we are bound to the Father and the Son are we enabled to perceive the eternal destiny which lies before us.

34.3 Who can comprehend the full weight and measure of any of the nouns, verbs, and modifiers contained in this verse? Who may understand the love of the Son for a wicked and fallen world, and why he interferes in the affairs of such depraved men? Most men have no notion of their relationship to the Savior, and therefore have no conception as to what motivates him in all of his dealings with mankind. The sectarians of the world often testify of the Lord Jesus as the Only Begotten of the Father and then blithely move on to other topics less profound. Who, among the children of men, have come to a full understanding as to the significance of eternal life? But line upon line and precept upon precept we will one day come to a full understanding of this testimony. As the Lord Jesus Christ would lay down his life for the salvation of

2 The light and the life of the world, a light which shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not;

D&C 34:2
MD 443, 447, 448
D&C 34:2–3
PM 353

3 Who so loved the world that he gave his own life, that as many as would believe might become the sons of God. Wherefore you are my son;

D&C 34:3
AF 468
DNTC 1:144
MD 443, 459
MM 1:478
EM 4:1673
mankind, so also would the Apostles in every dispensation be called upon to lay down their lives. One immediately thinks of the martyrdom of ten of those magnificent souls whose lives were forfeit at the hands of oppressors. But what may we say of John the Beloved, he who received the promise that he would live past his own allotted time until the appearance of the Savior in his glory? Was he not a man who had laid down in his life for his Lord and his Kingdom? All those who serve are not required to suffer the wrath of the wicked; not all who serve have a fitful life capped by a violent death. But the true disciple of Christ expends his time, talent, means, and energy in behalf of those around him, binding the hearts of his neighbors to him by acts of charity and kindness. So also with the brothers Pratt. Parley would die violently at the hands of a murderer; Orson would eventually succumb to the effects of diabetes. Both served their fellow men to the best of their ability.

34.4 Orson had not been given an open vision; neither had he witnessed some spectacular miracle by which he was convinced of the truthfulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He, as a young man, had sat at the feet of his brother and had listened to the words of eternal life as they had fallen from his sibling’s lips. Orson had been touched by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost and his life was changed forever. Therein lay the blessing that he had received.

34.5 Having exercised faith unto repentance, Orson Pratt accepted the covenant of baptism and membership in the Church of Jesus Christ. He had presented himself to the Lord for instruction and as a result received a calling to preach the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, of which he had a fervent testimony. Within the year, he would be ordained an elder and on 26 April 1835, at age 23, was ordained an Apostle. He would serve as a missionary throughout the eastern United States, Great Britain, and Austria.

34.6 The Lord is clear that Orson Pratt’s service to humanity would best be accomplished as he taught by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, for nothing short of that would pierce the hardened hearts of the children of men. No amount of human sophistry or astute argumentation could effectively open the ears and the eyes of the willfully deaf and blind. In these last days the preaching of the Gospel is performed so that there might be a people prepared to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming. The earth is to be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory, a Terrestrial glory as opposed to the lost and fallen Telestial state that it is in now. The inhabitants of the earth during the Millennial reign must be more noble, more inspired, and more purified than they are now if they hope to withstand the presence of the Son of God and his angels. Faith, repentance, and the saving ordinances of the Gospel are not simply principles to be observed for their own sake. The commandments of God, if kept, bring fundamental changes into the lives of the believers. Through obedience, we put off the natural man and acquire the image of Christ in our countenances. Our hearts and minds are become receptacles of truth and light. Bringing the children of men into this desirable state of grace is the role of the servants of God. To this end, Orson was to devote his life.

34.6.21—crooked—A crooked generation is created as the result of weaknesses in the personal and cultural lives of the children of men in the face of temporal challenges.

34.6.23—pervasive—The fundamental meaning of pervasive is that of corruption, turning the wrong way, or destroying. It also implies stubborness, obstinacy, and a willful determination in opposing that which is right.
34.7 After his resurrection from the dead, Jesus spent considerable time with his Apostles in Jerusalem, teaching them and preparing them for the ordeal through which they and the Church would pass. During those forty days, the disciples received all that they needed to spread forth the principles and ordinances of the Gospel into all of the known earth. They were forewarned and strengthened against the persecutions that would certainly follow as they took the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the inhabitants of the earth. Jesus departed from them from the crest of the Mount of Olives within a cloud. As he ascended, two angels dressed in white appeared to them

Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. (Acts 1:11)

The testimony of these angels was certain. Jesus would one day return to be received into the Kingdom of Heaven upon the earth. They were charged with the preparations to be made in anticipation of that great day by touching the hearts and minds of all those with whom they would come in contact, whether among the living or the death. This charge has continued into the present dispensation and Orson Pratt was one of the first to receive the commission.

34.8 The great and dreadful day of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ will create great anxiety in the hearts and minds of the wicked. Those who have relished the power and authority of the secular fame and wealth will comprehend that all that they have used to support and exalt themselves will vanish away. It will be innerving for all, except those who recognize the voice of him who will speak peace to them at that day.

34.9 This is a reprise of the revelation that had been given to the church just prior to the second conference of the Church of Jesus Christ about the time Orson Pratt had been baptized (see 29.14). In the Savior’s rehearsal of the events that would transpire between his physical death and the time of his second coming, the Lord referred specifically to particular signs (see MT-C 24.29). There have been gallons of ink spilled regarding the causes of the celestial manifestations attendant to the appearance of the Lord. What appears to be the case is that there will be a period of time in which, like the Nephites at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus, the inhabitants of the earth will be in the dark, seeing neither sun, moon, nor stars. Whether this darkness will come as the result of natural or man-made causes we are not told. How long the manifestation will last is not revealed. One’s own imagination might generate sufficient images of disaster and tragedy to satisfy the most morbid, but perhaps we ought to consider the possibility that the conduct of the righteous, their humility and faith, might ameliorate the most dire of possibilities.

34.9.9—sun—Some scholars have suggested that the loss of sunlight transpires because of atmospheric problems. Again, whether these are natural effects due to volcanism, the greenhouse effect, or a radical change in earth’s orbit around the sun, we do not know. Neither has the word of the Lord confirmed that man’s inhumanity to man will be the direct cause. Therefore, worldwide nuclear war is not necessarily a prerequisite for the Second Coming. The impenetrable darkness of Egypt at the time of the Exodus of Israel, the three hours of darkness at Calvary, the three days of darkness in the Americas prior to Jesus’ appearance to the Nephites, and many other recorded instances in the Scriptures clearly indicate that the God of Heaven may speak and there be light, and He can speak and there be darkness. Quibbling over the mechanism is

7 For behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, the time is soon at hand that I shall come in a cloud with power and great glory.

D&C 34:7
MLM 30
D&C 34:7–8
AF 373
MLM 499

8 And it shall be a great day at the time of my coming, for all nations shall tremble.

D&C 34:8
EM 2:703

9 But before that great day shall come, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon be turned into blood; and the stars shall refuse their shining, and some shall fall, and great destructions await the wicked.

D&C 34:9
MD 836
EM 2:703

255
boorless.

34.9.15—moon—Some have attempted to equate this instance with that recorded in the second chapter of Joel which was subsequently cited by Peter, John, and Moroni; that is, that there would be times when the moon should be turned to blood. While there may be a relationship between the two effects, the absence of the light of the moon and the light of the moon being blood red are two different things. There is no question that Joel prophesied of various times and places when the moon would appear as blood, some of which have already taken place and others which may yet lie in the future. Without being dogmatic, might we hold off the equation of the two effects for the sake of the language given in the Savior’s prophecy which is really quite specific: that the moon would show no light at all. The absence of the moon light could be accounted for by all of those causes articulated in 29.14.15.

34.9.22—stars—Commentators and other enthusiasts have gone to great lengths to impose their views on what actually happens as the stars “fall from heaven”. Some have suggested that the time of the Second Coming would be accompanied by extraordinary showers of meteors and comets. Others have asserted that the night sky would be such that it will appear as if every star had fallen down because they would not be visible, for much the same reasons as given for the sun and the moon not shedding their light upon the earth. More astute men have suggested that perhaps the return of the various portions of the earth that had been translated away at different times in the earth’s history would satisfy this specific portion of the Savior’s prophecy. Still others have speculated that perhaps erratic movements in the earth’s orbit or unsteadiness in its rotation would give the appearance to an earth-bound observer that the stars were careening to the earth. All of this is entertaining and not without merit, yet the simplest conclusion to be drawn in this instance, as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, that there would come a time when the stars would not be visible from the face of the earth. Again, we are not privy to the mechanism by which this is brought to pass.

34.10 At the time of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the wicked will be terrified beyond comprehension. All of their assumptions regarding the nature of mortal life and the manner in which to best enjoy the pleasures of the flesh will be swept away like so much dust and ash in a high wind. Despair will consume them. Every joy will be squelched, every hope will be dashed. They will not be allowed to take happiness in their wickedness, but will depart this life to spend a thousand years in the company of devils while the righteous enjoy the personal companionship of the Son of God. All of the children of men, however, are the sons of God and in their most basic orientation are receptive to the principles of truth and light. Mortality and the ways of this lost and fallen world, however, have corrupted men and women so that they are presently ill-equipped to dwell in the presence of God. Hence, the role of the divinely appointed emissaries of the Father and the Son. The servants of God are to testify of the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ and of his power over the chains of physical death. If they do so by the power of the Holy Ghost, the honest in heart will respond in faith.

34.11 For the most part of his life, Orson Pratt was faithful to the commission with which he had been charged. Like all of us, however, he had his moments of doubt for which he was deeply grieved. Yet, he humbled himself, seeking wisdom and forgiveness. In this he was ultimately successful, pressing

10 Wherefore, lift up your voice and spare not, for the Lord God hath spoken; therefore prophesy, and it shall be given by the power of the Holy Ghost.

11 And if you are faithful, behold, I am with you until I come—
forward along the path toward eternal life and salvation, blessing and benefiting those with whom he came in contact.

34.12 Not only is the time of the Lord’s appearance in the heavens drawing much closer than ever before, but from the moment of that appearance until the time of the separation of the righteous from the wicked will be quite short as well. If one is not keeping the commandments as the great signs of his coming are manifested, there will not be enough time to fully prepare to be among those who dwell with him upon the earth during the Millennium.

34.12.20—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

12 And verily, verily, I say unto you, I come quickly. I am your Lord and your Redeemer. Even so, Amen.

Section 35

Date: December 1830
Place: Fayette, New York (at or near)
To: Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon

35.0.1 On 15 October 1830, Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer, Parley P. Pratt and Ziba Peterson left Fayette, New York, on their mission to the posterity of Lehi. Their journey would take them eventually to the western frontier of the United States, to Jackson County, Missouri. During their travels they paused at many of the American Indian reservations, teaching the principles of salvation and presenting copies of the Book of Mormon to those who received them well. The foursome arrived in Mentor, Ohio, a small community a few miles east of Cleveland. Before encountering the truths of the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Parley P. Pratt and his wife had lived in the region. Parley had been deeply influenced by a disciple of Thomas and Alexander Campbell, one Sidney Rigdon who lived in Mentor. As a Campbellite minister of a liberal Baptist church in Ohio, Sidney had been extremely effective in bringing the residents in his region of country into renewed spiritual activity. Many hundreds of the citizenry had heard his eloquent teachings and his fervent witness of the Savior of mankind. Parley Pratt joined Sidney Rigdon’s congregation and became an active minister therein. Ultimately, however, Parley would encounter the Book of Mormon and would accept its teachings as those of the Lord God of Israel. When the four missionaries arrived in Ohio, Parley took his companions to meet his friend. Sidney, his wife Phebe, and their ten-year old daughter Athalia were in the family home when Parley extended his hand with a copy of the Book of Mormon and said that it was a revelation from God. This was the first time that Sidney had ever seen or heard of the Book of Mormon, and he had considerable doubt as to its truthfulness. The missionaries wished to debate Sidney on the matter, but he said that he would not argue the issue, but would read the book in order to see what claims that it might have upon his faith. Sidney Rigdon gave leave to Oliver Cowdery and Parley P. Pratt, however, to address the members of his congregation regarding the Book of Mormon and of the restoration of the Gospel of Christ. After two weeks of continuous study, the Rigdons became convinced of the truthfulness of what they had been taught. Both Sidney and Phebe were baptized. By the time that the missionaries resumed their journey toward Missouri, there were three small branches of the Church of Jesus Christ in Mentor, Kirtland, and Warrensville, Ohio. The missionaries also received a fifth companion into their number, a recent convert of only a few days, Dr. Frederick G. Williams.

35.0.2 In early December 1830, Sidney Rigdon and one of his close associates, Edward Partridge, made the trek from eastern Ohio to Fayette, New York, in order to visit with the prophet Joseph Smith. They arrived on the tenth day of
that month. Sidney Rigdon had been baptized and ordained an elder in the Church, but Edward had not yet received any ordinances of the Gospel. The day after arriving in Fayette he was baptized by Joseph. Needless to say, both Sidney and Edward were anxious to know what their respective duties were to be in the Church and Kingdom of God. This present revelation is in answer to Sidney’s petition; the one that follows immediately was in behalf of Edward Partridge. This section appeared as Chapter XXXVII in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 11 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

35.1 Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptists, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Sidney was immediately aware of the prophet’s spiritual capacity for illuminating the word of God. It is interesting to note the tone of this revelation in comparison to those that preceded it. Clearly the Lord spoke to Sidney Rigdon in his own language, after the manner of his own speech that he might more effectively understand.

35.1.4—voice—The literal oral voice that Sidney Rigdon was hearing, of course, was that of the prophet Joseph Smith. Yet Sidney was a spiritually equipped man and understood precisely what was being said to him, that he should hearken to the words being given to him by a servant of God.

35.1.11—Alpha—The first letter of the Greek alphabet. This constitutes a reprise of the Lord’s imagery used in his revelation to John the Beloved (see RV-C 1.8 and RV-C 21.6).

35.1.13—Omega—The last letter of the Greek alphabet. This constitutes a reprise of the Lord’s imagery used in his revelation to John the Beloved (see RV-C 1.8 and RV-C 21.6).

35.1.15—beginning—An iteration in English of the idea represented by “Alpha”.

35.1.18—end—An iteration in English of the idea represented by “Omega”.

35.1.23–24—eternal round—This is a phrase with which Sidney Rigdon would have become familiar with as a result of his recent reading of the Book of Mormon. In 1 Nephi 10:19 Nephi teaches his readers that in the power and revelations of the Holy Ghost there is complete consistency with any truth that has ever been revealed in time or in eternity, that truth ultimately is one thing, a great whole. Alma taught a similar principle to the people of the city of Gideon and later to his son Helaman, that because the Lord God is a being of truth, He does not vary to the right or to the left of that which is true (see AL-C 7.19–20 and AL-C 37.8–13). Joseph had been admonished in similar terms when he allowed the 116 pages of manuscript to fall into the hands of the wicked (see 3.1–7).

35.2 We may not be able to articulate precisely what Sidney Rigdon’s personal views were regarding the effectiveness of the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ prior to this revelation. The Baptists have traditionally taught that only a limited number of souls could be redeemed, those who had been predestined by the will of God to receive salvation. All others would be lost. Any questions

1 LISTEN to the voice of the Lord your God, even Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, whose course is one eternal round, the same today as yesterday, and forever.

2 I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was crucified for the sins of the world, even as many as will believe on my name, that they may become the sons of God, even one D&C 35:2

D&C 35:1

MD 77, 546

D&C 35:1–2

AF 84, 85, 468

MA 56

EM 4:1673

D&C 35:1

DNTC 3 439

MD 77, 546

D&C 35:1–2

AF 84, 85, 468

MA 56

EM 4:1673
about the infinite nature of the Lord’s covenants are answered here. All men, everywhere and everywhere may be cleansed through the blood of the Savior. In addition, any question regarding the nature of the Godhead is also resolved. The unity between the Father and the Son is not physically literal, any more than the disciples are physically unified with their Master. It is a unity of heart and mind that is spoken of.

35.3 Sidney Rigdon was a man of great faith, a man honest in heart who desired to benefit his fellow men according to the mind and will of the Lord. He searched the scriptures in order to determine what his duty was, and to the degree that he was able, he conformed his life to the principles of Christianity. As he perceived them in the Old and New Testaments. Thus, by the time that Parley P. Pratt appeared on his doorstep, he had become increasingly familiar with the mind and will of the Lord insofar as he had been committed to writing by the Apostles and prophets. He read and prayed about the Book of Mormon and received a testimony of its truthfulness. He accepted baptism and ordination to the priesthood. Therefore, at the time he met the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon was indeed prepared for a great work, a greater one than he had ever embarked upon before.

35.3.9—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

35.4 Sidney Rigdon’s influence upon the hearts and minds of the people of northeastern Ohio cannot be overestimated. Hundreds of people had responded to his cries of repentance while he labored as a Baptist Campbellite minister. Many of these had subsequently followed him into the waters of
baptism as they too came to an understanding of the truths contained in the
Book of Mormon and in the revelations of God that had been received
through the prophet Joseph Smith. He would be instrumental in laying the
foundation upon which a great people would arise preparatory to the second
coming of the Son of God. His labors in and around Kirtland, Ohio, would
establish a large body of Latter-day Saints by whom a Temple of the Most
High would be erected. In that House of the Lord, on 3 April 1836, the
Savior, Moses, Elias, and Elijah would all appear to administer the keys which
they had to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. There was no way that Sidney
Rigdon could have foreseen any of these things. His goodness and his desire
for continuing righteousness qualified him for the work.

35.4.17—John—This is, of course, he who was known anciently as John
the Baptist.
35.4.26—Elijah—Elijah the prophet lived in the days of Ahab and Jezebel.
He was a native of the region east of the Jordan River called the Gilead.
The city of Tishbe, the traditional home of Elijah, is located about
seven miles east of the Jordan and about fourteen miles north of the
river Jabbok. Elisha, Elijah successor, watched as Elijah was caught up
into heaven in a fiery chariot. Elijah appeared with Moses on the mount
of Transfiguration where he bestowed upon Peter, James, and John the
keys of the authority which he held. The use of these keys in the
Meridian of Time is confirmed by the fact that the saints in Paul’s day
were performing vicarious work for the dead, including baptism (see
1 CO-C 15.29).

35.5 This certainly is in reference to his former role as a Baptist minister.
Without question he would have administered the ordinance to the best of his
ability, according to the procedures established by the Campbells. The truth
was, however, that for all of his sincerity and the sincerity of those who sub-
mitted to baptism, neither he nor any other Baptist had the authority to effect-
ively immerse a repentant soul in water for the remission of sins. That priest-
hood was confined to the priests and elders of the Church of Jesus Christ
recently organized in Fayette, New York. The laying on of hands in order to
receive the gift of the Holy Ghost was not pretended to by most Christian
denominations of the day. Certainly Sidney Rigdon did not consider himself
authorized to do so for the benefit of those who had come to him for baptism.

35.6 We do not know how many souls had been authoritatively baptized by
Sidney Rigdon since the time that he had been ordained an elder in the
Church. Nor do we know if at that time he had been given the keys to con-
firm those members and bestow the gift of the Holy Ghost by the four mis-
nionaries who had brought him into the Church. He certainly had adequate
priesthood authority. Any question regarding the power to administer this
promised blessing to the faithful for whom he had responsibility was here
answered.

35.6.32—apostles—The Greek roots from which the term “apostle”
derives, originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political lan-
guage it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair
between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the
Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah,
the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the
rising Kingdom. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were ordained
Apostles by Peter, James, and John sometime between 15 May 1829
and 1 June 1829 on the banks of the Susquehanna River near Har-
mony, Pennsylvania. The Apostles hold the keys of the ministry of the

| Elijah which should come, and
| thou knewest it not. |
| 5 Thou didst baptize by water
| unto repentance, but they received
| not the Holy Ghost; | D&C 35:5–6 |
| 6 But now I give unto thee a com-
| mandment, that thou shalt baptize
| by water, and they shall receive the
| Holy Ghost by the laying on of the
| hands, even as the apostles of old. | D&C 35:6 |
| AF 166 | MD 438 |
35.7 Traditional Christianity would be exposed for what it was, a powerless human organization of men and women who had the appearance of Godliness but who had denied the power thereof. There was no priesthood authority, no continuing revelation, no administering to the needs and desires of the honest of heart. As the Church of Jesus Christ continued to grow, the goodness of God, His kindness and generosity, would be manifested in the lives of those who received the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The growing numbers of transformed men and women, the blessings that seemed to surround them, and the miraculous events that followed in their wake wherever they went would begin to clearly indicate that the world in its lost and fallen state could not compare with the Kingdom of God. Some of those whose impostures would be revealed would seek to destroy those who shed the light of day upon the wickedness of the inhabitants of the earth.

35.7.20—Gentiles—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

35.8 The blessings that would befall a people of truth faith and obedience could not be withheld from them. The covenants between the Father and His children open a direct channel through which the powers of Heaven are revealed to men upon the earth. Natural men do not and cannot perceive the operations of the Spirit of God and for that reason much of what they see among the saints is mysterious and inexplicable. Yet, the power of God is patently visible as it works upon the hearts and minds of the righteous. Fallen man terms these manifestations as miracles, signs, and wonders, but to the faithful these are the workings of a loving Father who has only their best interests at heart.

35.9 One of the beneficial ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is administering to those with physical and spiritual afflictions. Both faith and power have to be present for the healings to take place, together with the mind and will of God. The miracles mentioned here were prevalent during the Savior’s mortal ministry and during the ministry of his chosen Apostles. One of the outward signs of the restoration of the Church of Christ would be the blessings associated with comfort, joy, and well-being.

35.9.15—devils—Before the foundations of the earth were laid, Lucifer and his followers rebelled against the authority of God and for their pains were cast out of Heaven. They once enjoyed the familial relationship with the Father that all of the sons and daughters of God experienced in the Celestial Kingdom. Their rebellion cost them the opportunity to experience mortal life. In their anger and regret, however, they do all they can to destroy the progress of the children of men toward salvation and exaltation through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. The power of the Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of

7 And it shall come to pass that there shall be a great work in the land, even among the Gentiles, for their folly and their abominations shall be made manifest in the eyes of all people.

8 For I am God, and mine arm is not shortened; and I will show miracles, signs, and wonders, unto all those who believe on my name.

D&C 35:8
AF 235, 310, 311
EM 2:703
EM 3:1309
D&C 35:8–9
MD 507
D&C 35:8–11
AF 104
MM 222

9 And whoso shall ask it in my name in faith, they shall cast out devils; they shall heal the sick; they shall cause the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk.

D&C 35:9
MD 345
God is sufficient to banish these usurping spirits from the tabernacles that they have attempted to rule.

35.10 In the last days prior to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the power of God would be manifested to the world through the faith of the disciples of Christ. The eyes of the nations will be opened to the workings of the Spirit of God which will affect every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Many of the children of men will be drawn unto Christ, while others will refuse to be divinely influenced.

35.11 In advance of the restoration of the earth to its paradisiacal glory, the condition that existed at the time Adam and Eve dwelt in the Garden of Eden, the world of wickedness will have to be destroyed. All of the inhabitants of the earth who are unwilling to put off the natural man, at least to the degree so that they can live in the presence of the Savior, will find that their mortal experience has come to an end. Those men and women who are determined to become no more than Celestial beings will not be able to bear the glory of the Terrestrial world during the Millennial reign. Thus, those who have sought fame, wealth, and power during their lives will find that there is nothing for them in the Church and Kingdom of God.

35.11.3—faith—The eyes of the faithful will be opened to the meaning of all of the purifying acts of God that are to prepare the earth for the return of the Son of God. The faithless will perceive only the world crumbling around them.

35.11.13—Babylon—The ancient kingdom of Mesopotamia serves as an archetype of a lost and fallen world focused on materialism, manipulative domination, and self-congratulation.

35.13 It is difficult to know just how Sidney Rigdon perceived himself in comparison to all of the other men with whom he was acquainted. This verse serves, however, as a caution to learned men everywhere that only those who are humble and contrite will be able to effectively serve the Lord God of Israel in the latter days. We best serve when we are empowered by the spirit of the Lord, and the Holy Ghost will not abide in the heart of an arrogant man.

35.13.18—thresh—The English word “thresh” is an alternative form of the word “thres” which derives from Germanic roots having to do with the process of separating grain from the straw and chaff that accompany the sheaves of the manual harvest. This is accomplished by beating, rubbing, or flailing the sheaves, followed by winnowing. The act of winnowing generally involves casting the threshed harvest into the air and letting the lighter hay and chaff be blown away by the wind while the heavier grain falls back to the threshing floor. Note that the threshing is not accomplished by the servants of God because of their intellectualism or charisma, but rather in spite of their lack of learning and social acumen.

35.14 No servant of the Most High should ever feel inadequate in his assigned tasks so long as he is strengthened by the power and love of God the eternal Father. As has been said by many before, “If the Lord be for us, who can be against us?” There is no fear in faith. There is faith only in the midst of humility. It is a far easier task to strengthen a humble unlearned, weak man than it is to support an arrogant, strong man. A man who esteems himself already a warrior, will not take upon himself the armor of God nor will he receive instructions as to how to engage the enemy.

10 And the time speedily cometh that great things are to be shown forth unto the children of men;

11 But without faith shall not anything be shown forth except desolations upon Babylon, the same which has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

12 And there are none that doeth good except those who are ready to receive the fulness of my gospel, which I have sent forth unto this generation.

13 Wherefore, I call upon the weak things of the world, those who are unlearned and despised, to thresh the nations by the power of my Spirit;

14 And their arm shall be my arm, and I will be their shield and their buckler; and I will gird up their loins, and they shall fight manfully for me; and their enemies shall be under their feet; and I will let fall the sword in their behalf, and by the fire of mine indignation will I preserve them.
35.15 All men everywhere will have the opportunity to know and understand the principles of salvation and exaltation, whether rich or poor, bond or free, male or female. Who should teach the poor? Who would best approach them without intimidation? Who would best exhibit the love of God in all of their dealings with the poor and the meek? Would it not be those who consider themselves also poor and meek? Who best to teach the proud, the wealthy, and the powerful? Should not the example set forth by the Lord Jesus Christ, his personal humility and kindness, be the model which his disciples should emulate? In addition, until the rich and the arrogant humble themselves as the poor and the meek, there will be no salvation for them. Those of the inhabitants of the earth who respond to the teachings of the weak, unlearned, and the despised, will receive the Spirit of the Lord by which they will be able to perceive the operations of the God of Heaven, the movements of His hand among the nations of the earth.

35.16 The parable of the fig tree was originally given by the Lord Jesus Christ as he instructed his Apostles regarding the events attendant to his second coming. In the spring, the trees begin to put forth leaves and buds, foreshadowing another season. Spring is inevitably followed by summer, the great growing season of the year (see MT-C 24.32–33 and SM-C 1.38–39). So also are the signs that will foreshadow the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who see with eyes of faith will recognize those signs for what they are and will have confidence in the promises of God.

35.17 If Sidney Rigdon had not perceived the Lord’s point before now, this verse must have made the point clear. Joseph Smith certainly qualified as one who was weak, unlearned, and despised of the world. By comparison, Sidney was strong, educated, and honored by the world. If he were to be successful in his service to the Church and Kingdom of God he would have to put his pride behind him and walk in greater humility.

35.17—Joseph—In reference to Joseph Smith, Jun., the prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

35.18 Joseph Smith was the Lord’s anointed, and no man could take the keys of the priesthood from him. Even if Joseph were to transgress the laws of Heaven sufficiently that he would be rejected by the Lord, no man could replace him as a matter of succession unless the Lord’s hand were in the matter. After the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to take hold of the helm of the Church of Jesus Christ. His claim to the presidency was based on his long association with the prophet. In essence he attempted to usurp the power and authority of the priesthood that had been invested in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, rather than allow the Lord to “plant” another in Joseph’s stead. To that degree, the Lord’s counsel about Sidney’s potential arrogance fell on deaf ears.

35.19 If Sidney had ever thought to aspire to the presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ, this notion should have been nipped in the bud with this verse. Sidney was to do everything in his power to see to it that the prophet Joseph Smith was successful in all of his duties as the presiding officer in the Kingdom of God. If Sidney were to seek counsel from the Father, he would be inspired by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost as to what he should say and do in order that the prophet might be preserved against the efforts of the adversary to destroy him. In times of sorrow and tribulation Sidney could

15 And the poor and the meek shall have the gospel preached unto them, and they shall be looking forth for the time of my coming, for it is nigh at hand—

D&C 35:15
AF 373, 374
D&C 35:15–16
MLM 344

16 And they shall learn the parable of the fig-tree, for even now already summer is nigh.

D&C 35:16
EM 3:1062

17 And I have sent forth the fulness of my gospel by the hand of my servant Joseph; and in weakness have I blessed him;

D&C 35:17
MD 833
D&C 35:17–18
DHC 7 (23)

18 And I have given unto him the keys of the mystery of those things which have been sealed, even things which were from the foundation of the world, and the things which shall come from this time until the time of my coming, if he abide in me, and if not, another will I plant in his stead.

D&C 35:18
DHC 7 (23)
MD 410
EM 2:781, 977

19 Wherefore, watch over him that his faith fail not, and it shall be given by the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, that knoweth all things.

D&C 35:19
MD 426

263
be a comfort to Joseph if he were filled with the Spirit of God. In simple terms, Sidney was to sustain Joseph.

35.20 If Sidney Rigdon found his new assignment in the Church geographically inconvenient, nothing is recorded regarding any hesitancy or dismay on his part. The matter would be resolved within a month or two when the headquarters of the Church of Christ moved to its demographic center in Kirtland, Ohio.

35.20.16—scriptures—The primary assignment here has to do with the Joseph Smith Translation which began six months earlier in June 1830. Oliver Cowdery had been the prophet’s scribe since April 1829 as the translation of the Book of Mormon proceeded. Oliver had been called to lead the mission to the Lamanites and had departed from Fayette, New York, on 15 October 1830. Although John Whitmer was in a position to aid the prophet, he too had been called to missionary service. In order to facilitate the translation process, Sidney was called to act as the prophet’s scribe in this matter. Almost immediately, that portion of the Joseph Smith Translation which is sometimes referred to as the Prophecy of Enoch was received. This passage can currently be found as Moses 7 in the Pearl of Great Price.

35.21 The Joseph Smith Translation was to serve as a primer for the faithful that they might know for themselves how the Spirit of the Lord works upon the heart and mind of a prophet of God as he studies the word of God. They would come to recognize that Spirit, and by so doing recognize all that is transpiring in the world in anticipation of the glorious return of the Son of God.

35.21.15—asleep—Those who sin are spiritually asleep.

35.21.18—abide—Those who will survive the glory of the second coming will be those who have received that glory already into their lives through the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

35.21.28—purified—John the Beloved spoke in similar terms in one of his letters to the ancient saints. “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” (1 John 3:1–3) The agents in the purification are the saints themselves, inasmuch as they must exercise faith, repent of their sins, take upon themselves the ordinances and covenants of salvation. The sons of men must willingly put off the natural man and receive the divine nature.

35.22 After having translated another portion of the book of Genesis, Joseph and Sidney were counseled to leave their work until they arrived in Ohio, implying that that journey would transpire shortly. Sidney Rigdon stayed with the prophet Joseph Smith for several weeks in anticipation of his return to Mentor. On 2 January 1831 another conference of the Church was held in Fayette, New York, during which the Lord revealed that all of the Branches of the Church of Jesus Christ located in New York State should prepare themselves to move to Ohio. At the end of January 1831, the prophet and his family, together with Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge left for Kirtland, Ohio. On 1 February 1831, they were kindly received into the home of Newel K. Whitney where the Smiths stayed for several weeks.
35.23 There would be times when the translation process would pause momentarily. During the intervening time, the prophet would have occasion to add to the corpus of revelation that he had been receiving for several years. Sidney’s responsibility was similar to Oliver Cowdery’s as the first preacher of the Church of Christ, save that Sidney was to bring his prodigious learning and understanding of the Old and New Testaments to corroborate academically all that the prophet was acquiring from the Lord by revelation.

35.23–28—prophets—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

35.24 The establishment of Zion and the binding of Satan for a thousand years require the faithful obedience of the disciples of Jesus Christ. Sidney was in a position to do much good for the advancement of the Kingdom of God upon the earth.

35.24.17—heavens—The servants of sin are bent on destroying the servants of the Most High. Sinners are easily intimidated by the natural forces of this world which they do not understand. When the heavens and the earth shake, the children of men become distressed and frequently abandon all other affairs in order to preserve their lives. In many instances the lives of the disciples of Christ have been preserved because their enemies have been distracted from their wickedness. Sidney’s safety lay in observing to do all that the Lord had committed to his charge.

35.24.28—Zion—The establishment of Zion had been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. In this dispensation, one of the major meanings of the term “Zion” was in reference to the city that would be built upon this continent that would serve as one of the capitals of the Kingdom of God on the earth. Oliver Cowdery pointed out the site for this city and the Lord latter confirmed the selection. John Whitmer was an active participant in all that transpired among the saints in Missouri from 1831 to 1838.

35.25 At that time, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery held all of the keys of the priesthood of God upon the earth. So long as those keys remained upon the earth, no opposing force could effectively disrupt the progress of the Church and Kingdom of God.

35.25.2—Israel—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

35.26 The redemption is ultimately, of course, in the power of the resurrection and the effective atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the short term, however, the saints are redeemed from ignorance and fear through their faith in the Lord God of Israel and His servants. Although terrors and distress may abound in the world as the earth is cleansed and purified for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, yet the disciples of Christ will take comfort from the inspiration of the Holy Ghost as they are led from day to day.

35.27 There will not be a numerical advantage for the Church of Jesus Christ so long as there is wickedness in the world. Yet, the little stone cut out from the mountain without hands will roll forth upon the earth to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people until the whole of creation is filled with the

23 And inasmuch as ye do not write, behold, it shall be given unto him to prophesy; and thou shalt preach my gospel and call on the holy prophets to prove his words, as they shall be given him.

24 Keep all the commandments and covenants by which ye are bound; and I will cause the heavens to shake for your good, and Satan shall tremble and Zion shall rejoice upon the hills and flourish;

25 And Israel shall be saved in mine own due time; and by the keys which I have given shall they be led, and no more be confounded at all.

26 Lift up your hearts and be glad, your redemption draweth nigh.

27 Fear not, little flock, the kingdom is yours until I come. Behold, I come quickly. Even so. Amen.
knowledge of the Lord and a people prepared to receive him at his coming. The only safety will be within that Kingdom that was established by His hand at the beginning of this dispensation. It will not be confounded or destroyed by the feeble hands of men and devil that raise opposition against it.

35.27.18—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as "Amen" derives from roots which mean "true". This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Section 36

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>December 1830</th>
<th>D&amp;C 36</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Place:</td>
<td>Fayette, New York (near)</td>
<td>DHC 1 131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To:</td>
<td>Edward Partridge</td>
<td>EM 1:408</td>
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36.0 Edward Partridge was, as Joseph Smith observed, a pattern of piety and one of the Lord’s great men. A spiritually sensitive seeker of truth, Edward investigated the various sects of his day in an attempt to find the truth manifested in his day as it could be found in the scriptures. In 1828 he came in contact with the Campbellite movement and was an active participant in that movement when Oliver Cowdery and his companions arrived in northeastern Ohio while making their way to the western frontier of the United States in order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites. While many of the Campbellite Baptists eagerly associated themselves with the Church of Jesus Christ at the hands of the four missionaries, Edward Partridge deferred his own baptism. When Sidney Rigdon determined to travel from Mentor, Ohio, to Fayette, New York, to visit the prophet Joseph Smith, Edward went with him. They arrived at Joseph’s home on 10 December 1830. As the two had passed through Manchester, New York, Sidney and Edward asked the residents about the Smith family, and Joseph in particular. The reply that the Smiths were decent people until young Joseph brought forth the Book of Mormon impressed Edward such that his desire to be baptized was amplified considerably. On 11 December, the day following his first meeting the prophet, Edward Partridge was baptized in Seneca Lake by Joseph Smith. Edward Partridge would serve as the first Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation. He would suffer great persecution at the hands of the Missourians because of his position in the Church, and ultimately died, as a result of the injuries and exposure that he experienced, in May 1840 at the age of 47. This section appeared as Chapter XXXVIII in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 57 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

36.1 We do not know the precise date on which this revelation was received, whether on the 10th of December or shortly thereafter. It seems reasonable to assume, however, that the text of this Section was written before Edward Partridge was confirmed a member of the Church of Jesus Christ (see 36.2). Edward was baptized on the 11th of December 1831 and given the gift of the Holy Ghost under the hands of Sidney Rigdon.

36.1.10—Israel—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

36.1.18—Edward—In reference to Edward Partridge. Edward Partridge was, as Joseph Smith observed, a pattern of piety and one of the Lord’s great men. A spiritually sensitive seeker of truth, Edward investigated the various sects of his day in an attempt to find the truth manifested in his day as it could be found in the scriptures. In 1828 he came in contact with the Campbellite movement and was an active participant in that movement when Oliver Cowdery and his companions arrived in northeastern Ohio while making their way to the western frontier of
the United States in order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites. While many of the Campbellite Baptists eagerly associated themselves with the Church of Jesus Christ at the hands of the four missionaries, Edward Partridge deferred his own baptism. When Sidney Rigdon determined to travel from Mentor, Ohio, to Fayette, New York, to visit the prophet Joseph Smith, Edward went with him. They arrived at Joseph’s home on 10 December 1830. As the two had passed through Manchester, New York, Sidney and Edward asked the residents about the Smith family, and Joseph in particular. The reply that the Smiths were decent people until young Joseph brought forth the Book of Mormon impressed Edward such that his desire to be baptized was amplified considerably. On 11 December, the day following his first meeting the prophet, Edward Partridge was baptized in Seneca Lake by Joseph Smith. Edward Partridge would serve as the first Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation, beginning 4 February 1831. He would suffer great persecution at the hands of the Missourians because of his position in the Church, and ultimately died as a result of the injuries and exposure that he experienced in May 1840 at the age of 47.

36.1.27—forgiven—Either in anticipation of or as a result of his baptism by immersion for the remission of sins.
36.1.32—called—Edward Partridge was ordained a Bishop on 4 February 1831, less than two months after he became a member of the Church of Jesus Christ.
36.1.43—trump—There would be no hesitancy or weakness in his clarion cry of repentance.

36.2 We do not know exactly when Edward Partridge was confirmed a member of the Church of Jesus Christ, but it is likely to have taken place within a few days after his baptism, if not on the very day of that saving ordinance. Of one thing we can be confident: the revelation was given at some point prior to the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.
36.2.14—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney Rigdon had already been ordained an elder of the Church by the missionaries who baptized him in Ohio.
36.2.34—peaceable—We may point to Edward Partridge’s steady response to the tormentors and abusers of the saints in Jackson County, as the Missourians compelled the saints to abandon their property. As the tumult against the members of the Church reached a frenzied pitch, Edward Partridge and Charles Allen were taken stripped of their clothing and then tarred and feathered. This physical abuse was endured with such humility and grace that the mob grew still and astonished. Edward and Charles were allowed to return home without opposition. The power and influence of the spirit of God sustained those brethren in all of their trials.

36.3 Only in and through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ can any man receive immortality and eternal life. Only though his discipleship to the Savior could Edward Partridge ever find full spiritual satisfaction.
36.3.10—Hosanna—The Hebrew word phrase here Hellenized means “Oh Saviour I beseech thee”. Not only can this be understood as a plea to the Son of God for redemption, it is also a cry of repentance, like unto “Save yourself from this untoward generation.”

36.4 Just as Edward Partridge had been redeemed from the death and corruption prevalent in the world of men, so also would every man have to follow in those same tracks. Any who would serve their fellow men with honor and 2 And I will lay my hand upon you by the hand of my servant Sidney Rigdon, and you shall receive my Spirit, the Holy Ghost, even the Comforter, which shall teach you the peaceable things of the kingdom; and MD 149
and CR97-A 29
CR97-O 8
CR98-O 51
CR02-A 88
EM 2:813
EM 3:1034

3 And you shall declare it with a loud voice, saying: Hosanna, blessed be the name of the most high God.  

4 And now this calling and commandment give I unto you concerning all men—
D&C 36:3
MD 516
EM 2:659
EM 4:1456
D&C 36:4–5
EM 3:1121
36.5 This was as much a promissory note to the inhabitants of Kirtland, Ohio, and environs as it was to the Church in general. During the first eight months since the founding of the Church in Fayette, New York, anyone who had received callings to serve in the Kingdom of God had received their callings and ordinations from Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. These had jointly held the keys of the priesthood for the entire Church. For many years, Sidney Rigdon had been the spiritual leader of the Campbellite Baptists in northeastern Ohio. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Missionaries and other Church officers would all pass by the First Presidency for approval before their calls were extended and ordinations performed.

36.5.10–11—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

36.5.13–15—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

36.6 There is no more compelling issue in this or any other dispensation than the act of sincere repentance motivated by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

36.6.4—Save—This echoes the words of the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost as he testified to the Jews of the necessity of accepting the
fullness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ (see AC-C 2.37–40).

36.6.8—untoward—This English word signifies a spirit of unruliness, difficult to guide, to manage, or to influence. It also implies a marked tendency to cause trouble or unhappiness. It is, in the end, a term for rebelliousness.

36.6.16—fire—This echoes the teachings from the epistle of Jude. Jude was painfully clear about the fate of the apostates and the foolishness of their deluded doctrines, so also those who know the truth may have to be extraordinarily candid in order to open the eyes of the deceived. This is not done in a spirit of contention, however, but with a desire to wrest them from the inevitable destruction that will overwhelm them in the latter days if they do not relent and repent. No vestige of one’s former apostate life should remain to testify against him (see JU-C 1.17–25).

36.7 It is virtually impossible to abandon sin in all of its manifestations without turning unto the Lord God of Israel with all of one’s heart, might, mind, and strength.

36.7.3—commandment—That is to say, that every elder that is sent forth to preach the everlasting Gospel must have already put aside the spirit of the natural man by the power of the atoning blood of Christ. The minister must be repentant before he can call others to repentance. Otherwise, it is a weak cry indeed, hesitant and unsure.

36.8 The allusion to the coming of the Lord to the Kirtland Temple in April of 1836 is quite clear here. As the Bishop of the Church, Edward Partridge would have a particular role in bringing that building to completion.

36.8.3–4—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

36.8.21—temple—This is a partial citation from Malachi 3:1, a passage quoted by the angel Moroni during his first visit with the prophet Joseph Smith in September 1823. The foreshadowing of the building of the Temple in Kirtland and other places throughout the world had been continually presented to the prophet’s mind from that time forward.

36.8.24—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

7 And this commandment shall be given unto the elders of my church, that every man which will embrace it with singleness of heart may be ordained and sent forth, even as I have spoken.

8 I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God; wherefore, gird up your loins and I will suddenly come to my temple. Even so. Amen.

Section 37

Date: December 1830
Place: Fayette, New York (near)
To: Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon

37.0 On 6 April 1830, the ancient Christian Church was restored in the humble home of Peter Whitmer Senior in Fayette, New York. Shortly thereafter, in June 1830, Joseph Smith was given to understand that he would be given the opportunity to review the Old and New Testaments of the Bible with the intent to restore the original intent of the ancient Apostles and prophets who contributed to the volume. The project lasted for several years, and although the Joseph Smith Translation was not fully completed, yet much clarity and disambiguation was achieved. The book of Moses was received in connection with the prophet’s work on the Old Testament, specifically with the book of Genesis. While Joseph and Oliver were residing in Colesville, Pennsylvania, in June 1830, the membership of the fledgling Church were blessed with a revelation which is now published as the first chapter of the book of Moses. Moses 1 appeared in print the first time on 16 January 1843 in the Church periodical, Times and Seasons, volume 4, pages 71–73. Between June 1830 and
December 1830, some time was spent in working on the translation of the book of Genesis. Although only five chapters of the King James version of the Bible had been perused, considerably more narrative was restored. Much of the material concerned Adam and Enoch, especially in connection with the ministry of the prophet Enoch after he left his native country of Caiyan. Shortly before receiving the revelation now known as Section 37, Joseph and Sidney continued writing the teachings of Enoch, presenting to the saints in western New York what was called "Extracts from the Prophecy of Enoch", and which is now included in the book of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price as chapter 7. The same material can be found in the Joseph Smith Translation as Genesis 7:1–78. After transcribing this part of the translation of the Bible, Joseph and Sidney are commanded to refrain from the task until after they arrived in Kirland, Ohio. Thus, the translation is taken up again in February 1831 with Moses 8. This section appeared as Chapter XXXIX in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 58 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

37.1 On 2 January 1831 a third conference of the Church was held in Fayette, New York which Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge attended, their first as members of the Church of Jesus Christ. Several revelations were received, including one which instructed the branches of the Church in New York that the headquarters of the Church was moving to eastern Ohio, and that they should prepare themselves to journey there as soon as possible. Joseph and Sidney were already aware of this impending move. In the latter part of January of 1831, Joseph and Emma, together with Sidney and Edward began the journey to Kirland, Ohio, arriving there about the first day of February.

37.1.16—translate—that is to say, the translation of the Bible which had commenced with the book of Genesis in June 1830.

37.1.24—25—the Ohio—We may only speculate on the use of the definite article when referencing the place to which the saints were to gather. It is not, as some have claimed, a reference to the Ohio River, a body of water that lies far to the south of Kirland, Ohio. It is likely a shorting of the phrase "The Ohio Country", a part of which was eventually organized into "The Northwest Territory", and subsequently into "The Ohio Territory", from which was derived the State of Ohio. Ohio had been admitted into the Union 28 years before Joseph Smith and his entourage arrived there.

37.1.31—enemy—Satan had continually stirred up the inhabitants of the land since the beginning of the Church. The political, social, and spiritual atmosphere was considerably more receptive in northeastern Ohio.

37.1.34—35—your sakes—In Ohio great blessings would be poured out upon the disciples of Christ, not the least of which would be the building of the Temple and the keys of the priesthood that would be restored at the time of its dedication.

37.2 Three major branches of the Church existed in western New York in December 1830. The headquarters of the Church, the place where the Church of Jesus Christ had been organized eight months before, was in Fayette, New York. The Whitmer family formed the nucleus thereof. Manchester, New York, the home of Joseph Smith’s family, had served as another gathering place for the saints of the region. The Colesville branch constituted the third major branch, the place where Joseph Knight Senior’s family had been instrumental in preaching the Gospel.

37.2.12—until—Much of the labor involved during the subsequent weeks prior to removing to Kirland, Ohio, was helping the saints in New

1 BEHOLD, I say unto you that it is not expedient in me that ye should translate any more until ye shall go to the Ohio, and this because of the enemy and for your sakes.

2 And again, I say unto you that ye shall not go until ye have preached my gospel in those parts, and have strengthened up the church whithersoever it is found, and more especially in Colesville; for, behold, they pray unto me in much faith.
York to understand the importance of gathering to the Ohio.

37.2.35—Colesville—A small community in south-central New York, about 23 miles north of Harmony, Pennsylvania, and about 100 miles southeast of Fayette, New York. The Colesville Branch of the Church of Christ was comprised primarily of the friends and family of Joseph Knight, Senior. The Colesville branch would suffer much tribulation in the move to Kirtland, Ohio, and from thence to Jackson, County, Missouri.

37.3 The commandment to move to the Ohio would be reiterated during the third general conference of the Church held in Fayette, New York, on 2 January 1831 (see 38.32). Oliver Cowdery had been sent on a mission to the Lamanites two months earlier, leaving from Fayette with three of his brethren on a journey that would take them west of the state of Missouri. The simply explanation was that Oliver Cowdery would meet the saints in Ohio rather than in New York. He arrived there from Missouri to greet the members of the Church on 27 August 1831.

37.3.22–23—the Ohio—We may only speculate on the use of the definite article when referencing the place to which the saints were to gather. It is not, as some have claimed, a reference to the Ohio River, a body of water that lies far to the south of Kirtland, Ohio. It is likely a shorting of the phrase “The Ohio Country”, a part of which was eventually organized into “The Northwest Territory”, and subsequently into “The Ohio Territory”, from which was derived the State of Ohio. Ohio had been admitted into the Union 28 years before Joseph Smith and his entourage arrived there.

37.3.30–31—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

37.4 The blessings of the Temple that would come as the saints gathered to Kirtland, Ohio, the blessings of the city of Zion that had been promised for thousands of years, and the blessings of eternity which were to be obtained by faith in Jesus Christ and sincere repentance were to be forced on no man. Some of the early members of the Church would remain in New York and forfeit their potential growth as disciples of Christ.

37.4.17—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

38.0.1 The preparation of the saints of the Most High for the eternal blessings that were to be poured out upon them had begun before the foundations of the earth had been laid. The promise of mortal life, the gift moral agency, the principles of the Gospel, the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God, and the hope of the resurrection from the dead had been part of the plan of happiness presented in the premortal councils in heaven. The creation of the earth advanced the prospects of the children of God as did the fall of Adam and Eve. One generation followed another during which further light and knowledge were

3 And again, a commandment I give unto the church, that it is expedient in me that they should assemble together at the Ohio, against the time that my servant Oliver Cowdery shall return unto them.

4 Behold, here is wisdom, and let every man choose for himself until I come. Even so. Amen.

Section 38

Date: January 2, 1831
Place: Fayette, New York
To: Church
revealed to the children of men on the earth, instructions designed to entice them to unity among themselves and unity with the Father in Heaven. Every prophet who was called of God sought for the blessings that had once prevailed upon the earth before Adam and Eve partook of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, sincere repentance, and obedience to the ordinances of salvation and exaltation, the prophet Enoch brought his people out of ignorance and depravity, establishing them in a community in which the disciples were of one heart and mind, where they dwelt in righteousness, and had no poor among them. The city of Zion became a refuge from the wickedness of the world which ran rampant in almost every heart. Eventually Enoch and his city were taken into heaven just prior to the great flood which destroyed all human life on this planet save for the few that escaped the cataclysm in the ark built by Noah and his sons. In other dispensations, similarly minded prophets gather the saints of God together, establishing Zion in their day, bring salvation and exaltation to tens of thousands of the inhabitants of the earth. Moses attempted to do the same with the House of Israel shortly after they escaped from their years of slavery in the land of Egypt. These, however, were unprepared to live the simple principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, so the greater priesthood was taken from among them as well as the fullness of the Gospel. They were left with the Law of carnal commandments and the priesthood of Aaron by which the ordinances of the Law of Moses were to be administered. Had the children of Israel, particularly the Jews in the land of Judea, responded positively to the teachings of the mortal Messiah and his Apostles, Zion might have once more been established upon the earth. Those who considered themselves to be the covenant people, however, rejected the Lord’s invitation to participate in the blessings of heaven. Therefore, they were destroyed as a nation and their posterity scattered throughout the world, a physical reality that was symbolic of their spiritual disunity with their Father in Heaven. There was a promise that had always been upon the lips of the prophets of Israel, that there would come a time in which the House of Israel, together with the faithful from all nations, would be gathered together and established in the truth in anticipation of the coming of the Son of God who would redeem those who were willing to love him with all of their hearts and their neighbors as themselves. In other words, there would come a time in which the children of God would seek diligently to establish once again a city of righteousness, one that would fill the entire earth.

38.0.2 As the events surrounding the opening of the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time unfolded, it became clear to the prophet Joseph Smith and his colleagues that the Lord Jesus Christ was intent on preparing a people to receive him at his coming in glory upon the earth. We cannot but believe that the Father and the Son instructed the young Joseph that one of the failings of the religiously minded people of his day was that they were unable to come to a unity of the heart and mind, a fact that was easily discernable in the conduct of the inhabitants surrounding Palmyra during the Great Awakening, as it was called. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon was intended to bring a unity of doctrine, a presentation of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that would testify of the truthfulness of the Old and New Testaments. The books would become one in the hands of the faithful as the ancient prophet Ezekiel had prophesied. The power of the priesthood invested in the sons of Levi and Aaron was restored by John the Baptist to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on 15 May 1829, providing an opportunity for the children of men to enter into the covenants of salvation, to become one with the Father and the Son and part of the family of believers. The restoration of the Melchizedek
priesthood by the Apostles Peter, James, and John made possible the spiritual unity of the saints which comes through the blessings attendant to the gift of the Holy Ghost. In that glorious gift the disciples of Jesus Christ could learn to be of one heart and one mind. On 6 April 1830, the Church of Jesus Christ was formally organized upon the earth and a spiritual standard raised to the nations of the earth signaling that the gathering of Israel, together with all those faithful who pertained to the nations of the earth, had begun in earnest. In October 1830, Oliver Cowdery and his companions were sent on a mission to the descendants of the family of Lehi, to bring to them the testimony of the ancient Nephite prophets as was recorded in the text of the Book of Mormon. Oliver was additionally charged to find the site for the Temple of the Lord, that which would mark the center of the city of Zion to be built in the latter days in anticipation of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Millennial reign of the Son of God. The mission of Oliver and his three companions was also instrumental in moving the headquarters of the Church of Christ from New York to Ohio, the first step in a gathering that would culminate in the establishment of Zion in western Missouri. In December 1830, the Lord revealed to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon that this move was eminent (see 37.3). In the present revelation, received during the third general conference of the Church held in Fayette, New York, the Lord revealed to His Church some of the divine rationale for the move and the blessings that would befall the saints who rallied to the Ohio. Those who were unified by the spirit of God were motivated to make the move; those who had not received the Holy Ghost into their lives were left behind, cut off from the blessings of eternity. This section appeared as Chapter XI in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

38.1 Under the direction of God the eternal Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the premortal Jehovah, brought about the creation of the earth and all things that would dwell upon it by the power of the priesthood bestowed upon him. All of the children of God looked upon the creation of this planet with great anticipation and shouted for joy when it was fully organized. These were the seraphic hosts that the Lord looked upon and provided for.

38.1.8—9—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

38.1.11—13—Great I AM—This divine title of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has ever been associated with Jehovah, the premortal name of the Lord Jesus Christ (see EX-C 3.14).

38.1.14—Alpha—The first letter of the Greek alphabet. This constitutes a reprise of the Lord’s imagery used in his revelation to John the Beloved (see RV-C 1.8 and RV-C 21.6).

38.1.16—Omega—The last letter of the Greek alphabet. This constitutes a reprise of the Lord’s imagery used in his revelation to John the Beloved (see RV-C 1.8 and RV-C 21.6).

38.1.18—beginning—An iteration in English of the idea represented by “Alpha”.

38.1.21—end—An iteration in English of the idea represented by “Omega”.

38.1.35—36—seraphic hosts—Angelic ministers of the Lord God of Israel, usually in human form rather than animal, as are the cherubim.

38.2 The divine mind and heart is unbounded by time or space. For that reason all eventualities are anticipated and are provided for in advance as part of the economy of God.

1 THUS saith the Lord your God, even Jesus Christ, the Great I AM, Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the same which looked upon the wide expanse of eternity, and all the seraphic hosts of heaven, before the world was made;

2 The same which knoweth all things, for all things are present before mine eyes;

D&C 38:1
DS 1 11
MD 77, 240, 702
PM 56, 557
CR95-O 104
D&C 38:1–2
DS 1 9
MD 545
EM 2:523
D&C 38:1–3
AGQ 1 8
DTNC 1 71
DS 1 74
EM 2:739, 751
D&C 38:1–4
DTNC 3 194
MD 169, 170
CR02-A 78
D&C 38:1–5
AF 84
MA 56

D&C 38:2
MD 426
EM 2:521
38.3 The elements obey Jesus because he is the Voice of God, one who has received the power of the Father in large measure because his character is the same. The power to create order out the midst of chaos is a uniquely divine one.

38.4 The atoning sacrifice would take place during the Dispensation of the Meridian of Time, three thousand years after the people of Enoch had been received into the bosom of God by virtue of that anticipated redemption. The inhabitants of Zion exercised faith in Jesus Christ, repented of their manifold sins, received baptism as a symbolic representation of the power of the resurrection vested in the Lord Jesus Christ, and they received the blessings associated with the gift of the Holy Ghost, their souls being sanctified and purified by the principles and ordinances of the fullness of the Gospel which had been preached unto them by Enoch and which they willingly observed. The city of Zion had been translated and caught up into heaven, a Terrestrialized part of the earth which would ultimately be brought back to its original place on this planet once the earth had been prepared to enjoy the thousand years of Christ’s personal reign upon the earth. Other prophets and the saints who accompanied them had also received similar blessings, and would find themselves rejoined with the children of God upon the earth in the latter days. The spirits of the righteous have also received unto themselves a place of rest in paradise, sometimes referred to as the bosom of Abraham. These, too, have been the beneficiaries of the atonement and advocacy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

38.4.9—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every righteous man and woman since the days of Adam and Eve. It is a goal worth pursuing, inasmuch as it is an attempt to restore the earth to its paradisiacal glory. From time to time there have been people who have succeeded in binding the hearts and minds of their fellow men to them through faith, hope, and charity, in the bonds of the Christian covenant. In certain instances, entire communities have been translated because of their faithfulness to the principles and ordinances that pertain to eternity. The goal of the saints of the latter days is to prepare the entire world for the restoration of the earth to its paradisiacal glory, a condition that will last for a thousand years while the Lord Jesus Christ rules and reigns upon the earth in the Church and Kingdom of God. Zion will, therefore, eventually fill the whole face of this planet.

38.4.11—Enoch—This prophet should not be confused with the son of Cain who was raised in the land of Nod, east of Eden (see MO-C 5.41–43). Adam was 622 years old when Enoch was born, Seth was 492, Enos 387, Cainan 297, and Mahalalel 227. Enoch was ordained to the priesthood by Adam when he was 25 years old and subsequently blessed by him when he was 65 (see DC-C 107.48). Enoch and his city were translated when he was 430 years old (see DC-C 107.49).

38.4.32—Christ—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendency to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such
out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

38.5 Those who have despised righteousness or who have succumbed to the temptations of the flesh, not daring to put off the natural man, have squandered the opportunities of their second estate. When they have passed out of mortality, they find themselves completely unprepared to meet their God and Father, ensconcing themselves in the depths of the prison prepared for them. Their state of heart and mind is pitiable, they cannot be delivered from hell without a hope in Christ, without faith, without charity. Those who persist in their recalcitrance will suffer in their misery until the final judgment when they will be delivered up to him whom they have listed to obey.

38.6 Those who will not hearken to the voice of truth and light will find themselves without any glory in the eternities, banished with Satan and his cohorts to outer darkness, an eternal hell from which there can be no escape. Their condemnation is certain; their fate is secured; their destiny beyond the imagination of the righteous.

38.7 Although the mortal eyes of the righteous may not be able to look upon the person of the Father and the Son, this does not mean that they cannot perceive the motions of their divine efforts to preserve and protect the saints of the Most High. The Spirit of the Lord whispers to all those filled with the Holy Ghost the truth of His love and His watchful care over the just.

38.8 When the children of men are born into this world, their memories of their premortal existence are veiled, so that they remember little or nothing of all that which had transpired prior to entering into their tabernacles of clay. In addition, the commission of sin obfuscates the spiritual connection between the heavens and the earth, dulling the sinner’s ability to perceive the works of God going on all around him. In such a benighted condition, entrance into the presence of God would be unwise and ultimately fatal. Yet, there is a time on the near horizon of time when the Son of God will make his appearance to the inhabitants of the earth in a glory indescribable. The glory of the Lord will have natural consequences. Those who have not forsaken the lusts of the flesh will find that they cannot be protected from the majesty from on high. Their bodies will wither away and die, inasmuch as they are not sufficiently infused by the power and influence of the spirit of the Lord. Their spirits will waver in the prison that has been prepared for them for a thousand years.

38.9 The latter days will be filled with conflict and distresses of all kinds. Satan in a desperate attempt to keep the world in a Telestial state, or at least to keep the inhabitants thereof in a Telestial state, will unleash one horror after another in order to strike fear into the hearts of those who might otherwise be persuaded to exercise faith unto salvation. The righteous, however, must persist in their attempts to draw the children of men unto Christ in a spirit of love and gentle invitation. They are to be clear, however, raising the cry of repentance in no uncertain terms. To this there will be great opposition, the servants of Satan engaging in a war for the souls of the children of men. The saints of God, however, will emerge triumphant over the efforts of the adver-

5 But behold, the residue of the wicked have I kept in chains of darkness until the judgment of the great day, which shall come at the end of the earth;

6 And even so will I cause the wicked to be kept, that will not hear my voice but harden their hearts, and wo, wo, wo, is their doom.

7 But behold, verily, verily, I say unto you that mine eyes are upon you. I am in your midst and ye cannot see me;

8 But the day soon cometh that ye shall see me, and know that I am; for the veil of darkness shall soon be rent, and he that is not purified shall not abide the day.

9 Wherefore, gird up your loins and be prepared. Behold, the kingdom is yours, and the enemy shall not overcome.
sary to frustrate the mind and will of the Father. This last Kingdom, this final
dispensation prior to the second coming of the Savior will not fail. There will
be no general apostasy; there will be no overwhelming scourge of dissipation
to destroy the Church and Kingdom of God established in our day.

38.10 In terms of the entire population of the earth, there was only one body
of people who were pointed in precisely the right direction. That small band
of disciples would be tried and tested further, being refined and strengthened
in the truths of eternity as they were willing to receive them.

38.10.11—**all**—Not everyone who claimed membership in the Church
and Kingdom of God was free from the sins and transgression of this
world. Even those who were doing their best to abide by the command-
ments of the Lord often fell short of perfection in those matters. Simply
put, there was room for improvement for all of those who had sought
for the blessings of heaven.

38.11 In comparison to the conditions that existed upon the earth in the days
when Adam and Eve dwelt in the Garden of Eden, the effects of the fall were
horrific to contemplate. All nature was at war with itself, enmity raging
in every corner of world. It was this corruption that motivated the destruction of
all men in the days of Noah, save those that were with the patriarch in the ship
that had been built for their preservation. Notwithstanding the revelations that
the prophet Joseph Smith had received, the manifold visits of angels to instruct
and empower him and his associates, yet the world of men ignored these things,
including them as fables or impertinent shams. There were those, however,
who knew what these things portended and were actively engaged in trying to
destroy all those who had faith in the revelations of God and the power of the
priesthood that made salvation possible. Many of these would wage open war
against the saints of God. Others would enter into secret combinations,
determined to seduce or murder all those sympathetic to the truth.

38.12 Wickedness has become so prevalent upon this earth that the light of
Christ is being squelched in the hearts and minds of the children of men.
There was a time when the inhabitants of the earth were far more receptive to
the spirit of the Lord, yet with the distractions of this wicked world intensi-
fying from day to day, men are easily enticed to forsake the promptings of the
Lord and indulge themselves in practices that further their depravation and
their alienation from their Father and their God. This brings nothing but
sorrow to the eternal realms, particularly in light of the approaching judgment.
The scriptural allusion here is to the Savior’s parable of the Wheat and the
Tares (see *MT-C 13.24–30*). There is a man who planted good seed in his
field. Jesus and his Apostles were identifiably the planters of the seed. The par-
able reveals that there is tremendous opposition, malignant forces that would
try to undermine all that the servants of God were attempting to do, symbol-
ized by the enemy who scattered tare seeds among the properly planted wheat
grains. The imagery of the parable is plain enough. Broadcast planting of both
the wheat and the tares meant that from the very beginning the various plants
would have integrated root systems. To pull up one would mean the destruc-
tion of the other. Thus the perniciousness of the devil in not attacking the
Church by raw force, but to introduce a specious crop that would confuse and
distress the entire earth. How can Christianity be true when there is so much
evil that is done in the name of Christ? That is the final question that has
stymied the progress of the fullness of the Gospel in every dispensation. The
truth is discredited by the actions of the pretenders. In his own interpretation
of the parable, Jesus describes the importance of gathering out the mature tares

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Verily I say unto you, ye are clean, but not all; and there is none else with whom I am well pleased;</td>
<td>D&amp;C 38:10–12, DS 3:17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>For all flesh is corrupted before me; and the powers of darkness prevail upon the earth, among the children of men, in the presence of all the hosts of heaven—</td>
<td>D&amp;C 38:11, DHC 1:364, DS 3:55, D&amp;C 38:11–12, DS 3:30, MLM 554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Which causeth silence to reign, and all eternity is pained, and the angels are waiting the great command to reap down the earth, to gather the tares that they may be burned; and, behold, the enemy is combined.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 38:12, DS 1:242, MD 239, 728, MLM 343</td>
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from among the mature wheat in conjunction with the general harvest (see MT-C 13.36–43). Prior to the end of the world, or the destruction of the wicked on the earth, the righteous will be gathered out of the world. Their protection will be primarily in their unity and righteousness with each other. Some will have gathered to the relative safety of modern Zion, others will be gathered out of their communities into their Wards and Stakes as guided and directed by the Apostles and Prophets of this dispensation. The faithful will prepare themselves against the woes that will befall the wicked and their hearts will not faint in the midst of tragedy and dismay. There will be no deception perpetrated upon the saints of the living God. In the days of the Primitive Church, there were men and women who aligned themselves with the disciples of Christ who attempted to deceive their fellow members of the Church. Of this group were the pernicious Ananias and Sapphira who paid dearly for their sins. There were others who likewise suffered for their imposture. Within the Church of Jesus Christ today there are equally injurious individuals. Those who are merely nominal members of the Church of Christ will find themselves without fellowship in the rising Kingdom of God on the earth, and whether through their own choice or through the operations of the priesthood, they will discover themselves amidst the wicked and will suffer their fate at the time of the harvest. Satan and his devotees will be bound during the Millennial reign. They will have no place among the righteous who live out their mortal lives upon the purified earth nor will they find any solace among the spirits of the righteous whose state in the Paradise of God affords them the power to deliver the repentant from the bondage of death and hell. Their disappointment and anger will be like unto that of Lucifer when he was cast down from heaven with his minions at the time when his plot to usurp the throne of God failed. Once again, that which he thought to take unto himself will have been wrested from his grasp and restored to its rightful King. He and those who have hearkened to his voice will spend a thousand years in spirit prison, their suffering like unto a lake of fire and brimstone, or like unto a furnace into which the tares are cast that their seed might no more infest the ground.

38.12.27—tares—The Greek word which is usually translated into English as "tares" refers to "false grain" or "darnel". The English word "tares" derives from roots which refer not only to the darnel, but to various species of vetch, some of which are quite deadly. The term "darnel" derives from roots which imply "foolish and dizzy", perhaps in reference to the effect that is produced when darnel is consumed. Darnel has been known to produce convulsions and death.

38.12.36—enemy—Such a foe is malignant, indeed, for this an enemy that would destroy his neighbor with an extraordinarily difficult harvest at best or through illness, incapacity, and death if the darnel were inadvertently harvested with the wheat.

38.13 From the inception of this, the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times, there have been those who have thought to thwart the progress of the Kingdom of God upon the earth. Among the first of these clandestine attempts involved the machinations of Willard Chase and his cadre of conspirators who formed a cabal, the purpose of which was to deprive the prophet Joseph Smith of the plates upon which was inscribed the text of the Book of Mormon. They were not above using any means whatsoever in bringing their plan to fruition. There can be no doubt that the three attacks made upon the prophet as he was bringing the plates to the Smith home were made by members of that secret combination. From that time forth, wicked men, inspired by the forces of evil, have combined together to abuse, distress, rob, and murder the saints of the Most High. As to the particulars of any conspiracy framed in the opening days
of 1831 we may only speculate, but it is clear that the move from New York to northeastern Ohio was to be part of the Lord’s solution to the matter.

38.14 The membership of the Church of Jesus Christ needed to understand that their sojourn in life was not going to be trouble free. Their struggles would involve considerably more than just getting along with their neighbors. While they would successfully make friends and find sympathetic minds and hearts in their tribulations, yet they must ever be vigilant against the unseen powers that would unrelentingly be at odds with their happiness and progress. The aid of the Lord would not depend of their personal or aggregate perfection as disciples of Christ. The intelligence and strength would come in spite of the weaknesses, follies, and sins. The spirit of the Lord would strive with the members of the Church in spite of them for a time.

38.15 The sort of strength that the Lord encourages here derives from repentance. Repentance is thwarted primarily by fear. Here, then, the Savior clearly articulates what the saints are to do. Their confidence in the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ would sustain them as they continued to observe the points of revelation that were given through the prophet Joseph Smith.

38.15.11—kingdom—Not just The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but the political kingdom of God upon the earth that would be established when the Son of God returns to the earth to reign personally for a thousand years.

38.16 The establishment of the city of Zion in the latter days had been a subject revealed in some detail in the narrative of the Book of Mormon. As Joseph Smith began his translation of the Bible, the description of the city of Enoch came to the forefront as he worked his way through the first book of Moses. One of Oliver Cowdery’s tasks while laboring with the Lamanites was to find the site where the Temple of the New Jerusalem was to be built. The foundations of the city of Zion were being laid in the latter days. The city, however, exists only if there are a people prepared to inhabit it. The Lord called His people Zion prior to the days of the great flood, because they were of one heart, one mind, dwelt in righteousness, and had no poor among them. The Zion of the latter days must be of the same nature and the Lord here is beginning to address the spiritual attitudes that must prevail if the work preparatory to the second coming of Jesus Christ is to be successful. The poor are complaining their lot in life; the rich are seemingly oblivious to their suffering. Both attitudes needed adjusting.

38.17 The fundamental act of sinful arrogance committed by the wealthy is that they assume that all that they possess has been acquired by their cleverness, skills, and talents. While there is some truth to the notion that some souls come to this earth with gifts of the spirit that aid them in the acquisition of material blessings, yet those very gifts exist because they have not been completely veiled by the forgetfulness that attends mortal birth. These gifts have been permitted to grace the whole of humanity, no matter the venue in which they manifest themselves. Men and women begin to perceive as to how they might brightened and strengthen those around them. Some choose to do so because of their love for their fellow men; others wield those abilities to gain personal wealth, fame, and power. Needless to say, the Father favors those who are minded to serve. Zion is a society in which the gifts and talents of the inhabitants are mutually enjoyed and appreciated. Those who dwell upon the earth during the Millennium will be of a mind to bless their fellow men rather

| 14 But now I tell it unto you, and ye are blessed, not because of your iniquity, neither your hearts of unbelief; for verily some of you are guilty before me, but I will be merciful unto your weakness. | D&C 38:14  
| 15 Therefore, be ye strong from henceforth; fear not, for the kingdom is yours. | D&C 38:15  
| 16 And for your salvation I give unto you a commandment, for I have heard your prayers, and the poor have complained before me, and the rich have I made, and all flesh is mine, and I am no respecter of persons. | D&C 38:16  
| 17 And I have made the earth rich, and behold it is my footstool, wherefore, again I will stand upon it. | D&C 38:17  

DNTC 3 73  
MD 484  
DNTC 1 537  
DS 1 229  
MD 415  
DHC 1 364  
MD 632  
DHC 3 18–20  
CR98-O 95
than take advantage of them.

38.18 The ancient prophets declared that the hearts and minds of the covenant people in every generation must turn to one another; otherwise the whole earth would be smitten with a curse, and utterly wasted at his coming. The spirit of unity between generations comes as the principles of eternal life are understood and lived by those of a single generation. In other words, establishing a continuous link between the saints who lived in the days of Adam and Eve down to the present day can only come as men and women learn to live in harmony with one another. One derives from the other. Eventually, Jackson county in western Missouri would be designated as the land of inheritance, a place that would provide for the needs and wants of those who would enter into it by covenant. From this humble beginning, the Lord's Zion would go forth to fill up the entire earth. The saints would feel after their ancestors, desiring the blessings of eternity to be bestowed upon them as well. This will be the grand work of the Millennium; the salvation of men in every time and place since the beginning of time. The workers in that labor must be tireless and devoted, undistracted by the vain things of the world.

18 And I hold forth and deign to give unto you greater riches, even a land of promise, a land flowing with milk and honey, upon which there shall be no curse when the Lord cometh;

38.19 The physical location of the city of Zion would be easily found. By the time of this third general conference of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver Cowdery and his companions were nearing the little village of Independence, Missouri. They arrived there on 13 January 1831. In the middle of July 1831, the prophet Joseph Smith in the company of the saints from the Colesville branch arrived in the same place. It was at that point that the Lord revealed to the Church that place which would one day serve as the center place of Zion. The disciples would have to seek to establish Zion in order for that plat of ground to become Zion in reality. As will be seen below, there were distractions and distresses within the body of the saints who went to Missouri that hindered the progress of the Kingdom of God at that time. Frankly, the membership of the Church of Christ did not seek Zion with all of their hearts. The time is not far distant when there will be a people sufficiently prepared spiritually to bring about the physical Zion as a reflection of the Zion that dwells in their hearts.

19 And I will give it unto you for the land of your inheritance, if you seek it with all your hearts.

38.20 The establishment of Zion was to be in anticipation of the Millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who would dwell in the city would be of one heart and one mind, they would live the Gospel of Jesus Christ in its fullness, and they would be prepared to bless and strengthen all those around them such that there would be no want anywhere within the pale of the city. The children born to the citizens thereof would thrive in a societal atmosphere that would aid and abet their personal righteousness. They would be raised up without sin unto eternal life, like calves in a stall. For a thousand years, nothing but peace and harmony will prevail upon the face the earth. Therefore, the posterity of the citizens will themselves enjoy citizenship in the Kingdom of God, ensconced in their eternal inheritance as had been their parents. Once the earth has partaken of the Celestial glory, which event will take place shortly after the Millennium, all those who have participated in the establishment of Zion and have sustained it, will find themselves eternal heirs of peace and happiness upon the earth in a perfected and exalted state.

20 And this shall be my covenant with you, ye shall have it for the land of your inheritance, and for the inheritance of your children forever, while the earth shall stand, and ye shall possess it again in eternity, no more to pass away.

38.20.6—covenant—Those who would dwell in the city of Zion would be those who were prepared to enter into the fullness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, nothing wavering.

21 But, verily I say unto you that
under the divine monarch who is the Lord Jesus Christ. Every eye will see, every knee will bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God whose right it is to reign. No man or woman anywhere upon the earth will wield a scepter of any kind without receiving that power and authority directly from the Savior.

38.21.24—watch—Every true king, one patterned after the King of kings, is a teacher and a protector. He is tireless in his service to his people and seeks only their best interests. Earthly potentates generally fall far short of the example set by divinely appointed rulers.

38.22 Many of the civil laws of men have been founded upon true principles revealed by the servants of God to the children of men. Yet, because of misunderstandings and pervasive wickedness, the laws of men do not perfectly represent the mind and will of God. When the Lord Jesus Christ begins his rule over the earth in its paradisiacal state, the corruptions to be found in the philosophies of men will be excised from public life and the principles of truth reinserted back into the government of the children of men. In nothing will the righteous be concerned about the changes taking place, but they will rejoice in the mercy and justice of the Son of God.

38.23 Those with knowledge were called upon to teach those who were suffering in ignorance. Education, mutual understanding, was the first step to Zion, that all might be of one mind. Thus, those who were called and appointed to teach would know, having great confidence, that they were in a position to bless those around them.

38.24 The citizenry of Zion were those who would be fully engaged in observing the two great commandments of eternity. They were to love God with all of their heart, mind, and strength, and they were to love their neighbor as themselves. Herein lay the second step toward Zion, that the people were to be of one heart.

38.25 That which is right is that which conforms to the mind and will of God the eternal Father. The commandments of God are given to prepare the children of men for their eternal destiny as the children of God. The Father looks upon his children with infinite love, having compassion upon all of them without preferential distinction. Men are commanded to love their brethren as the Father and the Son love them, or they can in no wise entered into the Kingdom of God.

38.26 Prior to this time, little had been said to the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ about the Law of Consecration that the saints would be required to live if they were to have a habitation within the walls of the city of Zion. Here, however, is a foreshadowing of the principles that govern that Law. Is it fundamentally just that one man have more wealth and ease than another? The answer is obviously no, and yet that differentiating circumstance seems to govern the entire relationship between the children of men in this lost and fallen world. Why then, does God allow a man, or group of men, to acquire more of this world’s goods than others, thus allowing the disparity? It is a hard man indeed who does not perceive that the worldly distinction between the rich and the poor is fundamentally wrong. What is to be learned? The rich can easily see that it is within their power to be a blessing to others, if they so choose, just as God perceives that it is within His power to bring immortality and eternal life into the lives of the children of men. God chooses to bless, notwithstanding the enormity of the task; the rich are thus given the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verse</th>
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<th>references</th>
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<td>in time ye shall have no king nor ruler, for I will be your king and watch over you.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>MD 425, 657, MLM 598</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wherefore, hear my voice and follow me, and you shall be a free people, and ye shall have no laws but my laws when I come, for I am your lawgiver, and what can stay my hand!</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>D&amp;C 38:22, DNTC 1 859, DNTC 3 512, DS 1 229, 241, MD 300, 400, 434, 500, PM 203, EM 2:703</td>
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<tr>
<td>And let every man esteem his brother as himself, and practise virtue and holiness before me.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>D&amp;C 38:26, DHC 1 364, DHC 2 301, D&amp;C 38:26–27, EM 3:1061, EM 4:1498, D&amp;C 38:26–29, DNTC 3 68</td>
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opportunity to be as God is, to learn for themselves the true blessings at may
attend being personally prosperous. This change in attitude is one that
requires great faith in the promises of the Lord Jesus Christ and his Father.

38.27 The world of fallen men uses almost every means available to make
distinctions between the inhabitants of the earth. The differences of physical
form and features, the cleverness of an individual’s manner of speech, the
agility of one mind over another, the assertions that one style of clothing is
superior to all others, and a host of other arbitrary social touchstones. The act
of making these distinctions is in itself ultimately sinful, for it exalts certain
individuals of the children of God over all of the rest, causing the weak in faith
to jockey for positions of esteem, and causing them in turn to commit other
sins in the process. Most wickedness in the world can be traced to the pride of
the human heart. Unity of the hearts and minds of the disciples of Jesus Christ
is the hallmark of the city of Zion.

38.27.10—parable—The Greek word which in the New Testament is
translated as “parables” derives from roots which mean to "throw along
side". The word is reflexive, meaning that an issue or principle is
"placed beside itself", providing another way of looking at the same
thing. A parable is a simple comparison, a similitude. It differs from an
allegory in that generally only one concept is communicated in a par-
able. An allegory is usually quite complex, implying many separate ideas
and concepts in the course of its telling.

38.28 There is no safety in divisiveness, as the saints who attempted to settle
in Jackson county soon discovered. Into the subtle breaches, the enemies of
God would find purchase for their taunts, their mockery, and their perfidy.
Satan is anxious to find disagreements among the children of God that he can
take advantage of, that he might harden the hearts of the disciples against one
another, that he might frustrate the work of God among His people. He has
also recruited those who are willing accomplices to destroy the righteous.
Sometimes these men and women are convinced that they do the God of Heaven a
favor when they fight against Zion. Had they but sought His counsel beforehand,
however, they would know of the futility of their conspiracies and the
downward path upon which they were being led carefully to hell.

38.29 Shortly after this revelation was received war broke out between Thai-
land and Vietnam as a result of the former’s attempt to conquer Cambodia.
About the same time, Egypt embarked on the conquest of Arabia and Syria
because of the failure of the Ottoman Empire to make reparations for a pre-
vious conflict. The Nanning rebellion in Malaya against the British Empire
fomented from 1831 to 1832, as did the Great Jamaican Slave Revolt. There
were political upheavals raging in France, Belgium, Poland, the Netherlands,
and Brazil. Closer to the saints was the Blackhawk War of 1831 which took
place in northern Illinois and Wisconsin. We may easily point to the events
that would lead to the Civil War, and the machinations of men from all walks
of life who instigated policies and laws which brought about an escalation of
hostilities between the North and the South. However, it would be the
duplicity and wickedness of men in northeastern Ohio, in western Missouri,
and in Illinois that would bring about the misery, torment, and deprivation of
the Latter-day Saints of that era.

38.30 The saints were willing to place themselves in the hands of their Father
and their God. They had entered into covenants to that effect and were di-
gently seeking counsel from Him and from His servants. If, indeed, wars like

27 Behold, this I have given unto
you as a parable, and it is even as I
am. I say unto you, be one; and if
ye are not one ye are not mine.

D&C 38:27
DNTC 1 766
DNTC 2 313
DNTC 3 304
DS 3 36
MD 814
MM 4 115
PM 136
TSWK 363
CR95-A 46
CR97-A 29
CR98-A 85, 113
EM 1:299
EM 2:438
EM 3:1104, 1309

28 And again, I say unto you that
the enemy in the secret chambers
seeketh your lives.

D&C 38:29
EM 3:1291
EM 4:1549

29 Ye hear of wars in far coun-
tries, and you say that there will
soon be great wars in far countries,
but ye know not the hearts of men
in your own land.

D&C 38:30
TSWK 559
CR95-O 46, 70
unto those that could be found throughout the world were to appear on their doorsteps, what should they be about? The Lord would be increasingly clear that there would be a place prepared for the disciples of Christ, that they might be preserved against the violence that loomed on the horizon. The goal would be to gather out from the world to a place where the righteousness of the saints might prevail against the wickedness of the world. The first step would be the gathering to northeastern Ohio, a staging area where the membership of the Church could determine the level of their commitment, whether they were prepared to take upon themselves the principles and ordinances that would govern the inhabitants of the city of Zion. Had the saints remained faithful to their covenants, Jackson county, Missouri, would have become a respite from the storm of war and degradation, just as the city of Enoch had been before the days of the great flood. The membership of the Church, however, did not measure up to their namesakes from the dispensation that preceded them by five Millennia. The Lord in his mercy, however, provided another gathering place, ensconced within the protecting ridges of the intermountain west where the Church and Kingdom of God would weather the effects of the Civil War. Those men who had been called to guide and direct the affairs of the children of God during that period of time were men who had treasured up wisdom in their hearts, being filled with the power and the influence of the Holy Ghost. The wickedness of men and the subsequent spirit of destruction would assail the hearts and minds of the saints from a distance, but the despair of the damned would not be manifested in those places that the Father had prepared for them.

38.30.58—fear—The prospect of crossing the uninhabited and largely unexplored reaches of the western frontier of the United States in order to find a refuge from the impending storm should have completely unnerved the Latter-day Saints. Yet, they pressed forward in faith, braving every natural and unnatural obstacle, until they found themselves in a place of relative safety. Those who followed the counsel given by inspired men, did not suffer excessively nor were they ever overwrought.

38.31 The move to the west was not without its liabilities, whether in Ohio, Missouri, Illinois, or in the territory of Utah. Yet in each case, as they followed the revelations that were given to them on a regular basis, the Church of Jesus Christ was repeatedly delivered from the hands of its enemies. The righteousness of the Latter-day Saints came about as they were continuously obedient to the counsel given to them. Their faith increased; they were strengthened and edified; they began to see the hand of the Lord plainly manifested in their behalf. They were beginning to feel the effects of purification and sanctification, and took courage from the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ operating in their lives.

38.32 Those disciples of Christ who chose to forsake their material blessings in western New York would eventually find peace and safety. They would not, however, be completely free from political and social oppression, but they would be comforted in all of their afflictions and would escape the efforts of the evil one to destroy their eternal happiness. The experiences of the Church in Ohio would prepare the members thereof to take upon themselves the responsibility to perfect themselves through faithful obedience, to carry the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ into all of the world under the direction of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and the First Presidency. They would learn that it was possible for those who had departed from this life inadequately prepared for eternity could be blessed in the world of spirits where they waited for the resurrection of the dead. The power of the priesthood wickedness of men reveal these things unto you by their wickedness, in a manner which shall speak in your ears with a voice louder than that which shall shake the earth; but if ye are prepared ye shall not fear.

31 And that ye might escape the power of the enemy, and be gathered unto me a righteous people, without spot and blameless—

32 Wherefore, for this cause I gave unto you the commandment that ye should go to the Ohio; and there I will give unto you my law; and there you shall be endowed with power from on high;
would be manifested as never before in Ohio, a power that would eventually affect the lives of countless millions.

**38.32.16–17—**the Ohio—We may only speculate on the use of the definite article when referencing the place to which the saints were to gather. It is not, as some have claimed, a reference to the Ohio River, a body of water that lies far to the south of Kirtland, Ohio. It is likely a shorting of the phrase “The Ohio Country”, a part of which was eventually organized into “The Northwest Territory”, and subsequently into “The Ohio Territory”, from which was derived the State of Ohio. Ohio had been admitted into the Union 28 years before Joseph Smith and his entourage arrived there.

**38.33** The Gospel will be preached to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, and by the power of the priesthood it shall be accomplished. Those who labor will be inspired and empowered to do that which the Lord would have done. They will know from moment to moment those actions to be performed, those words that must be said, and those blessing that ought to be bestowed that they Kingdom of God might advance upon the face of the earth.

**38.33.4—**whosoever—The Lord Jesus Christ chooses those who will represent him.

**38.33.38—**power—Men look upon the conditions and circumstances that prevail in the world and they wonder at what must be done in order that the Lord’s purposes might be accomplished. A simple review of the progress of the Church, however, will reveal how the Lord’s hands have touched the nations of the earth and the hearts of the children of men just at the moment when the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is introduced into another part of the land. If there has been insistent opposition, that opposition is weakened or altogether removed as the elders of Israel press forward in their attempts to gather their brethren out from the four quarters of the earth.

33 And from thence, whosoever I will shall go forth among all nations, and it shall be told them what they shall do; for I have a great work laid up in store, for Israel shall be saved, and I will lead them whithersoever I will, and no power shall stay my hand.

**D&C 38:33**
**EM 2:703**

34 And now, I give unto the church in these parts a commandment, that certain men among them shall be appointed, and they shall be appointed by the voice of the church;

**D&C 38:34**
**DS 1 255**
**EM 1:298**
**D&C 38:34–35**
**MD 150**

35 And they shall look to the poor and the needy, and administer to their relief that they shall not suffer; and send them forth to the place which I have commanded them;

36 And this shall be their work, to govern the affairs of the property of this church.
settlement of Jackson county, Missouri, unfolded in the lives of the membership of the Church. It was this burgeoning inventory of personal and real property that motivated the revelation to appoint two Bishops to administer the temporal affairs of the Kingdom. One would preside in Kirtland, Ohio, and the other in Independence, Missouri.

38.37 There were times when the movements of the saints were closely monitored by those who were not members of the Church, so that the saints could be easily taken advantage of by unscrupulous investors and other greedy and unprincipled men. Often, obedience to the Lord’s commandments meant personal economic sacrifice on the part of the disciples of Jesus Christ. The Lord, therefore, provided agents who remained behind to protect the property of the members of the Church who had moved away, frustrating many of the covetous who thought to spoil the righteous.

38.38 The Lord did not require abandonment of wealth as a test of obedience; He required tithing and consecration. Taking the fullness of the Gospel into all of the world was a practical task, a task which necessitated the expenditure of personal and collective wealth. Much of that wealth would derive from the faithful members of the Church as they commended themselves into the hands of the Lord, as they exercised their faith to establish the spirit of Zion in their own hearts and in the place that the Lord had appointed unto them to gather.

38.39 The Nephite prophet Jacob had taught within the pages of the Book of Mormon that wealth in and of itself was not evil, but rather the motivations for acquiring the world’s goods constituted that which was suspect.

And now behold, my brethren, this is the word which I declare unto you, that many of you have begun to search for gold, and for silver, and for all manner of precious ores, in the which this land, which is a land of promise unto you and to your seed, doth abound most plentifully, And the hand of providence hath smiled upon you most pleasingly, that you have obtained many riches; and because some of you have obtained more abundantly than that of your brethren ye are lifted up in the pride of your hearts, and wear stiff necks and high heads because of the costliness of your apparel, and persecute your brethren because ye suppose that ye are better than they. And now, my brethren, do ye suppose that God justifieth you in this thing? Behold, I say unto you, Nay. But he condemneth you, and if ye persist in these things his judgments must speedily come unto you. O that he would show you that he can pierce you, and with one glance of his eye he can smite you to the dust! O that he would rid you from this iniquity and abomination. And, O that ye would listen unto the word of his commands, and let not this pride of your hearts destroy your souls! Think of your brethren like unto yourselves, and be familiar with all and free with your substance, that they may be rich like unto you. But before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God. And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; and ye will seek them for the intent to do good—to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick and the afflicted. (Jacob 2:12–19)

The pride of the wealthy saints is severely chastised as well as the covetousness of the poor. The Lord’s point is, while material wealth has its place in a lost and fallen world, it is not the means by which a man’s righteousness is deter-

37 And they that have farms that cannot be sold, let them be left or rented as seemth them good.

38 See that all things are preserved; and when men are endowed with power from on high and sent forth, all these things shall be gathered unto the bosom of the church.

39 And if ye seek the riches which it is the will of the Father to give unto you, ye shall be the richest of all people, for ye shall have the riches of eternity; and it must needs be that the riches of the earth are mine to give; but beware of pride, lest ye become as the Nephites of old.
mined. Righteousness can be exhibited by any man, woman, or child, regardless of the social, political, or economic circumstances in which they find themselves through their obedience to the laws and commandments of the Father and the Son.

38.40 At the heart of this commandment is the eminent move from New York to Ohio and that every member of the Church was to do all in his or her power to see to it that all who desired to be obedient to the counsel of the Lord would be able to do so. Every man would have his appointed tasks to help facilitate the gathering of the disciples of Jesus Christ. This specific instruction that applied directly to the events transpiring in the world in January 1831, also has general application to the entire Dispensation of the Fullness of Times. The work of gathering Israel and establishing Zion is a collective labor, every member doing his or her part as assigned by the Lord through His anointed servants.

38.41 The faithful were to encourage the faltering members of the Church, helping them to obey the directions given to the saints of the latter days. In addition, those who pertained to the Kingdom of God, those who were informed as to the great trials and tribulations that were about to descend upon the inhabitants of the land, had a divinely appointed mission to preach faith and repentance in the ears of those who still wavered in their wickedness, that they might put off the natural man and become saints of the Most High. All this to be done in humility and not in the spirit of condescending arrogance.

38.42 Again, this signaled the gathering of Israel, first to northeastern Ohio, then on to Independence, Missouri, and eventually withersoever the Lord would direct, for the blessing and the benefit of the children of God. The wicked were the tares. They were to be gathered and burned. The righteous constituted the good grain to be harvested by the servants of the master of the vineyard and brought to the garner. The servants of God, whatsoever their capacity, were to provide the example of obedience and faith in all things.

38.42.23—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as "Amen" derives from roots which mean "true". This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

39.0.1 As the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ are preached, many of the honest in heart come forward professing a desire to receive the truth. Some of these do not anticipate the cost associated with discipleship. The Savior made this point with many of his erstwhile followers with a series of observations and parables.

And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath

**Section 39**

Date: January 5, 1831
Place: Fayette, New York
To: James Covill

D&C 39
DHC 1 143
EM 1:408
EM 2:505
EM 4:1593
laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin
to mock him. Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to
finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth
not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to
meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while
the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desirer
conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh
not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:26–33)

James Covill, a man who, according to the History of the Church, had labored
as a Baptist minister for about forty years, came to Fayette, New York, osten-
sibly to have the prophet Joseph Smith petition the Heavens in his behalf, that
he might learn that which he should do to please God the Father. James
asserted that he was willing to do anything that God would ask of him
through Joseph. This revelation was the result. As to James Covill’s response
to the rather specific instructions that God gave to him, see Section 40. This
section appeared as Chapter XLI in the Book of Commandments, and as
Section 59 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

39.0.2 There has been no small discussion as to whether James Covill was a
Baptist minister or a Methodist preacher. In the index to the Book of Com-
mandments, the reference states “1832—A Revelation to James [Covill] a
Methodist Priest”. Yet in the introductory text to the revelation as it is pre-
sented in the History of the Church, James Covill is said to have been a
Baptist preacher for about forty years. Some historians have identified James
Covill with one James Covel, an erstwhile Methodist minister who was
appointed a traveling minister for the Methodists in Litchfield, Connecticut.
As far as records show, this James Covel was never closer to Fayette, New
York, than Poughkeepsie, a city on the Hudson River about 250 miles away.
How or when this James Covel ever heard of the prophet Joseph Smith
remains unexplained.

39.1 Under the direction of God the eternal Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, as
the premortal Jehovah, brought about the creation of the earth and all things
that would dwell upon it by the power of the priesthood bestowed upon him.
The state and condition of the world in which we live is that of a Celestial
world, lost and fallen, and its inhabitants bounded by the limitation of time
and space. The Savior assures James Covill that his existence did not begin
with his birth in Bethlehem, but that he dwelt in the eternity of the Father
prior to the foundations of the earth being laid. In addition, his postmortal
existence would continue forever, as an exalted being. That which the Lord
achieved through his personal righteousness and the power of the resurrection
vested in him, would be available to all of those who descended from heaven
to partake of mortality through his atoning sacrifice..

39.1.18–20—Great I AM—This divine title of the God of Abraham, Isaac,
and Jacob has ever been associated with Jehovah, the premortal name
of the Lord Jesus Christ (see EX-C 3.14).

39.1.22–23—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the
body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his
atoning sacrifice for sin.

39.2 Without the covenant of the Father, without the Gospel of salvation and
redemption, there is no life or expectation of life. Without the resurrection,
the body and the spirit of man would remain separated in misery for all eternity.
Without the remission of sins, the suffering of Christ for the personal

1 HEARKEN and listen to the voice of him who is from all
eternity to all eternity, the Great I
AM, even Jesus Christ—

D&C 39:1
MD 240, 340
PM 46, 104
D&C 39:1–3
AF 84
DS 1 29
MA 57
D&C 39:1–4
AF 469
PM 353
EM 4:1673
D&C 39:1–6
DNTC 1 73
DNTC 2 275
MD 65, 745
PM 495

2 The light and the life of the world; a light which shineth in
darkness and the darkness compe-
prehendeth it not;

D&C 39:2
MD 443, 447,
448
violations of the Law of God, there would be no hope for reconciliation, no possibility of returning with joy into the presence of our Heavenly parents. The power to overcome the effects of the Fall of Adam and the devastating consequences of rebellion were embodied in the Savior who conquered both death and hell through his personal righteousness and the power which the Father placed within him when he embarked upon his mortal sojourn upon the earth.

39.2—life—There is no other name given under Heaven by which mankind might be saved. The promise, the covenant, the Gospel of the Father has been manifested to men on the earth in only one person. Through that promise of the Father all men may have eternal life, even as many who will.

39.2—life—It is through the Gospel of Jesus Christ that the purpose of life in made clear. Through the covenants by which we are bound to the Father and the Son are we enabled to perceive the eternal destiny which lies before us.

39.3 Here the Savior cites from the writings of John the Beloved, from the first chapter of the Gospel according to John.

He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, [even] to them that believe on his name: (John 1:10–12)

Just as Jesus of Nazareth was not universally recognized as the Son of God, neither would Joseph and Oliver be recognized by the world in their day as instruments of salvation for the inhabitants of the earth. But there would be a few of the honest in heart who would join them in their ministry, just as there were those among the Jews who accepted the invitation to enter into the Church and Kingdom of God. This should have served as a fair warning to James Cowdery that his decision to become a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ in the latter days would not be popular with the world from which he came.

39.3—meridian—In reference to the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ came into mortality about midway between the fall of mankind, when the temporal existence of the earth began, and the exaltation of the earth which will take place after the Millennium and the short season that follows the thousand year reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

39.4 Here the Lord paraphrases a similar declaration made by the Apostle John in the introductory material to his Gospel (see JN-C 1.12). The disciples of Christ are empowered, through their obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Christ, to pass by every sentinel placed between the inhabitants of the earth and the abode of deity. They are perfected in spirit and body to dwell in the presence of God through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are knowledgeable and strong in their convictions. They are without guile and filled with charity for all men. They have bestowed upon them the authority of Heaven to bless and strengthen their brethren. In other words, the disciples have become precisely as their Master inasmuch as they have obeyed the same laws and heartened to the same voice as did he.

39.5 The discipleship of any man is in anticipation of his becoming like unto the master of the discipline. The price of Christian discipleship is the putting off of the natural man, every whit, and embracing all of the principles and ordinances that pertain to salvation and exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom.
For a man set in his ways, as was James Covill, this was an arduous process. One does not merely lie down in the evening as a Baptist and wake up the next morning as a fully developed son of God in the image of the Lord Jesus Christ. James Covill would learn throughout the text of this present revelation that he was not merely moving from one defined spot to another, but that he would have to unlearn many false conceptions to which he had been exposed during his time as a minister. In some instances, his whole approach to Christian living would have to be abandoned in favor of the truth. This would prove to be more than he could bear.

39.6 Although we cannot speak with certainty in this matter, it seems clear that James Covill may have thought that leaving his greatly tenured position in the Baptist church to be a sacrifice that was beyond him. To join with the Latter-day Saints would require him to publically admit that his teachings regarding the power and authority to baptize had been wrong for most of his life. His faith in Jesus Christ had been well-placed, but his confidence in the authority of the scriptures as the source for divine approbation fell far short of the truth. Additionally, no Baptist had claimed the Apostolic authority to lay one’s hands upon another’s head in order that the gift of the Holy Ghost might be conferred. The baptism of fire was beyond them as well, a clear indication of the absence of divine authority. Here the invitation to peace and knowledge is tacitly extended. James Covill understood the limitations of the philosophy of the Baptist church, but his long-term association and the temporal comfort that he enjoyed as a minister was too much for him to abandon.

39.7 James Covill had been an effective leader of many of the honest in heart who had been received into the Baptist church in much the same way that Sidney Rigdon had been a blessing to those who had accepted the teachings of Alexander Campbell. He would be blessed for the good that he had done; nothing virtuous would be lost to him in the eternities.

39.7.10—James—In reference to James Covill. Historical records suggest that this erstwhile disciple’s last name should be spelled Covel, who apparently was a Methodist minister and a medical doctor. He was invited by the Lord Jesus Christ to unite himself to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which he subsequently rejected. He died in New York city in February 1850.

39.8 We are not privy as to how James Covel first came into contact with the principles of the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ, or how he became acquainted with Joseph Smith and the newly restored Church of Jesus Christ. Yet he apparently was initially sincere in his request.

39.9 We are not privy as to the nature of the various rejections alluded to here by the Lord. That James Covill had been frequently troubled by his experiences as a minister seems clear enough. We might suppose that the inspiration of the Lord might have helped him avoid much of the sorrow that had come into his life. The implication here, of course, was that James might once again reject the counsel of the Lord because of his temporal circumstances.

39.10 Whether James Covel had been a Baptist or a Methodist minister (see 39.0.2) has little or no bearing on the Lord’s proposition to him. Both scenarios would have been difficult for him to accept had he determined to hold on to what he assumed that he had. If James had been a Baptist minister, his baptism into the Church of Jesus Christ would have seemed repetitious. He would have to accept the premise that until the appearance of John the Baptist

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6 And this is my gospel—repentance and baptism by water, and then cometh the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost, even the Comforter, which showeth all things, and teacheth the peaceable things of the kingdom.

7 And now, behold, I say unto you, my servant James, I have looked upon thy works and I know thee.

8 And verily I say unto thee, thine heart is now right before me at this time; and, behold, I have bestowed great blessings upon thy head;

9 Nevertheless, thou hast seen great sorrow, for thou hast rejected me many times because of pride and the cares of the world.

10 But, behold, the days of thy deliverance are come, if thou wilt hearken to my voice, which saith unto thee: Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on my name, and you shall receive my
to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, the authority to perform effective baptisms had been lost to the world for 1,800 years or so. He would have had to have accepted the declaration given by the Lord in Section 22 of the Doctrine and Covenants, as had all of the early saints who had been baptized in one fashion or another. If he had been a Methodist, the whole notion of baptism by immersion would have been troubling to him. The Methodists and the Baptists were seriously at odds with one another over this doctrine at this particular time.

39.11 James Covel’s experiences in his sectarian ministry would have been of great help to him as he was received into the Church and Kingdom of God and had bestowed upon him the holy priesthood of God. The preparations of the Lord’s servants come in a variety of ways depending on the nature of the divine tasks to be placed upon them. Like Parley P. Pratt, James might have very well become a fervent and effective preacher to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ had he himself been willing to abide by them.

39.11.2— if—An extremely important caveat. James Covel was free to choose, and if he would choose to be baptized, then he would have greater opportunities to serve in the Church and Kingdom of God. 

39.11.48—Israel—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

39.12 As James Covel had been prepared to accomplish a great work in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, so also would the Savior prepare the way before him as he labored in the vineyard. The act of forsaking the vain religious philosophies of men would have engendered within him a confirmation of all that he had been taught regarding the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the latter days.

39.13 The direct invitation to participate in the coming forth of the Kingdom of God is presented by the Lord in anticipation that James Covel would, of his own free will and choice, accept the blessings of both time and eternity. Within a few months the site for the building of the city of Zion would be found and dedicated. James could have very easily become part of the enterprise of preparing a people for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

39.13.19—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every righteous man and woman since the days of Adam and Eve. It is a goal worth pursuing, inasmuch as it is an attempt to restore the earth to its paradisiacal glory. From time to time there have been people who have succeeded in binding the hearts and minds of their fellow men to them through faith, hope, and charity, in the bonds of the Christian covenant. In certain instances, entire communities have been translated because of their faithfulness to the principles and ordinances that pertain to eternity. The goal of the saints of the latter days is to prepare the entire world for the restoration of the earth to its paradisiacal glory, a condition that will last for a thousand years while the Lord Jesus Christ rules and reigns upon the earth in the Church and Kingdom of God. Zion will, therefore, eventually fill the whole face of this planet.

39.14 Again, we do not know precisely from whence James Covel originated, but if he were the James Covel mentioned above, his first desire may have been to return to his immediate and extended family, together with any

Spirit, and a blessing so great as you never have known.

11 And if thou do this, I have prepared thee for a greater work. Thou shalt preach the fulness of my gospel, which I have sent forth in these last days, the covenant which I have sent forth to recover my people, which are of the house of Israel.

12 And it shall come to pass that power shall rest upon thee; thou shalt have great faith, and I will be with thee and go before thy face.

13 Thou art called to labor in my vineyard, and to build up my church, and to bring forth Zion, that it may rejoice upon the hills and flourish.

14 Behold, verily, verily, I say unto thee, thou art not called to go into the eastern countries, but thou

D&C 39:11
DN TC 3 178
DS 1 156
DS 3 14
MD 529
CR95-A 45

D&C 39:13
DS 3 330, 348
EM 2:703
remnants of any congregations that he may have taught during the forty years of his service in the ministry. However, the Lord had just instructed His Church that they were all to migrate to the Ohio where they would receive power from on high and be blessed in their desires to move the work of the Lord forward. James Covel was not to be an exception to the rule, notwithstanding any particular talents or skills that he might have seen within himself.

39.14.25–26—the Ohio—We may only speculate on the use of the definite article when referencing the place to which the saints were to gather. It is not, as some have claimed, a reference to the Ohio River, a body of water that lies far to the south of Kirtland, Ohio. It is likely a shortening of the phrase “The Ohio Country”, a part of which was eventually organized into “The Northwest Territory”, and subsequently into “The Ohio Territory”, from which was derived the State of Ohio. Ohio had been admitted into the Union 28 years before Joseph Smith and his entourage arrived there.

39.15 For all of his erudition, James Covel could not have possibly anticipated the blessings that the Father and the Son had prepared for the obedient. Some of the saints would find themselves establishing the first manifestations of the city of Zion in Jackson county, Missouri. Others would be engaged in the building of the Kirtland Temple, wherein Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery would receive the keys of the priesthood which would enable them to gather scattered Israel by means of the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They would also receive the keys of forming eternal families through the sealing ordinances of the Temple. They would also find solace in the potential salvation of those who had left this world without a knowledge of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is to be expected that James Covel and his family would have partaken of all of these blessings to one degree or another had they accepted the invitation to be baptized.

39.15.10–11—the Ohio—We may only speculate on the use of the definite article when referencing the place to which the saints were to gather. It is not, as some have claimed, a reference to the Ohio River, a body of water that lies far to the south of Kirtland, Ohio. It is likely a shortening of the phrase “The Ohio Country”, a part of which was eventually organized into “The Northwest Territory”, and subsequently into “The Ohio Territory”, from which was derived the State of Ohio. Ohio had been admitted into the Union 28 years before Joseph Smith and his entourage arrived there.

39.16 It is clear that James Covel would have been a great asset to the honest in heart dwelling in northeastern Ohio. His training and experience would have served those people well, illuminating their minds and hearts to the truth, especially if he had been filled with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost coupled with the power of the Melchizedek priesthood. The people of Kirtland and environs needed to hear the truth of the matter, that the word of the Lord cannot be obviated because of the limited vision of those who would be his disciples.

39.16.12—Ohio—No doubt speaking of those residents of the state who had been exposed to the truths of the restoration which had been imparted by the missionaries bound for the Unorganized Indian Territories a few months before.

39.17 In order to do as the Lord requested of him, James Covel would have had to have received great power and authority from the Father and the Son through the ordinations of the priesthood. A man who is authorized to call art called to go to the Ohio.

15 And inasmuch as my people shall assemble themselves at the Ohio, I have kept in store a blessing such as is not known among the children of men, and it shall be poured forth upon their heads. And from thence men shall go forth into all nations.

16 Behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, that the people in Ohio call upon me in much faith, thinking I will stay my hand in judgment upon the nations, but I cannot deny my word.

17 Wherefore lay to with your might and call faithful laborers into my vineyard, that it may be pruned.
other servants into the ministry in the name of Jesus Christ, must be one who has been ordained to do so. James Covel’s potential in the Church and Kingdom of God was extraordinary.

39.18 The judgment of the Lord is upon the world of the wicked. They shall all be destroyed at his coming if they do not repent and become as little children, full of grace and love. The righteous do not desire the destruction of their neighbors, but seek to bring them unto Christ that they might be spared the terrible events of the last days prior to the coming of the Savior in glory.

39.19 This is fundamentally the same cry as that uttered by John the Baptist when he first came forward to preach the Gospel of faith, repentance, and baptism. For the people of northwestern Ohio, the Kingdom of God was at hand, the whole of the Church of Jesus Christ having been commanded to resort to those environs in anticipation of the blessings that had been promised them by the Lord. Again, James Covel was to be like others among the early saints who had been prepared to work a great work of salvation, if he would take upon himself the covenants of the Lord.

39.28—*Hosanna*—The Hebrew word phrase here Hellenized means “Oh Saviour! I beseech thee”. Not only can this be understood as a plea to the Son of God for redemption, it is also a cry of repentance, like unto “Save yourself from this untoward generation.”

39.20 This command to baptize the honest in heart presumes that James Covel would himself be baptized and then take upon himself the divine authority of God as he was called and ordained an elder in the Church of Jesus Christ.

39.21 There were those among the various sects of the world who were perfectly willing to work out the date for the second coming of the Savior, notwithstanding the Lord’s statement that not even the angels of heaven would know in advance. Segments of the Baptist religion were prominently engaged in these sorts of speculation, particularly William Miller and his followers. James Covel is warned of these speculations.

39.22 There is no other name given under heaven by which a man can be saved except that of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other path appointed that has which has articulated as the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. James Covel could be an active part of the gathering of Israel and the salvation of mankind if he himself would submit to the terms of exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom.

39.23 What more could a Christian gentleman desire, especially one who had spent his life attempting to bring the children of men unto the Savior? He knew how to preach with faith. He knew how to cry repentance according to the word of God. To have bestowed upon him the power of the priesthood of God whereby he could administer the ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ should have been a wondrous proposition. To be capable of doing those things that would help preserve the earth from utter destruction at the second coming should have stirred his soul into complete and total obedience to the law of the Lord. He hesitated, however, and then withdrew himself from consideration.

39.24 Not only is the time of the Lord’s appearance in the heavens drawing much closer than ever before, but from the moment of that appearance until for the last time.

18 And inasmuch as they do repent and receive the fullness of my gospel, and become sanctified, I will stay mine hand in judgment.

19 Wherefore, go forth, crying with a loud voice, saying: The kingdom of heaven is at hand; crying: Hosanna! blessed be the name of the Most High God.

20 Go forth baptizing with water, preparing the way before my face for the time of my coming:

21 For the time is at hand; the day or the hour no man knoweth; but it surely shall come.

22 And he that receiveth these things receiveth me; and they shall be gathered unto me in time and in eternity.

23 And again, it shall come to pass that on as many as ye shall baptize with water, ye shall lay your hands, and they shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and shall be looking forth for the signs of my coming, and shall know me.

the time of the separation of the righteous from the wicked will be quite short as well. If one is not keeping the commandments as the great signs of his coming are manifested, there will not be enough time to fully prepare to be among those who dwell with him upon the earth during the Millennium. James Covel had been both invited and warned.

39.24—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

40.0 The case of James Covel was disturbing to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon. This had been a man who had exhibited as much enthusiasm for the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus as any they had encountered. James had expressed a willingness to do whatsoever the Lord would command him to do through the revelations given through the prophet. Yet in a short time, James Covel abandoned his quest to do the Lord’s will and returned to his former state. How could any man display such a dichotomy of sentiment in no more than a few days? Was it pride and the cares of the world that derailed him, as had been the case many times before? (see 39.9) If so, when and how did those cares affect him while he was in the company of Joseph and Sidney? Had they done something to offend the man? Was his failure to embrace the fullness of the Gospel a product of something they had said? James Covel’s heart had been right before the Lord. What had gone wrong? This revelation was in answer to their concern and distress. This section appeared as Chapter XLII in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 60 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

40.1 Here we have a clear a definition as to what constitutes a man’s heart being right before the Lord. A broken heart and a contrite spirit is the acceptable sacrifice of the disciples of Jesus Christ in this dispensation. James Covel offered those up on the altar of obedience, that he was willing to do whatsoever the Lord would command him to do. When the moment of truth arrived, however, he was not willing to finish the performance of his duty. He was not like father Abraham who was completely ready to take the life of his only son in order to obey the word of the Lord. Metaphorically speaking, James Covel withdrew the knife and took back his lamb.

40.1.13—14—James Covel—Historical records suggest that this erstwhile disciple’s last name should be spelled Covel, who apparently was a Methodist minister and a medical doctor. He was invited by the Lord Jesus Christ to unite himself to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which he subsequently rejected. He died in New York city in February 1850.

40.2 Apparently, James Covel had taken the revelation that he had received to heart, having understood what he was supposed to do in order to be a part of the burgeoning Kingdom of God upon the earth. We are not privy as to what unnerved him. The move to northeastern Ohio had been motivated in part by intensifying persecution in Fayette, New York, and other towns and villages where the Church had small branches. Had his expressed interest in the restoration of the Gospel and the Church of Jesus Christ become public? Had he been accosted by some of the antagonists of the Kingdom of God? Did he have second thoughts as well as to how he would fit into this new community economically, socially, and intellectually? We do not know, save that these

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<th>Section 40</th>
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<tr>
<td>Date: January 1831</td>
<td>D&amp;C 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place: Fayette, New York</td>
<td>DHC 1 145</td>
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<tr>
<td>To: Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon</td>
<td>EM 1:408</td>
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<td>EM 2:505</td>
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<td>1 BEHOLD, verily I say unto you, that the heart of my servant James Covill was right before me, for he covenanted with me that he would obey my word.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 40:1–3 CR02-A 28</td>
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<td>2 And he received the word with gladness, but straightway Satan tempted him; and the fear of persecution and the cares of the world caused him to reject the word.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 40:2 MD 569</td>
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were temporal matters that troubled him and not spiritual or doctrinal issues.

40.3 Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon need not concern themselves further in the matter, since James Covel was outside of their purview. We know little about what happen to the erstwhile disciple after his rejection of the opportunity to press forward in faith unto salvation in Jesus Christ, but he no doubt was dealt with mercifully and with great kindness until his courage increased and his faith was sufficient to renew his trek toward salvation and exaltation. 40.3.19—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

41.0.1 In previous revelations, the Lord had instructed the prophet Joseph Smith, together with the saints who had gathered to locations in Pennsylvania and New York, to move their households to northeastern Ohio where they would have the blessings of Heaven poured out upon them. Needless to say, not everyone who had espoused the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ responded positively to the commandment. Exercising faith and repenting of one’s sins required a tremendous effort by those who would be the saints of the Most High. Additionally, the expression of their faith in the midst of their friends and family frequently brought about great opposition and persecution.

The move to Ohio was to ameliorate some of the difficulties that the members of the Church were experiencing in Manchester, Fayette, Colesville, and Harmony. Those who chose to remain behind soon found themselves alienated from the Spirit of the Lord, quickly sliding back into their former beliefs and habits. The obedient were justified in their confidence in the prophet and the word of God. They found themselves witnessing the fulfillment of prophecy and enjoyed the blessings of the Holy Ghost as they observed to keep the will of the Lord regarding them.

41.0.2 Prior to the fall of 1830, the inhabitants of northeastern Ohio knew little or nothing regarding the experiences of the prophet Joseph Smith, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, or the formal organization of the Church of Jesus Christ in this last dispensation. They did, however, enjoy a degree of spiritual desire and a willingness to conduct their lives in accordance with that which they understood from the writings of the Apostles and prophets. Sidney Rigdon raised up a great congregation of people who wished to please God in and around the community of Kirtland, Ohio. When Oliver Cowdery, Parley P. Pratt and their companions arrived there, they found erstwhile disciples of Christ who were willing to hearken to their voice and to the message of the restored Gospel. In a relatively short period of time, scores of Sidney’s congregation, including their minister, accepted baptism at the hands of the Lord’s servants. Several men were ordained to various offices in the priesthood and branches of the Church of Jesus Christ were established.

Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge soon made their way to Fayette, New York, where they met with the prophet Joseph, recounting the blessings that had come into the lives of the saints who dwelt in the land of the Ohio. The Lord then made it clear to Joseph Smith and the rest of the membership of the Church that there was a safe haven to be found in Kirtland and that they should move their families and belongings to that place of gathering.

41.0.3 Among those who would be the disciples of Jesus, there were small
groups of people that thought to emulate the Christian society that existed in
the New Testament times, particularly among the saints who lived in and
around the city of Jerusalem after the death and resurrection of the Savior.
These enthusiasts perceived a gathering of believers who shared all that they
had with one another, as if they had been a "family". They attempted this life-
style without the spirit of revelation, without the priesthood of God, and
without the natural sentiments that derive from living in accordance with the
commandments of God. There were individuals who took advantage of the
tenderness and innocence of others, betraying the spirit of that which the
faithful were trying to do. As a result, some of the most devoted souls were
soon filled with a great deal of bitterness toward the communal experience.
This bitterness and contention was Satan inspired, designed to harden the
hearts and blind the minds of the inhabitants of the land toward the Law of
Consecration that was about to be revealed unto the saints of God.

41.0.4 The prophet Joseph Smith and his family arrived in Kirtland, Ohio, on
1 February 1831 in the company of Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge.
Joseph introduced himself to Newel K. Whitney who immediately provided
Joseph and Emma with full accommodations in his own home for several
weeks. There Joseph would receive many revelations, included this present.
The others that would follow would clarify the Lord’s intent in blessing his
people with those same blessings that had come to the people of Enoch, even
the blessings that attend the observance of the Law of Consecration. Not only
would Joseph be required to help the saints understand where the “family”
had gone amiss, he would also be required to present the principles of exalta-
tion in a manner that would not be misunderstood by the membership of the
Church, particularly those who had been associated with the unauthorized
attempt to live a communal life. The task would prove to be a great one.
Shortly after Joseph and Emma arrived in Kirtland, a man by the name of
Leman Copley offered to provide both Joseph and Sidney with houses and
provisions. The prophet petitioned the Lord on the matter and this section
was the response. In the history of the Church, the Lord’s wisdom is mani-
fested. Leman Copley was as unstable as water. When the Colesville Branch
arrived in Kirtland, Leman offered them the use of his farm. Within weeks,
Leman withdrew his offering and forced the saints to leave what he considered
to be his property. In June 1831, his apostasy clearly manifest to everyone
concerned, Leman Copley was excommunicated from the Church of Jesus
Christ. In October 1832 he was readmitted into the Church by baptism. After
the death of the prophet Joseph Smith Leman associated himself with various
apostate sects. One can only wonder at the disruption and consternation that
would have occurred if the prophet Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon had
received the proffered shelter and means. This section appeared as Chapter
XLIII in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 61 in the first edition of
the Doctrine and Covenants.

41.1 The work and the glory of God the eternal Father and His Son is to
bring about the immortality and eternal life of mankind. The power of the
resurrection vested in Jesus Christ guarantees the immortality of every man,
woman, and child who had every breathed a breath upon this planet. The
eternal life of the children of men is accomplished in a twofold process. The
first aspect of spiritual salvation comes in connection with the individual’s
desire to live by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God. Will-
ing obedience to the commandments of God brings the divine nature into the
hearts and minds of the disciples of Christ, inasmuch as every commandment
reflects a character trait of the God of Heaven. The second aspect of spiritual

1 HEARKEN and hear, O ye my
people, saith the Lord and your
God, ye whom I delight to bless
with the greatest of all blessings, ye
that hear me; and ye that hear me
not will I curse, that have professed
my name, with the heaviest of all
cursings.

D&C 41:1
DNTEC 2 122
DS 1 237
DS 2 99, 218
DS 3 310
MD 175, 259,
445, 530

294
salvation comes about because of the willing sacrifice of the Son of God as he took upon himself the consequences of the collective sins of humanity, the punishments that were incurred when men willfully disobeyed the inspired counsel of their eternal Father. The atoning sacrifice accomplished by the Lamb of God provided the means by which the disobedient might be purified, cleansed from all sin, that they might stand spotless before the Father in the last day. Those who receive the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ will be blessed beyond imagination, while those who reject them will be found without hope in the day of judgment.

41.2 The general gathering of the saints was to take place in and around the community of Kirtland, Ohio. The officers and the teachers were to gather around Joseph to receive the mind and will of the Lord regarding the establishment of Zion. There could be no city like unto that of Enoch, unless the membership of the Church were of one heart and one mind, dwelling in righteousness with no poor among them. The translation of the beginning chapters of the book of Genesis had made that perfectly clear. The prophet Joseph Smith would receive the word of the Lord, the Law of Consecration, which the elders of the Church would be called upon to sustain with all of their heart, might, mind, and strength if the Church and Kingdom of God were to move forward.

41.3 As might be expected, there was a great diversity of opinion in Kirtland and environs as to how the Gospel of Jesus Christ ought to be practically implemented in the Church of Jesus Christ. Many extraordinary practices had sprung up, many of which were contrary to the principles that would bring the saints together in love and harmony. When men are left to their own devices, they seldom propose conduct that edifies and mutually blesses those around them. The Lord God of Israel, however, never fails to bind the hearts and mind of the children of men together when they hearken to His counsel. The formal organization of the Church of Christ had been accomplished by men working within the legal structure of the land. But all this was done according to the specific instructions given by God through His servants. The same was true regarding the economic and social arrangements that the Lord had in mind for his disciples. The minds of men would not be able to figure them out; they would be revealed through the prophet of God in the spirit of prophecy.

41.4 The establishment of Zion constitutes one of the major steps necessary in order to prepare a people for the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. His glorious return will initiate the Millennial reign, a thousand year period of peace and prosperity that will provide salvation and exaltation for millions upon millions of the children of God who otherwise might never had had the opportunity to receive the benefits of the atonement of Jesus Christ. The saints of the latter days are called upon to keep the commandments of the Lord for the sake of their own salvation and for the sake of myriads of others who would be blessed through their obedience.

41.4.21—law—Although we may perceive in this injunction a call to obey all of the laws of God, within the historical context, the Lord is commending the Law of Consecration which was about to be unfolded to the membership of the Church.

41.5 While the membership of the Church was making efforts to gather to northeastern Ohio, Oliver Cowdery and his companions were nearing the western borders of the United States, preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ as contained in the Bible and the Book of Mormon. Oliver was also charged with

2 Hearken, O ye elders of my church whom I have called, behold I give unto you a commandment, that ye shall assemble yourselves together to agree upon my word;

3 And by the prayer of your faith ye shall receive my law, that ye may know how to govern my church and have all things right before me.

4 And I will be your ruler when I come; and behold, I come quickly, and ye shall see that my law is kept.

5 He that receiveth my law and doeth it, the same is my disciple; and he that saith he receiveth it and doeth it not, the same is not my
identifying the general area where the city of Zion would one day be established. Within a few days time from the giving of this present revelation, the Lord though His prophet would reveal the basic principles that would govern the inhabitants of the city of the New Jerusalem. Those who would receive the Law with all of their hearts would be permitted to make the journey to Jackson county, Missouri, to participate in the laying of the foundation of that most excellent of cities. Those who balked at the Law of Consecration, whether in Ohio or in Missouri, would have to settle themselves elsewhere.

41.6 To a certain degree, the blessings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, those that would be manifested to the world as the city of Zion, had been trampled under the foot of men in the little groups in and around Kirtland, Ohio, that wished to live as the ancient Christian saints. These men and women were, for the most part, completely unprepared to live as the people of Enoch. From what we can ascertain from the records of the time, there were among them those whose hearts were not set upon the glory of God, but who proved to be men and women filled with lust and avarice.

41.6.28—dogs—This is in reference to the metaphor used by the Savior when the woman of Canaan approached Jesus about her dying child. The Lord told her that he was sent to the House of Israel during his mortal ministry, and that it would be inappropriate for the bread prepared for the children of household to be given to the family pets. The woman acknowledged that, but subsequently observed that the pets of the house are given leave to partake of the food that the children chose not to eat. Because of her great faith, the woman received the blessing that she had requested (see MT-C 15.21–31). No such exception would be made for the unworthy to participate in the building up of the city of Zion.

41.6.31—pearls—The injunction against giving the bread prepared for the children of the Kingdom to those that could not possibly appreciate it, was incorporated into the Sermon on the Mount. In the same breath, Jesus uttered another metaphorical comparison between the blessing reserved for the saints with pearls, which could not possibly be understood by those who had been completely overcome by the temptations of this lost and fallen world (see MT-C 7.6)

41.7 By the time of this revelation, Joseph and Emma Smith had been the guests of Newel and Elizabeth Whitney for three days. The instruction that the Smiths were to have their own home was a tacit refutation of that practice among the various “families” in Kirtland, Ohio, that the faithful were to live in a communal society. This also served notice to Leman Copley that his offer would not be received at that time.

41.7.5—meet—A perfectly good English adjective that derives from Old High German roots that mean “moderation, suitability, manner, valuable, worthy, fit, proper, appropriate”.

41.7.9–11—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

41.7.15—house—Joseph and Emma’s home was located on Chillicothe Road, just north of the Kirtland Temple and the Kirtland cemetery. The Smith’s lived there from 1834 to 1837.

41.7.22—translate—in reference to the translation of the Bible which had begun earlier when Joseph and Emma were living in Fayette, New York. Sidney Rigdon would continue in Kirtland as Joseph’s scribe
disciple, and shall be cast out from among you;

6 For it is not meet that the things which belong to the children of the kingdom should be given to them that are not worthy, or to dogs, or the pearls to be cast before swine.

7 And again, it is meet that my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., should have a house built, in which to live and translate.
during the next two years. It is ironic, however, that the only translation that took place in Joseph’s home in Kirtland was a portion of the Book of Abraham.

41.8 In 1831 Sidney Rigdon’s home was located in Mentor, Ohio, about 3½ miles north of Kirtland. Inasmuch as he had been called to serve as Joseph Smith’s scribe, he would need to be in Kirtland frequently, but he was left to his own devices as to where he would choose to live. Eventually, Sidney would acquire a residence in Kirtland, Ohio, also located on the Chillicothe Road about 300 yards south of Joseph’s home and almost across the street from the Kirtland Temple. He also did not choose to be provided with housing and provisions by Leman Copley.

41.8.9–10—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

41.9 At the time that Oliver Cowdery and his companions taught the principles of salvation while on their mission in Kirtland in the fall of 1830, Edward Partridge was hesitant to join himself with the burgeoning Church of Christ that the elders established. When Sidney Rigdon, however, determined to travel to Fayette, New York, to meet with the prophet Joseph Smith, Edward was his companion. There he was completely convinced of the truth of the restoration and was baptized by the prophet Joseph Smith. In an earlier revelation, one given prior to his baptism (see 36.1–8), Edward was called to the ministry as a part of his covenant with the Lord. The details of his ministry are revealed here as he is called to be the first Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ, an assignment that would require all of his talents as a businessman and as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Edward Partridge expended his life and material means in the building up of the Kingdom of God upon the earth (see also 36.0).

8 And again, it is meet that my servant Sidney Rigdon should live as seemeth him good, inasmuch as he keepeth my commandments.

9 And again, I have called my servant Edward Partridge; and I give a commandment, that he should be appointed by the voice of the church, and ordained a bishop unto the church, to leave his merchandise and to spend all his time in the labors of the church;
Edward Partridge—Edward Partridge was, as Joseph Smith observed, a pattern of piety and one of the Lord’s great men. A spiritually sensitive seeker of truth, Edward investigated the various sects of his day in an attempt to find the truth manifested in his day as it could be found in the scriptures. In 1828 he came in contact with the Campbellite movement and was an active participant in that movement when Oliver Cowdery and his companions arrived in northeastern Ohio while making their way to the western frontier of the United States in order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites. While many of the Campbellite Baptists eagerly associated themselves with the Church of Jesus Christ at the hands of the four missionaries, Edward Partridge deferred his own baptism. When Sidney Rigdon determined to travel from Mentor, Ohio, to Fayette, New York, to visit the prophet Joseph Smith, Edward went with him. They arrived at Joseph’s home on 10 December 1830. As the two had passed through Manchester, New York, Sidney and Edward asked the residents about the Smith family, and Joseph in particular. The reply that the Smiths were decent people until young Joseph brought forth the Book of Mormon impressed Edward such that his desire to be baptized was amplified considerably. On 11 December, the day following his first meeting the prophet, Edward Partridge was baptized in Seneca Lake by Joseph Smith. Edward Partridge would serve as the first Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation, beginning 4 February 1831. He would suffer great persecution at the hands of the Missourians because of his position in the Church, and ultimately died as a result of the injuries and exposure that he experienced in May 1840 at the age of 47.

Bishop Partridge would receive as part of his calling, the responsibility to appoint unto those who had been found worthy, their inheritances in Zion. No better man could have been found to deal equitably with the saints of the Most High when they appeared before him in Missouri to receive their stewardships and the attendant blessings.

The calling of Nathaniel to the ministry contributes greatly to our understanding of Edward Partridge.

Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man. (John 1:44–51)

Had Nathaniel been hesitant in accepting the word of his friend Philip? Did not Edward hesitate to a degree even when his close friend Sidney Rigdon testified of the truth of the matter? Did not Sidney Rigdon suggest to Edward
that they ought to go to Fayette, New York, together to meet with the prophet? Was not Edward thereby convinced of his duty to accept baptism at the hands of Joseph Smith? We may assume that there were other exchanges between the various parties by which Edward Partridge knew that he was acceptable before the Lord Jesus Christ to serve in such a delicate calling.

41.11.15—Nathanael—Most likely the man to whom John the Beloved refers as Nathanael is the very same who is called Bartholomew in the synoptic Gospels (see MT-C 10.3.3, MK-C 3.18.6, and LK-C 6.14.16).

41.11.23—guile—The Greek word which is translated in the New Testament as "guile" derives from roots which mean "decoy, trick, bait, wile, craft, deceit, subtility". The English word "guile" derives from Germanic roots which produce a word of the same meaning, "wile". It is the identical orthographic process which caused the development of the two words "guard" and "ward". Edward Partridge was a man of innocent of deception.

41.12 The saints at Kirtland knew the man that Edward Partridge was, that he was honest in his dealings with his fellow men. His heart was pure, a man without guile. The Lord recommended to the membership of the saints that they accept His chosen servants as they had accepted Him. They could expect nothing less from Edward Partridge than they which they would have received at the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ were he to be present among them when the inheritances were distributed in the land of Zion.

41.12.35—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as "Amen" derives from roots which mean "true". This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

12 These words are given unto you, and they are pure before me; wherefore, beware how you hold them, for they are to be answered upon your souls in the day of judgment. Even so. Amen.

Section 42

Date: February 9, 1831
Place: Kirtland, Ohio
To: Twelve Elders

299
ment. As a result of the translation of the book of Genesis, Joseph and Oliver learned a great deal about the city of Enoch, the Lord’s Zion that was taken up into heaven before the days of the great flood. Through these revelations and those contained in the Book of Mormon, Joseph and Oliver knew that it was their duty to establish Zion upon this continent as it had been prophesied. The first mission of the Church, which began in October 1830, was ostensibly set out upon in order to take the fullness of the Gospel to the posterity of Lehi who were living on reservations provided for them by the government of the United States. In the process, however, the site for the New Jerusalem was determined and eventually Jackson county, Missouri was designated and dedicated for the gathering of the House of Israel. The gathering to Zion, however, would be governed by the Law of the Celestial Kingdom, the subject of the present revelation.

42.0.2 On 2 January 1831, while Joseph Smith yet resided in Fayette, New York, the Lord gave a revelation to the prophet in which the Lord warned the saints that their enemies were preparing to destroy them. In order to preserve His people, the Lord commanded the saints to depart from their several locations in New York and Pennsylvania, and make their way to the Ohio where they would find respite and protection for a time (see 38.32). They were also promised that they would there receive His law and His power by which they would gather in the righteous from the nations of the earth. Throughout the revelation, the Lord testified of the blessings that would come to the saints as they observed to keep His commandments. They were to receive a land of promise, an eternal inheritance through their faith and obedience. They were encouraged in their love and kindness toward one another, their willingness to support and sustain one another. They were commanded to avoid covetousness and that any desire for wealth must be for the intent of blessing others. As the saints began to gather to Kirtland, Ohio, the Lord confirmed the fact that He was about to reveal that law by which they would receive their inheritances (see 41.3.5). Five days after that second promise, the Law was given.

42.0.3 From this distant vantage point we may only speculate as to the identity of the twelve elders who were present when the revelation was given. Certainly Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Edward Partridge were there. Oliver Cowdery, John Whitmer, Ezra Peterson, Parley P. Pratt, and Frederick G. Williams, however, were in Missouri serving their mission to the Lamanites and would not have been present. This section appeared as Chapters XLIV and XLVII in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 13 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. The sequence of verses changed slightly between the text of the Book of Commandments and the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants as the two Chapters were merged.

42.1 The elders had been commanded to gather together in unity of heart and mind, within the spirit of the prayer of faith so that they might be prepared to receive the Law of the Lord (see 41.2–3). It is clear that the brethren present were those who did believe in Christ and were willing to keep the specific commandment to assemble.

42.1.15—name—The whole of Zion is built up unto God in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.
42.1.17–18—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.
42.2 The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not designed for passive disciples. The city of Zion is not for idlers. Every man who will hear the word of the Lord God of Israel must also be willing to conform his life to the principles and ordinances dictated by Him. What is at risk is the salvation and exaltation of the children of men.

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<th>2</th>
<th>Again I say unto you, hearken and hear and obey the law which I shall give unto you.</th>
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<td>3</td>
<td>For verily I say, as ye have assembled yourselves together according to the commandment wherewith I commanded you, and are agreed as touching this one thing, and have asked the Father in my name, even so ye shall receive.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Behold, verily I say unto you, I give unto you this first commandment, that ye shall go forth in my name, every one of you, excepting my servants Joseph Smith, Jun., and Sidney Rigdon.</td>
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42.3 The initial commandment to gather together had been given while the prophet Joseph Smith had been living in Fayette, New York (see 38:32). When the revelation was received on 2 January 1831, both Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge were in attendance. It would be unthinkable that those two were absent from this particular meeting.

42.3.25–26—*one thing*—That is to say, the revealing of the Law of the Lord regarding the establishment of Zion.

42.4 Ten of the elders are to embark on missions, in order to prepare a people to receive the principles and ordinances that would be required of all those who would dwell in the New Jerusalem. While a man may be saved in the Celestial Kingdom by his personal conformity to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, exaltation can only come to the body of Christ, saints joined together in thought and emotion through mutual obedience to the covenants of the Lord. The first step toward establishing Zion is to gather a like-minded people. That gathering could only take place if there were ministers willing to teach the truth to the inhabitants of the earth. Although we cannot speak with certainty, it may have been that the Lord was providing Joseph and Sidney with an opportunity to settle into Kirtland, having only been in that place for five days. The other men were undoubtedly residents of the town and environs who were at liberty to journey forth as had Frederick G. Williams some several months before.

42.4.29–31—*Joseph Smith, Jun.*—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

42.4.33–34—*Sidney Rigdon*—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more...
and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

42.5 The missionaries were to be guided in all of their travels by the power and the influence of the Holy Ghost. We do not know if specific assignments were given to them by the Lord through the prophet, but it is likely that each of these men, like Parley P. Pratt, had friends and associates that they could immediately call upon in order to fulfill the measure of their particular calling at that moment. The revelation would specify, however, that they were to travel westward initially (see 42.8). The Church at Kirtland would need to be strong in order to serve as an organizing agency as the saints were sent to Jackson county, Missouri, for their inheritance blessings in Zion.

42.6 We do not know if thecompanionships for this particular mission were selected by the prophet Joseph Smith, or whether the ten men naturally gravitated toward each other. In any event, they were not to be hesitant in any fashion, but were to declare the truth with boldness. Their role as angels established the spirit in which they would go forth among the children of men. They were to go without fear, they were to teach in the spirit of love and compassion, and they were to conduct themselves in such a fashion that no man would doubt the sources of their power and integrity.

42.7 Here the elders were given the keys of the priesthood by which they could authoritatively invite men, women, and children into the Kingdom of God. They were to teach faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance from all sin, and the possibility of the remission of sins if the people who heard their voice were desirous to obey. The King of Heaven would be at hand everywhere the missionaries went, inasmuch as they were the designated officers of that Kingdom.

42.8 The first formal mission of the Church of Jesus Christ took five elders from the city of Kirtland to western Missouri and into the Unorganized Indian Territory. Were the elders to follow the same track that Oliver Cowdery and his companions had made four months before? It seems unlikely, but in their travels they would be led to the honest in heart wherever they might be. As the saints began to migrate to Missouri, their travels would be considerably facilitated if there were friends, fellow citizens of the Kingdom of God, established along the way.

42.9 The general location of the city of Zion had been revealed earlier as Oliver Cowdery and his companions were preparing for their mission to the Lamanites (see 28.9). On 19 June 1831, Joseph Smith and several of the elders of the Church departed from Kirtland in order to take their journey to Jackson county. They arrived there about the 20th of July. Almost immediately the site for the city of Zion was identified and preparations were made to provide a land inheritance for those who would soon follow after.

42.9.21.22—New Jerusalem—The Lord Jesus Christ would be quite specific as to how the New Jerusalem would come to be and who would be involved (see 3 NE-C 20.22 and 3 NE-C 21.23–24). Remnants of the
House of Israel, specifically of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, will be gathered together as the saints of God, redeemed from the fall and the wickedness of this world. Together they will establish the city of Zion, called the New Jerusalem, upon the American continent, from whence the voice and word of God will issue forth unto all of the nations of the earth, that they might obey the commandments of him whose right it is to reign. The Gentiles who accept the covenants of Christ will be invited to participate as well.

42.10 Edward Partridge’s service as a Bishop would begin immediately, but would not come into full bloom until he had arrived in Jackson county, Missouri, some few months later. There was never a more faithful man in fulfilling his duties as a servant of God.

42.10.10–11—Edward Partridge—Edward Partridge was, as Joseph Smith observed, a pattern of piety and one of the Lord’s great men. A spiritually sensitive seeker of truth, Edward investigated the various sects of his day in an attempt to find the truth manifested in his day as it could be found in the scriptures. In 1828 he came in contact with the Campbellite movement and was an active participant in that movement when Oliver Cowdery and his companions arrived in northeastern Ohio while making their way to the western frontier of the United States in order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites. While many of the Campbellite Baptists eagerly associated themselves with the Church of Jesus Christ at the hands of the four missionaries, Edward Partridge deferred his own baptism. When Sidney Rigdon determined to travel from Mentor, Ohio, to Fayette, New York, to visit the prophet Joseph Smith, Edward went with him. They arrived at Joseph’s home on 10 December 1830. As the two had passed through Manchester, New York, Sidney and Edward asked the residents about the Smith family, and Joseph in particular. The reply that the Smiths were decent people until young Joseph brought forth the Book of Mormon impressed Edward such that his desire to be baptized was amplified considerably. On 11 December, the day following his first meeting the prophet, Edward Partridge was baptized in Seneca Lake by Joseph Smith. Edward Partridge would serve as the first Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation, beginning 4 February 1831. He would suffer great persecution at the hands of the Missourians because of his position in the Church, and ultimately died as a result of the injuries and exposure that he experienced in May 1840 at the age of 47.

42.10.16—office—That is to say, the role of serving as the first Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ. Edward would be given the land of Zion as the major portion of his stewardship and through the inspiration of Spirit of God he would appoint unto the saints their particular stewardship in that part of the Lord’s vineyard

42.10.31—transgress—It is doubtful that there is man or woman who can effectively point out any transgressions that Edward Partridge may have committed during his mortal life. He died in full faith and fellowship in Nauvoo, Illinois in 1840. This caveat was undoubtedly given for the benefit of those who might have doubted Bishop Partridge’s integrity, implying that if he were to do anything contrary to the mind and will of the Lord, he would be removed and replaced with a man who would serve the saints properly. There was never a necessity for that recourse.

42.11 The Lord’s house is a house of order. The city of Zion was to be a complete manifestation of the mind and will of the Lord. Therefore, no man or woman would have any power or authority in order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites. In order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites, many of the missionaries deferred their own baptism in order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites. While many of the missionaries deferred their own baptism in order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites.

10 And again, I say unto you, that my servant Edward Partridge shall stand in the office whereunto I have appointed him. And it shall come to pass, that if he transgress another shall be appointed in his stead. Even so. Amen.

11 Again I say unto you, that it shall not be given to any one to go
woman could participate in the building up of the Kingdom of God or partake of the blessings thereof, without having been appointed to do by someone who held the keys of authority. In a previous revelation, the Savior had reaffirmed that it was not proper for the dogs of the world to be entrusted with the blessings reserved for the righteous (see 41:6). Therefore, for a man to be able to carry the words of eternal life and salvation to the inhabitants of the earth he must first be found worthy to do so. It would appear that while the missionaries would be free to preach faith and repentance, and administer the ordinances of baptism and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, they were not immediate authorized to call and ordain other missionaries.

42.12 The officers of the Church of Jesus Christ were not to attempt to bring the honest in heart into the Kingdom of God by resorting to the philosophies of men. They were to teach the truth, pure and undefiled as they were guided and directed by the Spirit of God. The Book of Mormon contained the fullness of the Gospel of Christ and a man could draw nearer to God by following its precepts than by means of any other book. How many of the men in that room where this revelaion was being given had given themselves over to a profound study of the Book of Mormon? The Old and New Testaments would prove invaluable in reaching out to the inhabitants of the land, because for the most part, the citizens in those regions already accepted the truths contained therein.

42.12.25—27—Book of Mormon—The sacred record of the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, composed by the prophet Mormon during the fourth century of the Christian era, using nearly a thousand years of preserved records of the Nephite civilization. Its resting place was revealed to the prophet Joseph Smith who was then permitted to translate the record into English by the gift and power of God. 

42.12.33—36—fulness of the gospel—that is to say, faith in Jesus Christ, repentance from all wrongdoing, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. With those principles and ordinances firmly in place, any faithful man or woman could have access to all of the truths of eternity.

42.13 Although no book containing the revelations given to the prophet Joseph Smith up to that time had been published, yet many of them had been copied by the brethren of the Church for their own personal benefit. As they were called upon to teach their friends and neighbors, they were permitted, even encouraged, to resort to those wonderful documents for doctrine and policy. Paramount to all of these things, however, was the necessity of living those principles which they were actively teaching. The elders, priests, and teachers could not be effective emissaries of the Lord Jesus Christ unless they themselves were actively observing the principles they were teaching. Unless those principles and commandments were being observed, the Spirit of the Lord would not accompany them in their labors.

42.14 The power and the influence of the Holy Ghost does not come to a passive petitioner. There should be an ardent desire to follow the pattern set by the Lord for receiving the blessings of the Spirit of God. It does not come to the disobedient. It does not come to those who neglect their prayers to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ.

42.14.24—teach—While this may be understood as a commandment, it is better to say that the act of teaching cannot take place in the absence of the Spirit. By this we may know that teaching is the activity that brings about a conviction in the heart and mind of the one learning that forth to preach my gospel, or to build up my church, except he be ordained by some one who has authority, and it is known to the church that he has authority and has been regularly ordained by the heads of the church.

12 And again, the elders, priests and teachers of this church shall teach the principles of my gospel, which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, in which is the fulness of the gospel.

13 And they shall observe the covenants and church articles to do them, and these shall be their teachings, as they shall be directed by the Spirit.

14 And the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith; and if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach.
something must be done to improve one’s self.

42.15 Teaching from the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the revelations that had been received up to that point would continue until the Lord directed otherwise.

42.15.18–21—fulness of my scriptures—This is no doubt in reference to the translation of the Bible that Joseph Smith had begun in June 1830. There would come a time when this new volume would be utilized actively in the preaching of the Gospel of Christ. We may also understand that there would come a time when there would be considerably more revelations that would come through the prophet. These too would be incorporated into the teaching materials for the elders of the Church.

42.16 If a man is filled with the Holy Ghost, he speaks with the tongue of angels, testifying of the Lord Jesus Christ in all that he says and does. When a man testifies in this fashion, his own voice is coupled with the voice of God and there is no uncertainty in that which has been said. It is as a two-edged sword that pierces to the very heart of those who hear the words of truth.

42.17 The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are united in their sentiments and in their thoughts, so much so, that to be inspired or informed by one is to be inspired or informed by all.

42.18 What follows in these next verses is not merely an affirmation of the Ten Commandments, but rather a presentation of the fundamental laws of the Kingdom of God upon the earth. There is no discussion of the democratic process, public legislation, or psychological implications. There is simply a divine declaration as to how the citizens of the city of Zion would be governed. If one were unwilling to be measured by this unwavering standard, they simply need not apply for an inheritance there.

42.18.8—church—that is, the body of the disciples of Jesus Christ, those who desired to be part of the building up of the New Jerusalem.
42.18.12—kill—we may understand this to mean the deliberate taking of human life. The Lord has said through his servants that no murderer has eternal life. By the same token, no murderer has a place in city of Zion.
42.18.22–23—this world—Meaning the Celestial state that we experience at this time. In the Lord’s eyes, there is no forgiveness for a murderer, and therefore none of the blessings of salvation, including the outward ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ are available to him while he dwells in mortality.
42.18.27–29—world to come—The immediate world to come is the Terrestrial world that will define the Millennium, the paradisical glory spoken of to which the earth will be restored when the Lord Jesus Christ appears. Murderers will have no place upon the earth during the Millennium. Their spirits will wait in the world of spirits until the time of the resurrection, when they will be consigned to no more than a Celestial glory. It is clear, therefore, that such men and women will have no access to the Celestial Kingdom where God the Father and His Son dwell.

42.19 In the city of Zion and during the Millennial reign, the murderer will forfeit his own life for having taken the life of another. Regardless of any misconceptions or misrepresentations that may be circulated about such a conse-

15 And all this ye shall observe to do as I have commanded concerning your teaching, until the fulness of my scriptures is given.

16 And as ye shall lift up your voices by the Comforter, ye shall speak and prophesy as seemeth me good;

17 For, behold, the Comforter knoweth all things, and beareth record of the Father and of the Son.

18 And now, behold, I speak unto the church. Thou shalt not kill; and he that killeth shall not have forgiveness in this world, nor in the world to come.

19 And again, I say, thou shalt not kill; but he that killeth shall die.
quence, the fact remains that the judgment of the Lord God of Israel in these instances is immutable.

42.20 The city of Zion is a society that is of one mind and one heart, who live together in righteousness, and have no poor among them. A thief undermines every aspect of the fundamental principles of the Church and Kingdom of God. An unrepentant thief will find himself outside of the pale of the New Jerusalem because he represents a faithless cancer that will destroy the unity of the children of Jesus Christ.

42.21 Just as theft is a manifestation of a lack of love and the presence of selfishness, so also faith and love cannot exist in an atmosphere of deception and betrayal. There can be no unity in the midst of doubt, and therefore the city of Zion can tolerate no prevarication.

42.22 The selfless, unconditional love between a husband and wife, together with that which should exist between parents and children, is the core sentiment expressed by the inhabitants of the city of God. Through their faith, the children of God know their unfailing relationship with their eternal Father in Heaven. They are also completely aware of their siblings, the hosts of humanity who have dwelt upon this earth since the days of Adam and Eve. Having been cleansed from all sin and filled with the Holy Ghost, they seek to bless all those around themselves, both the living and the dead. They would do nothing to harm their own family, nor would they ever think to damage the happiness of others.

42.22.12—cleeve—The Hebrew word used in Genesis and translated as “cleeve” means to “impinge, cling, adhere, catch by pursuit, abide fast, follow close, be joined together, over take, pursue hard”. The Greek word used to represent the Hebrew word for “cleeve” derives from roots which imply “glue to, adhere, toward the side of, pertaining to, destination, keep company with”. The oddity in English of having apparently the same word functioning as an antonym to itself derives from the fact that the spelling “cleeve” descends from two different sources in Old High German. “Kleben” means “to stick to, adhere”; “klieben” means “to split” Why these divergent words ended up with the same orthographic value, particularly since their meanings differ in the extreme, is a matter for etymologists with little else to do with their time.

42.23 Hence the tragedy of pornographic and related materials. One cannot engage in such unsavory activities without offending the Spirit of God. When the Holy Ghost and the light of Christ are quenched within the heart of a man, he is left unto himself and has no means by which to fill his spiritual lamp. His faith dwindles because faith is a gift from God that is bestowed only through His Spirit. There is no place for an unrepentant man in the Kingdom of God because there is nothing of unity within such a man, he is divisive in all things and promotes it in the hearts and minds of others.

42.24 Adultery is unmitigated betrayal. It destroys faith, unity, love, tranquility, happiness, and the salvation of all those who are affected by it. In the city of Zion there would not be a single soul that would escape the consequences of such an act. An adulterer would lose his place and station in the New Jerusalem, and would ultimately forfeit his inheritance therein. It was a fair warning to all those who desired to make their way to Jackson county, Missouri.
42.25 There is mercy as well as judgment in the city of Zion. Needless to say, a man who has committed adultery has gravely injured himself spiritually. His accomplice would likewise be deeply affected. The families of the same would suffer intolerably. The whole of the society would be saddened and chagrined. Yet, for the sake of the souls of the sinners, that they might be redeemed and cleansed before God, a period of probation would be appropriate if the sinners were willing to endure it by forsaking their illicit relationship and returning to their own homes to help repair the damage they had done to themselves and to those who loved them. In reconciliation there can be forgiveness, but the sins of sexual transgression are extremely difficult to overcome; the determination for repentance must needs be unwavering or all will be lost.

42.26 A second transgression of this particular commandment by a resident of the city of Zion would be so devastating to the one who sins, that the likelihood of true repentance would almost nonexistent. Such a perpetrator of wickedness would soon find himself outside of the city limits of the New Jerusalem, there being no place for him among a righteous people.

42.27 Such conduct would be inexcusable for any disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. Why would any man do such a thing, save to diminish his neighbor in order to exalt himself. Even where offense has been given, it is incumbent upon the one offended to make a reconciliation with him who has offended him, that there might be peace and harmony among the saints. The children of God do not seek to assign blame; they seek to forsake those aspects of the natural man within themselves that may have caused the tear in the societal fabric.

42.28 In the earliest scriptural records that are in our possession these same principles have been iterated time and again. Moses reemphasized these principles in his teaching of the House of Israel while they were enconced in the wilderness of the Sinai peninsula (see EX-C 20.13–17). The Savior taught in like manner during his mortal ministry, as did the prophets raised up among the Nephites. The laws governing residency in the city of Zion were clear and unambiguous.

42.29 This constitutes a reprise of the teachings that Jesus gave to his disciples while he was yet with them in the flesh (see JN-C 14.15). Love inspires proximity. Simon Peter was willing to suffer death in any number of ways in order to remain at the side of the Savior. Jesus clearly tells his disciples that where he is going they cannot yet come. They suffer in mind and heart because of their love and devotion towards him; the thought that they might not ever again bask in his wisdom and affection made them almost wild with fear. Jesus’ counsel was that if they wish to be with him, if their love were such that they could not bear to be separated from him in the eternities, then they should at all times and in all places do those things which constitute conformity to the mind and will of God the Father. The appeal to the saints is that they not do anything that would separate them from the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. The companionship of the Holy Ghost would surely comfort the disciples in their times of trial and loneliness. The power and influence of the Holy Ghost purifies and sanctifies the one upon whom He falls. Every godly attribute, even in its most embryonic form, is enhanced and developed by the Spirit of God, the third member of the Presidency of eternal worlds. There can be no better preparation for citizenship in the Kingdom of God.

42.30 The members of the Church of Jesus Christ who had taken the time to

25 But he that has committed adultery and repenteth with all his heart, and forsaketh it, and doeth it no more, thou shalt forgive;

26 But if he doeth it again, he shall not be forgiven, but shall be cast out.

27 Thou shalt not speak evil of thy neighbor, nor do him any harm.

28 Thou knowest my laws concerning these things are given in my scriptures; he that sinneth and repenteth not shall be cast out.

29 If thou lovest me thou shalt serve me and keep all my commandments.

30 And behold, thou wilt remem-
read and study the text of the Book of Mormon were painfully aware of the philosophy of the Zoramites, an apostate sect living in the land of Antionum who believed that poverty was a curse from God, and that personal wealth was a divine approbation of all that they had been doing. They taught that it was offensive to God to provide sustenance to the poor, to do something that God Himself was unwilling to do. No Zoramite would ever have a place within the city of the New Jerusalem unless their perspective on this world and the Kingdom of God were radically changed. No one was in a position to determine how or why one man was blessed materially over another. What was of concern, however, had to do with the willingness of those who had means to be a benefit and a blessing to those who had not been as fortunate as themselves. Those who wished to participate in the founding of the city of Zion must needs be one in heart and mind, undistracted by those material things which distinguish one man from another. In the Law of Consecration and the subsequent stewardships rendered to each citizen could be found the beginnings of unity. A rich man would gain nothing by rendering all of his possessions to God and then look with covetousness upon those earthly things as they were distributed to those in want. He might, however, perceive a greater sense of brotherhood, filial unity that might knit his heart and mind to those around him.

42.31 These were practical matters which the Bishops of the Church of Jesus Christ would oversee. While Edward Partridge dwelt in Kirtland, Ohio, it was to him that the membership of the Church would come in order to make their consecration and then receive their stewardship. Bishop Partridge, however, soon found himself in the land of Zion, in Jackson county, Missouri, where he facilitated the acquisition of real property, supervised the provisions necessary to sustain the lives of the saints, and did all within his power to see that the membership of the Church were property housed and anxiously engaged in developing the resources of the land that the entire community might be mutually blessed. After Edward Partridge departed to the western frontier, Newel K. Whitney was called and ordained to serve as the Bishop in Kirtland, Ohio, to receive the consecrations of the saints and provide them with a portion of their stewardship before they embarked on their journey to Zion. Surpluses in land and other immovable objects were frequently liquidated so that Bishop Partridge would have the means whereby to acquire more property and provisions in Zion. The tasks in both places were enormous and the Bishops were aided by their counselors and other men appointed to help them.

42.32 The Law of Consecration was revealed by the Lord Jesus Christ in order to prepare his disciples for the realities of the Millennial reign and those of eternal life. The city of Zion requires a restructuring of the human heart and mind. We may point to the importance of putting off the natural man as a portion of this restructuring. Moses testified that the Lord called the people of Enoch Zion because they were of one heart and one mind, dwelling in righteousness with no poor among them. Their unity came in large measure because of the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In faith they repented of their prior transgressions against the commandments of God, and covenanted that they would forsake them. Through baptism and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, they were prepared to receive the continual inspiration and guidance of the Spirit of God, which spirit knit their hearts and their minds together. There were no contentions over doctrine; no conflicts because of jealousy or covetousness, whether speaking of spiritual or temporal blessings. In the Law of Consecration, there was to be a formal recognition that all temporal possessions were given of the

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<td>31 And inasmuch as ye impart of your substance unto the poor, ye will do it unto me; and they shall be laid before the bishop of my church and his counselors, two of the elders, or high priests, such as he shall appoint or has appointed and set apart for that purpose.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 42:31, DHC 1 150, D&amp;C 42:31–33, MD 592</td>
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<td>32 And it shall come to pass, that after they are laid before the bishop of my church, and after that he has received these testimonies concerning the consecration of the properties of my church, that they cannot be taken from the church, agreeable to my commandments, every man shall be made accountable unto me, a steward over his own property, or that which he has received by consecration, as much as is sufficient for himself and family.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 42:32, MD 15, 766, 813, EM 2:437, D&amp;C 42:32–35, AF 440, D&amp;C 42:32–39, EM 1:312</td>
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Father, and that every man was his brother’s keeper. The Law of Consecration taught that every man and his family required material support in order to pass through mortal life with a degree of comfort and safety. The reality was that some individuals possessed more than was necessary, while other did not have sufficient. The heart of the invitation to participate in the building up the Kingdom of God on the earth was whether the wealthy were willing to lovingly raise up their brethren from the depths of poverty, and whether the poor would receive material blessings in the same spirit. Both the erstwhile rich and poor would receive stewardships according to their needs, their talents, and their skills. Both the act of consecration and the bestowal of stewardships would be accomplished according to the civil laws of the land; nothing would be formalized until all parties were completely in agreement. If a man could not bring himself to consecrate his possessions and receive a stewardship according to the Law, he would not be forced to do either, but was free to continue his life as he had before the invitation was extended. He could not, however, impose himself on the saints of Zion in any fashion simply by virtue of his membership in the Church.

42:33 In practical terms, those disciples of Jesus Christ who determined with all of their hearts to partake of the blessings of the city of Zion would formally consecrate all that they possessed, their real property and accoutrements, together with all of their personal belonging to the Church and Kingdom of God by covenant and a formal deed. This was done through the Bishop of the Church in their area. In Kirtland, this would have been Bishop Newel K. Whitney. Having received these consecrations by legal and lawful deed, the Bishop would then deed back to the consecrating family as much of their personal belongings as seemed appropriate to both the Bishop and the family. Some men had special skills that required certain types of tools and other equipment. These also would be returned to the artisan according to his needs. Everything that would be needed to travel the distance to Jackson county, Missouri, would also be returned or provided. Any excess of goods or equipment was then placed in what would be called today the Bishop’s Storehouse. Obviously, some material blessings could not be transported. Houses, lands, and some domestic animals could not be moved from place to another. These would remain behind. The Zion-bound family, however, would carry a certificate to Missouri to be given to the Bishop there that would indicate the nature of the rest of the family’s stewardship. The Bishop in Missouri at this time, Bishop Edward Partridge, would supply all that the family still needed to provide for themselves in the land of Zion. Homes and business facilities were built and often pastures and fields were fenced by the community in order to help the family get settled in short order. In the meantime, if there were families who were otherwise completely qualified to partake of the blessings of the New Jerusalem, but who did not have sufficient materials or means to journey there, the Bishop in Kirtland could provide for them out of his Storehouse from the consecrated goods and equipment there. When there was a shortfall of any kind, whether in Kirtland or Missouri, the Bishop in Kirtland could dispose of selected real estate in his charge.

42:34 Today the Council on the Disposition of Tithes is comprised of the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and the Presiding Bishopric of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. When the revelation was received on 9 February 1831, only Bishop Edward Partridge had been called, ordained, and set apart for this ministry. For this reason, the wording of this revelation in the Book of Commandments differs slightly from that which has appeared in the Doctrine and Covenants since 1835.

33 And again, if there shall be properties in the hands of the church, or any individuals of it, more than is necessary for their support after this first consecration, which is a residue to be consecrated unto the bishop, it shall be kept to administer to those who have not, from time to time, that every man who has need may be amply supplied and receive according to his wants.

34 Therefore, the residue shall be kept in my storehouse, to administer to the poor and the needy, as shall be appointed by the high council of the church, and the bishop and his council:
42.34.24–25—high council—Primarily in reference to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles that was established in 1835.

42.35 The Council for the Disposition of Tithes is specifically charged to administer to the spiritual and temporal needs of the Church of Jesus Christ as a whole. Insofar as the establishment of the New Jerusalem was concerned, any properties needed for the saints in Zion were to be purchased by the Church for their benefit.

42.35.25–26—New Jerusalem—The Lord Jesus Christ would be quite specific as to how the New Jerusalem would come to be and who would be involved (see 3 NE-C 20.22 and 3 NE-C 21.23–24). Remnants of the House of Israel, specifically of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, will be gathered together as the saints of God, redeemed from the fall and the wickedness of this world. Together they will establish the city of Zion, called the New Jerusalem, upon the American continent, from whence the voice and word of God will issue forth unto all of the nations of the earth, that they might obey the commandments of him whose right it is to reign. The Gentiles who accept the covenants of Christ will be invited to participate as well.

42.35.29—hereafter—On 9 February 1831, the Church of Jesus Christ was not privy to the precise location of the city of Zion. That would not be identified until July 1831 when the prophet Joseph Smith arrived in Jackson county Missouri.

42.36 The saints of God have been commanded from the beginning to gather together that they might be enabled to build convenient places of worship, and more particularly the Temples of the Most High. Chapels, Temples, and other facilities have been provided and maintained by the Church through the tithes that have been contributed by the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. When the saints first settled in Jackson county, Missouri, all of their places of worship, including the temple of the New Jerusalem, were to be financed by the Bishop’s Storehouse from the surpluses that were placed there when the faithful entered into the Law of Consecration. The first temple to be built from the general coffers of the Church, however, was the Kirland Temple, which the Lord personally accepted on 3 April 1836. The keys and other priesthood powers that were bestowed upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery at that time did, without question, provide for the salvation of the children of Christ. At a future day, the great Temple in the New Jerusalem will be raised up by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, an edifice that will also serve as the means to bring salvation into the lives of the members of the Church.

42.37 What if a man were to enter into the Law of Consecration, by covenant, through the legal and lawful channels extant under civil law, and then completely apostatize from the faith? Could he then recover all that he had consecrated, including that which had been dispersed in some fashion to the poor? The answer was, no. He might retain his stewardship that had been legally and lawfully deeded back to him, but that was the extent of his hold on the material world that had been his before Consecration.

42.38 To pursue any course to recover that which a man had once consecrated, would be considered a direct affront to the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

42.39 The nations of the earth are engaged in a world economy, a system vast and powerful. The Church and Kingdom of God has a great deal of indepen-
dence from this system, but nonetheless uses it in order to conduct business in the secular world. Thus, the saints can be blessed in any part of the world, their places of gathering appointed by revelation. Chapels, Temples, and other facilities can be built because of the wise and judicious use of the economic powers established by the Gentile nations. Thus, as the saints have sought out the remnants of the House of Israel and provided for them, especially in what the world is pleased to call the third world countries, the rich among the Gentiles have indeed provided for the poor in Israel. As time passes, this effect will become far more poignant.

42.39.16—prophets—There are many allusions to this eventual equality between the rich and the poor to be found in the writings of the Old and New Testaments. The Book of Mormon, however, is continually specific regarding the involvement of the Gentiles of the latter days in the gathering of the House of Israel, and providing the means whereby the covenant people might lay the foundations of Zion and the New Jerusalem.

42.39.35—Gentiles—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

42.39.48—Israel—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

42.40 We may assume from this verse that the city of Zion will have its own fashion, and one that can be easily provided. No man, woman, or child would have to resort to the children of men in order to be clothed. The unity of the minds and hearts of the disciples of Jesus Christ would be such that there could be no fashionable distinction between them. Their clothing would be produced with natural beauty and skill, however.

42.41 In the city of Zion there would be no call for a slovenly appearance. Personal appearance, together with the maintenance of all properties and equipment, are central to the natural beauty of the city of Zion.

42.42 What may we say of the spirit of an idle man? Is it not the expression of unbridled pride that a man would partake of food and means that he himself did nothing to produce? In the city of Zion every man looks after the welfare of his neighbor, the result of mutual affection and concern. For one to take advantage of the generosity and love of a child of God by consuming that which the faithful have generated cannot be tolerated in a Zion society. This sort of behavior breeds elitism and social stratification, both repugnant to the disciples of Jesus Christ.

42.43 All of the children of God who are on the path of righteousness vary in degree with regard to the success that they have put off the natural man and have acquired the stature of Jesus Christ. In terms of physical health, many forms of assistance are possible, including medicinal remedies.

42.43.10—faith—That is to say, the person does not have sufficient faith

40 And again, thou shalt not be proud in thy heart; let all thy garments be plain, and their beauty the beauty of the work of thine own hands;

41 And let all things be done in cleanliness before me.

42 Thou shalt not be idle; for he that is idle shall not eat the bread nor wear the garments of the laborer.

43 And whosoever among you are sick, and have not faith to be healed, shall be nourished with all tenderness, with herbs and mild food, and that not

AF 442
DN TC 1 737
DkC 42:39-40
DHC 5 (42)
D&C 42:40
DN TC 3 79, 109
MD 511, 593
EM 2:437
DkC 42:40-42
DS 3 357
MD 303
EM 1:412
DkC 42:41
MD 147
CR96-A 70
DkC 42:42
AF 441
DHC 3 122
DHC 4 450
DN TC 3 67
GD 236, 258
MD 207, 225
TSWK 362
EM 3:1113
EM 4:1554, 1586
DkC 42:43
DHC 2 288
| 42.43.12—believe—That is to say, is one who does have faith in Jesus Christ, has repented of their sins, and has entered into the proscribed covenants necessary to be a citizen of the city of Zion. | 42.44 The power of the priesthood may be called upon as well, in conjunction with the medicinal remedies and the active faith of the afflicted one. This practice of administering to the sick has been employed among the faithful since the days of Adam and Eve. Neither the will of the Father nor the will of the ailing one can be overthrown by the power of the priesthood. The blessings can only be based on the agency of God and that of his suffering child. |
|  | 42.45 For the righteous, for those that have a burning testimony of the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, together with the universal power of his resurrection from the dead, there is not much to be troubled about when those who are closest to them begin to decline toward death. There is sorrow in separation and loneliness, it is true, but the promise of salvation from both death and hell should serve as a satisfying comfort for all those who are left behind in mortality. There is understandable grief, however, when it is clear that the one departing mortality is unprepared to meet his God. |
|  | 42.46 The sting of death is sin. Those who leave mortality devoid of offense toward God and man, do not suffer regret and anxiety. Typically, the faithful are filled with joyful anticipation of being rejoined with those who have gone before them. |
|  | 42.47 The antithesis of faith is fear. The passage into the grave from mortality may include the deep and abiding distress that accompanies ignorance. If a man leaves this life filled with regret or guilt, his anxiety will become inexpressible. |
|  | 42.48 The faithful may very well sense the will of the Father regarding their mortal probation, whether it is to be lengthy or shortened. By the Spirit of God, this same faithful man may know that he has tasks to perform in another venue. For the most part, however, men and women pass through this life hoping to enjoy the blessings of eternity at some point, but desiring to cling to this second estate so long as it is possible. Frequently, those who love and cherish the ailing individual feel much the same way. Thus, they willingly place themselves in the hands of a loving God to receive of Him whatsoever they stand in need. |
|  | 42.49 Whether speaking of physical or spiritual blindness. The implication here is, of course, that those without physical sight who have sufficient faith in the power of the priesthood as ensconced in the servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, may indeed have their vision returned to them. |
|  | 42.50 Whether speaking of spiritual or physical deafness, it is the same. The implication here is, of course, that those who have lost their hearing, who have sufficient faith in the power of the priesthood as ensconced in the servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, may indeed have any physical deafness reversed. |
|  | 42.51 There are countless examples in the scriptures and in the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of this very blessing being bestowed, notwithstanding all of the medical reasons why it should not come to pass. |
| 44 And the elders of the church, two or more, shall be called, and shall pray for and lay their hands upon them in my name; and if they die they shall die unto me, and if they live they shall live unto me. | 45 Thou shalt live together in love, insomuch that thou shalt weep for the loss of them that die, and more especially for those that have not hope of a glorious resurrection. |
| 46 And it shall come to pass that those that die in me shall not taste of death, for it shall be sweet unto them; | 47 And they that die not in me, wo unto them, for their death is bitter. |
| 48 And again, it shall come to pass that he that hath faith in me to be healed, and is not appointed unto death, shall be healed. | 49 He who hath faith to see shall see. |
| 50 He who hath faith to hear shall hear. | 51 The lame who hath faith to leap shall leap. |
42.52 A man or women whose illnesses do not respond to medicinal remedies, tender and loving care, and the power of the priesthood are not to be scorned or reproached in any fashion. In the end, it is the salvation of their souls that is as stake. Those who keep the commandments of God, walking uprightly to the best of their ability, will one day enjoy a perfection of bodily functions. Until the day of the resurrection arrives, however, the faithful but infirm, will be cared and provided for in the Church and Kingdom of God.

42.53 In the city of Zion, every man has a stewardship that has been given to him according to his needs and abilities. All that the man possesses and has become in the earth belongs to the God of Heaven. To this the man joyfully acceded when he entered into the Law of Consecration. Therefore, he should perceive himself as a servant in the household of God.

42.54 Theft or robbery is not an option in the Kingdom of God. If one’s brother has something desirable and he is willing to part with it, there should be immediate and just remuneration. It is likely, in this particular case, that the garment is a product of the family and may bear all of the indications of expert skill. The owner of the garment may very well be willing to part with garment out of the profound love that he has for his desirous neighbor. There is no cause, however, to mock the love of the man by not responding in kind.

42.55 Every man, according to the terms of his stewardship, should be able to maintain himself and his family. As a man of the world, he may wish to enhance his circumstances by taking of his profit and purchasing those luxuries to which his heart has inclined. A citizen of the New Jerusalem, however, is first concerned with the needs of his own family, and then his heart turns to the welfare of the other inhabitants of Zion. His obvious surpluses pertain to the Church and Kingdom of God for the mutual benefit of all. In such a system, there would never be want of any kind; there would never be any poor among the inhabitants of Zion.

42.56 The many revelations received by the prophet Joseph Smith during his lifetime came as a result of study and prayer, as did the inspired version of the Bible.

42.56.6—scriptures—Certainly with regard to the continuing revelations that had been provided to the Church through the prophet Joseph Smith. In addition, the prophet and his scribes were in the process of translating the Bible into what we now have as the Joseph Smith Translation.

42.56.18—preserved—Both the holographs for the revelations and for the Joseph Smith Translation were preserved so that we are able to enjoy them today in printed form.

42.57 In some instances the revelations that were given were quite specific as to what Joseph and the saints were to do next, instructions that could have empowered the enemies of the Church to frustrate their duties or at least make them far more difficulty to accomplish. Small portions of the Joseph Smith Translation would be published in the early Church periodicals, but typically they were passages that would not immediately be recognized as having come from the Bible, such as the first chapter of Moses and the revelations directly associated with the life and teachings of Enoch.

42.58 This is now currently true of both the Doctrine and Covenants and the Joseph Smith Translation. They are being carried into every quarter of the

52 And they who have not faith to do these things, but believe in me, have power to become my sons; and inasmuch as they break not my laws thou shalt bear their infirmities.

53 Thou shalt stand in the place of thy stewardship.

54 Thou shalt not take thy brother’s garment; thou shalt pay for that which thou shalt receive of thy brother.

55 And if thou obtainest more than that which would be for thy support, thou shalt give it into my storehouse, that all things may be done according to that which I have said.

56 Thou shalt ask, and my scriptures shall be given as I have appointed, and they shall be preserved in safety;

57 And it is expedient that thou shouldst hold thy peace concerning them, and not teach them until ye have received them in full.

58 And I give unto you a commandment that then ye shall teach
earth as the Church and Kingdom of God is recognized throughout the world. Where the fullness of the Gospel is not now being taught, the word of the Lord is that there will come a day when every living man, woman, and child will have the opportunity to accept the truth at the hands of ordain minister of the Church of Jesus Christ.

42.59 Joseph Smith had learned a great deal about the governance of the Church of Christ as he translated the Book of Mormon. As the time neared for the formal organization of the Kingdom of God upon the earth, Joseph was given specific instructions as to how that organization was to be conducted. Thereafter, additional revelations were giving detailing the conduct of the officers of the Church as the Church continued to grow. The Joseph Smith Translation would provide other opportunities for illumination. The city of Zion would utilize all of these instructions as well, together with other revelations that would add to the knowledge and understanding of the elders of the Church.

42.60 Obviously a man who does not study that which has been given of the Lord to His servants will be lacking in understanding, such that it is unlikely that he would know what to do under any given set of circumstances. Progress is based on conscious obedience to the Law of God; very little is gained by accidental obedience. Disobedience, of course, constitutes a spirit of rebellion that cannot prosper the city of Zion. Such a disobedient soul would soon find himself outside of the pale of the New Jerusalem.

42.61 Those filled with the Holy Ghost are filled with the spirit of revelation. Asking for truth and knowledge according to the influence of the Holy Ghost will never be denied. Thus, a faithful man may learn line upon line, precept upon precept until he has acquired the mind of Christ in all things. There is no doubt in truth and light; there is peace and joy as one is inspired by the Comforter; there is no fear in knowing that one’s calling and election has been made sure.

42.62 The Lord’s own due time would occur five and one half months later on 20 July1831 when Joseph Smith was told precisely where the initial boundaries of the city of Zion were to be found. The labor would begin immediately, and though there would be a time of consternation and distress as the saints attempted to do that which had been given them to accomplish, yet the word of the Lord cannot and will not fail. The New Jerusalem will be raised up as prophesied in anticipation of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

42.62.18–19—New Jerusalem—The Lord Jesus Christ would be quite specific as to how the New Jerusalem would come to be and who would be involved (see 3 NE-C 20.22 and 3 NE-C 21.23–24). Remnants of the House of Israel, specifically of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, will be gathered together as the saints of God, redeemed from the fall and the wickedness of this world. Together they will establish the city of Zion, called the New Jerusalem, upon the American continent, from whence the voice and word of God will issue forth unto all of the nations of the earth, that they might obey the commandments of him whose right it is to reign. The Gentiles who accept the covenants of Christ will be invited to participate as well.

42.63 The twelve elders gathered to receive the Law of the Lord had already been commanded to go into the regions west of Kirtland, preaching the Gospel of Christ and receiving the honest in heart into the Church and Kingdom them unto all men; for they shall be taught unto all nations, kindreds, tongues and people.

59 Thou shalt take the things which thou hast received, which have been given unto thee in my scriptures for a law, to be my law to govern my church;

60 And he that doeth according to these things shall be saved, and he that doeth them not shall be damned if he so continue.

61 If thou shalt ask, thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal.

62 Thou shalt ask, and it shall be revealed unto you in mine own due time where the New Jerusalem shall be built.

63 And behold, it shall come to pass that my servants shall be sent forth to the east and to the west, to
of God (see 42:4–9). The promise here is that there would be other sent into all of the world to do the same.

42.64 No doubt there would be others beside these twelve elders who were to be called immediately to go into the mission field. Those who received the Gospel who lived east of Kirtland were to first gather to Ohio and from thence to Missouri, once the exact place of gathering had been pointed out. Jackson county had been intended as a safe resort for the inhabitants of the land during the great tribulations that were about to descend upon the world. Had the Missourians and other men in authority in the government of the United States conducted themselves in accordance with the established laws of the day, the city of Zion would have been a place where tens of thousands might have found refuge from the storm of the Civil War. As it was, Jackson county and environs were devastated by the opposing forces. The saints, however, were safely ensconced in the valleys of the intermountain west.

42.65 By keeping the laws and commandments of the Lord, the leadership of the Church would always know from whence would come the oppressions and persecution, and with that knowledge would be prepared to defend themselves and the saints from unwarranted distress. The membership of the Church could be as equally enlightened as they lived by every word that proceeded forth from the mouth of God. They could anticipate the aggressions of their enemies, whereas the enemies of God would know nothing of the preparations that the disciples of Christ were making to defend themselves.

42.66 The only safety that is in time or in eternity is in obedience to the laws and commandments of God. To expect protection and peace in any other course of life is mere folly, a self-delusion that will end in suffering and destruction.

42.67 When the Temple at Kirtland was finished, the Church and Kingdom of God were enhanced by the keys bestowed upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Moses, Elias, and Elijah brought priesthood authority that would allow the eternal unions of husbands and wife, parents and children, and the gathering of the entire family of mankind, even as many as would choose to be gathered. Covenants even greater than these have also been extended to the faithful.

42.67.21–22—New Jerusalem—The Lord Jesus Christ would be quite specific as to how the New Jerusalem would come to be and who would be involved (see 3 NE-C 20.22 and 3 NE-C 21.23–24). Remnants of the House of Israel, specifically of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, will be gathered together as the saints of God, redeemed from the fall and the wickedness of this world. Together they will establish the city of

| 64 And even now, let him that goeth to the east teach them that shall be converted to flee to the west, and this in consequence of that which is coming on the earth, and of secret combinations. |
| D&C 42:64 | EM 3:1291 |

| 65 Behold, thou shalt observe all these things, and great shall be thy reward; for unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but unto the world it is not given to know them. |
| D&C 42:67 | AF 355 |

| 66 Ye shall observe the laws which ye have received and be faithful. |

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Zion, called the New Jerusalem, upon the American continent, from whence the voice and word of God will issue forth unto all of the nations of the earth, that they might obey the commandments of him whose right it is to reign. The Gentiles who accept the covenants of Christ will be invited to participate as well.

42.68 An allusion to James 1:5, wherein the principle of mutual communication between God and man is assured. This is, of course, the first principle of wisdom to be learned by the honest in heart. The Father is approachable and willingly receives the petitions of His children, and is prepared to bless them with all of those things that they ask of Him, so long as such blessings will promote their spiritual growth.

42.69 The Church of Jesus Christ had been established upon the earth according to the commandments of the Father on 6 April 1830. Those who fulfilled the desires of the Father and the Son were those who had received the keys of the Melchizedek and Aaronic priesthoods, together with others who had received similar authority. When the twelve men gathered to receive the Law of the Lord, they too were men who had been ordained elders in the Church of Christ and who had been called to administer the principles and ordinances of the Gospel to the inhabitants of the land. They held all of the necessary keys to preach the truth and to invite the honest in heart to partake of the covenants that had been extended unto the children of men.

42.69.26—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as "Amen" derives from roots which mean "true". This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

42.70 These twelve elders had received their calls to the ministry, and in their absence other priesthood bearers would have to fulfill their callings as well. The operation of the Church of Christ is a cooperative affair, all of the members being intent upon blessing the lives of their fellow men.

42.71 Those men who are mentioned here are those who had received the responsibility of overseeing the temporal affairs of the Church and Kingdom of God. They had been called to serve the membership of the Church fulltime, such that they were not able to labor separately for the maintenance of their families. Inasmuch as they had need, particularly in their day to day provisions, they were to receive from the Storehouse just as those poor who would be making their way to the land of Zion. In this sense, the Bishop and his counselors were considered participants in the Law of Consecration, even though they were not living in Missouri.

42.72 Some of those who worked fulltime for the benefit of the membership of the Church might be considered employees, men who received a salary for their service. In lieu of a fixed salary, they might receive a practical stewardship, which in turn would be the means of providing more revenue or provisions in the Church’s general funds and commodities. Others, those who had entered into the Law of Consecration and who had little or no time to engage in other projects, were supported in their administrative stewardships from the surplus in the Bishop’s Storehouse.

42.73 The Presiding Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ is one who is fully occupied in serving the membership of the Church. If he is performing his duty, he has neither time nor energy to seek the temporal maintenance of his
family. Hence, the instruction that is given here.

42.74 This verse, together with the three which follow it, may be found as verses 21–24 in Chapter XLVII of the Book of Commandments. They were originally revealed on 23 February 1831, fourteen days after the preceding seventy-three verses. This is the only cause for justifiable divorce that is given in the scriptures and is a reflection of the Savior’s teachings (see MT-C 5:32). To the dissolute and those who would excuse this teaching, it is a bitter pill. One cannot escape the denunciation of capricious divorce that is articulated here. Sexual immorality on the part of a spouse is declared the only justification for separation. We may see here, however, that if the unoffending spouse humbly seeks for citizenship in the city of Zion, it is possible that he or she may receive and inheritance.

42.74.21—fornication—The word “fornication” in English is almost always used in reference to the illicit relationship between unmarried parties. The Greek term which is rendered in Matthew as “fornication” should be translated as “whoredom”. We are mincing words here, of course, because sexual immorality by any name is incalculably damaging to the lives of those who so indulge themselves.

42.75 Infidelity in the marriage covenant is sufficient grounds for any man or woman to be excluded from the New Jerusalem. It would be an extraordinary case for a divorced man or woman to have an inheritance in the land of Zion. Adultery among the saints who obtained stewardships in Zion would be unthinkable, but the Lord anticipated that there would be some. In such an eventuality, the guilty parties would be excommunicated, both temporally and spiritually.

42.76 The Bishops were charged that they were to receive no one into the covenants attending the Law of Consecration if they were divorced and their former spouses were still living. By the same token, the Bishops could not in good conscience assign a stewardship to such a profligate. Divorced men and women might belong to the Church, but they could not actively participate in the blessings of Zion until their circumstances were made perfectly clear and rectified according to the mind and will of the Lord. Needless to say, if a man were willing to betray his legal and lawful wife for the attentions of another woman, he could not be expected to generate sufficient spirituality to be of one heart and one mind with his fellow citizens in the New Jerusalem.

42.77 If a man or woman is divorced and has not remarried, which might clearly be the case if he or she were the offended party, they would not be allowed to partake of the blessings of the Law of Consecration until it was determined that they had not fallen err to grievous sins subsequent to their divorce.

42.78 This verse and those that follow to the end of the Section are found as the first twenty verses of Chapter XLVII in the Book of Commandments. They did not appear in the earliest holographs of the revelations, but did appear in the earliest printing of the revelation in the periodicals of the Church. We do not know exactly when they were received by revelation. It would appear that these verses are not merely a reprise of verses 18 to 29 given above. The former instructions pertained specifically to those who were being considered to participate under the terms of the Law of Consecration in the land of Zion. These present verses were added to provide the leadership of the Church with instructions as to how to deal with members of the Church who...
did not pertain to the city of the New Jerusalem.

42.79 If a man or woman who was dwelling in the New Jerusalem committed a murder, not only would he be dealt with according to the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the result of which would almost certainly be excommunication, he would also be dealt with according to the laws of the Kingdom of God, because these latter would constitute with civil laws of the city. The man then would suffer capital punishment (see 42.18–19). If the murderer lived within the pale of a sovereign nation, the Church could only handle the man for his membership. The civil laws of the land would take precedence and judgment would be executed accordingly.

42.80 Sexual immorality directly impacts the fellowship of a truant member of the Church of Jesus Christ. If the sinner lives within the boundaries of an organized Ward, he may be subject to a Bishop’s disciplinary council, comprised of the Bishop and two others, preferably his councilors. The nature of the infraction may be serious enough that the Stake Presidency and the High Council may be gathered to a disciplinary council to consider the man’s status in the Kingdom of God. In areas where the formal organization of the Church is limited, two or more priesthood leaders may form a disciplinary council to deal with the case. The open confession of the sinner may constitute one of the witnesses against the transgressor. The testimony of the priesthood leader to whom the sinner has confessed may constitute the other. Sometimes additional witnesses are required.

42.81 In the course of a disciplinary council all of the pertinent facts are set before those appointed and the truth of the matter is determined. Once the facts have been ascertained, then it is the responsibility of the leadership of the council to determine how the sinner might be reclaimed by faith and repentance. The consequences of sin may be grievous and the way of the transgressor may be hard, but the way is open for every man or woman who has jeopardized their eternal future to return to full faith and fellowship in the Church and Kingdom of God. Generally, the members of the council represent the whole body of the Church of Christ when they raise their hands to sustain the decision being made.

42.82 It would be difficult to hold a Bishop’s disciplinary council in the absence of the Bishop. To hold a council comprised of the Stake Presidency and the High Council without the presence of the Bishop of the accused individual being present would seem to be an incomplete proceeding.

42.83 The mind and will of the Lord is clearly stated here. In later revelations the manner in which these councils were to be conducted is considerable clarified and articulated.

42.84 In the city of Zion there would be a civil law to which the citizen could turn, one which rendered complete and perfect justice. The civil result would be that the man or woman would be deprived of their citizenship in the city of God (see 42.20). Outside of the pale of the New Jerusalem, however, the leadership was not to take the legal ramifications of robbery into their own hands, but rather turn the robber over to the proper authorities in the land where the infraction took place.

42.85 Stealing is a clandestine form of robbery, the latter usually committed with the victim under duress. It would be difficult to imagine any society

79 And it shall come to pass, that if any persons among you shall kill they shall be delivered up and dealt with according to the laws of the land; for remember that he hath no forgiveness; and it shall be proved according to the laws of the land.

80 And if any man or woman shall commit adultery, he or she shall be tried before two elders of the church, or more, and every word shall be established against him or her by two witnesses of the church, and not of the enemy; but if there are more than two witnesses it is better.

81 But he or she shall be condemned by the mouth of two witnesses; and the elders shall lay the case before the church, and the church shall lift up their hands against him or her, that they may be dealt with according to the law of God.

82 And if it can be, it is necessary that the bishop be present also.

83 And thus ye shall do in all cases which shall come before you.

84 And if a man or woman shall rob, he or she shall be delivered up unto the law of the land.

85 And if he or she shall steal, he or she shall be delivered up unto
wherein there would be no law against either activity. Outside of the city of
Zion, robbers and thieves were to be turned over to the local civil authorities.

42.86 Defamation of character is frequently punishable by civil law, as is
perjury. Railing against members of the Church in any degree of unrighteous-
ness may reflect negatively on the fellowship that the Church might have with
individual. One who would bring false accusation against his fellow man
cannot be considered to be of one heart and one mind with the saints and
therefore, no longer a viable citizen of the city of God. Criminal prevarication
would fall under the purview of the civil courts.

42.87 There are some offenses that are not covered by the law of the land,
particularly in societies where corruption has tainted the administration of
justice. It is possible, then, for a degree of justice to be administered according
to the laws and covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ. This may be suffi-
cient to bring about a reconciliation between the opposing parties.

42.88 The most productive and satisfying resolutions of differences are those
which are initiated and brought to fruition by those who are directly involved.
This often requires great humility and long-suffering. According to the Lord,
it is the offended party that is to initiate the process. Frequently, the erstwhile
offender is oblivious to the nature of his offense, having no intention of
distressing any of those around him. This should be the state of affairs
wherever the saints of God are found.

42.89 Sometimes neither the offender nor the offended party can come to an
agreement as to what actually transpired. Sometimes this is the fault
the person offended being too aggressive in his or her approach to the suspected
offender. Sometimes the pride of the person accused of offending another is
hurt. Where the parties have reached an impasse, then the leadership of the
Church is appealed to as an unbiased third party. At no time are the two who
are embroiled in their controversy to recruit support from their fellow citizens
in the Kingdom of God, for that would only bring shame and division within
the Church. Nor should either side bring litigation until all else has failed, and
even then the saints should be circumspect.

42.90 Sometimes the offenses given are deliberate attempts to injure others.
To the degree that these offenses have become public, so also should the
reconciliation be made public.

42.91 If a man or woman has offended his God in private, so therefore should
the reconciliation be made between the Father and His son or daughter. If one
has offended another and that falling out can be resolved in private, so be it.
But if a member of the Church has openly embarrassed and defamed another,
deprieving them of their good reputation, then the apology and reconciliation
should be accordingly public. If the offender in this case will not make resti-
tution, then their membership in the Church and Kingdom of God may very
well be in jeopardy.

42.92 There should be no attempt on the part of the offended one to escalate
the problem by spreading abroad the nature and the effects of the offense.
Sometimes, if the offender is unwilling to repent of his or her actions, the
offended one may simply have to forgive the sinner and move on with his or
her life. To do otherwise might bring untoward reactions from the mem-
bership of the Church, causing divisions and contentions on a far greater scale.

| the law of the land. | D&C 42:85–86  
| AF 428 |
| 86 And if he or she shall lie, he or she shall be delivered up unto the law of the land. | D&C 42:86  
| MD 441 |
| 87 And if he or she do any manner of inquiry, he or she shall be delivered up unto the law, even that of God. | D&C 42:87–92  
| AGQ 1 84 |
| 88 And if thy brother or sister offend thee, thou shalt take him or her between him or her and thee alone; and if he or she confess thou shalt be reconciled. | D&C 42:88  
| FPM 194  
| D&C 42:88–89  
| DNTC 1 422  
| MM 3 91  
| D&C 42:88–93  
| MF 186  
| EM 1:309 |
| 89 And if he or she confess not thou shalt deliver him or her up unto the church, not to the mem-
ers, but to the elders. And it shall be done in a meeting, and that not before the world. | D&C 42:90–91  
| DNTC 3 92 |
| 90 And if thy brother or sister offend many, he or she shall be chastened before many. | D&C 42:90–91  
| DNTC 3 92 |
| 91 And if any one offend openly, he or she shall be rebuked openly, that he or she may be ashamed. And if he or she confess not, he or she shall be delivered up unto the law of God. | D&C 42:90–91  
| DNTC 3 92 |
| 92 If any shall offend in secret, he or she shall be rebuked in secret, that he or she may have opportu-
nity to confess in secret to him or her whom he or she has offended, and to God, that the church may |
Ultimately we know that offenses will come, but the power of reconciliation is the essence of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

42.93 The foregoing constituted the mind and will of the Lord regarding the leadership and membership of the Church and how they were to become at peace and in harmony one with another.

43.0.1 The membership of the early Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation sometimes had difficulty in distinguishing the spirit of revelation from the spirit of the devil. If the Holy Ghost were to whisper to a man, how would he know that the notions that had come into his mind and heart were from God? Likewise if the spirit of the evil one were to teach an individual, how could that influence be distinguished from the spirit of God? This became particularly complicated when the saints were for the most part inexperienced in these matters. Fortunately for the Church there were several touchstones by which one could learn to discern the truth of any matter. First, there were the standard works of the Church, the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith. Clearly, if a revelation contradicted that which had been previously received, then the erstwhile “inspiration” would be suspect. Second, there were men who had experience in these matters, who knew what it was like to be edified by the Holy Ghost or assaulted by the spirit of the devil. These men were typically filled with the spirit of discernment and could recognize almost immediately from whence came the message and the messenger.

43.0.2 At the heart of the contentions prevalent during the early days of the Church in Kirtland was an inordinate pride in the hearts of many, who thought to instruct the prophet Joseph Smith in his duties because in their opinion he was hardly more than a boy. Many of the early saints came from religious and political backgrounds that bristled at the notion of a preeminent leader, or a central governing body for any organization. For many of these men and women, the blessings and gifts enjoyed by one man could and ought to be personally enjoyed by all. Hence, when it became clear that Joseph Smith was receiving revelations on a regular basis, there were those who thought to do the same, not understanding the order of the Kingdom of God that had already been established when the Church was first organized. When God did not speak to them as they thought He ought when they sought revelations from Him, they were willing to listen to any spiritual source and gravitated toward the deceptions of Satan. They were readily deceived because of their ill-informed pride. Some of these, particularly those who brought railing accusations against the prophet and other Church leaders, were easily revealed for what they were. Some others were far more subtle. In February 1831 there were an unusual number of deceivers that were attempting to find acceptance within the Kingdom of God. The prophet sought the counsel of the Lord on this matter; God in his wisdom revealed the following. This section appeared as Chapter XLV in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 14 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

43.1 No matter what the inhabitants of the world were willing to receive as truth, the membership of the Church and Kingdom of God were under covenant to receive the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ as they were revealed through his chosen servants. The saints could learn more from the Lord’s prophet in ten minutes than they could from resorting to the vain philoso-

not speak reproachfully of him or her.

93 And thus shall ye conduct in all things.

Section 43

Date: February 1831
Place: Kirtland, Ohio
To: Elders of the Church

1 O hearken, ye elders of my church, and give ear to the words which I shall speak unto you.

D&C 43:1–4
DHC 7 (23)
D&C 43:1–7
EM 1:395
43.2 On the very day that the Church of Jesus Christ was formally organized in this dispensation, the Lord commanded that the membership of the Church would look to Joseph Smith as His seer, His translator, His prophet, His Apostle, and as the first elder of the Church. The saints were to receive his words as if from the mouth of God. If they did so, they would not be deceived (see 21:1–6). All those who had been received into the Church by baptism had accepted that premise and should have cast a wary eye at any man or woman who professed to usurp or supplant Joseph as the Lord’s spokesman to the Church.

43.3 So long as Joseph himself was abiding by the laws and commandments that had been given to the Church of Jesus Christ, no one could justifiably claim that he or she was to succeed the prophet. Even Oliver Cowdery, he who held the keys of the priesthood with Joseph, could not presume to take precedence over the teachings and calling of the first elder (see 28.1–7).

43.3.2—taken—This would transpire on 27 June 1844 in Carthage, Illinois. Until the prophet’s death, his teachings and revelations took precedence over the teachings and revelations of any other man or woman.

43.4 The successors of the prophet Joseph Smith would come from the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, men who were appointed and ordained by the laying on of hands. This Quorum was called and set apart in February 1835. When Joseph Smith was murdered in June 1844, the Twelve Apostles constituted the governing body of the Church and Kingdom of God. Brigham Young, then President of the Quorum of the Twelve, became Joseph’s immediate successor. Had there been a necessity prior to 1835 to replace the prophet, Joseph would have been given the right to bestowed upon the man the Lord had chosen all of the rights, keys, powers, and authority that the angels of God had bestowed upon him.

43.5 The saints at any given time would be able to know those teachings that should be binding upon them. So long as Joseph lived, there would be no question as to whom they should look for guidance. If there needed to be a change in leadership while the prophet remained in mortality, the membership of the Church would be privy to that transfer of authority. Hence, any others who pretended revelations for the Church or for mankind in general should be ignored.

43.6 Henceforth there should have been no more confusion as to the identity of the Lord’s instrument for blessing the lives of the saints. Notwithstanding this clear declaration, there would be many who would lead the honest in heart astray by means of their pretended revelations.

43.7 He who would preside at any given time in the Church and Kingdom of God would not be a stranger to the saints. He would not be a sneak thief climbing into the sheepfold. He would be one sanctioned by the Lord Himself, through long service to the saints of the Most High. Needless to say, he would have accepted all of the covenants given by the Lord. He would have conformed his life to the teachings of the Savior, living by every word that had proceeded forth from the mouth of God. Before being appointed to receive revelations, the successor of the prophet Joseph Smith would have continually and faithfully taught all that had been given through the Lord’s servant.

2 For behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye have received a commandment for a law unto my church, through him whom I have appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations from my hand.

3 And this ye shall know assuredly—that there is none other appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations until he be taken, if he abide in me.

4 But verily, verily, I say unto you, that none else shall be appointed unto this gift except it be through him; for if it be taken from him he shall not have power except to appoint another in his stead.

5 And this shall be a law unto you, that ye receive not the teachings of any that shall come before you as revelations or commandments;

6 And this I give unto you that you may not be deceived, that you may know they are not of me.

7 For verily I say unto you, that he that is ordained of me shall come in at the gate and be ordained as I have told you before, to teach those revelations which you have received and shall receive through him whom I have appointed.
43.8 The saints are led astray when they abide in ignorance. They are to familiarize themselves with all that the Lord has revealed through His servants. The Lord is timely in all of His instructions; everything that He has revealed has direct bearing on the survival and progress of His disciples. The principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, together with all of the ancillary doctrines that accompany the covenants of the Lord, are woven together into a perfect whole. By comprehending all that the Father and the Son have delivered unto their servants, we may know how to wend our way through this lost and fallen world of which we are a part.

43.9 Each of the laws and commandments of the Kingdom of God is designed to teach the children of men of some aspect of the divine nature. Those who have taken upon themselves the name of Jesus Christ through the ordinances of the Gospel are commanded to draw nigh to their Lord through obedience to the truths they have received. As the children of God they are to assist one another in achieving perfection. They are to be of one heart and one mind, loving and caring for one another until they are completely acceptable before Heaven.

43.10 The work and glory of the Father and the Son is to bring about the immortality and eternal life of mankind. To the degree that the honest in heart respond positively to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, they are drawn into a unity with Celestial beings, candidates for exaltation. Those who balk at portions of the plan of happiness, become darkened in their minds, losing what little comprehension that they once had, until they know nothing at all.

43.11 No doubt the Lord is speaking individually and collectively. Every man and woman who would be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ must put off the spirit of the natural man and become as a little child, obedient and faithful in all things. All sin is to be abandoned and every effort made to implement the truth of all things into one’s daily walk and talk. In any society, the recalcitrant are despoilers of the happiness of the righteous, and eventually those who would usurp the power and authority of the servants of God must be relieved of their covenants and provided with another venue. Certainly in preparation for laying the foundation of the city of Zion, this must be so.

43.12 No man or woman who has dwelt in this dispensation, even the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times, will ever inherit the full weight and measure of the glory of the Celestial Kingdom without accepting the prophet Joseph Smith as the Lord’s agent.

43.12.10—appoint—The Lord had already appointed Joseph to serve in the capacities for which he was known. Every individual must do the same. We might say today that we must sustain the prophet of God with all of our hearts in order to find happiness, both in time and in eternity.

43.12.14–16—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

43.12.24–26—prayer of faith—This is not mere lip service, but an expression of heartfelt desire for the personal wellbeing of the servant of God.

43.13 The building up of the Kingdom of God upon the earth is a practical matter as well as a spiritual one. The saints wished to be edified on a regular

8 And now, behold, I give unto you a commandment, that when ye are assembled together ye shall instruct and edify each other, that ye may know how to act and direct my church, how to act upon the points of my law and commandments, which I have given.

9 And thus ye shall become instructed in the law of my church, and be sanctified by that which ye have received, and ye shall bind yourselves to act in all holiness before me—

10 That inasmuch as ye do this, glory shall be added to the kingdom which ye have received. Inasmuch as ye do it not, it shall be taken, even that which ye have received.

11 Purge ye out the iniquity which is among you; sanctify yourselves before me;

12 And if ye desire the glories of the kingdom, appoint ye my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and uphold him before me by the prayer of faith.

13 And again, I say unto you, that if ye desire the mysteries of the
basis, but for that blessing there was a price to be paid. If Joseph Smith was continually distracted by having to deal with the temporal affairs of the world in addition to his duties as the President of the Church, there would be little time remaining for laboring in behalf of the Kingdom of God. Translating the Book of Mormon took time. Tending to the needs of the various branches of the Church in preparation for laying the foundation of the New Jerusalem required enormous effort. The coming forth of the new Translation of the Bible could not be accomplished as a hobby. Joseph could move the Church forward as he was assisted in doing so by those who covenanted to build up the Kingdom of God. The saints would have to decide as to what they really wished to have in their hands; their temporal goods or the wisdom of God.

43.14 Those who were unwilling to support the efforts of the prophet, who were unwilling to advance the cause of Zion, would eventually be found outside of the pale of the Kingdom of God. The Church of Jesus Christ would be purified one way or another; either the saints would repent, or they would be left behind.

43.15 The missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ have no need to be taught of the world. Their Master, their Teacher, is He who comprehends all things. The elders of the Church have been imbued with the power of the priesthood of God, His authority, coupled with the power and the influence of the Holy Ghost. There is little to be gained by sitting at the feet of those who have garnered up fundamentally useless information that will not draw the children of men unto their God. The wisdom of the world is foolishness unto God because it cannot and will not produce salvation.

43.16 The elders who are sent into the world to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ must be sustained by the power of the Spirit of God or they will be fruitless in their labors. A man endowed with power from on high cannot be confounded, but stands as a bright and shining light in the midst of the infernal darkness of the world. Their words cannot be resisted because they are the words of God.

43.17 The reason for the restoration of the Gospel, the priesthood, and the revelatory power given to the prophets of God is to prepare a people for the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Without these particular blessings, the whole earth would have been laid waste at his coming. As it is, the way of the Lord is being prepared before Him, so that He might receive those who have been sanctified by the power of truth.

43.18 Nearly two thousand years ago, the Lord Jesus Christ emerged from the tomb, victorious over the grave, holding the keys of the resurrection. There were many in various parts of the world who came forth from the dead with him to stand as witnesses of the power vested in him by the Father. These testified unto the living in no uncertain terms, by which their faith in the Christ was strengthened. Since that first Easter morning, many others have been brought forth from the world of spirits to attend to the tasks that pertain to their callings in time and in eternity. However, the vast majority of humanity has fallen into dust after the end of their mortal sojourn upon the earth. Their spirits have resided separate from the affairs of mortals, whether in paradise or in prison, whether among the righteous or among the wicked. When the Lord Jesus Christ appears in glory, near the beginning of the Millennial reign, the righteous who have lived upon the earth will be given the opportunity to come forth in the morning of the resurrection, in anticipation of the kingdom, provide for him food and raiment, and whatsoever thing he needeth to accomplish the work wherewith I have commanded him;

14 And if ye do it not he shall remain unto them that have received him, that I may reserve unto myself a pure people before me. D&C 43:14
MD 612

15 Again I say, hearken ye elders of my church, whom I have appointed: Ye are not sent forth to be taught, but to teach the children of men the things which I have put into your hands by the power of my Spirit; D&C 43:15–28
DS 1 309

16 And ye are to be taught from on high. Sanctify yourselves and ye shall be endowed with power, that ye may give even as I have spoken. D&C 43:16
DNCT 1 859
MD 675
CR01-O 110

17 Hearken ye, for, behold, the great day of the Lord is nigh at hand. D&C 43:17
AF 373
MLM 30
D&C 43:17–18
AF 390
MLM 633
D&C 43:17–25
MLM 376
D&C 43:17–34
DS 3 55
D&C 43:17–35
DS 3 21
D&C 43:18
AF 394
DNCT 1 396
DNCT 2 528
DNCT 3 512
JC 790
MD 640, 667
D&C 43:18–29
MD 787
thousand years of peace and happiness that will mark the day of perfection and sanctification in the history of the earth. The wicked, however, will not come forth from their graves until after the Millennium. Their eternal lot will differ greatly from those who are the beneficiaries of the first resurrection.

43.19 Salvation and exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom do not derive from a passive acceptance of the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The saint of the Most High is an active participant in the Lord’s endeavor to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of mankind. Many of the elders who had gathered together to receive this particular revelation had already received their call to carry the principles of salvation into the regions round about Kirtland, Ohio. Their faithfulness to the charge given to them would determine their eternal prospects.

43.19.2—gird—That is to say, prepare yourselves to be about your assigned tasks.

43.20 There was no time to spare. The coming of the Lord Jesus Christ was nigh. Those who had not heard the voice of warning were in jeopardy. Those not exhibiting the spirit of repentance in their daily walk and talk were walking upon the downward path to eternal destruction. The saints needed to perceive the dire straits in which the inhabitants of the earth were mired and reach out to all those in distress and bring them unto Christ before the hour of judgment arrived. None would be exempt, no matter their social or material circumstances.

43.20.1—nations—In February 1831, the elders of the Church had received commandments to take the truths of the restoration throughout the confines of the United States and to the remnants of the children of Lehi. There would come a time when they would be sent into all of the world with the same message.

43.21 The humble and simple members of the Church of Jesus Christ have been sent to the inhabitants of the earth to test and to try them, that the children of men might hear the truth and act upon it according to their predilections. The honest in heart will seek out the inspiration of the Almighty and will obey the voice of His spirit. The rebellious will persist in their wickedness. Prior to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, a stunning series of trials and tribulations will serve as a wake-up call to the nations of the earth, far more poignantly physical than anything accomplished by the elders of the Lord. Again, the wicked will have to choose whether they will hearken to the voice of warning or whether they will refuse to be moved and perish in their sins.

43.21.3—I—This the person of the missionary who has been sent into the world to cry out the voice of warning that began in the previous verse.

43.21.33—thunders—Perhaps an allusion to the thunders that would speak forth in the latter days according to the Revelation of John the Beloved (see RV-C 10.3–4). Of course, the physical nature of the devastating storms in the latter days that are instrumental in destroying much life upon the earth may very well serve as a spectacular call to repentance (see 2 NE-C 27:1–3).

43.22 There will come a time, prior to the second coming of the Son of God, when the Lord Himself will preach His own sermon to the inhabitants of the earth. The world of nature will be in turmoil, the elements apparently distressing all of mankind, the earth suffering contortions, the seas heaving beyond their bounds, famine and death embracing the earth. To whom will the world

19 Wherefore gird up your loins lest ye be found among the wicked.

20 Lift up your voices and spare not. Call upon the nations to repent, both old and young, both bond and free, saying: Prepare yourselves for the great day of the Lord;

21 For if I, who am a man, do lift up my voice and call upon you to repent, and ye hate me, what will ye say when the day cometh when the thunders shall utter their voices from the ends of the earth, speaking to the ears of all that live, saying—Repent, and prepare for the great day of the Lord?

22 Yea, and again, when the lightnings shall streak forth from the east unto the west, and shall utter forth their voices unto all that live, and make the ears of all tingle that

D&C 43:20
AF 119
D&C 43:20–28
DS 1 234

D&C 43:22
MLM 358
D&C 43:22–26
DS 3 22
of men turn for comfort when all seems in chaos? There will be many who will be humbled; there will others who will remain belligerent until they are no more. Repentance would have been far more desirable in a day of peace and spiritual enlightenment, but repentance of any kind will suffice for temporal salvation in that great day.

43.23 After the voice of the servants of God enhanced by the Holy Ghost, after the devastation of the world through temporal disasters, then the voice of the Lord Himself will be heard in every quarter of the earth, testifying of His unbounded love for them, but warning all that impertinence and rebellion will not continue into the Millennial reign. If they insist upon their rebellion against the whisperings of the Spirit of God and that of His only begotten Son, they would find themselves exiled to the world of spirits for a thousand years.

43.24 A reprise of the Lord’s lament over the city of Jerusalem shortly before his crucifixion (see MT-C 23.34–39) and to the surviving Nephites after the great destruction that accompanied his death (see 3 NE-C 10.3–8). The gathering of Israel and the establishment of Zion was ever a protection against the ravages of evil, both from within and without. The city of Enoch avoided every onslaught devised by the wicked of her day because the righteous had willingly gathered beneath the protecting wings of their God, and were eventually carried from the earth to a place of safety before the floods of Noah poured forth upon the earth. God will have His people obedient of their own free will and choice, but if they refuse his protection, they doom themselves to destruction.

43.25 The labors of God the eternal Father and of His Son Jesus Christ have been tireless, a manifestation of their unfailing love for the members of their eternal family. Our God is not desperate for admirers; He does not demand adoration. His sentiments about the creation are not those of an agonized artist; He is not frustrated about a growing lack of control. The Father is grieved at the conditions that exist upon this earth because he is filled with all of the tender feelings of a loving parent. He fully understands what His children need to do in order to acquire all of the attributes and characteristics of His divine nature, that which will qualify them to dwell in the midst of eternal glory. There is no question that many hundreds of thousands, even millions of His spirit offspring have responded to the enticing of the Holy Ghost. They have chosen to hearken to His voice and live by the principles and ordinances that He had provided the faithful. He is not content, however, to allow the rest of His posterity to sink into the oblivion of imperfection as the result of a want of effort on His part. He has sent the faithful unto the wicked, calling upon them to wake up to the calamity which faces them. When the voice of mortal men has not sufficed, He has commanded his angelic ministers to raise a clarion call for repentance. Each instrument that He has used has been calculated to raise the level of consciousness of a certain segment of the inhabitants of the earth. He has spoken with His own voice, together with the voice of nature, not so as to terrify, but rather to bring His children out of their false sense of carnal security, to remind them that they have life upon this earth because of eternal laws which they do not and cannot control. Once awakened out of their spiritual slumber, once alerted to their dire circumstances, the Lord God of Israel then extends the covenants of salvation, the promises of eternity, that the children of men might choose for themselves whether they will have life or death as their eternal lot. The Father will not overturn a conscious decision of one of His children to partake of

hear, saying these words—Repent ye, for the great day of the Lord is come?

23 And again, the Lord shall utter his voice out of heaven, saying: Hearken, O ye nations of the earth, and hear the words of that God who made you.

24 O, ye nations of the earth, how often would I have gathered you together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!

25 How oft have I called upon you by the mouth of my servants, and by the ministering of angels, and by mine own voice, and by the voice of thunderings, and by the voice of lightnings, and by the voice of tempests, and by the voice of earthquakes, and great hailstorms, and by the voice of famines and pestilences of every kind, and by the great sound of a trump, and by the voice of judgment, and by the voice of mercy all the day long, and by the voice of glory and honor and the riches of eternal life, and would have saved you with an everlasting salvation, but ye would not!
eternal banishment from His presence. He will, however, suffer indescribable sorrow at the loss of that child.

43.26 There is an ultimate reality in all of existence; there is the truth of the whole matter. That truth is immutable, unflinching, because it simply is. Spiritual and physical existence are defined by immutable laws. Without those laws, there would be no existence of any kind. God our eternal Father is the master of all law, comprehending from the beginning to the end, all of the intricacies associated with those laws, together with what transpires when intelligence actively engages the realm of universal law. Intelligence perceives the effects that any interaction with the existing laws produces. The nature of intelligence is such that there are some effects that are more desirable than others. The desirable effects may be termed the principles of happiness. There is no being in all of time or eternity that is more felicitous than God our eternal Father; He partakes completely of all the happiness that any intelligence can possibly enjoy. Having found the path to eternal happiness, He has provided opportunities for His children, beings like unto Himself in every way, to partake equally with Him if they so choose. His children are intelligent as well, and are sensitive to those effects that produce happiness in eternity. They can also sense the effects that are less desirable, even those which constitute the polar opposite of happiness. The Father has constantly cautioned His children regarding the principles of misery, and His warnings are inexorably identified with Him. Disobedience to God brings misery; it is unavoidable; it is the nature of existence. He takes no joy in the suffering of His children, but He cannot change the nature of the principles of happiness and misery any more than He can change His own nature.

43.27 Those inhabitants of the earth that persist in flaunting their wickedness, effectively incur the wrath of God, because they insist in placing themselves in harm’s way, subject to the principles of misery rather than subject to the principles of happiness.

43.28 This verse constitutes an allusion to the Allegory of Zenos, wherein the Lord describes in metaphorical terms the lengths to which He is willing to go in order to preserve His children in time and in eternity (see JA-C 5.1–77). Although we may not fully understand all of the laws that govern creation, salvation, and exaltation, we may conclude that there are eternal seasons or temporal constraints involved. These are not arbitrary, but are based on the immutable truths of eternity. Therefore, men are given a time upon the earth to learn and to progress, but that timeframe is not boundless. In our case, the temporal existence of this planet, the period of time allotted since the fall, unto the time of the death and resurrection of the earth, has been decreed to be seven thousand years, plus a short season. We are approaching the time of the Millennium, a thousand year period of peace and harmony wherein much will be done to sanctify all of the inhabitants of the earth. These are the days during which the forces of evil and the forces of good will be actively arrayed and the children of men will consciously choose that which they would rather experience in time and in eternity. The Gospel of Jesus Christ will resound in every nation, among every kindred, tongue, and people.

43.29 This, of course, constitutes the promise given by the Lord Jesus Christ to the saints of the latter days. The elders who received this revelation had been invited to participate in the restoration of the earth to its paradisical glory by helping to prepare a people to receive the Savior at his coming in glory.
43.30 The Millennium is that period of time in the temporal history of the earth when the Lord Jesus Christ will reign personally in the midst of his saints. The earth will have been restored to its paradisiacal glory, a Terrestrial state in which death and disease as they are presently manifested will no longer bear sway. The principles that found expression in the city of Enoch and other Zion communities will prevail upon the entire face of the earth. Every prophet who has ever lived upon this planet since the days of Adam and Eve has looked forward to that glorious day, knowing that they have an inheritance there.

43.30.4—Millennium—A thousand year period of time initiated by the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Savior of mankind will reign during a time of peace, love, and harmony while the earth enjoys a Terrestrial rest from all wickedness.

43.31 Satan will have no power during the Millennium because no man, woman, or child will be inclined to hearken to his voice. He will welter with his minions in hell, having no venue in which to vent his unquenchable hatred of the righteous.

43.31.18–19—little season—We may only speculate about the nature of this short period of time after the close of the Millennium. Satan will find those who will hearken to his voice which will be the means of bringing misery again among the children of men. We have no idea how long this period of loathing and violence will continue before Satan and his hosts are banished forever.

43.31.24—end—What is meant here is the end of the temporal existence of the earth. When this planet was created it was a Terrestrial sphere, devoid of death and disease. When Adam and Eve partook of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, the earth literally fell, both physically and spiritually from the presence of God, becoming a Celestial world, lost and fallen. At the second coming of Christ, the earth will be restored to its paradisiacal glory, or that which prevailed while Adam and Eve resided in the Garden of Eden. After the short season, the earth will pass through a change very much like that of death and resurrection, after which it will be a glorified Celestial world, perfectly fitted for the heirs of God, the Savior and his children begotten through his atoning sacrifice.

43.32 Those righteous mortals living at the end of the Millennium and during the short season when Satan will have limited power again, will pass through a change at the same time as the earth is exalted. They will die and resurrect in the twinkling of an eye, in an instant. To the candid and uninformed observer, the earth will appear to have been destroyed by fire. That, of course, will not be the case. The Celestial materials that will comprise the physical nature of this earth will not be consumed, but will be eternally enhanced.

43.32.4—liveth—The final events regarding the status of the earth prior to its exaltation will be anticipated in part by the translation of the earth when the Savior comes upon the earth to rule for a thousand years. All that which pertains to the Celestial world will pass away as if by fire as the earth receives a Terrestrial glory. Those mortals who will witness this transformation will themselves be changed from their Celestial state to that of the Terrestrial world, and this instantaneously. During the Millennium, when a righteous man or woman reaches their time of appointed death, they will be transformed in the twinkling of an eye as well, passing through death and resurrection in an instant.

30 For the great Millennium, of which I have spoken by the mouth of my servants, shall come.

31 For Satan shall be bound, and when he is loosed again he shall only reign for a little season, and then cometh the end of the earth.

32 And he that liveth in righteousness shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and the earth shall pass away so as by fire.
43.33 As the earth receives its Celestial glory, Satan and all those who have hearkened to his voice are dispossessed of any erstwhile claims they may have presumed upon the earth and its inhabitants. They are consigned to Outer Darkness, a place which only they will experience, and that for all eternity. That it will be like unto spirit prison, or the hell spoken of in the scriptures, there can be no question, save that it will endure for eternity, an unrelenting suffering of mind and spirit. The sons of perdition who have obtained their physical bodies in the resurrection will suffer to even a greater degree.

43.33.28—judgment—The wicked will have stood before God on several occasions before they are finally banished from all contact with the creations of the Father. The righteous who witness these proceedings will see for themselves the anguish and torment of the damned.

43.34 The prospects of both the righteous and the wicked had been laid out before the saints, in order to inspire them in their labors among the children of men. These forays were not simply a matter of fulfilling the prophecies of God; they were fundamentally related to the love which the Father and the Son have toward the members of their eternal family. The salvation of a single soul was a solemn matter indeed.

43.34.9—10—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

43.35 We cannot afford to be cavalier in our relationship with God. The redemption of the earth and its inhabitants can only be accomplished through obedience to the commandments of the Father, which commandments are reflective of the truths and laws that define eternal existence.

43.35.9—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as "Amen" derives from roots which mean "true". This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

44.0 During the previous weeks, the Lord had given to His servants instructions as to how they should proceed in their preparations to establish the city of Zion, including the fundamental principles that would govern the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem. The saints would need to be of one heart and mind, observant of the commandments of God, and engage in economic policies that would free all men from the bondage of poverty. In order to have the Church progress toward independence, their numbers would need to increase, an object that could only be accomplished through intensified missionary work. In earlier revelations, several of the elders had been given the charge to seek out the honest in heart in those lands that lay to the west of Kirtland, Ohio (see 42.8). The Lord later promised them that the time would come when the servants of God would be sent in every direction that the House of Israel might be gathered in to the safety of Zion. In this revelation, the Lord appointed a time for a general conference of the Church, one which would be held for three days beginning on 3 June 1831 in Kirtland. The missionary force that would be gathered and instructed during that conference would be instrumental in bringing many of the children of men unto salvation, so much so that many of the principles and practices described in the revelation regarding the Law of Consecration would become a reality, simply because the number of faithful saints had increased. This section appeared as

33 And the wicked shall go away into unquenchable fire, and their end no man knoweth on earth, nor ever shall know, until they come before me in judgment.

34 Hearken ye to these words. Behold, I am Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. Treasure these things up in your hearts, and let the solemnities of eternity rest upon your minds.


Section 44

Date: February 1831 (latter part)  D&C 43:33
Place: Kirtland, Ohio         MD 281, 837
To: Joseph Smith, Sidney    MF 118
               Rigdon             EM 3:1392

D&C 43:34
DN TC 3 317
MD 432, 448, 677, 740
CR95-A 45
CR95-O 32
CR98-O 16

Date: February 1831 (latter part)  D&C 44
Place: Kirtland, Ohio         DHC 1 157
To: Joseph Smith, Sidney    MD 378
               Rigdon             EM 1:408

328
Chapter XLVI in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 62 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

44.1 As was mentioned above, this general conference of the Church of Jesus Christ would be held for three days beginning 3 June 1831 in Kirtland, Ohio. More than two thousand would gather together to receive instruction in the Law of Consecration and other matters pertaining to the building up of the Kingdom of God upon the earth. The spiritual outpouring during those three days was such that the elders were considerably strengthened in their determination to keep the commandments of God and live in accordance with the dictates Spirit of God.

44.2 The accounts written concerning that conference in June 1831 reveal a literal fulfillment of all that the Lord had promised to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon. The elders gathered at Kirtland would learn to distinguish between the power and influence of the Holy Ghost and that manifested by Satan and his minions. Additional offices in the priesthood would be identified, to which many of those in attendance would be ordained. Great prophecies and other glorious revelations would transpire while the brethren were gathered together, by which the membership of the Church would be edified and informed.

44.3 All those who attended the June general conference should be prepared to embark on missions, that having been warned, they were to warn their neighbors. The saints were to gather to Kirtland, Ohio, and from thence they would be given the opportunity to receive an inheritance in the land of Zion. Through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and sincere abandonment of all sin, together with the various ordinances that served as the tokens of salvation, there would be a people prepared to make the journey to western Missouri. They would serve as the means by which the foundation stones of the New Jerusalem would be laid.

44.4 On 6 April 1830, six men participated in the formal organization of the Church of Jesus Christ, according to the existing laws of the State of New York. The Kingdom of God renders unto Caesar that which pertains to Caesar, so long as the civil laws bear sway in the land. So likewise in every aspect of human endeavor that is governed by civil law, the Church attempts to operate within the established system. While it may be possible to organize a religious entity with six individuals, considerably more people are required to build a city, establish financial security for its inhabitants, and provide for any eventuality conjured up by the enemies of righteousness. As the Church has grown, these goals have been more easily achieved.

44.5 In the process of time, every imaginable effort has been made to interrupt the progress of the Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth. This has been true during the course of every dispensation since the days of Adam and Eve. As the saints have gathered, they have been opposed. In the present dispensation, outrageous, nefarious means have been used to undermine that which the Lord had commanded of His people. The attacks came wherever the Church had links with the temporal affairs with the world. Thus, when the Book of Mormon was about to be published, there were those who purposefully attempted to intimidate E.B. Grandin. It should come as no surprise, then, that when the opportunity came, the brethren had no hesitancy in acquiring their own printing press, so that they might be independent of the world in that arena. This spirit of independence, inspired by the God of Heaven, has

1 BEHOLD, thus saith the Lord unto you my servants, it is expedient in me that the elders of my church should be called together, from the east and from the west, and from the north and from the south, by letter or some other way.

2 And it shall come to pass, that inasmuch as they are faithful, and exercise faith in me, I will pour out my Spirit upon them in the day that they assemble themselves together.

3 And it shall come to pass that they shall go forth into the regions round about, and preach repentance unto the people.

4 And many shall be converted, insomuch that ye shall obtain power to organize yourselves according to the laws of man;

5 That your enemies may not have power over you; that you may be preserved in all things; that you may be enabled to keep my laws; that every bond may be broken wherewith the enemy seeketh to destroy my people.
continued. There is hardly an endeavor in which the Church engages where
great strength is not manifested.

44.6 Under the Law of Consecration, the poor and the needy would be pro-
vided for from the Bishop’s Storehouse. During the intervening time between
the giving of the revelation and the realization of the storehouse, the poverty-
stricken saints were to be watched over and care for by the rest of the Church.
Thus, the spirit of Zion was to prevail in the hearts of the membership of the
Church even before the first fields were plowed in the land of inheritance.

44.6.39—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is per-
fected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as
“Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the
many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

45.0.1 Since before the foundations of the earth were laid, the potential dest-
iny of the inhabitants thereof has been a matter of concern to God the eternal
Father, His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, and all of the hosts of Heaven. The
children of God anticipated the creation of this planet and rejoiced when it
finally appeared in its paradisiacal form. Adam and Eve were place within the
Garden of Eden, given instructions to guide and direct them. In the process of
time, Lucifer was given leave to tempt and to try them, the result of which was
the fall. This was precipitated in large measure by our first parents partaking of
the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The earth and all of
its denizens were transformed from a Terrestrial state in the presence of God,
to a Telestial one, the lost and fallen condition that we find ourselves in presen-
tly. During this period of alienation from God, the children of men would be
given an opportunity to take upon themselves tabernacles of clay, physical
bodies, which they would learn to control and perfect as they lived out their
lives upon the earth. When the spirit sons and daughters of God were organ-
ized in the premortal councils, all were informed that their numbers were
finite and that the time allotted for the temporal existence of this world was
also finite. From the fall of man until the exaltation of the earth would be
scarcely more than seven thousand years. During that time, billions of the
children of men would dwell upon the earth, having the opportunity to refine
their spiritual sensitivity, choosing from among the many voices that they
would hear, which they would obey.

45.0.2 The prospect of coming to the earth without the memories of the
premortal life undoubtedly was daunting to many, if not all of the children of
God. This preternatural fear consumed one-third of the hosts of Heaven so
that they sided with Lucifer, a son of the morning who sought to over throw
the throne of God and place himself upon it. These were cast out by the
faithful, the devil’s retinue fleeing to the earth where they thought to frustrate
the plan of salvation by corrupting the hearts and minds of the children of
men. The Father in His mercy had provided for the state of isolation through
which His children would pass. To every man, woman, and child he provided
a source of inspiration, the light of Christ, which would lead them along in
righteousness if they were willing to be led. As they were obedient to those
intimations of godliness, they would receive further light and knowledge, until
they were directly instructed by the servants of God and invited to partake of
the fullness of the Gospel, the plan of salvation and redemption. Thus, for the
past six thousand years, when the children of men were receptive, the truth has
shined forth, dispensations established, wherein the powers of godliness in all

6 Behold, I say unto you, that ye
must visit the poor and the needy
and administer to their relief, that
they may be kept until all things
may be done according to my law
which ye have received. Amen.

Section 45

Date: March 7, 1831
Place: Kirtland, Ohio
To: Church

D&C 44:6
AF 453
D&C 44:29
MD 710

D&C 45
AGQ 2 190
DHC 1 159
DNTC 1 637,
653
DS 3 19, 48, 259
MD 494, 691
MM 1 8
MM 3 459
MM 4 369
EM 1:404, 408, 412
EM 3:1283
EM 4:1593,
1791
of their glory were bestowed upon the willing inhabitants of the earth.

45.0.3 The bane of every generation has been the overt attempts of the devil and his minions to control the hearts and minds of men. They have been inordinately successful in bringing death and misery into the world, in addition to that which was occasioned by the fall. The effects of sin have deeply troubled the faithful as they have watched their family, friends, and neighbors struggle under the burdens of guilt, shame, and remorse. The servants of God, however, promised that there would come a time when the influence of Satan would bear sway no more upon the earth; for a thousand years the light and love of the Son of God would rule the nations, bringing peace, harmony, and prosperity to all living men. The Millennium would comprise the seventh thousand years of the temporal existence of the earth. Detailed prophecies were given of the events that would transpire in preparation for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory. Great was the desire of the weary and the distressed among the children of men for that day of rest in every dispensation; the faithful considered themselves strangers and pilgrims looking for the holy city.

45.0.4 The opening of this present dispensation was filled with promise. This was to be the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times. The boy Joseph Smith sought for a respite from a conviction of his sins, seeking in the religions of his day, the power of redemption. His search brought him to his knees in a grove of trees near his home in Manchester, New York. God the eternal Father and His Son Jesus Christ appeared to Joseph and told him that none of the extant denominations were able to provide what he desired, but there would be an opportunity provided for him to receive a remission of his sins in the not too distant future. The coming of the angel Moroni, the translation and publication of the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods, and the formal organization of the Church of Jesus Christ were all accompanied with assurances that the Millennial day was at hand, and that the light and knowledge that was being revealed through the prophet would be the means by which a people would be prepared to meet the Savior at his coming. Satan, in the meantime, was raising all sorts of opposition to the burgeoning Kingdom of God. Physical persecution ran rampant; rumors flew in every direction; and falsehood of all kinds appeared in print, not only about the latter day saints, but also concerning the scriptures that had been preserved to guide the children of men in the latter days. Even within the Church of Christ there were those who proposed to interpret the words of the Lord in order to enhance themselves in the eyes of others. Some of these contradictory claims began to disrupt the peace of the membership of the Church. This present revelation was one of many to enable the saints to have a correct understanding of all that was about to transpire. This section appeared as Chapter XLVIII in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 15 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

45.1 The humble are frequently intimidated by the arrogant. Those who had been received into the Church and Kingdom of God through the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ had become men and women filled with faith and humility. They wished to pursue their course in life unhindered. They wished to obey the commandments of God without ridicule or oppression. Yet, Satan and his hosts were determined to make the saints of the Most High as miserable as themselves, by inspiring wicked men to trouble and distress them on every hand. The Lord here assures his disciples that they have chosen the better course, that they have the approval of their Heavenly

1 HEARKEN, O ye people of my church, to whom the kingdom has been given; hearken ye and give ear to him who laid the foundation of the earth, who made the heavens and all the hosts thereof, and by whom all things were made which live, and move, and have a being.

D&C 45:1
JC 35
CR00-A 91
EM 2:739
D&C 45:1–4
EM 2:751
D&C 45:1–7
EM 1:412
Father. In the midst of their doubts, they had to be reminded of all of the blessings that they had hitherto received, that they might successfully hang onto the iron rod and pull themselves forward along the straight and narrow path to eternal life and salvation in the Celestial Kingdom.

45.2 This, of course, is an appeal to endure to the end. The members of the Church of Jesus Christ had put their hand to the plow and did not have the time or energy to look back upon that sort of life that they had once lived. They had come together to participate in laying the foundation of a great work and they dare not be distracted by those who would deprive them of their peace. While some time might pass before all of the blessings promised by the Lord through His servants would be realized, yet the disciples of Christ had cause to labor all of their days to the best of their ability, making their contribution to the building up of the Kingdom of God upon the earth, lest they be found wanting in the day of judgment.

45.3 Jesus Christ is our advocate with the Father. He speaks positively in our behalf, seeking divine mercy and forgiveness for the manifold transgressions that we have committed against His law.

45.4 The Savior is not only our defender in the courts of eternal judgment; he is also our benefactor, having paid the price for the consequences of our sins. During the final hours of his mortal life, Jesus suffered the pain and agony of body, mind, and spirit that we should have suffered for those things we have done by which we have offended God. The work and the glory of God is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of the children of men. The Lord Jesus Christ passed through physical death holding the keys of the resurrection, by which he came forth from his own tomb. With his deliverance from death comes the promise that all who have ever breathed a breath upon this planet will likewise come forth from the grave to enjoy endless life. In addition, the Lord provided a means by which any and every man might call upon the Son of God for a remission of sins, by which atoning sacrifice, the sons and daughters of God might return to their eternal Father cleansed, purified, and sanctified, prepared in every way to enjoy eternal life and exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom. Jesus does not hesitate to clearly articulate his desire to bring all who desire to do so, into a state of glory similar to that which we once enjoyed in the presence of God before the foundations of the earth were laid.

45.5 We need to constantly remind ourselves of the infinite love which Jesus has manifested in our behalf. There is no salvation from death and hell, save that which has been achieved by the Son of God in our behalf. This constitutes the heart of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus can directly petition the Father because only he, out of the countless billions who have walked this planet, successfully resisted every temptation of the flesh, being completely obedient to every commandment of God during every instant of his mortal life.

45.6 The earth and its inhabitants have been given a timeframe according to the wisdom and will of God. The temporal existence of the earth has been determined beforehand and no mortal man can change the decrees of the Lord God of Israel. Now is the time, during the period of probation allotted to the children of men, to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. There will come a point when the earth will be substantively changed. If we are not prepared to be changed with it, we will find ourselves in another venue, considerably less felicitous.

2 And again I say, hearken unto my voice, lest death shall overtake you; in an hour when ye think not the summer shall be past, and the harvest ended, and your souls not saved.

3 Listen to him who is the advocate with the Father, who is pleading your cause before him—

4 Saying: Father, behold the sufferings and death of him who did no sin, in whom thou wast well pleased; behold the blood of thy Son which was shed, the blood of him whom thou gavest that thyself might be glorified;

5 Wherefore, Father, spare these my brethren that believe on my name, that they may come unto me and have everlasting life.

6 Hearken, O ye people of my church, and ye elders listen together, and hear my voice while it is called today, and harden not your hearts;
45.7 Without the covenant of the Father, without the Gospel of salvation and redemption, there is no life or expectation of life. Without the resurrection, the body and the spirit of man remain separate in misery for all eternity. Without the remission of sins, the suffering of Christ for the personal violations of the Law of God, there would be no hope for reconciliation, no possibility of returning with joy into the presence of our Heavenly parents. The power to overcome the effects of the Fall of Adam and the devastating consequences of rebellion were embodied in the Savior who conquered both death and hell through his personal righteousness and the power which the Father placed within him when he embarked upon his mortal sojourn upon the earth.

45.7.10—Alpha—The first letter of the Greek alphabet. This constitutes a reprise of the Lord’s imagery used in his revelation to John the Beloved (see RV-C 1.8 and RV-C 21.6).

45.7.12—Omega—The last letter of the Greek alphabet. This constitutes a reprise of the Lord’s imagery used in his revelation to John the Beloved (see RV-C 1.8 and RV-C 21.6).

45.7.14—beginning—An iteration in English of the idea represented by “Alpha”.

45.7.17—end—An iteration in English of the idea represented by “Omega”.

45.7.19—light—It is through the Gospel of Jesus Christ that the purpose of life is made clear. Through the covenants by which we are bound to the Father and the Son are we enabled to perceive the eternal destiny which lies before us.

45.7.22—life—There is no other name given under Heaven by which mankind might be saved. The promise, the covenant, the Gospel of the Father has been manifested to men on the earth in only one person. Through that promise of the Father all men may have eternal life, even as many as will.

45.8 Here the Lord paraphrases a similar declaration made by the Apostle John in the introductory material to his Gospel (see JN-C 1.12). The disciples of Christ are empowered, through their obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Christ, to pass by every sentinel placed between the inhabitants of the earth and the abode of deity. They are perfected in spirit and body to dwell in the presence of God through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are knowledgeable and strong in their convictions. They are without guile and filled with charity for all men. They have bestowed upon them the authority of Heaven to bless and strengthen their brethren. In other words, the disciples have become precisely as their Master inasmuch as they have obeyed the same laws and hearkened to the same voice as did he. The discipleship of any man is in anticipation of his becoming like unto the master of the discipline. The price of Christian discipleship is the putting off of the natural man, every whit, and embracing all of the principles and ordinances that pertain to salvation and exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom. For a man set in his ways, this is an arduous process. One does not merely lie down in the evening as a faithless degenerate and wake up the next morning as a fully developed son of God in the image of the Lord Jesus Christ. This requires time, but the time is short, little to spare.

45.9 The first to be taught the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ were Adam and Eve, which they received with all of their hearts. They made these things known unto their children, but most of them refused to hearken to the voice of their parents. The Lord spoke unto the inhabitants of the earth by

7 For verily I say unto you that I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the light and the life of the world—a light that shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehenderth it not.

8 I came unto mine own, and mine own received me not; but unto as many as received me gave I power to do many miracles, and to become the sons of God; and even unto them that believed on my name gave I power to obtain eternal life.

9 And even so I have sent mine everlasting covenant into the world, to be a light to the world, and to be a standard for my people, and for
means of His spirit, by the voice of his angels and other chosen servants, and by His own voice. He established His covenants among them by principle and ordinance, founding a people willing to obey His commandments, with a promise that their posterity would always have access to the fullness of the Gospel when it was present on the earth. When the remnants of the covenant people would not respond to the preaching of the truth, the Lord turned His servants to other peoples, the Gentiles who frequently responded with enthusiasm, thereby entering into the same covenants as the ancient faithful, obtaining the same blessings for themselves and their posterity as those that had been bestowed upon Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

45.9.16—light—The world in its lost and fallen state is virtually incomprehensible to the children of men. They dwell in the midst of darkness, blind men unaware of the dangers that beset them. The Gospel, when received, opens the eyes of the blind, the ears of the deaf, and softens the hearts of the wicked. The preaching of the Gospel and the gathering of the faithful serve as a preamble to the establishment of the people of Zion. The Lord in his mercy has come to dwell in the cities of Zion throughout the whole history of mankind upon this planet. That is the expectation that lies before us in this generation.

45.9.24—standard—The English word “standard” derives from Germanic sources that mean “standing place, a point of gathering marked by an emblem or banner; something established by authority, custom, or common consent as a model, a structure built as a base or support.”

45.10 Given the context, we should probably assume that the Lord is referring in large measure to the words that were given to the prophet Isaiah.

Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. (Isaiah 1:16–20)

All this in preparation for the establishment of the city of the New Jerusalem.

45.10.5—it—that is to say, the covenant or standard spoken of in the previous verse.

45.11 Only a few months before, the prophet Joseph Smith and his colleagues learned of the missionary efforts of the prophet Enoch and his successful gathering of a righteous people with whom he founded the city of Zion. These were a people who had became one heart and one mind, dwelt in righteousness, and had no poor among them. Ultimately, before the day of the great flood through which Noah passed, the city and its inhabitants were translated, taken from the earth unto the bosom of the Father. The saints of this last dispensation had already been called upon to prepare themselves for a similar task, in anticipation of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. If the disciples of Christ wished to achieve the same status before the Lord, then they would have to hearken to the voice of the Lord through Joseph Smith just as the inhabitants of the city of Zion had hearkened to the voice of Enoch.

45.11.25—Enoch—This prophet should not be confused with the son of Cain who was raised in the land of Nod, east of Eden (see MO-C 5.41—

10 Wherefore, come ye unto it, and with him that cometh I will reason as with men in days of old, and I will show unto you my strong reasoning.

11 Wherefore, hearken ye together and let me show unto you even my wisdom—the wisdom of him whom ye say is the God of Enoch, and his brethren,
Adam was 622 years old when Enoch was born, Seth was 492, Enos 387, Cainan 297, and Mahalalel 227. Enoch was ordained to the priesthood by Adam when he was 25 years old and subsequently blessed by him when he was 65 (see DC-C 107.48). Enoch and his city were translated when he was 430 years old (see DC-C 107.49).

The translation of the city of Enoch was literal. All of the inhabitants thereof, together with the portion of land that had been granted unto them, not excluding any of the improvements that they had made from the time they had settled upon it. The people of Zion were spared death and were promised that there would come a day in which they would return to their former place upon the earth and would enjoy the personal ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ with their brethren during the Millennium. Throughout the history of the world, since the days of Enoch until the present, the servants of God have sought to obtain the same blessings. If they could not establish a city like unto that which Enoch achieved, then they frequently sought to be translated as well. At times, the latter request was granted, especially for those men who held the keys of the priesthood God who had been tasked with assignments that required having a physical body long after their mortal lives should have come to an end.

Much of the narrative given here by the Lord constitutes paraphrasing of passages to be found in the eleventh chapter of the epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Hebrews. The Apostle focused the attention of his readers on the faith of the ancients by which they were able to accomplish extraordinary things. We cannot help but believe that the same is expected of those who find the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the latter days. The desolation of the prophets of God in the world is in part a reflection of the revelations that they have received, presenting how the earth could be a far better place than it is now (see HE-C 11.13).

This would transpire either because they would be translated, caught up into the city of Zion, or that they would come forth in the morning of the first resurrection to reign with Christ during the Millennium.

In the previous verses, the Lord spoke of the promises that had been extended to the ancients who had hearkened to his voice prior to his mortal sojourn upon the earth. At this point, the Savior clearly presents those teachings that he had delivered unto his disciples shortly before he was crucified. Many of these points can be found in the Gospels, and more particularly in the twenty-fourth chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew.

Many of the Savior’s prophecies regarding the latter days came about as the result of a discussion that was initiated by the Lord’s comments regarding the Temple at Jerusalem.

And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple; and his disciples came to him for to hear him, saying, Master, show us concerning the buildings of the temple; as thou hast said; They shall be thrown down and left unto you desolate. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? And do ye not understand them? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here upon this temple, one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And Jesus left them and went upon the mount of Olives. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be

Who were separated from the earth, and were received unto myself—a city reserved until a day of righteousness shall come—a day which was sought for by all holy men, and they found it not because of wickedness and abominations;

And confessed they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth;

But obtained a promise that they should find it and see it in their flesh.

Wherefore, hearken and I will reason with you, and I will speak unto you and prophesy, as unto men in days of old.

And I will show it plainly as I showed it unto my disciples as I stood before them in the flesh, and spake unto them, saying: As ye have asked of me concerning the signs of my coming, in the day when I shall come in my glory in the clouds of heaven, to fulfil the promises that I have made unto your fathers,
which thou hast said concerning the destruction of the temple, and the Jews; and what is the sign of thy coming; and of the end of the world? (or the destruction of the wicked, which is the end of the world.) (JST, Matthew 24:1–4)

As will be seen, the conversation between Jesus and his disciples as recorded here differs somewhat from that which was recorded in the Gospels, but the essential truths are the same. We must remember that the purpose of the Gospel writers was to present in a formal way much of the teachings that had been originally presented in an intimate setting.

45.16.56—promises—Certainly in reference to the resurrection and the redemption from sin. But additionally there were promises associated with the covenants that were received by the ancient prophets and patriarchs regarding the salvation of their posterity.

45.16.21—flesh—We are at a loss to determine whether he was speaking of his mortal flesh or his resurrected flesh. There is some indication in the present revelation that this particular discourse which Jesus is delivering occurred sometime after the general teachings that had been given while the disciples were with him in his refuge on the Mount of Olives (see 45.56)

45.17 All but one of the disciples would spend the next two thousand years laboring for the souls of men in the world of spirits. The fulfillment of their work would come in large measure once the keys of the priesthood were restored by which all of the ordinances of the Gospel might be vicariously performed for and in behalf of those whom they had brought unto Christ while in spirit prison.

45.17.8–9—long absence—It is obvious that the disciples clearly understood that the second coming of their Lord was not going to take place during their lifetimes. In fact, they were undoubtedly aware that nearly two thousand years would pass before most of them would be brought forth from the grave.

45.17.19—bondage—Having once enjoyed the liberties associated with having a physical body, to be reserved even in the paradise of God, the bosom of Abraham, for a long period of time would seem an imprisonment of a sort. Certainly when the resurrection is described as having the bonds of the captives loosened, we are far more informed regarding that state as compared to our present circumstances.

45.17.29—redemption—Primarily regarding the resurrection of the dead, but also regarding the restoration of the children of men from the consequences of their transgressions against the commandments of God.

45.17.35—restoration—That is to say, the gathering of scattered Israel that would take place prior to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

45.17.39—Israel—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

45.18 The disciples of Jesus Christ were subject to the sentiments of their own time and culture. The Temple in Jerusalem had stood in its prominent place in the city for more than five hundred years, being made even more glorious in its appearance by the King of Judah during the previous forty years. It was a symbol of national pride and the heart of Jewish worship. The disciples of Jesus Christ held it in high esteem. The Pharisees and Sadducees considered it indestructible, even though the structure had been completely destroyed at the

17 For as ye have looked upon the long absence of your spirits from your bodies to be a bondage, I will show unto you how the day of redemption shall come, and also the restoration of the scattered Israel.

18 And now ye behold this temple which is in Jerusalem, which ye call the house of God, and your enemies say that this house shall never fall.
time of the Babylonian captivity about 589 BC. Their confidence was misplaced, for they thought that their safety and the security of the Temple were based on their personal and collective righteousness as observers of the Law of Moses. Their blindness to the spiritual matters of the Kingdom of God not only deprived them of all that they held sacred, it also became the means by which they despised and rejected the promised Messiah.

45.18—Jerusalem—A city located about 32 miles from the Mediterranean Sea and 18 miles from the Jordan River and the northern tip of the Dead Sea. Once the city was captured by the children of Israel from the Jebusites, it served as the capital of the kingdom of Israel and Judah for many centuries. Jerusalem sits aside of several prominences including Moriah, where Abraham was commanded to take Isaac as an offering unto the Most High God, and mount Zion. The Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives lie immediately to the east. The traditional sites of Calvary and the Garden Tomb lie immediately to the north. The king at the time of the initial entry into the land of promise was Adonizedek.

45.19 The leadership of the Jews at the time of the mortal ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ were a clever lot, seeking to manipulate the people for whom they had charge, the various political entities that exercised power in the region, and the various internal sects of their religion in order to acquire personal wealth, personal power, and personal notoriety. In their machinations, they overestimated the tolerance of the Romans. The military repercussions to their political schemes were devastation, first in AD 70 when the city of Jerusalem was seized and the Temple razed, and then later in AD 130 when the entire government of the nation was disenfranchised. There was no safety in Palestine and only modest security within the Roman Empire. The Jews fled their homeland in all directions, finding little respite even at great distances from the geographical heart of Judaism.

45.20 In Matthew’s account of the interview with the Savior on the Mount of Olives, the central issue was not that the Temple would be destroyed, not one stone left upon another, but that the disciples had a need to ask the question at all. Because the power of God was upon him, Jesus was prescient to the events that would shortly come to pass in Jerusalem and how the Temple would be destroyed. The Savior asked the Apostles why it was that they cannot perceive the ruin as he had, inasmuch as he had bestowed upon them all of the gifts which he himself possessed.

45.20.18–21—one stone upon another—The massiveness of the solid blocks that were used in the construction of the Temple of Jerusalem, including the extensive refit make by Herod the Great is astounding. The effort made by the Romans in their search for the Temple coffers was enormous and extensive. If the foundations of the Temple Mount were included in the Savior’s prophecy, the intensity of the wrath and voracity of the Romans becomes stunning. The stones of the Temple structure itself, Flavius Josephus reports, were fifty feet long, twenty-four feet wide, and sixteen feet thick.

45.21 In the Joseph Smith Translation of the book of Matthew, the phrasing of this verse is used in connection with the signs attending the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (see SM-C 1.34). Here the Lord is referring to the entire litany of events that would lead up to the scattering of the Jews from their native land that he had already presented to them (see SM-C 1.4–25).

45.21.7—Jews—That is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah,

| 19 But, verily I say unto you, that desolation shall come upon this generation as a thief in the night, and this people shall be destroyed and scattered among all nations. | D&C 45:19
| DNTC 2 290 | MLM 30 |

| 20 And this temple which ye now see shall be thrown down that there shall not be left one stone upon another. | D&C 45:21
| EM 1:413 | D&C 45:21–30 |
| DS 3 8 |
one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnant, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

45.22 In his detailed account of events that would transpire between his ascension into heaven and his second coming in glory, the Lord clearly articulates the destructions that would come upon the face of the earth by which the recalcitrant wicked would be ushered into the world of spirit. The wicked would be destroyed prior to the Millennium, either through repentance or through death. The disciples were also well informed regarding the eventual destiny of the earth, that it would one day become the abode of the faithful in Christ, a Celestial sphere filled with light and truth.

45.23 The death and resurrection of the earth would not take place for many hundreds of years, until after the Millennial reign which would not even begin for another two thousand years from the time that he sat before him. In other words, there was a great work to be done among the inhabitants of the earth over a long period of time before the purification and sanctification of the earth and its denizens could take place.

45.24 The destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple was inevitable. Yet a remnant of the Jews would survive. Many would find solace and a degree of safety in their day because they would be willing to hearken to the voice of the Apostles and prophets that Jesus had chosen to succeed him. With the scattering of the Jews during the first and second centuries after the birth of Christ, the nations of the earth would be gradually introduced to the notion of a covenant people and the Lord God of Israel. The spread of Christianity, even in its corrupted, apostate form, would likewise lay the foundation for a raised awareness among the peoples of the earth that salvation and redemption from both death and hell were possible.

45.24.8—Jerusalem—A city located about 32 miles from the Mediterranean Sea and 18 miles from the Jordan River and the northern tip of the Dead Sea. Once the city was captured by the children of Israel from the Jebusites, it served as the capital of the kingdom of Israel and Judah for many centuries. Jerusalem sits aside of several prominences including Mount Moriah, where Abraham was commanded to take Isaac as an offering unto the Most High God, and Mount Zion. The Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives lie immediately to the east. The traditional sites of Calvary and the Garden Tomb lie immediately to the north. The king at the time of the initial entry into the land of promise was Adonizedek.

45.25 In the days of the mortal ministry of the Savior, the Greeks and the Romans were those who were generally considered the Gentiles of the world. Through the labors of Paul and the other Apostles, the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ would enter into almost every nation known to man at that time. The teachings of the Savior would be accepted and then embraced, becoming the fundamental building blocks of what would become Western Civilization. The Christian world would be inexorably identified with the Gentiles until the gathering of the covenant people began in earnest.

45.25.16—Gentiles—The Greek word "Gentiles" means "foreigners" or "strangers", and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as "Gentiles" carries

22 Ye say that ye know that the end of the world cometh; ye say also that ye know that the heavens and the earth shall pass away;

23 And in this ye say truly, for so it is; but these things which I have told you shall not pass away until all shall be fulfilled.

24 And this I have told you concerning Jerusalem; and when that day shall come, shall a remnant be scattered among all nations;

25 But they shall be gathered again; but they shall remain until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

D&C 45:22
EM 3:1009
D&C 45:22–26
MLM 535
D&C 45:22–35
DNTC 1 655
MM 3 441

D&C 45:24
EM 1:413
D&C 45:24–28
EM 2:542
D&C 45:24–29
MM 1 97
D&C 45:24–30
DNTC 1 656
DS 3 144
MD 722

D&C 45:25
AF 337, 343
DNTC 2 290
MD 722
EM 1:413
D&C 45:25–45
EM 3:1310
with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

45.26 This is a repetition of the statement made by the Savior to his Apostles concerning the period of time between the destruction of Jerusalem and the defeat of Bar Kokhba. In the King James Version this observation is only found in verse 6. Those who hear of the wars and rumors of wars, are the saints who have gathered to a place of safety where, for the most part, they play no active role in the turmoil and tribulations which engage the world in genocide and wholesale slaughter. For the sake of the membership of the Church, Jesus testified that notwithstanding the restoration of the Kingdom of God upon the earth and the gathering of Israel from the four quarters of the earth, wickedness would continue, wars would abound, and the earth would sicken at the filthiness that had spread out upon its face. The declared tardiness of the returning Lord is an illusion concocted by those faithless souls who are devoid of the spirit of God.

45.26,33—Christ—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew "Messiah". In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendency to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

45.27 Jesus testified to the Apostles that notwithstanding the great labor which they would invest in the promulgation of the Gospel of Christ, there would be those who would forsake their covenants in the heat of oppression and as a result of the multitude of temptations that would appear to which they would fall err (see SM-C 1.10). The fact that in this same inspired restoration of the prophecy regarding the last days the Savior reemphasized that same point regarding the latter days (see SM-C 1.30), perhaps we ought not to be overly astonished when some of those around us in the Church and Kingdom of God also forsake that which they once knew to be pure and holy. In addition, as great wickedness enters into the hearts and minds of the inhabitants of the earth, the terrors of inhumanity will continue to increase proportionately. As men resist the temptation to take advantage of the poor and the weak, they prepare themselves for that day in which the Savior of mankind will provide salvation and exaltation for those who have overcome the persuasions of the world and the lusts thereof.

26 And in that day shall be heard of wars and rumors of wars, and the whole earth shall be in commotion, and men’s hearts shall fail them, and they shall say that Christ delayeth his coming until the end of the earth.

27 And the love of men shall wax cold, and iniquity shall abound.
45.28 As the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times is initiated, the power of the Gentile nations will bear sway in most of the known world. Though considered advanced, educated, sophisticated, and prosperous, the Gentiles will suffer great spiritual darkness, blindly grooping for the wall, as it were. Their philosophies and religions will prove unsatisfactory, and they will run from one piece of foolishness to another, forever learning and never coming to a knowledge of the truth. In the midst of this spiritual ignorance, the simplest of revelations will open a spiritual venue for the children of men that will excel all of the learning accumulated by the worldly wise during the entire temporal existence of the world.

45.28—Gentiles—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

45.29 The learned of the latter days are compromised by their assumptions, so that it is virtually impossible to comprehend the spiritual truths offered by the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. Because they accept only those things which they can perceive with their natural senses, they never put off the natural man sufficiently to discover the great spiritual realities that surround them. These are men who have purposefully blinded their spiritual eyes, stopped their spiritual ears, and have hardened their spiritual hearts.

45.30 Because of the prevailing philosophical stance of the Gentiles, they will refuse to be moved by the spiritual realm of the Kingdom of God. They therefore exile themselves from the truths that will reign triumphant in the hearts and minds of the righteous. As the faithful of Israel are gathered, the philosophies of men will have less influence upon them, until they will stand completely independent of the vanity and foolishness of a lost and fallen world.

45.30—Gentiles—The Greek word “Gentiles” means “foreigners” or “strangers”, and was first applied to the Greeks themselves when that empire came in contact with the Jews during the early part of the fourth century BC. The Hebrew word translated as “Gentiles” carries with it the notion of “massing” like unto locusts and other ravenous insects. Our English word derives from the Greek through Latin. Although the title could refer to any not of the covenant peoples, yet it has its most important application to the remnants of the Greco-Roman civilization, or what is called Western Civilization.

45.31 The phrase “overflowing scourge” is unique to the writings of the prophet Isaiah.

Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay
to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. And your covenant with death shall be disanulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report. (Isaiah 28:14–19)

There can be no finer description of the secret combinations that have destroyed the nations of the earth throughout its long history. It is clear that these too will be in abundance in the latter days. Together with this general spiritual malaise will be other catastrophic tribulations by which the nations of the earth will be wasted (see 5.16–20).

45.32 In the extended account of the Savior’s teachings regarding the last days, the Savior declares that only those who are standing in holy places will escape the wrath decreed that is equated with the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel (see SM-C 1.12). Needless to say, the version given in the Pearl of Great Price is helpful in discerning what Jesus had in mind for the Apostles to watch for in anticipation of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the Temple thereof. Something of odious proportions was to transpire which would bring about a complete abandonment of the city of Jerusalem. That event was the desecration of the Temple by Titus which incited the people of Judea to rebellion, a rebellion which climaxed with the destruction of Jerusalem and the leveling of the Temple. A similar abomination was to take place just prior to the second coming of the Savior (see SM-C 1.31–34). The implication is, of course, that there would be a consecrated Temple somewhere in the latter days that will be subjected to the vile treatment of an oppressive nation, just as the Temple of Jerusalem had been desecrated by the Roman legions. We might speculate about the possibility of the Temple of Jerusalem being rebuilt, which is sure to happen, and the possibility that it too might be desecrated as had been the first two which stood upon its foundations. We might speculate about the possibility of one of the modern Temples built for the redemption of the living and the dead being violated by one of the nations of the earth. Speculations and nothing more, until the Lord chooses to inform His servants and warn them appropriately. The fact of the matter is that two Temples in this dispensation have already been desecrated, the result of which was the abandonment of the cities wherein they had been built by the saints of the Most High. We need not speculate excessively, therefore, about the fulfillment of Daniel’s prophecy, for to some degree that has already happened. That Daniel’s prophecy may be fulfilled in a more literal fashion is certainly within the realm of possibility. The wicked will find their circumstances more and more intolerable until they have given themselves over to destruction in despair.

45.32.5—stand—There has been some discussion as to whether the fulfillment of this prophecy was a part of the description of the scene involving the Temple and the Roman army or a commandment to the saints that they would have to find a place of safety. The Greek word which is translated in Matthew as “stand” literally means to “appoint, abide, continue, covenant, establish, set up”. Clearly a safe place would needs be appointed for the latter day saints.

45.32.7–8—holy places—Understanding the significance of Jesus’ instruction meant the difference between life and death to the membership of the Church in AD 70. Those with a cursory acquaintance with the
verse might conclude that they ought to have gone to the Temple itself in order to escape destruction, but that act led to the death of hundreds of thousands of Jews who sought to ensconce themselves there during the siege of the Roman army. Those who hearkened to the leadership of the Church in the days of tribulation at Jerusalem, quietly made their way to the fortified city of Pella in Decapolis, in the foothills on the east bank of the River Jordan. There they escaped unscathed when the Romans poured out retribution upon the heads of the rebels. So likewise has the Lord appointed his holy places where the saints may be gathered and instructed in those matters which will protect them against the devastations that will eventually consume the wicked.

45.33 For the sake of the membership of the Church, Jesus testified that notwithstanding the restoration of the Kingdom of God upon the earth and the gathering of Israel from the four quarters of the earth, wickedness would continue, wars would abound, and the earth would sicken at the filthiness that had spread out upon its face. The litany of those events that would accompany the dawning of the Millennial reign appears to multiply in part because of the latter-day ability to become instantly knowledgeable about affairs in distant lands. Having said that, it should be clear that the intensity and frequency of natural and human turmoil has increased as the personal and collective wickedness of the children of men has increased. One does not have to be obsessively astute to observe that since the opening of the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times, the terrors of world conflagration have intensified. The quenching of the light of Christ in the hearts and minds of the children of men inevitably leads to contention and bloodshed.

45.34 The disciples were confronted with deep and abiding tribulations that would befall the covenant people and their nation during their lifetimes. Additionally, the distress of nations would continue into the far distant future, directly impacting the coming forth of the Church and Kingdom of God in the latter days, thus hindering to a degree the preparation of a people to receive the Savior at his second coming in glory. Their concern seems justified, given their circumstances and the prophecies that the Lord had just communicated to them.

45.35 While it was true that the trials and tribulations that awaited the sons and daughters of God were almost incomprehensible, yet the Lord reminded his disciples that all of the news was not bad. The restoration of the Gospel, and that of the priesthood and the Church, would all eventually take place, in the midst of these momentous outward signs. The destructions would serve as a promissory note to the faithful that if they endured to the end, all would be well with them.

45.36 The coming forth of the Church and Kingdom of God in the latter days would be as natural in the eyes of the world as the subtle changes from one season to another. The Gospel would break upon a sleeping world like the dawn of a new day.

45.36.18—**parable**—The Greek word which in the New Testament is translated as "parables" derives from roots which mean to "throw along side". The word is reflexive, meaning that an issue or principle is "placed beside itself", providing another way of looking at the same thing. A parable is a simple comparison, a similitude. It differs from an allegory in that generally only one concept is communicated in a parable. An allegory is usually quite complex, implying many separate ideas...
The parable of the Fig Tree is simple to be understood. As certainly as one may know of the coming summer by the budding and blossoming of the trees, so also may the disciples of Christ know that with the appearance of the various signs prophesied they may know that the Coming of their Lord is eminent. It should be remembered that the budding and blossoming of the fig tree happens quickly to the unobservant, yet it is a gradual but insistent development.

The implication of the wording of the King James Version of this parable is that the Apostles themselves would be witnesses to the great tribulations that would befall the children of men during the last days prior to the Second Coming (see MT-C 24,32–38). This has led many commentators astray and their works reflect that misunderstanding as they attempt to cram 2000 years of history into a forty-year period of time. The text in the Pearl of Great Price clarifies the time and persona (see SM-C 1,38–39). It is the saints of the latter days that are to learn from the parable of the fig tree.

The faithful in the Lord Jesus Christ are filled with the Spirit of God, and as such they recognize the signs of the times as they transpire. They are edified and blessed by those things which they witness and are encouraged in times of great trial and tribulation, while the rest of the world is filled with sorrow, regret, and anxiety. The distress of nations will be that they have no notion as to whether there will ever be a time of peace; the righteous will know in their hearts that deliverance is at hand.

The Savior here is using imagery drawn from the prophecies of the prophet Joel with which Joseph Smith was quite familiar because of his frequent interviews with the angel Moroni (see SH-C 1,41). The general membership of the Church of Jesus Christ would have been familiar with the language as well. Peter cited Joel in his sermon to the Jews gathered at the Temple in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost shortly after the resurrection of the Lord (see AC-C 2,16–21). Joel prophesied of a devastation that would come upon Israel, without question in reference to the Babylonia Captivity and quite possibly regarding the Assyrian Captivity as well. After the desolation there would be a return in which great blessings would be poured out upon the House of Israel. While the ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy will take place just prior to the Second Coming, Peter perceives a connection with the events of his time as well. The multitude had just witnessed a marvel in the tongues of fire, yet for the preceding three years the inhabitants of Palestine had personal contact with the Lord Jesus Christ during his mortal ministry. Those with eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand knew that the Lord God of Israel had been in their midst. Those who believed would not be ashamed. Neither were the Apostles and the other disciples when they were verbally and physically abused by the Jews and the Romans. Immediately after the ascension of Jesus from the Mount of Olives, the Spirit of the Lord was poured out upon the Apostles first, and from thence the Gift of the Holy Ghost and all of the attendant blessings would be taken into all of the world, unto all people, every nation, kindred, and tongue. The very beginning of that fulfillment was taking place that very day. The children of many of those of the multitude would be raised with all of the blessings of the Gospel of Christ, being baptized at age eight and being filled with the Holy Ghost in their youth, young men and women with fervent testimonies of the divinity of the Son of God and of his atoning sacrifice for mankind. Prophets, seers, and
revelators would come from all generations, and not just the aged. The spirit of revelation would be upon all those who professed faith in the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The same would be true of the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time and, hence, the significance of the angel Moroni having quoted Joel’s prophecies.

45.40—signs—The Greek word which is translated in Acts as “signs” derives from roots which signify “mark, indication, token, wonder, miracle”. The word “sign” in English derives from Latin roots which mean “mark, figure, image”. Both suggest an outward manner of identification. These will not be manifestations that will be asked by the wicked to satisfy their idle curiosity, but the natural consequences of the power of God, the priesthood, having been bestowed upon the sons of God.

45.40.7—wonders—The Greek word which is translated in Acts as “wonders” derives from roots which mean “prodigy, omen”. These omens would be manifested in conjunction with the sun, moon, and stars. Some of them would be understood properly, others would be ignored for what they are; for the wicked many would be absolutely terrifying. The faithful would have the Heavens opened to them, by ordinances, teachings, and direct revelation.

45.41 Those of us in this dispensation should perceive immediately the connection between that which transpired anciently among the Jews in Jerusalem during the ministry of the Apostles; these things have transpired and are transpiring among the faithful in this dispensation. We may understand that the Lord God of Israel would reveal to those who would abide by the principles of eternal life the meaning of all things that transpired around them, through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. To the rebellious and dissolute, other revelations would come.

45.41.5—blood—The Greek word which is translated in Acts as “blood” while referring to the blood of both men and animals, may also refer to the juice of grapes. This word is also used in the New Testament to refer to the atoning blood of Christ. It is used also to indicate “bloodshed”. The Hebrew word in Joel translated as “blood” is almost semantically identical. For the righteous, the shedding of the blood of the Savior is a positive blessing, a sign designed to help the believer live in accordance with the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To the wicked and unbelieving, war and the loss of life is preeminent, a sign that their world of abominations is about to unravel.

45.41.7—fire—The righteous on that Day of Pentecost were surrounded by fire, a literal baptism in the Heavenly element. This was the promise given to them by John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus Christ, a promise that has been reaffirmed in this dispensation. To the wicked, the destruction of all that has made them carnally secure would soon be upon them.

45.41.9–11—vapors of smoke—The Greek word which is translated in Acts as “vapour” derives from roots which mean “breathe, air, mist”. The Hebrew word used in Joel which is translated as “pillars” derives from roots which mean “column, cloud, erect, palm”. The Hebrew word which is translated in Joel as “smoke” derives from roots which mean “dust, vapor, anger”. The obvious reference to destruction and mayhem overshadows the possible positive aspects of the prophecy. Yet one might allow that in the days of Moses, the House of Israel were led from place to place and protected by pillars of smoke and fire, meaning the presence of God in their midst. Jesus testified that the Holy Ghost

41 And they shall behold blood, and fire, and vapors of smoke.
would teach the disciples all that they would need to know and do in order to be preserved from the destructions which should come upon the wicked.

45.42 The effects of the apostasy upon the Kingdom of Judah in the days of the Apostles became increasingly apparent until the rebellions of the Jews became so strident that both the city and the nation were ultimately destroyed. The literal atmospheric consequences that came with the pillaging of the people, the destruction of their property, and the eventual destruction of the arability of the land itself might easily be seen in the smoke and dust cast up. The wording of the translation of Joel varies somewhat from that which Peter cites.

The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. (Joel 2:31)

Some scholars have pointed to these astronomical effects as pertaining to the eclipsing of the various political entities of the day. While these notions have some merit, we might consider that these same effects have been directly prophesied as transpiring in our day as well, in a much more literal vein. For an extended treatment of these latter-day manifestations, see MT-C 24.29–30.

At this hour we are in the midst of that time period described by the prophet Joel and the Savior in the text regarding the signs that would precede his coming in glory. There have been gallons of ink spilled regarding the causes of the celestial manifestations attendant to the appearance of the Lord. What appears to be the case is that there will be a period of time in which, like the Nephites at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus, the inhabitants of the earth will be in the dark, seeing neither sun, moon, nor stars. Whether this darkness will come as the result of natural or man-made causes we are not told. How long the manifestation will last is not revealed. One’s own imagination might generate sufficient images of disaster and tragedy to satisfy the most morbid, but perhaps we ought to consider the possibility that the conduct of the righteous, their humility and faith, might ameliorate the most dire of possibilities.

45.42.11—sun—Some scholars have suggested that the loss of sunlight transpires because of atmospheric problems. Again, whether these are natural effects due to volcanism, the greenhouse effect, or a radical change in earth’s orbit around the sun, we do not know. Neither has the word of the Lord confirmed that man’s inhumanity to man will be the direct cause. Therefore, worldwide nuclear war is not necessarily a prerequisite for the Second Coming. The impenetrable darkness of Egypt at the time of the Exodus of Israel, the three hours of darkness at Calvary, the three days of darkness in the Americas prior to Jesus’ appearance to the Nephites, and many other recorded instances in the Scriptures clearly indicate that the God of Heaven may speak and there be light, and He can speak and there be darkness. Quibbling over the mechanism is fruitless.

45.42.17—moon—Some have attempted to equate this instance with that recorded in the second chapter of Joel which was subsequently cited by Peter, John, and Moroni; that is, that there would be times when the moon should be turned to blood. While there may be a relationship between the two effects, the absence of the light of the moon and the light of the moon being blood red are two different things. There is no question that Joel prophesied of various times and places when the moon would appear as blood, some of which have already taken place and others which may yet lie in the future. Without being dogmatic,
might we hold off the equation of the two effects for the sake of the language given in the Savior’s prophecy which is really quite specific: that the moon would show no light at all. The absence of the moon light could be accounted for by all of those causes articulated in 1:33.10.

45.42.24—stars—Commentators and other enthusiasts have gone to great lengths to impose their views on what actually happens as the stars “fall from heaven”. Some have suggested that the time of the Second Coming would be accompanied by extraordinary showers of meteors and comets. Others have asserted that the night sky would be such that it will appear as if every star had fallen down because they would not be visible, for much the same reasons as given for the sun and the moon not shedding their light upon the earth. More astute men have suggested that perhaps the return of the various portions of the earth that had been translated away at different times in the earth’s history would satisfy this specific portion of the Savior’s prophecy. Still others have speculated that perhaps erratic movements in the earth’s orbit or unsteadiness in its rotation would give the appearance to an earth-bound observer that the stars were careening to the earth. All of this is entertaining and not without merit, yet the simplest conclusion to be drawn in this instance, as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, that there would come a time when the stars would not be visible from the face of the earth. Again, we are not privy to the mechanism by which this is brought to pass.

45.43 As had been prophesied earlier, the city and Temple of Jerusalem would be destroyed and desolated, the Kingdom of Judah scattered to the four quarters of the earth. In the latter days, however, a great number of Jews would reclaim their land of inheritance, an event that is clearly in progress this very day.

45.43.8–9—this place—Inasmuch as the account given here is of the Lord Jesus Christ speaking to his disciples prior to his ascension into heaven, we may correctly conclude that he is referring to Jerusalem.

45.44 We cannot speak to the spiritual or temporal instruments that the Lord God of Israel will use that will turn the hearts of the Jews to the Messiah, but there will come a time when many of them will be looking forward to his coming just as anxiously as the saints will be waiting upon him. After passing through much tribulation and at the moment of greatest mortal alarm, the Savior will step forward to defend the posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Those who had been expressing no faith in the coming of the Messiah will no longer enjoy the promises made to the fathers.

45.45 There are times of what might be termed catastrophic judgment. Physical death is one of those times, when each man, woman, and child who passes out of this life is faced with the substance of reality, that which they have created for themselves as a result of their choices, their moral agency. Some will suffer greatly because of what they have forfeited; others will rejoice in the company of the faithful. The second coming and the resurrection of the righteous will provide the inhabitants of the earth with another one of these seminal moments of catastrophic judgment, but not the last.

45.45.15—trump—The Apostle Paul speaks specifically of the trump of the resurrection (see 1 CO-C 15.52–54) as do prophets in the Book of Mormon.

45.45.18—saints—In reference to the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
Christ, those who have covenanted to no longer partake of the wickedness of the world. The Greek word used in the New Testament means “those not of the earth”.

45.45.21—*slept*—A euphemism for death, inasmuch as the body lies in the grave without awareness, while the spirit dwells in the world of spirits. 45.45.30—*cloud*—Having instructed his Apostles and other disciples for a period of forty days, Jesus took his leave of the brethren from atop the Mount of Olives. A cloud enveloped him and he disappeared from their sight. Was this ascension like unto that which Elisha witnessed when the prophet Elijah was translated without tasting death? Luke makes no mention of a “chariot of fire”, but there was no doubt a manifestation of glory. Modern experiences assure us that columns of “fire” or pillars of light frequently accompany the appearances of divine emissaries. Whatever the manner, the angels who were present at the ascension testified to the Apostles that the world would one day receive the returning Christ, watching him descend in the same fashion as they had observed him ascend (see AC-C 1.9).

45.46 All of the righteous, both the living and the dead will be caught up into the clouds of glory to join the Lord Jesus Christ at his second coming. The righteous dead will be raised up unto their inherited Celestial glory; the righteous living will be translated or transfigured from their Telestial state to that of the Terrestrial state that will define the paradisiacal glory of the Millennial reign.

45.46.5—7—*slept in peace*—That is to say, that the death of the disciples came without the sting of sin. The Apostles would enter into the world of spirits to enjoy the company of all of the righteous from the days of Adam and Eve. The resurrection would perfect and exalt them in their righteousness.

45.46.42—*saints*—In reference to the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ, those who have covenanted to no longer partake of the wickedness of the world. The Greek word used in the New Testament means “those not of the earth”.

45.47 The Lord God of Israel loves His children, but He cannot abide their disobedience. The children of men who have disassociated themselves from the light of Christ and who prey upon the innocent and weak will be held to account. During the Millennium, only the honorable and the honest in heart will find solace in mortality. Prior to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ the earth will be cleansed of the abject wicked.

45.48 Here the Lord Jesus Christ references the prophecies of the prophet Zechariah.

Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. (Zechariah 14:1–4)

46 Wherefore, if ye have slept in peace blessed are ye; for as you now behold me and know that I am, even so shall ye come unto me and your souls shall live, and your redemption shall be perfected; and the saints shall come forth from the four quarters of the earth.

46.47 Then shall the arm of the Lord fall upon the nations.

47 And then shall the Lord set his foot upon this mount, and it shall cleave in twain, and the earth shall tremble, and reel to and fro, and the heavens also shall shake.
This will occur just prior to the Savior’s appearance in glory.

45.48.10–11—this mount—that is to say, the Mount of Olives just to the east of the city of Jerusalem.

45.49 Needless to say, all of the cynicism and skepticism in the world cannot deter the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The faithless can no longer merely close their spiritual eyes, stop their spiritual ears, or harden their hearts. The glory of the coming Lord will be physical as well as spiritual, and for the wicked there will be no escape. Every eye will see, every knee will bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ.

45.50 The Savior appears to be paraphrasing another passage of scripture with which the prophet Joseph Smith and the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ were quite familiar.

And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorners is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off: That make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought. Therefore thus saith the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. (Isaiah 29:18–22)

We might presume to conclude that perhaps the Book of Mormon will be one of the instruments that will effectively persuade the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.

45.51 This certainly constitutes another allusion to the prophecy of Zechariah.

And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God. (Zechariah 13:6–9)

Needless to say, two-thirds of the remnant of the Jews having been cut off because of their wickedness is a distressing development. One wonders at what the surviving fraction will be from among the Gentiles when the Savior returns in glory.

45.51.5—Jews—that is, those who could trace their lineage back to Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob. The land of Palestine had been home to twelve tribes at one time, but this had been generally reduced to the remnants, the largest faction being that of the tribe of Judah.

45.52 Whatever else we may speculate about the nature of the resurrection from the dead, it is quite clear that the Lord Jesus Christ has the capacity to

49 And the Lord shall utter his voice, and all the ends of the earth shall hear it; and the nations of the earth shall mourn, and they that have laughed shall see their folly.

50 And calamity shall cover the mocker, and the scorners shall be consumed; and they that have watched for iniquity shall be hewn down and cast into the fire.

51 And then shall the Jews look upon me and say: What are these wounds in thine hands and in thy feet?

52 Then shall they know that I am the Lord; for I will say unto D&C 45:49

MD 519

D&C 45:49–50

MD 432

D&C 45:50

MLM 551

D&C 45:51–52

AGQ 2 109

DNTC 1 835

DNTC 3 439

MD 174, 722

MLM 231

PM 535

D&C 45:51–53

AGQ 1 44

DNTC 1 681

DS 2 291

MD 393, 424

MM 4 236

EM 2:738

D&C 45:51–54

AGQ 5 187

D&C 45:52

MD 46

348
visibly maintain the impressions made by the nails driven into his flesh and the wound in his side administered by the spear of the soldier. He showed these very wounds to his chosen Apostles after the resurrection, as he did to many other saints dwelling in the land of Palestine and in the land of Bountiful. There will be no doubt in the minds and hearts of the Jews who it is that stands before them.

45.52.41—Jesus—The Anglicized form of the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew name, Oshea or Joshua. At its root, "Jesus" means "Savior".

45.53 Again, the allusion to the writings of the prophet Zechariah.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrinmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart. (Zechariah 12:9–14)

All of this represents personal sorrow more than collective sorrow. It represents godly sorrow unto repentance and salvation.

45.54 The earth will be transformed from a Telestial sphere to a Terrestrial one. Those individuals who have persisted in their Telestial conduct will be dismissed from mortality and will suffer the condemnation of the damned until after the Millennial reign. Those men and women who have lived honorable lives, even without partaking of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, will find themselves part of the Kingdom of God, with Jesus Christ as their sovereign. They will have a time and a place reserved for them as they live out their mortal sojourn upon the earth, to hear the Gospel preached with the accompanying power of the Holy Ghost. It is to be expected that most of these, if not all, will respond positively to the invitation to partake of eternal life.

45.55 Satan will have no power during the Millennium because no man, woman, or child will be inclined to hearken to his voice. He will welter with his minions in hell, having no venue in which to vent his unquenchable hatred of the righteous.

45.56 The provocative aspect of this verse is the order of the implied events. In the record that has been preserved as the Gospel according to Matthew, the narration of the parable of the Ten Virgins occurs after the Savior’s discourse on the future trials and tribulations of the saints; the latter is in chapter 24, while the former is in chapter 25. The semantic and syntactic values of the wording of the verse would suggest that the account that he is narrating here for the benefit of the latter day saints took place after the material present in Matthew 24. Thus, we are left to speculate about the time when the present discourse was given, whether during the two days between his sermon recorded in Matthew 24 and 25, and the crucifixion, or whether these particular teachings were presented during the forty days that he spent with the Apostles after them: These wounds are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. I am he who was lifted up. I am Jesus that was crucified. I am the Son of God.

53 And then shall they weep because of their iniquities; then shall they lament because they persecuted their king.

54 And then shall the heathen nations be redeemed, and they that knew no law shall have part in the first resurrection; and it shall be tolerable for them.

55 And Satan shall be bound, that he shall have no place in the hearts of the children of men.

56 And at that day, when I shall come in my glory, shall the parable be fulfilled which I spake concerning the ten virgins.

57 And I will give them a place among the children of the covenant, a place among the Saints of the living God, an inheritance in the land of promise, through the Meridian of Time, a land of promise to be the title deed of their inheritance. And it shall come to pass that the latter day Saints shall be gathered into the land of promise, to possess it according to the promise of the Scriptures. (D&C 45:57)

EM 2:731, 734
D&C 45:53
DN TC 3 439
MD 834
D&C 45:54
AF 59, 148, 389
AGQ 5 106
DS 2 29, 297
JC 24, 297, 293
MD 346
EM 1:94, 369, 413
D&C 45:54–55
DN TC 1 682
DS 1 86
D&C 45:55
DN TC 3 570
MD 496
MLM 666
EM 2:728
D&C 45:56
DN TC 1 685
EM 3:1061, 1311
D&C 45:56–57
MLM 344
EM 1:413
EM 3:1061
D&C 45:56–58
FPM 257
D&C 45:56–59
his resurrection.

45.56.19—spake—the tense of this verse implies that Jesus had already taught this parable sometime before he embarked on the present discourse.

45.56.22–23—ten virgins—The parable of the Ten Virgins may be found in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 25, verses 1 through 13.

45.57 Without allegorizing the parable, it is possible to interpret the various parts of the story in a fashion that it becomes clear why it was that the sharing of the “oil” would be impossible for the faithful virgins. Without question the wedding symbolizes the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth during the Millennium. Both the context of the parable and the introductory phrase of the first verse in the inspired version make that certain. Jesus identified the ten “virgins” as the covenant members of his Church, the kingdom of heaven. In a lengthy explanation of this parable in another place, Jesus revealed that the light of the lamp is the Holy Ghost. Given that bit of information we might infer what the oil in the lamp might represent. What is it in our lives that invites the spirit of God to light our paths in this benighted and fallen world? Is it not our willing obedience to the commandments of God, the observance of every word that proceeds out of His mouth? The oil of righteousness is obtained drop by drop as we conduct our daily walk and talk in the manner which God would have us do. We cannot have too much. The danger to our salvation is in thinking that we need not do more than what we have already accomplished. We assume that we have completely qualified ourselves for salvation and have in reserve all that we will need to come back into the presence of God in glory. It is by grace we are saved after all that we can do, but we are expected to do all that we can. Inside the story being related by the Savior to his Apostles, the wise virgins cannot share because no one would then be left to welcome the bridegroom and his wife. Outside the story, the virgins cannot share their oil because one cannot transfer one’s own righteousness to another. Everyone becomes righteous in the same way. The five foolish virgins had to retrace their steps and prepare themselves sufficiently before they could join the wedding party. Unfortunately for them, there were time constraints on the initial invitation.

45.58 At the beginning of the Millennial reign, the earth will be restored to its paradisiacal glory. The conditions that will prevail will be like unto those that existed while Adam and Eve dwelt in the Garden of Eden. For a thousand years Satan will have no power over the hearts of the children of men. The men and women who bear children during that time will be honorable, filled with faith, obedient in every way. They will all serve as worthy examples to their children, who in turn will observe to do all that the Lord requires of them. Hundreds of millions of the children of men will be received as the sons and daughters of God to receive a fullness of exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom.

45.59 The perfect example of humility, love, and kindness will be constantly before the inhabitants of the world in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and his servants. No man will doubt the compassion of the Son of God or the effectual atonement that he has brought about through his suffering for the sins of all.

45.60 When Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery initiated the inspired translation of the Bible in June 1830, they began with the book of Genesis. By 7 March 1831, the prophet and his scribes had gotten no farther than Genesis 24:41. On 8 March 1831, Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon began the translation of

57 For they that are wise and have received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived—verily I say unto you, they shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day.

58 And the earth shall be given unto them for an inheritance; and they shall multiply and wax strong, and their children shall grow up without sin unto salvation.

59 For the Lord shall be in their midst, and his glory shall be upon them, and he will be their king and their lawgiver.

60 And now, behold, I say unto you, it shall not be given unto you to know any further concerning this chapter, until the New Testa-
the New Testament with the first verse of the Gospel according to Matthew. This labor would continue until 2 February 1832 when Joseph and Freder-ick G. Williams would resume the translation of the Old Testament at the point where Joseph and Sidney had left off the year before.

45.60.4—That is to say, the Lord Jesus Christ.
45.60.20–21—We may only speculate about to which chapter the Savior is referring. Some scholars have suggested that Jesus is speaking of Matthew 24. That seems somewhat unlikely, since much of the material covered by the Lord in his discourse to his ancient disciples falls outside of the subject matter of that chapter. It is most likely that he is speaking of Genesis 24, inasmuch as the prophet and his scribe, having arrived at verse 41, did not bother to finish the remaining 26 verses, but immediately went to Matthew 1:1. When Joseph and Fredrick resumed the translation of the Old Testament, they began with verse 42 of Genesis 24.

45.61 One of the major products of the inspired translation of the Bible was the many revelations that have been included in the Doctrine and Covenants.
45.61.11—That is to say, the New Testament.
45.61.16—We may only speculate as to how the translation of the New Testament prepared Joseph Smith and the membership of the Church for the future. Certainly in terms of their insight into the scriptures and how these applied to the last days prior to the coming of Jesus Christ would be a substantial preparation especially when the persecution of the Church of Jesus Christ intensified.

45.62 As the prophet Joseph Smith and his associates labored with the text of the Bible, their minds and hearts were opened to the machinations of their enemies by the power of the Holy Ghost.

45.63 The Lord had already revealed aspects of the combinations that would be raised against the saints in the latter days (see 38.28–32). The Lord testified if they were prepared they would not fear when they began to see the violence of their own countrymen that would burst forth, first in Jackson county, then throughout Missouri, Illinois, and the intermountain west. Eventually, they would witness the depredations of the Civil War within the relative safety of the valleys of the Utah Territory.

45.64 The purpose of the gathering first to Ohio and then to Missouri, was to remove the saints from harm’s way, not only from the snares of their immediate enemies, but from the conflagration that was to come. Had the Church of Jesus Christ not been driven by force from the state of Missouri, there would have been safety from the death and destruction that eventually swept the state during the Civil War. As the missionaries preached in the lands west of Kirtland, temporary havens of safety were established, to which the honest in heart could be gathered in anticipation of the instructions of the Lord which would ultimately guide the saints to Zion.

45.65 In the spirit of Zion, the disciples of Christ were to provide for the whole of humanity that would eventually join them in their escape from the death and destruction that would overcome the world of men. From the sequestered funds of the Church, the land of inheritance would be secured, to which the faithful would be remanded to build up the New Jerusalem unto the Most High God.

45.61 Wherefore I give unto you that ye may now translate it, that ye may be prepared for the things to come.
45.62 For verily I say unto you, that great things await you;
45.63 Ye hear of wars in foreign lands; but, behold, I say unto you, they are nigh, even at your doors, and not many years hence ye shall hear of wars in your own lands.
45.64 Wherefore I, the Lord, have said, gather ye out from the eastern lands, assemble ye yourselves together ye elders of my church; go ye forth into the western countries, call upon the inhabitants to repent, and inasmuch as they do repent, build up churches unto me.
45.65 And with one heart and with one mind, gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which shall hereafter be appointed unto you.
45.66 Had the New Jerusalem been built in Jackson county, Missouri, when it was first intended, the history of that part of the world would have been considerably different than it has been. There will come a time, however, when the word of the Lord will be fulfilled and the New Jerusalem will be raised up just as it has been prophesied from the beginning. Every aspect of its role in the salvation of mankind will be made manifest before the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

45.67 Just as the wicked had no power whatsoever over the people of the city of Enoch, so also will be the impotency of the wicked in the last days when the New Jerusalem is established. The enemies of Zion will stand afar off, filled with anger, frustration, regret, and abject fear. There will come a time when the wicked will no longer have a place among mortals, but will ushered into the spirit world where they will be powerless to afflict the righteous.

45.67.34—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every righteous man and woman since the days of Adam and Eve. It is a goal worth pursuing, inasmuch as it is an attempt to restore the earth to its paradisiacal glory. From time to time there have been people who have succeeded in binding the hearts and minds of their fellow men to them through faith, hope, and charity, in the bonds of the Christian covenant. In certain instances, entire communities have been translated because of their faithfulness to the principles and ordinances that pertain to eternity. The goal of the saints of the latter days is to prepare the entire world for the restoration of the earth to its paradisiacal glory, a condition that will last for a thousand years while the Lord Jesus Christ rules and reigns upon the earth in the Church and Kingdom of God. Zion will, therefore, eventually fill the whole face of this planet.

45.68 The city of Zion will be a land of peace, devoid of any sort of internal conflict. The machinations of the wicked will be useless against the inhabitants of the city, for they will have no access to the New Jerusalem. Therefore, those who will not hearken to the voice of the Lord will be filled with such anger and disappointment that they cannot deal violently with the saints, they will begin to do so among themselves. Those who will be unwilling to participate in the conflagration must needs find refuge elsewhere.

45.68.26—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every righteous man and woman since the days of Adam and Eve. It is a goal worth pursuing, inasmuch as it is an attempt to restore the earth to its paradisiacal glory. From time to time there have been people who have succeeded in binding the hearts and minds of their fellow men to them through faith, hope, and charity, in the bonds of the Christian covenant. In certain instances, entire communities have been translated because of their faithfulness to the principles and ordinances that pertain to eternity. The goal of the saints of the latter days is to prepare the entire world for the restoration of the earth to its paradisiacal glory, a condition that will last for a thousand years while the Lord Jesus Christ rules and reigns upon the earth in the Church and Kingdom of God. Zion will, therefore, eventually fill the whole face of this planet.

45.69 The saints will not be inclined to fight. They will have already established themselves in places of safety according to the dictates of the Father and the Son. The honest in heart among the children of men, those who would find respite in the Kingdom of God during the Millennium, will seek peace and safety among the disciples of Jesus Christ.

66 And it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God;

67 And the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion.

68 And it shall come to pass among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety.

69 And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another.
45.70 Although the wicked will despise the faithful and those who have no desire to fight, they will not array themselves against the bastions of the righteous for fear of the glory of the Lord. No doubt they will not understand completely the source of their fear, but it will weaken their knees and frighten their hearts to a point that they will not be able to manifest their hatred among the saints of God.

45.70.17—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every righteous man and woman since the days of Adam and Eve. It is a goal worth pursuing, inasmuch as it is an attempt to restore the earth to its paradisiacal glory. From time to time there have been people who have succeeded in binding the hearts and minds of their fellow men to them through faith, hope, and charity, in the bonds of the Christian covenant. In certain instances, entire communities have been translated because of their faithfulness to the principles and ordinances that pertain to eternity. The goal of the saints of the latter days is to prepare the entire world for the restoration of the earth to its paradisiacal glory, a condition that will last for a thousand years while the Lord Jesus Christ rules and reigns upon the earth in the Church and Kingdom of God. Zion will, therefore, eventually fill the whole face of this planet.

45.71 The mercy of God, the eternal Father, than that of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is such that all those who exercise faith, repenting of their sins and receiving the ordinances of the Gospel, will be received into the Church and Kingdom of God, from this time forward through the Millennial reign. The present missionary labors will continue and intensify, the hindrances to the preaching of the saving principles of eternal life will vanish, until every nation, kindred, tongue, and people will have the opportunity to accept or reject the truths of eternity.

45.71.22—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every righteous man and woman since the days of Adam and Eve. It is a goal worth pursuing, inasmuch as it is an attempt to restore the earth to its paradisiacal glory. From time to time there have been people who have succeeded in binding the hearts and minds of their fellow men to them through faith, hope, and charity, in the bonds of the Christian covenant. In certain instances, entire communities have been translated because of their faithfulness to the principles and ordinances that pertain to eternity. The goal of the saints of the latter days is to prepare the entire world for the restoration of the earth to its paradisiacal glory, a condition that will last for a thousand years while the Lord Jesus Christ rules and reigns upon the earth in the Church and Kingdom of God. Zion will, therefore, eventually fill the whole face of this planet.

45.72 A sensible precaution that any reasonable man would concede as being the wisest course for Joseph Smith and his companions to follow.

45.72.8—9—these things—Certainly in reference to the detailed plans regarding the building up of the city of Zion, but also in reference to the manifold revelations that the prophet Joseph Smith had been receiving for and in behalf of the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ. We might likewise point to the translation of the Bible which would be the means of revealing great and marvelous things pertaining to the Kingdom of God in the latter days. The servants of God have no need to telegraph what the Lord has required of them. The Lord will work his own will upon the wicked; the righteous need only do that which is required of them without pride and without fanfare.

70 And it shall be said among the wicked: Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; wherefore we cannot stand.

71 And it shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations, and shall come to Zion, singing with songs of everlasting joy.

72 And now I say unto you, keep these things from going abroad unto the world until it is expedient in me, that ye may accomplish this work in the eyes of the people, and in the eyes of your enemies, that they may not know your works until ye have accomplished the thing which I have commanded you.
45.73 Even the wicked will be given an opportunity to reflect upon the hand of the Lord, and how His power has influenced the course of nations.

45.74 The epiphany that will burst upon the minds and hearts of the wicked at the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ will not be a pleasant one. Once they find themselves in the world of spirits, powerless to work their will upon the inhabitants of the earth, they will consider their destiny with horror and anxiety, the pains and sufferings of hell.

45.75 There is no more abject fear than that of the damned. Their fear derives from not knowing what is going to happen next. The joy of the saints is that they are continuously informed by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost as to their eternal prospects.

45.75.22—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

46.0.1 The spirit of the city of Zion and that of the Church and Kingdom of God is the spirit of unity and not of division. The preaching of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to every nation, kindred, tongue and people constitutes the gathering of the House of Israel, a substantive reunion of a people vanquished and scattered to the four quarters of the earth. By the same token, the Lord counseled his disciples that that which is holy, the bread reserved for the children of the Kingdom, should not be given to the dogs. Hence, there are some aspects of eternal truth that are reserved for sacred places, ordinances that cannot be performed before the eyes of a jaded world. In the early days of the Church, the members of the various branches had difficulty determining those meetings to which nonmembers could be invited, and attempting to avoid offending the Spirit, excluded nonmembers from their sacrament meetings. On other occasions, they determined that the gatherings when the gift of the Holy Ghost was being bestowed were far too sacred for someone who had not as yet taken the covenant of baptism upon themselves. Those members of the Church who had familiarized themselves with the text of the Book of Mormon, quickly pointed out that the Savior’s instructions to the Nephites differed from the practice that had begun to manifest itself.

And behold, ye shall meet together oft; and ye shall not forbid any man from coming unto you when ye shall meet together, but suffer them that they may come unto you and forbid them not; But ye shall pray for them, and shall not cast them out; and if it so be that they come unto you oft ye shall pray for them unto the Father, in my name. Therefore, hold up your light that it may shine unto the world. Behold I am the light which ye shall hold up—that which ye have seen me do. Behold ye see that I have prayed unto the Father, and ye all have witnessed. And ye see that I have commanded that none of ye should go away, but rather have commanded that ye should come unto me, that ye might feel and see; even so shall ye do unto the world; and whosoever breaketh this commandment suffereth himself to be led into temptation. And now it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words, he turned his eyes again upon the disciples whom he had chosen, and said unto them: Behold verily, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you another commandment, and then I must go unto my Father.
that I may fulfill other commandments which he hath given me. And now behold, this is the commandment which I give unto you, that ye shall not suffer any one knowingly to partake of my flesh and blood unworthily, when ye shall minister it: For whoso eateth and drinketh my flesh and blood unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to his soul; therefore if ye know that a man is unworthy to eat and drink of my flesh and blood ye shall forbid him. Nevertheless, ye shall not cast him out from among you, but ye shall minister unto him and shall pray for him unto the Father, in my name; and if it be that he repenteth and is baptized in my name, then shall ye receive him, and shall minister unto him of my flesh and blood. But if he repent not he shall not be numbered among my people, that he may not destroy my people, for behold I know my sheep, and they are numbered. Nevertheless, ye shall not cast him out of your synagogues, or your places of worship, for unto such shall ye continue to minister; for ye know not but what they will return and repent, and come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I shall heal them; and ye shall be the means of bringing salvation unto them. Therefore, keep these sayings which I have commanded you that ye come not under condemnation; for wo unto him whom the Father condemneth. And I give you these commandments because of the disputations which have been among you. And blessed are ye if ye have no disputations among you. (3 Nephi 18:22–34)

The following revelation was sought in order to settle the matter.

46.0.2 In the same vein the Church had some difficulty understanding why it was that the gifts of the Spirit manifested themselves differently. If there was to be unity among the saints, should not each and every one of them be affected the same way? How could a diversity of gifts produce the unity expected of the saints in Zion? This mystery is somewhat clarified in this Section as well. This section appeared as Chapter XLIX in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 16 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

46.1 There is some ambiguity represented here in the wording of this verse, but it seems probable that the Lord is referring to the previous revelation that had been received which outlined some of the events that would transpire prior to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. They were spoken to the Church and not to the world and given so that the saints might be better informed and prepared for the trials and tribulations that would soon befall the inhabitants of the world.

46.1.15–16—these things—We are hard-pressed to determine the antecedents for this phrase. There is nothing in the History of the Church that would supply them directly. However, given the context of the revelation and its proximity to the previous revelation in Joseph Smith’s narrative, we may speculate a little about possibilities. At issue was the exclusion of certain segments of society from what had been considered public meetings of the Church. The Book of Mormon was clear that the ancient Nephites were commanded to not exclude nonmembers from their meetings. Yet at the close of the previous revelation, the Lord instructed the prophet and his close associates to not allow the contents of Section 45 to go into the world (see 45.72), and referring to them as “these things”. Lest there be any confusion about the applicability of the counsel in that verse to the errant practices of some of the members of the Church, the Lord makes a clear distinction in the circumstances.

1 HEARKEN, O ye people of my church; for verily I say unto you that these things were spoken unto you for your profit and learning. D&C 46:1–7 DHC I 163

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46.2 Even though there may be counsel given from time to time that would safeguard the instructions given to the saints, these precautions did not justify the Church in deviating that which had already been published to the world defining the nature of their public meetings. The Lord refers the saints here to the description of the conduct of the Nephite Church of Jesus Christ given by Moroni in the Book of Mormon (see MR 6.5–9).

46.2.7—written—Again, this is probably in reference to the counsel given regarding the contents of Section 45.

46.3 The public meetings of the Church of Jesus Christ were to serve as part of the formal invitation for the children of men to come unto Savior for redemption, salvation, and exaltation. One of the practical blessings that an investigator would enjoy would be to perceive the spirit of the meeting, to begin to realize that the power of personal revelation was not only real, but desirable.

46.4 The Lord’s instructions here are completely in agreement with those that the Savior had given to the Nephites when he appeared to them after the resurrection. The leadership of the Church of Christ was to be careful in administering the sacrament, that no one was to receive the emblems of the atoning sacrifice if he or she was unworthy to do so. This was, first of all, a protection for the unworthy members, that they not eat and drink damnation to their souls by participating in the sacramental service. By the same token, their abstinence was a protection to the general body of the Church.

46.5 What could be possibly gained by excluding the honest in heart from joining with a society that was inviting them to become an active part of the body of Jesus Christ? They would be instructed that the emblems of the sacrament were prepared for those who had already received the covenants and ordinances of salvation. With understanding they would realize that they were not as yet prepared to partake.

46.6 In the early years after the formal organization of the Church, baptisms by immersion were performed in the open air, usually in a river or lake. The confirmation of the newly baptized member, in conjunction with the bestowal of the gift of the Holy Ghost, would generally take place in a separate meeting, typically indoors. It may have been this practice that convinced some of the saints that nonmembers should be excluded. The Lord here reveals that folly of that assumption.

46.7 It is certain that the decision to exclude nonmembers from the sacrament and confirmation meetings had not been submitted to the Lord for approbation, yet the Lord allowed the practice to continue for a time until the saints began to question the issue on their own and openly sought His counsel on the matter. In giving this particular revelation to the Church through the prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord also counsels the saints that they ought not merely accede to the decision, but that they should seek confirmation of the truth through personal prayer and in conjunction with the blessings of the Holy Ghost. In the case of the isolation of the sacrament and confirmation meetings from the presence of the nonmembers, certain men had drawn incorrect conclusions because of a want of study and spiritual insight. In addition to wrong-headedness, there were other sources of erroneous doctrine and conduct, primarily the spirit of the evil one and his minions.

46.8 The safety of the saints in every dispensation has been in the revelations of the Holy Ghost, not only through the prophets of God, but to the individ-

2 But notwithstanding those things which are written, it always has been given to the elders of my church from the beginning, and ever shall be, to conduct all meetings as they are directed and guided by the Holy Spirit.

3 Nevertheless ye are commanded never to cast any one out from your public meetings, which are held before the world.

4 Ye are also commanded not to cast any one who belongeth to the church out of your sacrament meetings; nevertheless, if any have trespassed, let him not partake until he makes reconciliation.

5 And again I say unto you, ye shall not cast any out of your sacrament meetings who are earnestly seeking the kingdom—I speak this concerning those who are not of the church.

6 And again I say unto you, concerning your confirmation meetings, that if there be any that are not of the church, that are earnestly seeking after the kingdom, ye shall not cast them out.

7 But ye are commanded in all things to ask of God, who giveth liberally; and that which the Spirit testifieth unto you even so I would that ye should do in all holiness of heart, walking uprightly before me, considering the end of your salvation, doing all things with prayer and thanksgiving, that ye may not be seduced by evil spirits, or doctrines of devils, or the commandments of men; for some are of men, and others of devils.

8 Wherefore, beware lest ye are deceived; and that ye may not be
ual members of the Church as well. Both the Spirit of God and the expressions of devils are to be sensed in the spiritual realm. How does a mortal learn to distinguish between the two influences? This has been a difficulty manifested in every generation since the beginning of time.

46.9 The first task for anyone attempting to discern the difference between the whisperings of the Holy Ghost and the temptations of the devil is to be prayerfully obedient to all of that which the seeker already knows to be true. One cannot hope to come to a knowledge of the truth through divine inspiration when he is unwilling to live by that which has already been revealed to him. One may evaluate one’s own sentiments toward the Father and the Son. Is there love for God? Is it mutually expressed?

46.9.26—seeketh—A man may have flaws in his character, weaknesses that hinder his coming into the presence of the Father, but he still may be receptive to the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. A saint may not yet be sanctified, but if he is progressing toward perfection, he will reap the blessings and benefits of those who are further along on the path to salvation and exaltation.

46.9.48—sign—Needless to say, the spiritual sensitivity of a sign seeker is hardly existent, he or she having devoted their strength to following after the desires of the natural man.

46.10 Not only is it important to have an intellectual awareness of the possible gifts that can be bestowed by the Holy Ghost, but it is also vital to comprehend to what end each gift is given and how each gift fits into the economy of God. As countercintuitive it may seem initially, the gifts of the spirit are intended to bring greater unity in the minds and hearts of the children of God, and that with an increased love between the saints. Although what follows may be found in the writings of both the Apostle Paul (see 1 CO-C 12.1–13) and the Nephite prophet Moroni (see MR-C 10.8–18), it is probable that the Lord is purposefully referring the saints to the Book of Mormon.

46.11 After a man has received the ordinance of baptism, having exercised faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repenting of his sins, he is prepared to be a blessing to others around him. Clearly every man is graced with natural gifts, talents, and skills, by which he can prove to be a contributing member of whatever society to which he may belong. The gifts of the spirit far transcend these natural gifts, giving opportunities for service on a spiritual plane.

46.12 The unity of the residents of the city of Zion comes in large measure because of their mutual love for one another. That love derives from an unwavering desire to be a blessing to one’s fellow men. The power to be a blessing comes from the gifts of the spirit. If one man possesses a gift and uses it to bless another who does not have direct access to the blessings associated with the gift, how does the beneficiary feel toward the benefactor? The reciprocity comes when the one blessed uses his own gift to edify and strengthen the one who had recently blessed him in a time of need. The two are knit together in mutual love and appreciation in a way that cannot be affected in any other way.

46.13 Thus may we know whether a man is serving as a servant of the Lord God. He will never speak contrary to the voice of the spirit which is within each faithful saint. Paul testifies that we may have confidence in the movements of the Spirit of God within us, notwithstanding that the whole world may speak ill of all that we believe and hold dear (see 1 CO-C 12.1–13). No deceived seek ye earnestly the best gifts, always remembering for what they are given;

9 For verily I say unto you, they are given for the benefit of those who love me and keep all my commandments, and him that seeketh so to do; that all may be benefited that seek or that ask of me, that ask and not for a sign that they may consume it upon their lusts.

10 And again, verily I say unto you, I would that ye should always remember, and always retain in your minds what those gifts are, that are given unto the church.

11 For all have not every gift given unto them; for there are many gifts, and to every man is given a gift by the Spirit of God.

12 To some is given one, and to some is given another, that all may be profited thereby.

13 To some it is given by the Holy Ghost to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he was crucified for the sins of the world.
man can be a true Christian without having been moved upon by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost.

46.13.11—*know*—Perhaps something more than mere intellectual awareness is implied.

46.13.13–14—*Jesus Christ*—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

46.13.24—*crucified*—The Lord Jesus Christ had begun the atoning sacrifice in the garden of Gethsemane, the day before his crucifixion. That suffering for sin culminated on the cross where he died as part of the aftermath of his atonement. The crucifiers did nothing to enhance the redemption of mankind when they drove the nails into the Savior’s hands, wrists, and feet. The act of crucifixion was satanically inspired, designed to distract Jesus from the task assigned to him before the foundations of the earth were laid.

46.14 When the truth is spoken, accompanied by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, the message becomes the word of God, the voice of God, and the power of God unto salvation. When one man speaks with the tongue of angels, others must hear with the ears of angels if they are to ever comprehend the significance of what has been said. This is a gift that has been given to many, if not all of those who have sought the God of heaven and His Kingdom.

46.15 Each member of the Church of Christ is given opportunities to serve their fellow men. The various capacities are innumerable, but the direction and guidance for the work as a whole is singular. It is not so important as to where we serve as it is how we serve. Service without joy is slavery and our ability to understand how our small acts of service benefit the Kingdom of God on the earth can only come as we are inspired and uplifted by the power of the Holy Ghost.

46.15.17—*administration*—The Greek word which is translated in the New Testament as “administrations” derives from roots that mean “attendance, servant, aid, official service, minister, run errands, waiter, teacher, pastor”. At the heart of its meaning is the notion of service.

46.16 Certain priesthood leaders have the responsibility to determine the nature of the spiritual influences that are affecting those for whom they have responsibility. This gift of discernment is absolutely vital to them. It is comparable to the circumstances that prompted the giving of this particular revelation as to whether nonmembers were to be admitted into the sacrament and confirmation meetings. The thinking of men, the ruminations of their spirits, suggested they go in one direction. Joseph Smith learned through the gifts which he had received that this course of action had not been inspired by the Lord.

46.16.17—*operations*—The context of the verse seems to indicate that it is the operations of the various kinds of spirits in the world. How may a man know whether it is the voice of God, the voice of the devil, or his own internal voice that is prompting him to think or act in a certain way? Only by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost.

46.17 If we accept the traditional distinction between “wisdom” and “knowledge”, the first is considered as “understanding through experience” and the second as “intellectual awareness”. In either case, comprehension of how an element of truth fits into the entire scope of omniscience can only be obtained from God Himself, through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. Both wisdom and knowledge are given to the children of God that they might be

14 To others it is given to believe on their words, that they also might have eternal life if they continue faithful.

15 And again, to some it is given by the Holy Ghost to know the differences of administration, as it will be pleasing unto the same Lord, according as the Lord will, suit his mercies according to the conditions of the children of men.

16 And again, it is given by the Holy Ghost to some to know the diversities of operations, whether they be of God, that the manifestations of the Spirit may be given to every man to profit withal.

17 And again, verily I say unto you, to some is given, by the Spirit of God, the word of wisdom.
The acquisition of knowledge, factual truth, is not supposed to be a sterile process. Anything may be said or written, and over the centuries many things have been asserted. How does one know that these things are worthwhile? Learning about falsehood, erroneous thinking, and despicable conduct does little to advance a man’s progress toward exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom. How does one know that particular knowledge which is of most worth? It is revealed by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. In order to be effective, a teacher must needs know that the things which he teaches are according to the mind and will of God.

18 To another is given the word of knowledge, that all may be taught to be wise and to have knowledge.

19 And again, to some it is given to have faith to be healed;

D&C 46:19
DNTP 1:318
JC 319
EM 2:909
D&C 46:19-20
AF 235
DNTP 2:46
MD 345
D&C 46:20
EM 2:910

20 And to others it is given to have faith to heal.

21 And again, to some is given the working of miracles;

D&C 46:21
AF 235
DNTP 2:370
MD 507
D&C 46:21-31
AF 235
DNTP 2:370
MD 603

22 And to others it is given to prophesy;

D&C 46:22
DNTP 2:370
MD 603

23 And to others the discerning of spirits.

D&C 46:23
DNTP 2:370
DNTP 3:393
MD 197, 271
EM 1:384
D&C 46:24-25
DNTP 2:371, 383
MD 799
EM 4:1538

24 And again, it is given to some to speak with tongues;

D&C 46:24
DNTP 2:370
DNTP 3:393
MD 197, 271
EM 1:384
D&C 46:24-25
DNTP 2:371, 384
MD 799
EM 4:1538
made feasible by the intercession of the Holy Ghost. Relatively speaking, it is a simple matter for the Spirit of God to give a man imbued with that Spirit the power to speak in any of the languages of men, for he is equipped with the language of God.

46.25 When an emissary of God has delivered his message to those to whom he has been sent, how may he know the specific nature of their response to the message if he is not acquainted with their tongue? This, too, may be brought about by the instrumentality of the Holy Ghost.

46.26 Again, all of these gifts are parsed out to men according to their needs and the needs of those around them, that the hearts and minds of the children of God might be knit together in love, compassion, and gratitude for one another.

46.27 The blessing bestowed upon the bishops and others holding the keys of the priesthood is not that they would have all of these gifts of the Spirit, but they would be able to discern which of all of the spiritual manifestations that would appear among the saints were from God.

46.27.4—bishop—In March 1831, there was only one man who had been appointed to the office of Bishop: Edward Partridge. Since that time tens of thousands of faithful saints have been called by revelation and ordained by the laying on of hands by those holding the keys of the priesthood of God.

46.28 The gifts of the Spirit are exactly that. They can only be obtained in the Lord’s fashion. One of the general purposes for revealing the power of God unto the children of men is to aid those who are attempting to partake of the divine nature to recognize the whisperings of the Spirit, that they might be as sensitive to light and truth as He is. A man who lives after the manner of this lost and fallen world will become carnal, sensual, and devilish, and an unfit receptacle for the blessings of eternity. The only spiritual experiences that such an unrepentant man would have would lead him to destruction.

46.29 There are those appointed in the Church and Kingdom of God who are filled with the Spirit of God, receiving countless communications from God the eternal Father, who are set to be an inspiration for other mortals, that they too might progress toward perfection. Thus, members of the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and other divinely appointed individuals may exhibit the attributes and characteristics of all of those blessings that derive from an outpouring of the Holy Ghost. The nature of some assignments in the priesthood is such that all of the gifts find expression in the ministry to the saints and to the world.

46.30 If a person prays under the influence of the Spirit of God, he cannot ask amiss, for the Holy Ghost will not inspire a man to ask for something contrary to the will of the Father. Therefore, an inspired prayer always produces inspired results.

46.31 There is no other name given under Heaven whereby any of the gifts of the Spirit can be given. The name of the priesthood that administers these spiritual gifts is the Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God; even though the Church has chosen to refer to it as the Melchizedek priesthood out of reverence for the name of God.

46.31.16—Christ—Simply put, the name "Christ" is the Greek translation

25 And to another is given the interpretation of tongues.

26 And all these gifts come from God, for the benefit of the children of God.

27 And unto the bishop of the church, and unto such as God shall appoint and ordain to watch over the church and to be elders unto the church, are to have it given unto them to discern all those gifts lest there shall be any among you professing and yet be not of God.

28 And it shall come to pass that he that asketh in Spirit shall receive in Spirit;

29 That unto some it may be given to have all those gifts, that there may be a head, in order that every member may be profited thereby.

30 He that asketh in the Spirit asketh according to the will of God; wherefore it is done even as he asketh.

31 And again, I say unto you, all things must be done in the name of Christ, whatsoever you do in the Spirit;
of the Hebrew "Messiah". In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean "anointed one". Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascen-
dancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every
priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particu-
larly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the
House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though
certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings
and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed
prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such
out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of sal-
vation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in
similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the
Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who
has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might
have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been
designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

46.32 Ingratitude is an expression of pride. A man who vaunts himself because
of the gifts of the Spirit that have been entrusted to him will not long rejoice
in those marvelous manifestations that are given to him so that he might bless
the saints. He will soon enough find himself very much alone and miserable.

46.33 The gifts of the Spirit of God cannot be received by a wicked or a
vicious man. The only spiritual influences that the unrepentant can experience
are those which pertain to the kingdom of the devil. In our service to our
fellow men we must do nothing to offend the Holy Ghost.

46.33.13—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is per-
fected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as
"Amen" derives from roots which mean "true". This word is one of the
many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

47.0.1 As the work of the early ministry of the prophet Joseph Smith began, it
became clear that someone needed to act as a competent scribe for him. For a
time those duties were attended to by Martin Harris, particularly as the trans-
lation of the Book of Mormon began in earnest. After the debacle of the miss-
ing manuscript, Emma Smith labored in the capacity of scribe for a short
period of time. With the arrival of Oliver Cowdery in Harmony, Pennsylva-
nia, in April 1829, the translation of the Book of Mormon advanced quickly.
With the move to Fayette, New York in June 1829, several members of the
Whitmer family acted as Joseph's scribe during the final days of the translation
process. Notwithstanding these aids, most of the holographic manuscript of
the Book of Mormon and the whole of the printer's copy of the handwritten
text were in Oliver's hand. On the day that the Church of Jesus Christ was
formally organized once more upon the earth, 6 April 1830, the Lord com-
manded the saints that they ought to keep a record of their concerns and ac-

Section 47

Date: March 8, 1831
Place: Kirtland, Ohio
To: Joseph Smith

32 And ye must give thanks unto God in the Spirit for whatsoever blessing ye are blessed with.

33 And ye must practise virtue and holiness before me continually.
Even so. Amen.
formally appointed Church Historian. Certainly the minutes of that conference are in Oliver’s handwriting. Yet it is clear that John Whitmer would be heavily engaged in the arrangement and editing of the various revelations that had been received up to that point. During the summer of 1830, John Whitmer labored with Joseph on what would become known as “Revelation Book 1.” Almost all of that work is in John Whitmer’s hand. In the fall of 1830, Oliver Cowdery and three of the other elders of the Church departed from Fayette on their way west to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ as contained in the Book of Mormon to the remnants of the posterity of Lehi. John Whitmer continued entering into the Revelation Book the various communications received by the prophet from the Lord. John also took the place of Oliver Cowdery as scribe as the Joseph Smith Translation progressed through November and December. In the latter month Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge came to Fayette, New York, to visit the prophet, the former having been baptized previously by Oliver Cowdery. The Lord appointed Sidney Rigdon as Joseph’s scribe, insofar as the translation of the Bible was concerned (see 35.20), thus relieving John Whitmer of the ad hoc assignment that had befallen him with Oliver Cowdery’s departure on his mission to the Lamanites.

47.0.2 The formal call of John Whitmer to serve as Church Historian followed after a long period of time of faithful occupation as one of Joseph’s scribes and the keeper of the Revelation Book. John Whitmer kept an ongoing volume of historical materials called the “Book of John Whitmer, kept by commandment”, in which he compiled an account of the Church of Jesus Christ from his perspective until March 1838 when he was excommunicated. He refused to turn his Church history over the officers of the Church. It is now in the possession of the Community of Christ. This section appeared as Chapter I. in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 63 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

47.1 With the move of the headquarters of the Church of Jesus Christ to Kirtland, Ohio, from Fayette, New York, it became clear that certain adjustments in the leadership of the Church were necessary. It was a logical decision for John Whitmer to serve as the first Church Historian, given his long association with the prophet Joseph Smith and his various skills and talents. John, however, was not willing to serve in such an exalted position without hearing the voice of the Lord on the matter. This revelation was in response to John’s request.

47.1.10—John—in reference to John Whitmer. John Whitmer was the third child of Peter and Mary Whitmer, born 27 August 1802. With his brothers David and Peter, Junior, he was baptized for the remission of sins in June 1829. As the publishing of the Book of Mormon commenced, John was selected to serve as one of the Eight Witnesses, men who personally handled the plates from which the translation of the Book of Mormon was made. John Whitmer never deviated from his testimony. John Whitmer was among the first to join the Church of Jesus Christ after it was organized on 6 April 1830. He was ordained an elder on 9 June 1830 and within a few months was called upon to be the Church Historian. On the third of July 1834 John Whitmer and W.W. Phelps were called to serve as counselors to David Whitmer as the presidency of the Church in Missouri. After he and several others were excommunicated from the Church for apostasy, John Whitmer settled in Far West, Missouri, where he died 11 July 1878.

47.1.23—Joseph—in reference to Joseph Smith, Jun., the prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God
upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

47.2 John Whitmer’s assignment as Church Historian was not a passive one, insofar as the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ was concerned. John’s acquaintance with all of the events that had transpired from the opening of this dispensation, his experiences as one of the Eight Witnesses of the Book of Mormon, and his intimacy with the recorded revelations of the Lord made him a powerful advocate of the truth.

47.3 While we cannot at this point be absolute certain as to the date of Oliver’s official appointment as Church Historian, if it ever was formalized, yet it seems quite clear that Oliver’s involvement in keeping the records of the Church had been quite active since the time the Church was first organized. Otherwise the wording of this verse would have been considerably different.

47.3.23–24—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

47.3.29–30—another office—Probably in reference to Oliver’s responsibilities as the president of the mission to the Lamanites.

47.4 So long as John Whitmer remained true and faithful to the principles and covenants of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, he would be guided in all that he committed to paper. There would come a time, however, when the burdens and cares of this world would distract him and lead him away from the fellowship of the saints.

47.4.21—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Again, verily I say unto you that he can also lift up his voice in meetings, whenever it shall be expedient.

3 And again, I say unto you that it shall be appointed unto him to keep the church record and history continually; for Oliver Cowdery I have appointed to another office.

D&C 47:3
EM 2:589

4 Wherefore, it shall be given him, inasmuch as he is faithful, by the Comforter, to write these things. Even so. Amen.

D&C 47:4
MD 149

Section 48

Date: March 1831
Place: Kirtland, Ohio
To: Saints in Ohio

D&C 48
DHC 1 166
EM 1:408

363
of Eden anciently, and the place where a Temple of God would be raised up.

48.0.2 As part of their missionary labors west of Fayette, New York, the missionaries visited with the honest in heart in northeastern Ohio, in and around the community of Kirtland. Among the many saints gathered there were Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge. These two determined to learn their duty from the prophet of God and in December 1830 traveled to Fayette to meet with Joseph Smith. Sidney is shortly thereafter called to serve as Joseph’s scribe in the latter’s translation of the Bible. A series of revelations given through the prophet Joseph Smith during December 1830 and January 1831, clearly indicated that there was to be a gathering of the faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, the first step being to move out of harms’ way in New York and Pennsylvania, to the relative safety of Ohio. The saints were also promised that when they had gathered to northeastern Ohio they would be given the law of the Lord that would prepare them for the events that were about to transpire upon the earth. They were to learn how to be of one heart and one mind, the principles by which they could dwell in righteousness, and the manner in which they could live without any of their number suffering poverty of any kind. By the first week in February 1831, Joseph Smith and his family found themselves in Kirtland, having encouraged the saints in the east to join him as quickly as they could. Within a few days after his arrival, Joseph received the Law which contained many of the principles having to do with consecration, one of the fundamental concepts required for the establishment of a Zion people. As winter turned to spring in 1831, a general conference was called for June 1831 to be held in Kirtland. For many of the saints this would serve as the clarion call to move en masse to Ohio. For the members of the Church in Ohio, the prospect of having hundreds of their brethren with all of their personal belongings show up in their community was disconcerting. The central question that produced this revelation was how the Church could possibly purchase sufficient lands upon which to place the itinerant saints and if these lands were to be considered permanent locations for the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ. This section appeared as Chapter LI in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 64 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

48.1 Although some of the saints in Ohio may have thought that Zion might be established in the environs of Kirtland, most of the members of the Church of Jesus Christ knew that the foundations of the New Jerusalem would be laid elsewhere. The exact location for the gathering of the House of Israel would not be revealed until the prophet Joseph Smith and others of the brethren made their journey to western Missouri in the latter part of June 1831. In the interim, the saints in Ohio were to preserve their own homesteads to the best of their ability.

48.2 Some of the new converts in northeastern Ohio had great tracts of land upon which they could easily accommodate a goodly number of the faithful members of the Church from New York and Pennsylvania.

48.3 Many of the westward-moving members of the Church had sold their property in the east and carried the proceeds with them. If the need arose, some of those means might be expended to purchase a limited amount of property in and around Kirtland for a temporary location upon which the saints might rest before moving on to the site of the New Jerusalem. In the end, Kirtland would serve as a staging area, a resting place, from which the disciples of Christ would travel to the land of their inheritance.

1 It is necessary that ye should remain for the present time in your places of abode, as it shall be suitable to your circumstances.

2 And inasmuch as ye have lands, ye shall impart to the eastern brethren;

3 And inasmuch as ye have not lands, let them buy for the present time in those regions round about, as seemeth them good, for it must needs be necessary that they have places to live for the present time.
48.3.4—ye—That is to say, the saints who held property in northeastern Ohio.
48.3.9—them—That is to say, the saints who were coming from the eastern communities in New York and Pennsylvania

48.4 Notwithstanding the counsel of the Lord to buy property when and where necessary, the Church of Jesus Christ was to preserve as much of their liquid assets as they possibly could against the time they would be called upon to purchase land in Jackson county, Missouri. Many of the saints had liquidated their assets in the east, but many others had left farms and businesses in the hands of their neighbors and friends. As soon as was possible, these properties would also have to be sold if lands in Zion were to be obtained in a practical and efficient manner. The move to the land of Zion was not to be holiday excursion; it was not something to enter into lightly.

48.5 Within four months, the precise location for the New Jerusalem would be revealed to the prophet Joseph Smith, who would personally travel to western Missouri to confirm that which Oliver Cowdery had sensed as he passed through that land on his way to the Unorganized Indian Territory to preach to the descendants of the children of Lehi.
48.5.11–12—your brethren—That is to say, the saints travelling from New York and Pennsylvania.
48.5.21–22—certain men—Although there would be several brethren in the company of the prophet Joseph Smith when the revelation for the site of the New Jerusalem was given, Bishop Edward Partridge and Sidney Gilbert would prove to be the Lord’s agents in purchasing the land necessary for the settling of the saints in Jackson county, Missouri.

48.6 All that could be known about the establishment of the New Jerusalem had not yet been revealed. As time passed, the natural development of the concepts and precepts that would bring a large body of men, women, and children together in peace and harmony would take place line upon line and precept upon precept. If the membership of the Church would follow the counsel of the Lord, they could not fail.
48.6.2—they—That is to say, the certain men mentioned in the previous chapter.
48.6.25—ye—That is to say, the saints located in northeastern Ohio.
48.6.51—presidency—The presiding officers of the Church would call those who would make the journey to Zion.
48.6.54—bishop—The bishop would have the practical responsibility of instituting the Law of Consecration among those who had been called to participate in the foundation of the city of Zion.
48.6.72—hereafter—As the first members of the city of Zion began to settle in the lands of their inheritance, there would be continuing revelation given to guide and direct them in the paths of righteousness, that they might build up the city in all holiness.
48.6.76—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of asent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

49.0.1 Shortly after the second general conference of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer Junior, Ziba Peterson, and Parley P.
Pratt left Fayette, New York, on their mission to the remnants of the Lamanites. On 15 October 1830, the foursome began their trek westward visiting with Cattaraugus, Wyandot, Shawnee, and Delaware tribes of Native Americans along the way. They were also instrumental in bringing men like Sidney Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams into the Church and Kingdom of God in northeastern Ohio. On 14 February 1831, the elders met in Independence, Missouri, and determined that Parley P. Pratt should return to the prophet Joseph Smith to give a report on how the missionaries had fared. After pushing his way through snow and mud for 1,500 miles, in the midst of which suffering from a bout with the measles, Parley arrived in Kirtland six months after he had left with his brethren. When he had left Fayette, there were hardly more than sixty-five members of the Church. Upon his return, he discovered that almost a thousand members of the Church in Ohio and several hundred in New York, including his own family that had joined in his absence. His wife informed him by letter that she and many others of the New York saints had prepared to gather to Kirtland and that he should wait for her there. Thus, Parley was present in Kirtland, Ohio when this revelation was given.

49.0.2 As the saints began to arrive from New York, they settled temporarily on land that was made available by Frederick G. Williams, Philo Dibble, Isaac Morley, and Leman Copley. The property of the latter convert to the Church was located in Thompson, Ohio, and the saints who lived upon the land were primarily from Colesville, New York. Both Leman Copley and all of the saints from Colesville entered into the Law of Consecration, the first to do so formally in this dispensation. Some of the Colesville saints thought that the land of their inheritance was in Thompson, that it was to be Zion for them. When Leman Copley apostatized from the Church he broke the covenant of consecration into which he had entered and demanded that the Colesville saints vacate the land. During the general conference of the Church held on 3 June 1831, the saints were informed that their inheritance lay near the borders by the Lamanites and several of their company were appointed to lead them to Independence, Missouri.

49.0.3 In the summer of 1822, the North Union Shaker Community was established on the property of Jacob Russell at the behest of his son Ralph who had joined the sect in North Union village near Lebanon, Ohio. Shaker Heights in Cleveland, Ohio, constitutes the only remnant of that society’s presence in the city. It was a self-supporting community, producing dairy products, canned fruits and vegetables, woolen and linen goods, medicinal herbs, garden seeds, brooms and other useful items. They dammed Doan Brook and established several water-powered industries, including a sawmill, a woolen mill, and a grist mill. At some point Leman Copley had become attached to that body of the United Society of Believers in Christ’s Second Appearing. At its height, the Shaker community in Cleveland had 300 active adherents.

49.0.4 The story of Leman Copley is somewhat tragic. He embraced the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ at the hands of the saints in northeastern Missouri during the spring of 1831. He had been a Shaker prior to his baptism. He professed faith in the Gospel, but felt that many of the teachings of the Shakers were true. The revelation given here was in response to the prophet’s request of the Lord regarding that sect. In response to this revelation, Sidney Rigdon, Parley P. Pratt, and Leman Copley went to the Shaker community near Cleveland, Ohio. This section appeared as Chapter LII in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 65 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.
49.1 We do not know what interaction Sidney Rigdon and Parley P. Pratt may have had with the Shakers prior to this time. Both had been ministers for the Disciples of Christ and had labored in northeastern Ohio for a period of time. Although Leman Copley had been a member of the Shaker society, it seems unlikely that he was ever a member of the community in Cleveland.

49.1.7—Sidney—In reference to Sidney Rigdon. Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

49.1.9—Parley—In reference to Parley P. Pratt. Parley Pratt was born 12 April 1807 in Burlington, New York. His early family life was marked by attendance to a strict moral value system coupled with hard work. As a teenager he found himself attracted to the Baptist church. After his marriage to Thankful Halsey in 1827, he settled in the wilderness west of Cleveland, Ohio. In 1829, Sidney Rigdon and others of the Campbellite faith came into his region of country. Rigdon’s teachings being far more consistent with the Old and New Testaments, Parley accepted membership in that religious community and became one of its ministers. In the late summer of 1830, as he was traveling toward his parents’ residence with his wife, he was impressed to stop in Newark, New York. There he saw and read for the first time, the Book of Mormon. He left Newark immediately for Palmyra and from thence to Manchester where he spent time with Hyrum Smith who answered all of his inquiries. Hyrum took Parley to Fayette, New York, where he met with Oliver Cowdery. About 1 September 1830, Parley P. Pratt was baptized in Seneca Lake by Oliver and immediately ordained an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ. Parley then rejoined his family in Columbia county, New York, where he taught and baptized his brother Orson. Shortly thereafter he returned to Fayette for the conference that commenced on the 26th of September 1830. Here he met the prophet Joseph Smith for the first time. He then received his mission call to

1 HEARKEN unto my word, my servants Sidney, and Parley, and Leman; for behold, verily I say unto you, that I give unto you a commandment that you shall go and preach my gospel which ye have received, even as ye have received it, unto the Shakers.
serve with Oliver, Peter and Ziba Peterson.

49.1.11—*Leman*—In reference to Leman Copley, an early convert to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He was born 25 March 1781 in Connecticut. He eventually settled in Thompson, Ohio. He adopted the faith of the Shakers, a sect popularized by Ann Lee. He associated himself with various apostate groups before and after the death of the prophet Joseph Smith. Before his death in 1862 he established himself in Madison, Illinois.

49.1.46—*Shakers*—The United Society of Believers in Christ’s Second Appearing was founded in 1747 by James and Jane Wardley, in conjunction with a number of French members of the Society of Friends. These French Quakers are sometimes referred to as the “French Prophets”. In 1757 Ann Lee joined the movement and became the “spiritual mother” of the sect. As the result of a revelation in 1772, Ann Lee and eight of her followers immigrated to New England. During the ensuing century, Ann Lee and her adherents established twenty communities throughout the United States, attracting more than 20,000 people to their sect. The greatest membership of the church, however, was no more than 6,000 about the year 1840. At the end of 2010, there were only three elderly members left in the Society living in Sabbathday Lake, Maine.

49.2 As was the case with many of the reformers and early Protestants, the Shakers were appalled by the conditions in the secular world and the hypocrisy of traditional Christianity. They sought truth and enlightenment from the scriptures and desired to have the outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon their meetings and upon each member. In the end, however, they were deceived by the philosophies of men and the doctrines of devils, particularly in those matters that pertain to salvation and exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom.

49.3 At the heart of their religion was a consuming desire to overcome all temptation, to receive light, truth, love, mercy, and charity into their lives through repentance and the forgiveness of Heaven. They wished to be in the world but not of the world. Their techniques for attempting this balance between the physical and spiritual worlds, however, were misguided.

49.3.7—*Sidney*—In reference to Sidney Rigdon. Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illumined conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could

2 Behold, I say unto you, that they desire to know the truth in part, but not all, for they are not right before me and must needs repent.

3 Wherefore, I send you, my servants Sidney and Parley, to preach the gospel unto them.
bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

49.3—Parley—In reference to Parley P. Pratt. Parley Pratt was born 12 April 1807 in Burlington, New York. His early family life was marked by attendance to a strict moral value system coupled with hard work. As a teenager he found himself attracted to the Baptist church. After his marriage to Thankful Halsey in 1827, he settled in the wilderness west of Cleveland, Ohio. In 1829, Sidney Rigdon and others of the Campbellite faith came into his region of country. Rigdon’s teachings being far more consistent with the Old and New Testaments, Parley accepted membership in that religious community and became one of its ministers. In the late summer of 1830, as he was traveling toward his parents’ residence with his wife, he was impressed to stop in Newark, New York. There he saw and read for the first time, the Book of Mormon. He left Newark immediately for Palmyra and from thence to Manchester where he spent time with Hyrum Smith who answered all of his inquiries. Hyrum took Parley to Fayette, New York, where he met with Oliver Cowdery. About 1 September 1830, Parley P. Pratt was baptized in Seneca Lake by Oliver and immediately ordained an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ. Parley then rejoined his family in Columbia county, New York, where he taught and baptized his brother Orson. Shortly thereafter he returned to Fayette for the conference that commenced on the 26th of September 1830. Here he met the prophet Joseph Smith for the first time. He then received his mission call to serve with Oliver, Peter and Ziba Peterson.

49.4 Leman Copley was to be ordained to the priesthood and set apart as a missionary to the Shakers. Having been taught the fundamental principles and teachings of Ann Lee and her associates, Leman should have been able to perceive how best to introduce the fullness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet, his perspective was to ever be from the point of view of the believing Latter-day Saint and not that of a Shaker. The Gospel was not to be bent to fit the doctrines of his former faith, but there was to be a call to repentance from those egregious errors that had been introduced among them.

49.4—Leman—In reference to Leman Copley, an early convert to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He was born 25 March 1781 in Connecticut. He eventually settled in Thompson, Ohio. He adopted the faith of the Shakers, a sect popularized by Ann Lee. He associated himself with various apostate groups before and after the death of the prophet Joseph Smith. Before his death in 1862 he established himself in Madison, Illinois.

4 And my servant Leman shall be ordained unto this work, that he may reason with them, not according to that which he has received of them, but according to that which shall be taught him by you my servants; and by so doing I will bless him, otherwise he shall not prosper.

5 Thus saith the Lord; for I am God, and have sent mine Only Begotten Son into the world for the redemption of the world, and have decreed that he that receiveth him shall be saved, and he that receiveth him not shall be damned—
Christian Church, so also was Ann Lee considered the female Christ and the founder of the second Christian Church. One of the first and foremost doctrines that would have to be taught to the Shakers was that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God and the only name given under Heaven by which men could be saved. This, of course, would be poorly received by the Society.

49.13–14—Only Begotten—The Shakers held that the birth of Ann Lee constituted the second coming of Jesus Christ.

49.6 After his mortal ministry had come to an end, Jesus suffered death upon the cross at Calvary. His body then lay in the tomb for three days, after which he arose from the dead, resurrected and perfect in every way. His disciples witnessed his ascension into heaven and were informed that he would in like manner return to the earth in glory. In the interim, however, he would be enthroned on the right hand of the Father until the Fullness of Times was come in. The implication of these fundamental doctrines of truth is that the “spirit of Christ” is eternally embodied in the exalted tabernacle which came forth from the tomb and was not available to inhabit the physical body of Ann Lee or any other individual.

49.7 Many of the reformers and Protestant sects were firm believers in the fulfillment of the prophesies regarding the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Shakers, however, received into their theology the notion that the second coming would transpire in the birth of a woman. For the believers, Ann Lee was that manifestation. As Sidney, Parley, and Leman approached the Shaker community in Cleveland, this doctrine, too, would have to be repudiated. The reality of the second advent of Jesus Christ as an appearance in glory would have to be taught unflinchingly.

49.8 Ann Lee taught that in order to obtain salvation, one had to confess their sins (and that frequently), give up all worldly goods (hence, their communal living), and take of the cross of celibacy (sexual relations were considered the main source of sin). The Lord’s declaration here is that despite all of their efforts in confession, austerity, and celibacy, the Shakers were not and could not be free of sin as they supposed. The pattern for redemption had been revealed and Shakerism did not follow that pattern.

49.22–23—holy men—No doubt in reference to the translated and resurrected servants of God who were anxiously engaged in preparing the world for the second coming of the Son of God.

49.9 Membership in the Shaker movement generally took one of two forms. Beginning in 1790, fervent believers took upon themselves the covenants, confessing their sins, consecrating their property and labor to the Society, and forsaking all sexual relationships. These were formally signed and attested to. Less-committed Believers could live in noncommunal orders, maintaining their families and a degree of independence from the main body of the church. Needless to say, there were some surface similarities between the Shaker communities and the outward aspects of the Law of Consecration. The Lord insists that this revealed order had proven effectual since the earliest ages of this world and should not be compared to the inventions of men, no matter how noble the premises.

49.10 Whereas the Shakers sought to distance themselves from the world in order to remain spotless, the Lord’s approach is to change the hearts and minds of the entire population of the world by bringing about a reformation among the wicked. Isolationism might suffice for a time in avoiding the perse-

6 And they have done unto the Son of Man even as they listed; and he has taken his power on the right hand of his glory, and now reigneth in the heavens, and will reign till he descends on the earth to put all enemies under his feet, which time is nigh at hand—

7 I, the Lord God, have spoken it; but the hour and the day no man knoweth, neither the angels in heaven, nor shall they know until he comes.

8 Wherefore, I will that all men shall repent, for all are under sin, except those which I have reserved unto myself, holy men that ye know not of.

9 Wherefore, I say unto you that I have sent unto you mine everlasting covenant, even that which was from the beginning.

10 And that which I have promised I have so fulfilled, and the nations of the earth shall bow to it; and, if not of themselves, they shall
curations and deprecations of evil men, yet the invitation to holiness was to be actively extended to all men. Ultimately, the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ would prevail. The Church and Kingdom of God would roll forth like a little stone cut out of the mountain without hands. Every nation kindred, tongue, and people would come to accept the Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ.

49.11 The Shakers were a Pentecostal people, much like the Quakers from whom they emerged. The fervor of their worship services was notable for its manifestations of ecstatic expression, particularly in singing, dancing, spinning, speaking in tongues, and the like. The trembling for the which they which they were mocked and named was thought to be a sign of being purified from the sins of the world.

49.11.12–13—this people—That it to say, the communal Shakers living in Cleveland, Ohio.

49.11.21—apostle—The Greek roots from which the term “apostle” derives, originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were ordained Apostles by Peter, James, and John sometime between 15 May 1829 and 1 June 1829 on the banks of the Susquehanna River near Harmony, Pennsylvania. The Apostles hold the keys of the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world and are entitled to administer the ordinance of baptism for the remission of sins and for membership in the Church and Kingdom of God unto any and every man that believes in Christ and brings forth the fruits of repentance.

49.11.26—Peter—The Shakers resorted to the teaching of the Apostle Peter on the Day of Pentecost continually as a way to justify the “gifts of the Spirit” that moved them during their worship meetings. The Lord tells Sidney Rigdon Parley Pratt, and Leman Copley that they are to clarify and enhance the Shakers’ understanding of this passage of scripture.

49.12 The Apostles had gathered together within the walls of the Temple at Jerusalem during the feast of Pentecost held 50 days after the Passover. Jews from all over the known world had gathered as well, people who had lived so long outside the boundaries of the land of Palestine that their native language was no longer Aramaic. As the Apostles taught faith in the Son of God, the Holy Ghost descended upon them and they spoke the various languages of the worshipers in attendance so that they might be taught in their own tongue. This odd turn of events was mocked by those who could not perceive that which was transpiring; Peter then explained that this was a manifestation of the spirit prophesied by the ancient prophets, Joel in particular. Peter then taught them openly of Jesus Christ after which the people cried out, “What shall we do?” (see AC-C 2.1–36)

49.12.8—Jesus—The Anglicized form of the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew name, Oshea or Joshua. At its root, “Jesus” means “Savior”.

49.13 The remission of sins does not occurred merely by confession and abandonment. It proceeds from a willingness to live by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God. In tandem with that complete obedience to the will of God, one must enter into the covenant that the Lord has established, through baptism by immersion. The signing of the written covenants, as was come down, for that which is now exalted of itself shall be laid low of power.

11 Wherefore, I give unto you a commandment that ye go among this people, and say unto them, like unto mine apostle of old, whose name was Peter:

12 Believe on the name of the Lord Jesus, who was on the earth, and is to come, the beginning and the end;

13 Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, according to the holy commandment, for the remission of sins;

D&C 49:11–14
AF 166
DNTC 2 42
EM 3:1177, 1211
D&C 49:12–14
AF 169
D&C 49:13
DNTC 2 110
MD 630
MD 70
D&C 49:13–14
The instructions to Noah after the flood regarding the eating of meat are sufficiently clear.

And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you, and the
dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But, the blood of all flesh which I have given you for meat, shall be shed upon the ground, which taketh life thereof, and the blood ye shall not eat. And surely, blood shall not be shed, only for meat, to save your lives; and the blood of every beast will I require at your hands. (JST, Genesis 9:8–11)

That which is called today the Word of Wisdom, would not be received by the Church until February 1833 (see DC-C 89.1–21) wherein the eating of meat again, was sanctioned but somewhat limited by the Lord. The Apostle Paul had taught similar principles in his epistle to Timothy (see 1 TM-C 4.1–4).

49.20 The Shakers were great advocates of equality between men and women; Ann Lee is frequently pointed to as the true founder of women’s rights in America. They believed that all material wealth was to be held communally, and eventual established more than 20 communes throughout the United States where men and women lived together as brothers and sisters, providing for one another by their industry and frugality. The principles contain in the Law that had been given to the Church and Kingdom of God a month before, emphasized the material equality of men that derived from a unity of mind and heart, a determination to abide by the law of God, and mutually bless and strengthen those around them. The covenants that established Zion, however, were not to be found in the written covenants of men.

49.21 Again, we do not know the extent to which the Shakers at the Cleveland community accepted or rejected sport hunting, but the Lord again reveals the extent to which He would tolerate the shedding of blood. The Shakers, however, were extraordinarily frugal and threw nothing out that could be utilized in some productive fashion.

49.22 The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ would be accompanied by the glory attendant to his exalted person, the glory of the angelic hosts attending him, and the glory of the saints as they are caught up to meet him. The birth of Ann Lee in Manchester, England, did not qualify as the fulfillment of the prophecies. There would be many charlatans who would claim to be the reincarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ. These could be summarily dismissed.

49.23 This is, perhaps, a tacit rejection of the notion that the Shakers were moved upon by the power of God. In the latter days, when the world is in commotion, who will endure in peace and tranquility? When the Lord Jesus Christ appears in glory, descending upon the earth in a cloud accompanied by the hosts of heaven and the saints of the Most High, who will stand without shame in his presence? Does the companionship of the Holy Ghost bring turmoil and chaos into the hearts of men, or is he the Comforter, the still small voice of God the eternal Father? Prior to the Millennial reign, the entire earth will be physically transformed, until it is restored to its paradisical glory. The righteous will look upon these movements with joyful anticipation, while the wicked will fear and tremble, sensing an end to all that they hold dear.

49.24 The Church and Kingdom of God was at the point of implementing the Law that would establish the city of Zion. The gathering of the House of Israel would bring about the building of the New Jerusalem, a community might have in abundance.

20 But it is not given that one man should possess that which is above another, wherefore the world lieth in sin.

21 And wo be unto man that sheddeth blood or that wasteth flesh and hath no need.

22 And again, verily I say unto you, that the Son of Man cometh not in the form of a woman, neither of a man traveling on the earth.

23 Wherefore, be not deceived, but continue in steadfastness, looking forth for the heavens to be shaken, and the earth to tremble and to reel to and fro as a drunken man, and for the valleys to be exalted, and for the mountains to be made low, and for the rough places to become smooth—and all this when the angel shall sound his trumpet.
that would not come into existence in any highly populated area of the world, but rather in a desolate region, among the remnants of the posterity of Lehi and his sons. The blessings promised to the ancestors of the Native Americans in this hemisphere will come to pass, as naturally as the transformation of a rosebud into a full fragrant flower.

49.24.11—Jacob—With his brother Esau, the twin sons of Isaac and Rebecca. Jacob faithfully sought for the patriarchal blessings that his brother despised and ultimately acquired them.

49.24.19—Lamanites—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

49.25 The pure in heart among all nations would be gathered as the Lord would direct, to the places which would be appointed to them. At first there would be gatherings to singular locations; then the Lord would build up Zion among every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

49.25.1—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every righteous man and woman since the days of Adam and Eve. It is a goal worth pursuing, inasmuch as it is an attempt to restore the earth to its paradisical glory. From time to time there have been people who have succeeded in binding the hearts and minds of their fellow men to them through faith, hope, and charity, in the bonds of the Christian covenant. In certain instances, entire communities have been translated because of their faithfulness to the principles and ordinances that pertain to eternity. The goal of the saints of the latter days is to prepare the entire world for the restoration of the earth to its paradisical glory, a condition that will last for a thousand years while the Lord Jesus Christ rules and reigns upon the earth in the Church and Kingdom of God. Zion will, therefore, eventually fill the whole face of this planet.

49.26 The gathering of Israel and the perfecting of the saints can only be guided by those who are actively observing to keep the commandments of the Father. Worthy instruments are required to touch the hearts of those who seek the truth. The effect of their missionary labors would depend in large measure upon their receptiveness to the whisperings of the Spirit of God. Given Leman Copley’s conduct immediately after this foray, we may conclude that he was not blessed as spiritually as he might have been by his mission to the Shakers.

49.27 A man filled with the Spirit of the Lord cannot be confounded by the enemies of rightousness. The servants of God who have themselves been cleansed of all iniquity are unshakable in their testimony of the truth. They are surrounded by the angels of Heaven and sustained by the power of God. There is no need for fear or despair in the Kingdom of God.

49.28 The second coming of the Son of God into the world of men is nigh at hand, closer than any man knows.

49.28.4—5—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

49.28.12—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.
50.0 One of the outward characteristics that distinguished religious sects like the Shakers, the Quakers, and other Pentecostals from much of the Christian world was the propensity to accept any sort of possession by the spirit as being from God. Thus, men and women would express their religious ecstasy by writhing, contorting their bodies, and by uncontrolled outbursts of one sort or another. Speaking in unknown tongues was common; claiming open visions and dictating revelations while in a swooning state were frequent. We do not know how much of this sort of thing Sidney Rigdon, Leman Copley, and Parley P. Pratt saw during their visit to the Shaker community just outside of Cleveland, Ohio, but the community in general had a reputation that would have accompanied such extreme conduct. After returning to Kirtland, Parley Pratt, John Murdock, and several other elders in the Church were given assignments to visit the various Branches in the surrounding area. While attending to this task, they witnessed similar manifestations among the saints; manifestations that had not been present among the early converts to the Church when Parley had originally passed through Ohio on his way to preach to the Lamanites west of the frontier in Missouri. Parley Pratt and the others were deeply disturbed by what they saw, but were hesitant to correct any of those involved least they should do something contrary to the will of God. They therefore consulted with the prophet Joseph Smith when they returned to Kirtland. This section appeared as Chapter LIII in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 17 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

50.1 The success and progress of the Church of Jesus Christ in this last dispensation would take place only upon the principles of righteousness. The ability to distinguish between that which is of God, that which is of men, and that which is of the devil can only be accomplished by the power and the influence of the Holy Ghost.

50.1.23–25—words of wisdom—Those who follow the counsel of God the eternal Father and that of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, are the only men upon the earth who are truly wise. God is the very embodiment of wisdom, knowledge, truth, and light.

50.1.39—agreed—Joseph Smith, Parley P. Pratt, John Murdock and the other elders were unified in their desire to know what exactly the Father would have them do regarding the manifestations that had been taking place throughout the surrounding branches of the Church of Jesus Christ.

50.1.46—spirits—The saints hoped that the spiritual manifestations that took place within the Church of Jesus Christ were prompted by the Holy Ghost. It was clear, however, that most if not all of the rather unseemly conduct among them in their worship meetings could not in good conscience be ascribed to that source. A full third of the premortal hosts of Heaven rebelled with Lucifer against the Father and the Son and for their pains were cast down to the earth. Since their expulsion, the spirits of the damned have arrayed themselves against the sons and daughters of God who had remained faithful, tempting and deceiving them in any way possible. Any spiritual manifestation in a lost and fallen world inspires curiosity in the hearts and minds of the children of men. Without a standard by which to evaluate these various manifestations, the inexperienced and uninformed are led away to believe that the sentiments, discourses, and others influences of the devil are from God. In their state of spiritual deception, they lose the ability to discern the whisperings of the Spirit of God, which requires a willingness to...
50.2 When one considers the total number of mortal inhabitants of the earth since the days of Adam and Eve until the winding up scene at the end of the Millennium, one is struck by the billions of the sons and daughters of God who will have dwelt here in order to experience their second estate. These constitute the two-thirds of the spirit children of God the eternal Father who proved faithful in that war in Heaven that resulted in the expulsion of Lucifer and the spirits who followed him into eternal exile. These countless billions have become devils, angels to a devil, who seek the eternal destruction of all those who opposed them in the beginning. To say that these evil spirits outnumber the children of men is to state the obvious. Yet, for all that this numerical disparity implies, the evil spirits only have power that we mortals allow them to have. If we partake of the same rebellious attitudes that prompted their warfare against God, then their desires take corporeal form in our resultant conduct. If we hearken to their seductive voices of temptation, we become attuned to their enticements instead of the still, small voice of the Holy Ghost.

50.3 While the hosts of Satan desire to usurp the physical tabernacles of the children of men to any degree possible, Satan’s objective is to destroy as many of the faithful children of God as is possible, in whatever manner available to him. The only item on his agenda is the destruction of faith, hope, and charity in the hearts and minds of the mortal inhabitants of this earth, filling them with the despair and eternal anxiety which he suffers.

50.4 The Lord was very much aware of the various spiritually degenerate practices that had been imported into the Church of Jesus Christ.  
50.4.12—abominations—The English word “abominations” derives from roots that mean “ill omen, dark forebodings, hateful, loathsome”. Anything that does not lead to eternal life and salvation in the Celestial Kingdom of God is an abomination.

50.5 The Lord first commends the faithfulness of the saints who have not been adversely affected by the spirits of the evil one. These have been those who, filled with the Holy Ghost, have rejected the enticements of the devil and have sought more fully to embrace the light and truth of God. This power to distinguish between good and evil would prosper them on their way toward eternal life and salvation.

50.6 In part, this condemnation is spoken of the rebellious spirits who sided with Lucifer in the premortal existence. There will come a time when they will no longer find a place within the confines of this planet, but will be cast out into eternal exile into a place known only to God and themselves, where they will suffer the consequences of their own choices. In addition there will be others who, having taken upon themselves a physical body, will have rejected the promptings of the light of Christ and the Spirit of God, utterly refusing to be influenced by them. They too, will be cast out into a place designated for the sons of perdition. Those who have conspired with the devil in any degree to subvert the souls of the children of men will likewise suffer, unless they willingly pass through the process established for the redemption of their souls.

50.7 When the children of men employ duplicity in order to unrighteously obtain power over the minds, hearts, and bodies of their fellow men, they abide by the teachings of the Father. Satan makes no such demands of his acolytes.

| 2 Behold, verily I say unto you, that there are many spirits which are false spirits, which have gone forth in the earth, deceiving the world. | D&C 50:2–6
| 3 And also Satan hath sought to deceive you, that he might overthrow you. | MD 608
| 4 Behold, I, the Lord, have looked upon you, and have seen abominations in the church that profess my name. | D&C 50:4
| 5 But blessed are they who are faithful and endure, whether in life or in death, for they shall inherit eternal life. | D&C 50:5
| 6 But wo unto them that are deceivers and hypocrites, for, thus saith the Lord, I will bring them to judgment. | MD 443
| 7 Behold, verily I say unto you, there are hypocrites among you, | EM 2:464
| | DS 1 294
| | D&C 50:2–35
| | MD 372
partake of the same spirit that motivated Lucifer in the premortal councils of Heaven. Such ambitious men are easy prey for the devil who carefully leads them from one form of wickedness to another until he has completely corrupted them. These wicked men may be redeemed, however, through faith and repentance, calling upon the name of Jesus Christ. Thus, there was every expectation that those who had been deceived by the servants of Satan in the branches of the Church in Ohio might yet be rescued from their impending doom.

50.7—hypocrites—There is a dearth of understanding evident in the world about what “hypocrisy” is. The Greek word for “hypocrite” from which the English is derived is a concatenation of two parts: “hypo-” and “krinesthai”. The first part means “beneath” just as “hypodermic” means “beneath the skin.” The second part literally has to do with “dispute, decide, or judge”, signifying something to the effect “beneath certainty”. Thus, the original “hypocrites” were actors, those who were feigning characters on a stage. By watching the play, a member of the audience could know nothing of the life and attitudes of the actor himself. By association, a “sincere” man is one who is literally “without wax”; that is to say, one who does not wear a mask as did those actors while strutting upon the stage.

50.8 The hypocrites in the Church were deceiving the saints in order that they might gain power over them, whether through economic means, by submission to their unrighteous dominion, or by way of their charisma acquiring notoriety and adulation among them. All of these ploys, of course, would ultimately lead the weaker saints away from their God and Savior. The Lord would not allow the forces of evil to run rampant within the Church and therefore there would be those appointed to hold the wicked accountable for their sins. Disciplinary councils would be held and the faithless would find themselves outside of the pale of the Church and Kingdom of God.

50.9 The elders who had come to inquire of the Lord through the prophet Joseph Smith were concerned about their own conduct; they did not wish to offend the Spirit of God nor the saints because of their ignorance or lack of wisdom in these matters. The Lord assured these elders that they had chosen the better course.

50.10 The Lord was willing to counsel with the elders of the Church, inasmuch as they were sensitive to the promptings of the Holy Ghost. As the Lord reasoned with them in their minds, the Spirit would touch their hearts so that they might have confidence in the truths that were being revealed to them. There is no more effective manner to acquire the truths of eternity than the method proposed here.

50.11 Here we may perceive the condescension of God. It would have been a simple matter for the Lord to explain what was wanting in the lives of those who were participating in the unseemly conduct in the branches in and around Kirtland, Ohio, yet He chose to bless and instruct His servants in a memorable and significant way, speaking to them as if He were one of their own number.

50.12 The intellectual capacity of man is potentially as great as that of God the eternal Father, but in this rudimentary state in which we find ourselves, we are incomprehensibly inferior to any divine being. Our spiritual sensitivities are embryonic, our languages are distressingly inadequate, and our attempts at

who have deceived some, which has given the adversary power; but behold such shall be reclaimed;

8 But the hypocrites shall be detected and shall be cut off, either in life or in death, even as I will; and wo unto them who are cut off from my church, for the same are overcome of the world.

D&C 50:8
MD 34, 443

9 Wherefore, let every man beware lest he do that which is not in truth and righteousness before me.

D&C 50:10
AF 42
D&C 50:10–12
EM 2:703, 704
D&C 50:10–22
DNTC 3 356
D&C 50:11–24
EM 2:650

10 And now come, saith the Lord, by the Spirit, unto the elders of his church, and let us reason together, that ye may understand;

11 Let us reason even as a man reasoneth one with another face to face.

12 Now, when a man reasoneth he is understood of man, because he reasoneth as a man; even so will I, the Lord, reason with you that
logic are continually flawed for a want of proper assumptions. The Lord in His patience and love is willing to take us from where we are to where He is.

50.13 Each of the men who had gathered to receive instruction from the Lord had exercised faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, had repented of their sins sufficiently to be prepared to receive the ordinances of baptism by immersion and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. They had proven themselves worthy to receive the power of God, the priesthood that had been restored upon the earth for the edification and salvation of mankind. What should this have implied about their ability to determine those things which were of God and those which were not? If they did not have the spirit of discernment, who did?

50.14 The truths of heaven can only be effectively taught by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. The elders who had gathered to hear the voice of the Lord regarding the matter before them had done so on numerous occasions. They were not inexperienced; they knew what it felt like to have the Spirit of God speak through them. Could they not determine for themselves that the contrasting influences were foreign to the Church and Kingdom of God? To give them credit, some of the elders did suspect that something was amiss, but they could not bring themselves to act. The Lord counseled with them that they should have more confidence in the power and authority that they had bestowed upon them.

50.15 The hesitancy on the part of the elders to rebuke the evil spirits that had infiltrated the various branches of the Church of Jesus Christ was condemned by the Lord. They should have known better from the beginning from whence the influences had come.

50.16 Notwithstanding their erroneous assumptions, the Lord was willing to labor with them because of their humility in asking the question regarding the untoward spiritual manifestations. Would any of the elders present ever forget the lesson that they were learning at the feet of the prophet as he spoke the word of the Lord to them? Would they ever hesitate in their evaluation of the various spirits that would be manifested in their presence in the future? It seems unlikely, inasmuch as they were then being taught by the power and influence of the Spirit of God, a spirit that they would immediately recognize throughout their lives as directly contrasted with the spirit that they had felt among the members of the Church during the previous days as they had visited with them.

50.17 The Lord continues His simple syllogism. The elders of the Church had received the truth of Heaven by the preaching of the Gospel by those who were filled with the Spirit of God. They had exercised faith unto repentance and had received the saving ordinances, including the invitation to receive the full weight and measure of the gift of the Holy Ghost. Because of their righteous conduct before God and men, each of them had been called of God by revelation and the laying on of hands to serve as representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ to the inhabitants of the earth. They were commissioned and ordained to teach the Gospel as they had been taught, in truth by the Spirit of God. Most had done so to one degree or another. They had felt the power of the Holy Ghost both as students and teachers. Why could they not make the logical conclusion for themselves that if they felt a different spirit manifested among the saints that it could not be a result of the Holy Ghost operating on the minds and hearts of the children of men?

13 Wherefore, I the Lord ask you this question—unto what were ye ordained?

14 To preach my gospel by the Spirit, even the Comforter which was sent forth to teach the truth.

15 And then received ye spirits which ye could not understand, and received them to be of God; and in this are ye justified?

16 Behold ye shall answer this question yourselves; nevertheless, I will be merciful unto you; he that is weak among you hereafter shall be made strong.

17 Verily I say unto you, he that is ordained of me and sent forth to preach the word of truth by the Comforter, in the Spirit of truth, doth he preach it by the Spirit of truth or some other way?
| 50.18 What other conclusion could be drawn? The Lord God of Israel is a being of truth and light. He is not a being who varies in any degree. He teaches the same truths, albeit according to the ability of the children of men to receive them. He does not engage in spiritual practices that deviate from the sweet and peaceable counsels that always accompany the presence of the Holy Ghost. | 18 And if it be by some other way it is not of God. | D&C 50:19–21
EM 2:800
D&C 50:19–24
AGQ 3 (9) |
| 50.19 By extension, then, the elders needed to ask themselves the question as to how their messages had been received when they taught under the influence of the Holy Ghost. Were there writhings, contortions, or outbursts of any kind? Were any those who received the fullness of the Gospel so presumptuous as to impose their personal revelations on others? The elders could easily answer these questions for themselves. | 19 And again, he that receiveth the word of truth, doth he receive it by the Spirit of truth or some other way? |  |
| 50.20 Clearly, those aberrant spiritual manifestations visible among the saints in the Ohio branches were not inspired by the Holy Ghost and would needs be rebuked from among them, and if necessary, those who persisted in allowing the influence of evil spirits to motivate them would have to be dealt with in a summary way. | 20 If it be some other way it is not of God. |  |
| 50.21 As the elders felt at the moment they were communing with the Lord in the company of the prophet Joseph Smith, so should they feel in all of their meetings throughout the Church and Kingdom of God. Anything that deviated from that solemn, sweet, and tender Spirit should be eliminated from among the saints, lest they be led away by false spirits. | 21 Therefore, why is it that ye cannot understand and know, that he that receiveth the word by the Spirit of truth receiveth it as it is preached by the Spirit of truth? | D&C 50:21–22
EM 4:1443
D&C 50:21–24
DS 1 286 |
| 50.22 Where there is division, where there is contention, the Spirit of the Lord is absent. Under the influence of the Holy Ghost there is unity of heart and mind, there is peace and righteousness, and there is prosperity on every hand. There could be no happier people than those who live by the promptings of the Spirit of God. | 22 Wherefore, he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together. | D&C 50:22
DNTE 2 387, 485
CR95-0 3
CR96-0 3
D&C 50:22–23
MD 213
D&C 50:23
DS 3 206
D&C 50:23–24
AGQ 2 (10), 70
AGQ 4 70
MD 446
MM 2 153
CR02-A 73
D&C 50:23–27
DS 1 186
D&C 50:23–28
DS 1 298, 300
DS 2 36
D&C 50:23–29
DNTE 1 144
DS 3 295
MD 179
D&C 50:24
DNTE 1 291
DNTE 3 295
DNTE 3 375, 433
CR97-O 20 |
| 50.23 The Holy Ghost is a revelator. Those under his influence are lifted up in their faith, their expectations, and their understanding of the prospects of eternity. Without the Holy Ghost, there is only the natural awareness of a lost and a fallen world, from which there is no hope of escape, even in death. | 23 And that which doth not edify is not of God, and is darkness. |  |
| 50.24 The light of Christ testifies to every man and woman who is born upon the earth that there is more to existence than the incessant clamoring of the Celestial world for wealth, power, and fame. Those who allow themselves to be illuminated by eternity become aware of the bounds and limitations placed upon those who succumb to the temptations of the world. They learn to navigate this mortal life with some clarity, learning for themselves the difference between good and evil, and the blessings associated with choosing the former over the latter. The choice of good over evil, allows for the choice of greater good over greater evil, and the bringing of greater happiness into the lives of the children of men. By pursuing the divinely appointed course indicated by the whisperings of the Spirit of God, a man finds himself approaching the perfection promised by the light of Christ when he first became aware of the spiritual possibilities afforded to all of the sons and daughters of God. | 24 That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day. |  |
| 50.25 The Church and Kingdom of God is a house of order, one that has been established to govern all those who wish to become citizens of the Celestial Kingdom. Mortal men are appointed to be guardians of the faithful, blessed with gifts of the Spirit to guide and direct them in setting the affairs of the saints in their proper order according to the inspiration of the Almighty. | 25 And again, verily I say unto you, and I say it that you may know the truth, that you may chase darkness from among you; |  |
The elders who had been appointed to visit with the saints in the branches in Ohio had been given that authority.

50.26 The presiding elders of the Church are selected to be guardians of the faithful, empowered to bless and benefit all those with whom they come in contact. They are to be patient and loving, but they are to brook no apostasy inspired by the powers of the evil one. Such conduct is to be rebuked and dealt with according to the commandments of God without hesitancy or regret, notwithstanding the personal losses they may feel when close friends and associates are involved. The words of these men cannot be ignored without there being consequences difficult to be borne. Yet, the ordained men themselves cannot forget whom they serve; they must be humble beyond measure, kind and considerate in all of their dealings with the members of the Church.

50.27 The priesthood which each of the elders held was the Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God. They were to be his representatives in word and in deed, inspired to do as he would do in any and all cases. If they were acting in his capacity, motivated by the pure love of Christ, they could accomplish anything that the Son could accomplish in heaven or on earth. The elders need not be hesitant in observing to do all that the Lord God of Israel would call upon them to do. Thus are the sons of God prepared for eternity.

50.27.41—42—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

50.28 By means of faith in Christ and sincere repentance from sin, a man initiates a covenant of godliness with God the eternal Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. When he receives the ordinance of baptism by immersion, he fulfills the commandment given to our first parents when they were cast out of the Garden of Eden. By receiving into his life the healing and guiding influence of the Holy Ghost, he receives a personal testimony that his conduct thus far is acceptable unto the Father, and that he has a legal and lawful claim upon the powers of Heaven as one of the citizens of the Kingdom of God. As the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ become effective in the man’s life, through continual obedience to the whisperings of the Spirit, he becomes a saint, free from the bondage of sin.

50.29 A man filled with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost cannot petition the God of Heaven in any degree of unrighteousness. His motivations are pure, inspired by a divine charity for the children of men. He has the mind of Christ and conducts himself as would the Savior in any given circumstance. Faithfully bearing the holy priesthood of God, the elders of the Church may command the elements and all living things in the name of Jesus Christ and they must obey.

50.29.21—Jesus—The Anglicized form of the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew name, Oshea or Joshua. At its root, “Jesus” means “Savior”.

50.30 The elders could not presume to dictate to the world their own terms; they would speak as they were moved upon by the Holy Ghost or they were not to speak at all. The ancient prophets were promised that they would command and they would be obeyed, but these holy men knew that they could only do so when they knew and understood the mind and will of the Lord in the matter. Insofar as the evil spirits were concerned, the elders of the Church had nothing to fear from them. The whole rebellious host of heaven could be

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Corinthians 1:15</th>
<th>26 He that is ordained of God and sent forth, the same is appointed to be the greatest, notwithstanding he is the least and the servant of all.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Peter 1:21</td>
<td>27 Wherefore, he is possessor of all things; for all things are subject unto him, both in heaven and on the earth, the life and the light, the Spirit and the power, sent forth by the will of the Father through Jesus Christ, his Son.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Peter 5:4</td>
<td>28 But no man is possessor of all things except he be purified and cleansed from all sin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:17</td>
<td>29 And if ye are purified and cleansed from all sin, ye shall ask whatsoever you will in the name of Jesus and it shall be done.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 John 5:21</td>
<td>30 But know this, it shall be given you what you shall ask; and as ye are appointed to the head, the spirits shall be subject unto you.</td>
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arrayed against the presiding elders of the Church, but through the power invested in them and by the name of Jesus Christ, they could banish Satan and his minions from their midst.

50.31 The elders who were the subjects of this revelation had experienced contact with spiritual manifestations about which they knew little or nothing. They puzzled over the things that they had witnessed, and in some instances were troubled by what they had seen. The Lord clearly indicates their course of action when they encountered similar circumstances. If they found themselves in the midst of a congregation where there seemed to be a spiritual influence, but they were not directly affected by it, they had only to ask Father in the name of the Son for clarification. If the Lord did not pour out a spirit of understanding upon the brethren, then they would know that some other influence was in operation.

50.31.34—Jesus—The Anglicized form of the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew name, Oshea or Joshua. At its root, “Jesus” means “Savior”.

50.32 If the spiritual manifestation was not of God, then it could be assumed that either an evil spirit was operating upon the members of the Church or that those supposedly affected were pretending to be overcome by the spirit in order to impress those around them. In either case, the offenders were to be rebuked. The hypocrites were to cease and desist in their pretense; the devils were to be cast out in the name of Christ. In either case, there was to be a firm declaration that those things which had taken place had not been inspired by the Holy Ghost.

50.33 Satan is the grand accuser. He testified against God the eternal Father in the premortal councils before the world was created. He railed against the motives of the faithful. Since his fall from grace, the devil has been a constant accuser of the brethren, especially against those who have fallen into transgression. He declares them unredeemable, belittling and mocking their every motion toward repentance and salvation. The servants of God are not to partake of this spirit in any degree, even when dealing with him who is the greatest of all transgressors. Satan is a man of great pride, filled with unwarranted self-esteem. There is no joy in heaven over his fall; we should not be filled with pride when his influence has been mastered by the power of the priesthood.

50.34 There would be opportunities for the elders of the Church to become acquainted with the various gifts of the spirit as they travelled from place to place. Some they would perceive in the lives of the saints among whom they would visit. Petitioning the Father for clarification, they too would partake of those same gifts and be edified and blessed by them. Thus, their joy would not come because they had overcome evil, but because they had been edified by another aspect of the Spirit of God with which they had not been familiar.

50.35 The greatest joy that any of the saints would receive into their lives would be the knowledge that what they were doing to advance the Kingdom of God was acceptable to the Father and the Son. Obedience is the first law of heaven and as such, it is the premiere principle by which we receive the blessings of heaven. The scriptures illustrate the principles of repentance and obedience, as do the continuing revelations received by the servants of God. This last dispensation in which we are participating has been established to prepare a people for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory, that which will be followed by a thousand years of willing obedience to the fullness of the

31 Wherefore, it shall come to pass, that if you behold a spirit manifested that you cannot understand, and you receive not that spirit, ye shall ask of the Father in the name of Jesus; and if he give not unto you that spirit, then you may know that it is not of God.

32 And it shall be given unto you, power over that spirit; and you shall proclaim against that spirit with a loud voice that it is not of God—

33 Not with railing accusation, that ye be not overcome, neither with boasting nor rejoicing, lest you be seized therewith.

34 He that receiveth of God, let him account it of God; and let him rejoice that he is accounted of God worthy to receive.

35 And by giving heed and doing these things which ye have received, and which ye shall hereafter receive—and the kingdom is given you of the Father, and power to overcome all things which are not ordained of him—
Gospel, during which no evil will prevail upon the earth.

50.36 Parley P. Pratt, John Murdock, and the other elders who had come to the prophet Joseph Smith for clarification on the spiritual manifestations they had witnessed in the various branches of the Church of Jesus Christ in Ohio, had feared to do wrong, and in so doing had allowed certain practices to continue among the saints. The Lord, however, was merciful unto them, forgiving them of their transgressions.

50.37 Although we cannot at present speak with complete certainty, it may very well be that Joseph Wakefield was among the number of elders that accompanied Parley Pratt and John Murdock to seek clarification about the spiritual manifestations that they had observed among the saints. Parley and Joseph were successful in their labors. Joseph Wakefield would later be called to serve in the eastern regions of the United States, during which time he would baptized George A. Smith, a young man who would one day serve in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

50.37.4–5—Joseph Wakefield—Some historians have suggested that Joseph Wakefield was baptized in June 1831, but this clearly cannot be the case given the missionary calling extended to him by the Lord the month before. Joseph faithfully served in the Church of Jesus Christ for a few years, but then apostatized from the faith because of his own biased views regarding the nature of prophets and prophecy. Joseph Wakefield could not abide the conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, who in the midst of his work on the translation of the scriptures, would take time to play with his children. By 1834 he was actively engaged in hostile activity against the saints in Kirtland, Ohio. The irony here is that if Joseph Wakefield had followed the counsel given in this revelation he would have petitioned God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ as to whether the prophet’s spiritual conduct was acceptable, and if so that he might be a partaker thereof. He did not do so and therefore so found himself outside of the pale of the Church of Jesus Christ.

50.37.15–17 Parley P. Pratt—Parley Pratt was born 12 April 1807 in Burlington, New York. His early family life was marked by attendance to a strict moral value system coupled with hard work. As a teenager he found himself attracted to the Baptist church. After his marriage to Thankful Halsey in 1827, he settled in the wilderness west of Cleveland, Ohio. In 1829, Sidney Rigdon and others of the Cambellite faith came into his region of country. Rigdon’s teachings being far more consistent with the Old and New Testaments, Parley accepted membership in that religious community and became one of its ministers. In the late summer of 1830, as he was traveling toward his parents’ residence with his wife, he was impressed to stop in Newark, New York. There he saw and read for the first time, the Book of Mormon. He left Newark immediately for Palmyra and from thence to Manchester where he spent time with Hyrum Smith who answered all of his inquiries. Hyrum took Parley to Fayette, New York, where he met with Oliver Cowdery. About 1 September 1830, Parley P. Pratt was baptized in Seneca Lake by Oliver and immediately ordained an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ. Parley then rejoined his family in Columbia county, New York, where he taught and baptized his brother Orson. Shortly thereafter he returned to Fayette for the conference that commenced on the 26th of September 1830. Here he met the prophet Joseph Smith for the first time. He then received his mission call to serve with Oliver, Peter and Ziba Peterson.

36 And behold, verily I say unto you, blessed are you who are now hearing these words of mine from the mouth of my servant, for your sins are forgiven you.

37 Let my servant Joseph Wakefield, in whom I am well pleased, and my servant Parley P. Pratt go forth among the churches and strengthen them by the word of exhortation;
50.38 Although we cannot at present speak with complete certainty, it may very well be that John Corrill was among the number of elders that accompanied Parley Pratt and John Murdock to seek clarification about the spiritual manifestations that they had observed among the saints. John Corrill would be one of seven High Priests sent to Jackson county, Missouri, to oversee the affairs of the Church and Kingdom of God in Zion. The others were Oliver Cowdery, W.W. Phelps, John Whitmer, Sidney Gilbert, Edward Partridge, and Isaac Morley.

50.38.5–6—John Corrill—John Corrill’s history in the Church of Jesus Christ is somewhat checkered. He hesitated in receiving baptism in the Church until the conversion of Sidney Rigdon and after his personally witnessing some of what he termed to be the gifts of the spirit of God. His reading of the Book of Mormon had initially not sparked a testimony within him. He served in prominent positions within the Church and was the elected representative of the Latter-day Saints to the state legislature of Missouri. He along with several other prominent leaders of the Church apostatized during the great difficulties between the Church and the Missourians in 1839. He was subsequently excommunicated. He later died on 26 September 1842 in Adams County, Illinois.

50.39 Although we cannot at present speak with complete certainty, it may very well be that Edward Partridge was among the number of elders that accompanied Parley Pratt and John Murdock to seek clarification about the spiritual manifestations that they had observed among the saints. The implication of the context of this verse would suggest that at some point Edward Partridge had been guilty of hampering the service of some of the elders, although we do not know the nature of the impediments. It may have been that Edward thought that some of the activities of the elders ran counter to his own assignment as the Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ.

50.39.7–8—Edward Partridge—Edward Partridge was, as Joseph Smith observed, a pattern of piety and one of the Lord’s great men. A spiritually sensitive seeker of truth, Edward investigated the various sects of his day in an attempt to find the truth manifested in his day as it could be found in the scriptures. In 1828 he came in contact with the Campbellite movement and was an active participant in that movement when Oliver Cowdery and his companions arrived in northeastern Ohio while making their way to the western frontier of the United States in order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites. While many of the Campbellite Baptists eagerly associated themselves with the Church of Jesus Christ at the hands of the four missionaries, Edward Partridge deferred his own baptism. When Sidney Rigdon determined to travel from Mentor, Ohio, to Fayette, New York, to visit the prophet Joseph Smith, Edward went with him. They arrived at Joseph’s home on 10 December 1830. As the two had passed through Manchester, New York, Sidney and Edward asked the residents about the Smith family, and Joseph in particular. The reply that the Smiths were decent people until young Joseph brought forth the Book of Mormon impressed Edward such that his desire to be baptized was amplified considerably. On 11 December, the day following his first meeting the prophet, Edward Partridge was baptized in Seneca Lake by Joseph Smith. Edward Partridge would serve as the first Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation, beginning 4 February 1831. He would suffer great persecution at the hands of the Missourians because of his position in the Church, and ultimately died as a result of the injuries and exposure that he
experienced in May 1840 at the age of 47.

50.40 There could hardly be a better description of the condition that the elders found themselves in than to be called little children. There is tenderness in the term, to be sure, but there is also an implied admonishment to grow into spiritual maturity and into the privileges afforded them by the power of God that had been conferred upon them. As they developed into the sons of God they were intended to be, they would receive further light and knowledge until they had received a fullness of the truth.

50.41 Notwithstanding all of their mortal foibles and follies, the Lord accepted the elders as they were, encouraging them to improve and increase in mutual love and in personal righteousness. They had taken upon themselves the covenants of Jesus Christ and as such they had become his children, his sons, with the potential to become even as he is, that they might inherit the fullness of glory in the Celestial Kingdom of God.

50.42 The laws of God have been broken since the days of Adam and Eve, and none are exempt from the demands of justice. Through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, however, the spiritual and physical debts and liabilities incurred by the children of men while living in mortality may be resolved satisfactorily, the demands of justice having been silenced by the blood of the Savior. The Father, then, tenders His legal claim upon the souls of men for their disobedience unto the Son who has paid for their redemption. Those thus purified and sanctified will find salvation in the eternal worlds.

50.43 The Father and the Son are in complete and total agreement with regard to the manner in which the children of men may be redeemed from both death and hell. Their mutual covenant is immutable. The Savior invites every man, woman, and child to partake of blessings associated with that divine covenant, to come into a complete and total reconciliation with them, that they might be prepared to enter into their presence, exalted for all eternity.

50.44 Jesus, through the principles and ordinances of the Gospel, is our father and we are his begotten children. By the same token he is our good shepherd and we are his beloved sheep. He is the firm foundation upon which we may securely and confidently build our house of faith, that we might find peace and rest in the mansions of his Father. Jesus is unfailingly our tender parent, our watchful guardian, and the substance upon which our happiness is built.

50.44.17—Israel—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

50.45 This is the dispensation of the fullness of times, the era which anticipates the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory, to open the Millennial reign of the Son of God, during which the perfection of the earth and all who dwell upon it will be fulfilled. Every eye will witness, every ear will ring with the glad tidings, every knee will bow in the presence of the King of kings, and every tongue will utter the only possible response to the blessings extended by his presence upon the earth.

50.46 The elders would do all that lay before them with an eye single to the glory of God that was about to burst upon them. Those who did not would fall by the wayside and would be found wanting in the latter day.

40 Behold, ye are little children and ye cannot bear all things now; ye must grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.

41 Fear not, little children, for you are mine, and I have overcome the world, and you are of them that my Father hath given me;

42 And none of them that my Father hath given me shall be lost.

43 And the Father and I are one. I am in the Father and the Father in me; and inasmuch as ye have received me, ye are in me and I in you.

44 Wherefore, I am in your midst, and I am the good shepherd, and the stone of Israel. He that buildeth upon this rock shall never fall.

45 And the day cometh that you shall hear my voice and see me, and know that I am.

46 Watch, therefore, that ye may be ready. Even so. Amen.
50.46.10—*Amen*—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as "Amen" derives from roots which mean "true". This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 51

Date: May 1831
Place: Thompson, Ohio
To: Edward Partridge

51.0.1 When the Church of Jesus Christ was formally organized on 6 April 1830, there were three prominent communities of the saints that had grown up around the faithful men and women who supported the prophet Joseph Smith during the time the Book of Mormon was being translated. In Palmyra, New York, was the Joseph Smith, Senior, family who had borne the full weight and measure of the opposition against young Joseph after the great theophany of the Father and the Son that occurred in the spring of 1820 and the multiple visits of the angel Moroni beginning in September 1823. When the Church of Jesus Christ was formally organized in April 1830, the meeting was held in the home of Peter Whitmer, Senior, most of his immediate family being present. Two of the Whitmer siblings, David and Peter, Junior, were numbered among the first six members of the Church. Fayette served as the headquarters of the Church until early 1831. One of the early material supporters of the young prophet and his family was Joseph Knight, Senior, who maintained his home in Colesville, New York. In October 1830, the Colesville Branch was organized with Hyrum Smith as its first President, probably the first formally organized branch in the history of the Church in this dispensation. There were approximately sixty-five baptized members in the branch at that time.

51.0.2 From the very beginnings of the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times, the adversary and his minions brought all of their forces to bear on the prophet Joseph Smith, his family, and his associates. This continued to intensify, notwithstanding various attempts to deflect the persecution by having young Joseph’s family relocate from time to time. During 1828 and 1829 Joseph and Emma lived in Harmony, Pennsylvania, Manchester, New York, and Fayette, New York, often leaving behind bodies of men and women who had been sufficiently stirred up by the servants of sin to resort threats of physical violence. Frequently these threats were realized. Once the Church of Jesus Christ was formally organized, the opposition increased. By the end of 1830, the membership of the Church was under great pressure by their neighbors and others to forego their discipleship and renounce Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon. In the fall of that year, Oliver Cowdery and three companions began a mission to preach the coming forth of the Book of Mormon to the Native Americans living in designated reservations from New York to the western frontier of the United States. As part of this ministry they stopped in northeastern Ohio, meeting with prominent men there whose faith and testimony of the restoration of the Gospel of Christ were soon ignited. In short order many hundreds of faithful men and women had received the principles and the ordinances of salvation, establishing the largest gathering of saints in the Church. Antagonism and opposition in Ohio was considerably less than that occurring in New York. In December 1830, Sidney Rigdon and his travelling companion Edward Partridge arrived in Fayette, New York, to meet with the prophet Joseph Smith. Sidney was immediately called by the Lord God to serve as Joseph’s aide in the translation of the Bible that had been initiated some six months before. Edward Partridge received baptism about the same time. In conjunction with the visit of Sidney and Edward, the Lord revealed that it was His will that the New York membership of the Church...
should move their households to Kirtland and environs (see 37.3). During the third general conference of the Church of Jesus Christ held in Fayette, New York, the commandment to move west to Ohio was reiterated. The Lord gave as part of His rationale for the move the intensifying persecution that the saints were suffering in their communities (see 38.28–32). Additionally, the faith that would be exercised in making the move would be rewarded by an outpouring of the spirit and the revelation of the Law of the Lord that would serve as the foundation of the city of Zion that would be raised up in the last days in preparation for the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory.

51.0.3 The prophet Joseph Smith and his wife, together with Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge, were among the first to hearken to the voice of the Lord. About the first of February 1831, the four arrived in Kirtland, Ohio, where Joseph and Emma were received into the home of Newel K. Whitney and his family. In late February or early March 1831, the saints living in and around Palmyra, New York, gathered their belongings and began their trek to Kirtland, Ohio. They travelled by canal boat and steamboat for the most part, under the leadership of Lucy Mack Smith, arriving toward the latter end of April 1831. Of the Fayette branch we have less knowledge as to when they arrived in Ohio. Peter Whitmer, Junior, was already in Missouri as Oliver Cowdery’s missionary companion at the time the revelations had been given. John Whitmer had been sent to Kirtland carrying the revelations and the nascent history of the Church with him. Some others of the Fayette Branch travelled with Lucy Smith. The Colesville Branch, under the direction of Newel Knight, arrived in Kirtland a few weeks later and settled on the land in Thompson, Ohio, that Leman Copley had consecrated for that very purpose.

51.0.4 Edward Partridge had accompanied Sidney Rigdon from Ohio, to Fayette, New York, as a seeker after truth. He had not as yet been baptized. Shortly after meeting with the prophet, he accepted baptism on 11 December 1830. On 4 February 1831, he was called to serve as the first Bishop of the Church of Christ in this dispensation. He would serve in that capacity until his death on 27 May 1840. As the saints began to arrive in Kirtland, it became clear that providing for these dislocated members of the Church would prove to be a serious problem if there were no additional revelations given. The Lord had made definitive statements to the effect that the city of Zion and the land of their inheritance was not going to be permanently established in Ohio, but that the land of promise was far to the west. How could the Coleville saints enter into the Law of the Lord if there were no inheritance for them at the moment of their arrival? What was to be done in the meantime? This constitutes the essence of the present revelation. This section did not appear in the Book of Commandments, but was printed as Section 23 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

51.1 As the only bishop in the Church in 1831, Edward Partridge had responsibility for the temporal welfare of the saints, particularly those who were about to embark on an arduous journey from Kirtland to Jackson County, Missouri. The Law of Consecration had been revealed, together with many particulars as to how that was to be accomplished. The practical implementations of the principles were, however, untried and Edward was no doubt deeply concerned that the procedures be conducted properly lest any be offended. After all, all of these tasks were geared toward the establishment of Zion, in order to raise up a people prepared to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.

51.1.16–17—Edward Partridge—Edward Partridge was, as Joseph Smith

1 HEARKEN unto me, saith the Lord your God, and I will speak unto my servant Edward Partridge, and give unto him directions; for it must needs be that he receive directions how to organize this people. D&C 51:1–20 EM 1:119
observed, a pattern of piety and one of the Lord’s great men. A spiritually sensitive seeker of truth, Edward investigated the various sects of his day in an attempt to find the truth manifested in his day as it could be found in the scriptures. In 1828 he came in contact with the Campbellite movement and was an active participant in that movement when Oliver Cowdery and his companions arrived in northeastern Ohio while making their way to the western frontier of the United States in order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites. While many of the Campbellite Baptists eagerly associated themselves with the Church of Jesus Christ at the hands of the four missionaries, Edward Partridge deferred his own baptism. When Sidney Rigdon determined to travel from Mentor, Ohio, to Fayette, New York, to visit the prophet Joseph Smith, Edward went with him. They arrived at Joseph’s home on 10 December 1830. As the two had passed through Manchester, New York, Sidney and Edward asked the residents about the Smith family, and Joseph in particular. The reply that the Smiths were decent people until young Joseph brought forth the Book of Mormon impressed Edward such that his desire to be baptized was amplified considerably. On 11 December, the day following his first meeting the prophet, Edward Partridge was baptized in Seneca Lake by Joseph Smith. Edward Partridge would serve as the first Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation, beginning 4 February 1831. He would suffer great persecution at the hands of the Missourians because of his position in the Church, and ultimately died as a result of the injuries and exposure that he experienced in May 1840 at the age of 47.

51.2 The membership of the Church of Jesus Christ looked forward to laying the foundations of the city of the New Jerusalem. There was great enthusiasm and determination, but they would not move forward if they were only equipped with zeal; there must needs be knowledge as well if they were to succeed. Those who went to Zion would be required to enter into solemn covenants based on Celestial principles. If those covenants were mismanaged in any way, the disciples of Christ could not prosper in their labors. They would be as branches of a tree that had been lopped off, lifeless and fit for burning. Their spiritual strength would be wanting and they would find that they could not be sustained in the midst of the opposition that would be raised against them. They would soon find themselves outside of the pale of the Church and Kingdom of God.

51.3 Edward Partridge had been called to serve as the Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ by revelation and the laying on of hands on 4 February 1831. He chose as his counselors Isaac Morley and John Corrill. These three men had the responsibility to oversee the consecrations of the people and the appointment of inheritances or stewardships in the land of Zion.

51.3.4—Edward Partridge—Edward Partridge was, as Joseph Smith observed, a pattern of piety and one of the Lord’s great men. A spiritually sensitive seeker of truth, Edward investigated the various sects of his day in an attempt to find the truth manifested in his day as it could be found in the scriptures. In 1828 he came in contact with the Campbellite movement and was an active participant in that movement when Oliver Cowdery and his companions arrived in northeastern Ohio while making their way to the western frontier of the United States in order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites. While many of the Campbellite Baptists eagerly associated themselves with the Church of Jesus Christ at the hands of the four missionaries, Edward Partridge deferred

2 For it must needs be that they be organized according to my laws; if otherwise, they will be cut off.

3 Wherefore, let my servant Edward Partridge, and those whom he has chosen, in whom I am well pleased, appoint unto this people their portions, every man equal according to his circumstances and his wants and needs.
his own baptism. When Sidney Rigdon determined to travel from Mentor, Ohio, to Fayette, New York, to visit the prophet Joseph Smith, Edward went with him. They arrived at Joseph’s home on 10 December 1830. As the two had passed through Manchester, New York, Sidney and Edward asked the residents about the Smith family, and Joseph in particular. The reply that the Smiths were decent people until young Joseph brought forth the Book of Mormon impressed Edward such that his desire to be baptized was amplified considerably. On 11 December, the day following his first meeting the prophet, Edward Partridge was baptized in Seneca Lake by Joseph Smith. Edward Partridge would serve as the first Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation, beginning 4 February 1831. He would suffer great persecution at the hands of the Missourians because of his position in the Church, and ultimately died as a result of the injuries and exposure that he experienced in May 1840 at the age of 47.

51:3.5—chosen—Isaac Morley had joined the Church in Kirtland as a result of the missionary labors of Oliver Cowdery and his companions. He was ordained an elder almost immediately. On 3 June 1831 Isaac was ordained a High Priest by Lyman Wight and the same day was set apart as the first counselor to Edward Partridge. He would serve as a counselor until Bishop Partridge’s death in 1840. Isaac Morley served in the Church and Kingdom of God for the rest of his life, moving west with the saints after the death of Joseph Smith, and is considered by some to be the founder of Manti, Utah. He died in Fairview, Utah, 24 June 1865 at age 79. John Corrill was baptized 10 January 1831 and shortly thereafter was ordained an elder. He was called and ordained a High Priest and set apart as second counselor to Edward Partridge on 3 June 1831. On 1 August 1837 he was replaced by Titus Billings. A few months later he was called to serve as the Keeper of the Lord’s Storehouse in Far West, Missouri. For additional information regarding John Corrill, see 50:38.5–6

51:4 The transactions involved in the receiving of consecrations and in the appointing of stewardships were to be done legally and lawfully, insofar as the laws of the land were concerned. There were to be written and recorded deeds transferring what could be called real and personal property, first from the prospective citizen of Zion to the Church and then from the Church to the individual. Both the Bishop and the prospective citizen had to be in agreement regarding all of these matters or else the covenant could not proceed. All was to be voluntary, without coercion of any kind. Once the covenant was in place, the temporal matters were final. Anything that had been consecrated to the Church and not deeded back as a stewardship could not be reclaimed at a later date. There could be no appeal to the state or federal government because all transactions had been done according to law. Apostasy on the part of the individual could not undo the legal transactions.

51:4.5–6—Edward Partridge—Edward Partridge was, as Joseph Smith observed, a pattern of piety and one of the Lord’s great men. A spiritually sensitive seeker of truth, Edward investigated the various sects of his day in an attempt to find the truth manifested in his day as it could be found in the scriptures. In 1828 he came in contact with the Campbellite movement and was an active participant in that movement when Oliver Cowdery and his companions arrived in northeastern Ohio while making their way to the western frontier of the United States in order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites. While many of the Campbellite Baptists eagerly associated themselves with the Church of Jesus

4 And let my servant Edward Partridge, when he shall appoint a man his portion, give unto him a writing that shall secure unto him his portion, that he shall hold it, even this right and this inheritance in the church, until he transgresses and is not accounted worthy by the voice of the church, according to the laws and covenants of the church to belong to the church.

D&C 51:4
MD 766
D&C 51:4–5
AF 440
MD 851
Christ at the hands of the four missionaries, Edward Partridge deferred his own baptism. When Sidney Rigdon determined to travel from Mentor, Ohio, to Fayette, New York, to visit the prophet Joseph Smith, Edward went with him. They arrived at Joseph’s home on 10 December 1830. As the two had passed through Manchester, New York, Sidney and Edward asked the residents about the Smith family, and Joseph in particular. The reply that the Smiths were decent people until young Joseph brought forth the Book of Mormon impressed Edward such that his desire to be baptized was amplified considerably. On 11 December, the day following his first meeting the prophet, Edward Partridge was baptized in Seneca Lake by Joseph Smith. Edward Partridge would serve as the first Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation, beginning 4 February 1831. He would suffer great persecution at the hands of the Missourians because of his position in the Church, and ultimately died as a result of the injuries and exposure that he experienced in May 1840 at the age of 47.

51.5 When a man consecrated his material wealth to the Church and Kingdom of God, he did so by an oath and a covenant. When he received his stewardship this was also by an oath and a covenant. This was in addition to the legal transactions that accompanied these acts. If a man subsequently broke his oath and covenant because of apostasy, he lost his standing in the Church and Kingdom of God, but that did not affect his legal status under civil laws of the United States. The Church could not in any fashion deprive the apostate of his deeded stewardship, whether in land, cattle, or personal possessions. On the other hand, the man could not recover anything that he had legally and lawfully deeded to the Church when he had first entered into the Law of Consecration.

51.6 All this was done to protect the rights and privileges of the poor and the needed who received their stewardships from the Bishop’s Storehouse, where the surplus of the wealthy members of the city of Zion had been placed when they had received their stewardships. Therefore, an apostate could not walk into the home of another member of the Church and demand anything that might have pertained to his household before consecration.

51.7 This is probably in reference to the properties that had been consecrated to the Church but which had not been deeded to another as a stewardship. This would be particularly true of real estate in Ohio and New York that had been consecrated to the Church as the saints were receiving their land inheritance in Missouri. The Church held the deeds to these properties in trust for the entire membership of the Church.

51.8 Not all of the individual wants and needs of the poor saints would be met by the consecrations of the wealthy. No doubt there would come a time when some of the properties that had been consecrated to the Church would have to be liquidated. The revenue generated would be used to purchase commodities and clothing for the poor as they began to make their way to the land of Zion.

51.9 The object of the Law of Consecration was to help prepare a people for the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Millennial reign. The inhabitants of Zion were to be of one heart, one mind, dwell in righteousness, and have no poor among them. For any prospective resident of Zion to withhold anything from his consecration would be a manifestation of unmitigated

5 And if he shall transgress and is not accounted worthy to belong to the church, he shall not have power to claim that portion which he has consecrated unto the bishop for the poor and needy of my church; therefore, he shall not retain the gift, but shall only have claim on that portion that is deeded unto him.

6 And thus all things shall be made sure, according to the laws of the land.

7 And let that which belongs to this people be appointed unto this people.

8 And the money which is left unto this people—let there be an agent appointed unto this people, to take the money to provide food and raiment, according to the wants of this people.

9 And let every man deal honestly, and be alike among this people, and receive alike, that ye may be one, even as I have commanded you.
hypocrisy.

51.10 The consecrations that were being received from the future inhabitants of the land of Zion were not to be used for any other purpose than for the establishment of the New Jerusalem. The money and goods could be used to equip and feed those on their way to their inheritance, but could not be used to benefit anyone or any other place.

51.10.7–8—this people—That is to say, those who were entitled to receive an inheritance in the land of Zion.

51.10.18—church—That is to say, any other branch of the Church of Jesus Christ that was not preparing to depart for the land of Zion.

51.11 If the leadership of the Church perceived that there were needs elsewhere, the consecrated funds could be used temporarily, as a loan, but the funds would need to be replaced as soon as possible. The consecrated money and goods were to be dedicated to the sole purpose of building up the city of Zion.

51.11.3–4—another church—That is to say, a branch of the Church of Jesus Christ not located in the land of Zion.

51.11.9–10—this church—That is to say, the body of the Church of Jesus Christ who had already consecrated their all to the Kingdom of God and who were authorized to receive their inheritance in the land of Zion.

51.12 Any deviation from the decreed policy of have the consecrated funds used only for the establishment of Zion would have to be approved by the Bishopric and by the common consent of all those involved, especially those who had already entered into the Law of Consecration.

51.13 The Bishop’s Storehouse was not to be merely a repository of excess goods consecrated by the saints and not assigned as stewardships. It was to be a place from which the saints might be prepared in all things to make their move to the land of their inheritance.

51.13.8—storehouse—The first Bishop’s storehouse appointed was the Newel K. Whitney Store in Kirtland, Ohio. The second was Sidney Gilbert Store in Independence, Missouri. At the present time there are hundreds of such storehouses scattered throughout the world for the blessing and benefit of the saints of God. When Edward Partridge removed from Kirtland, Ohio, to Jackson county, Missouri, Newel K. Whitney became the Bishop of the Church in Kirtland.

51.14 Given the great demands upon his time, Edward Partridge could not be expected to work at any other occupation in addition to his role as the Bishop of the Church. Thus, his needs and those of his family were to be provided for so long as he was fully engaged in his duties.

51.15 The Colesville Branch of the Church had arrived in Kirtland, Ohio in April 1831 and had been ensconced on properties consecrated by Leman Copley for that purpose. Leman’s land was located in Thompson, Ohio, where Joseph Smith and Edward Partridge had gone to resolve the burgeoning problems that were beginning to manifest themselves there.

51.16 The Colesville Branch would have only a short respite upon the land in Thompson, Ohio, after which they would be evicted by Leman Copley. At that time, the Lord would have the membership of that branch travel to Jackson county, Missouri, where they would receive their inheritances in the land of Zion.

10 And let that which belongeth to this people not be taken and given unto that of another church.

11 Wherefore, if another church would receive money of this church, let them pay unto this church again according as they shall agree:

12 And this shall be done through the bishop or the agent, which shall be appointed by the voice of the church.

13 And again, let the bishop appoint a storehouse unto this church; and let all things both in money and in meat, which are more than is needful for the wants of this people, be kept in the hands of the bishop.

14 And let him also reserve unto himself for his own wants, and for the wants of his family, as he shall be employed in doing this business.

15 And thus I grant unto this people a privilege of organizing themselves according to my laws.

16 And I consecrate unto them this land for a little season, until I, the Lord, shall provide for them otherwise, and command them to go hence;
51.16.6—7—this land—That is to say, the land that had belonged to Leman Copley which he had consecrated for the use of the saints as they began to gather in northeastern Ohio.

51.16.10—11—little season—in a matter of weeks Leman Copley would withdraw his land from the Colesville saints.

51.17 This has been the attitude of all saints since the beginning of this dispensation. They knew that it was unlikely that they would remain long in any given place, but they were to improve the places where they were temporarily planted as if they were going to be there for a thousand years.

51.17.3—6—hour and the day—On 3 July 1831, the saints of the Colesville Branch departed for Missouri. On or about 25 July 1831, they arrived in Jackson county.

51.18 The members of the Colesville Branch had been the first body of saints to respond to the commandment to remove from New York and gather to the Ohio. There would be others who would follow. The pattern established by the Lord for the Colesville saints would be used for these latter.

51.18.10—11—Edward Partridge—Edward Partridge was, as Joseph Smith observed, a pattern of piety and one of the Lord’s great men. A spiritually sensitive seeker of truth, Edward investigated the various sects of his day in an attempt to find the truth manifested in his day as it could be found in the scriptures. In 1828 he came in contact with the Campbellite movement and was an active participant in that movement when Oliver Cowdery and his companions arrived in northeastern Ohio while making their way to the western frontier of the United States in order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites. While many of the Campbellite Baptists eagerly associated themselves with the Church of Jesus Christ at the hands of the four missionaries, Edward Partridge deferred his own baptism. When Sidney Rigdon determined to travel from Mentor, Ohio, to Fayette, New York, to visit the prophet Joseph Smith, Edward went with him. They arrived at Joseph’s home on 10 December 1830. As the two had passed through Manchester, New York, Sidney and Edward asked the residents about the Smith family, and Joseph in particular. The reply that the Smiths were decent people until young Joseph brought forth the Book of Mormon impressed Edward such that his desire to be baptized was amplified considerably. On 11 December, the day following his first meeting the prophet, Edward Partridge was baptized in Seneca Lake by Joseph Smith. Edward Partridge would serve as the first Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation, beginning 4 February 1831. He would suffer great persecution at the hands of the Missourians because of his position in the Church, and ultimately died as a result of the injuries and exposure that he experienced in May 1840 at the age of 47.

51.18.17—churches—that is to say, other branches or congregations of the Church who would subsequently gather to Ohio on their way to Missouri.

51.19 One may make a case for this promise having been made to Edward Partridge and his counselors for their labors in the ministry. However, it is clear that the Lord is speaking of the saints in general, and the Colesville saints in particular, who would receive their stewardships in the land of Zion after having consecrated themselves to the building up of the Kingdom of God upon the earth.

17 And the hour and the day is not given unto them, wherefore let them act upon this land as for years, and this shall turn unto them for their good.

18 Behold, this shall be an example unto my servant Edward Partridge, in other places, in all churches.

19 And whoso is found a faithful, a just, and a wise steward shall enter into the joy of his Lord, and shall inherit eternal life.
51.20 This certainly must be an allusion to the final section of Matthew 24 where the Lord speaks of the malfeasance of the servants of God who had change of the temporal welfare of the citizens of the Kingdom of God. Those who were to enter into the Law of Consecration were covenanting to watch over and bless their neighbors at all times and under all circumstances (see MT-C 24.44–51).

51.20.8–9—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

51.20.21—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as "Amen" derives from roots which mean "true". This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

52.0.1 The first three general conferences of the Church of Jesus Christ were held in Fayette, New York. During the third, beginning on 2 January 1831, the saints were enjoined to move their families and household to the west, to the Ohio, where they would receive the Law of the Lord and would obtain power and authority to advance the Kingdom of God upon the earth, particularly with regard to the establishment of the city of Zion. No doubt there were other motives for this move, not the least of which was the intensifying persecution that the disciples of Christ were receiving in their scattered branches in the state of New York. Many individual families arrived in Kirtland, Ohio, during the ensuing months, in anticipation of the blessings that were about to be poured out. The entire Colesville, New York, Branch of the Church arrived in Ohio under the direction of Lucy Mack Smith, the mother of the prophet. These were ensconced on a large tract of land in Thompson, Ohio, consecrated by Leman Copley for that very purpose.

52.0.2 Some members of the Church of Jesus Christ were aware that any stay in Kirtland and environs would be short-lived. They had been privy to revelations that indicated that the city of Zion was to be built further west on land near the borders with the Lamanites. The missionary journey of Oliver Cowdery and his companions included this aspect of the proposal to establish the city of the New Jerusalem. Yet many of the itinerate members of the Church hoped that the move to the Ohio would immediately bring about their inheritance in the Kingdom of God. In this they were at first disappointed, but soon rejoiced in the opportunity that would be afforded them to lay the foundation of the great city that would be built prior to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in Jackson county, Missouri. The gathering of the saints to Ohio, however, afforded them an opportunity to assemble in greater numbers than ever before. There were more than two thousand members of the Church in attendance. During the conference, the power of God was manifested to the saints in a fashion to reveal the opposing spiritual forces in operation in the world. The nature and organization of the priesthood offices in the Church were also clarified, including the office of High Priest, to which office nineteen of the brethren were ordained.

52.0.3 The day following the conference, a group of priesthood brethren gathered together to receive counsel from the Lord regarding their upcoming duties, particularly in conjunction with the move of the Church to the place where the New Jerusalem would be raised up in the last days. The next general conference was appointed, one that would be held in Missouri on 4 August
1831. This section appeared as Chapter LIV in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 66 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

52.1 We cannot at present identify all those who were in attendance at this postconference gathering, but more than thirty priesthood bearers are mentioned by name. We should probably assume that most of them were present when the revelation was given. All of those who bear the priesthood of God have been called by revelation and ordained by the laying on of hands by direction of those who hold the keys of authority upon the earth. The first nineteen men specifically ordained to the office of high priest were indicated by the voice of the Lord. Five of them were personally ordained by the prophet Joseph Smith and the other fourteen were ordained by Lyman Wight according to the prophet’s instruction.

52.2 The elders who had gathered together were prepared to do all that the Lord would require of them.

52.2.18–19—this time.—That is to say, beginning on 7 June 1831.

52.2.23—conference.—That which would be held on 4 August 1831 in the home of Joshua Lewis, in Kaw township, Missouri.

52.2.29—Missouri.—The city of Zion was to be established in Jackson county.

52.2.43—remnant.—One might certainly point to the posterity of father Lehi as being a portion of those indicated here, but clearly the whole House of Israel is intended. The gathering of Israel continues to the present day in anticipation of the great blessings that yet lie ahead.

52.2.45—Jacob.—With his brother Esau, the twin sons of Isaac and Rebecca. Jacob faithfully sought for the patriarchal blessings that his brother despised and ultimately acquired them.

52.2.50—heirs.—Blessings may be inherited, like those that were bestowed upon Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The posterity of these great patriarchs have certain privileges afforded them because of their faithful observance of the principles and ordinances which they received into their lives. By the same token, men and women of the present day who observe to do the same things that the ancient prophets, seers, and revelators did during their mortal sojourn upon the earth, are entitled to the same blessings because of their own covenants. Thus, all men may be saved and exalted through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ regardless of their ancestry.

52.3 The prophet Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon would spend the next twelve days in preparation for their journey to Missouri. On 19 June 1831, they and seven other saints left for Jackson county, Missouri. The trip involved traversing 880 miles in various conveyances during a thirty day period. During the last 240 miles, essentially the breadth of the state of Missouri, Joseph walked the entire distance with four of his brethren: Martin Harris, W.W. Phelps, Edward Partridge, and Joseph Coe. Sidney Rigdon, A. Sidney Gilbert and his wife traveled on the Missouri river from St. Louis to Independence. As they travelled, the company would take the time, when opportunity afforded itself, to read a chapter from the Bible and pray. Great blessings derived from their practice.

52.3.10–12—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

52.3.14–15—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man...
who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

52.4.36—Missouri—The city of Zion was to be established in Jackson county.

52.4 Not only were Joseph and Sidney inspired in their travels to do those things which would best bless the saints travelling with them, they were also being enlightened and prepared for the task which yet lay before them. They were to point out the precise place where the great temple of the New Jerusalem was to be built.

52.5 The Lord had already made it quite clear that the place for the city of Zion was to be found on the borders of land adjacent to the Lamanites (see 28.9). That general announcement was to be clarified once the prophet and his companions arrived in Missouri.

52.6 No man’s feet are so firmly planted that he need not be cautioned about the potential for apostasy and personal failure. Joseph Smith was certainly not exempt, so therefore was no one else, including men of the stature of Sidney Rigdon. Every one of the elders had to look to himself and continually avoid those things which might ensnare him, those things that might lead to destruction.

52.7 Lyman Wight and John Corrill were to travel as missionary companions to Missouri. They did not, however, sojourn with the prophet Joseph Smith and his company.

4 And inasmuch as they are faithful unto me, it shall be made known unto them what they shall do;

5 And it shall also, inasmuch as they are faithful, be made known unto them the land of your inheritance.

6 And inasmuch as they are not faithful, they shall be cut off, even as I will, as seemeth me good.

7 And again, verily I say unto you, let my servant Lyman Wight and my servant John Corrill take their journey speedily;
ordained an elder in the Church. After his journey to Missouri with the prophet, Lyman Wight returned to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he lifted his voice regarding the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon and of the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He baptized more than one hundred souls into the Church and Kingdom of God at that place, many of whom later settled in Jackson county. Lyman Wight forcefully and diligently maintained his testimony of the Gospel, often under extreme conditions. On 8 April 1841 he was sustained to fill the vacancy in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles occasioned by the martyrdom of David W. Patten. After the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Lyman Wight found himself at odds with his brethren of the Twelve, leading a body of the saints to colonize land south of Austin, Texas, with George Miller. Eventually this venture dissolved completely. Lyman was excommunicated for apostasy and later died in Mountain Valley, Texas, on 31 March 1858.

52.7.16–17—John Corrill—John Corrill's history in the Church of Jesus Christ is somewhat checkered. He hesitated in receiving baptism in the Church until the conversion of Sidney Rigdon and after his personally witnessing some of what he termed to be the gifts of the spirit of God. His reading of the Book of Mormon had initially not sparked a testimony within him. He served in prominent positions within the Church and was the elected representative of the Latter-day Saints to the state legislature of Missouri. He along with several other prominent leaders of the Church apostatized during the great difficulties between the Church and the Missourians in 1839. He was subsequently excommunicated. He later died on 26 September 1842 in Adams County, Illinois.

52.8 It is likely that Lyman Wright and John Corrill traversed a southern route on their way to Missouri, perhaps following the same path that Joseph Smith and his company would follow. Others of the brethren, however, would follow the track of what would eventually become the National Road which passed through the middle of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. Needless to say, the route taken by John Murdock and Hyrum Smith took them considerably out of the way when one considers the most direct route. John and Hyrum, however, together with David Whitmer and Harvey Whitlock, would meet with the prophet Joseph Smith on 13 August 1831 at Chariton, Missouri, as the latter was returning to Kirtland, Ohio, after the dedication of the temple site in Independence, Missouri.

52.8.5–6—John Murdock—John was baptized in northeastern Ohio by Parley P. Pratt in November 1830 as a result of the preaching of Parley, Oliver Cowdery and their missionary companions. His faithfulness to the Church and Kingdom of God is notable. At the death of his wife Julia, John Murdock's newborn twins were given to Joseph and Emma Smith to raise. Emma's newborn twins had died about the same time. Joseph S., the male Murdock twin, died at age 11 months as a result of exposure, occasioned by an assault on the prophet Joseph Smith in Hiram, Ohio. John Murdock served in many capacities in the Church, as a member of the High Council, as Bishop, and as patriarch. He died in Beaver, Utah, on 23 December 1871 at the age of seventy-nine.

52.8.10–11—Hyrum Smith—Hyrum was the elder brother of Joseph Smith, born on 9 February 1800. Although more than five years Joseph's senior, Hyrum was completely faithful to all that Joseph testified had transpired in his boyhood. He served as one of the Eight Witnesses of the Book of Mormon and as the eldest of the six men who
formally organized the Church of Jesus Christ on 6 April 1830. He served in many capacities in the Church and Kingdom of God before his death as a martyr on 27 June 1844 in Carthage, Illinois.

52.9 The six missionaries referred to in the previous verse were teach in accordance with that which had been revealed to the apostles and prophets of the Bible and of the Book of Mormon, although one could have easily extrapolated the verse to mean the words of those who were then serving as Apostles and prophets in the Church and Kingdom of God. In addition, they were to do all of their teaching in accordance with the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, an influence that could not accompany them unless they were abiding by the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the best of their ability.

52.9.3—*them*—Grammatically in reference to John Murdock and Hyrum Smith, but undoubtedly in reference to all six of the afore mentioned missionaries.

52.9.21—*prophets*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

52.9.23—*apostles*—The Greek roots from which the term “apostle” derives, originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were ordained Apostles by Peter, James, and John sometime between 15 May 1829 and 1 June 1829 on the banks of the Susquehanna River near Harmony, Pennsylvania. The Apostles hold the keys of the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world and are entitled to administer the ordinance of baptism for the remission of sins and for membership in the Church and Kingdom of God unto any and every man that believes in Christ and brings forth the fruits of repentance.

52.10 The three companionships had been assigned by the Lord. The brethren were not to travel alone. They would always raise their voices together, two witnesses of the truth, not just a solitary voice. When the inhabitants of the lands through which they were passing received the truth with all their hearts, the elders were to administer the ordinances of salvation in their behalf; both baptism by immersion and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. It is not unlikely that from among the new converts, men were also chosen to receive the power and authority of the holy priesthood.

52.11 The preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the latter days was designed to prepare a people for the second coming of the Son of God. During an earlier dispensation of the Gospel, the servants of God had labored for hundreds of years in order to prepare a city worthy of translation. That sort of pedestrian time would not be expended in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time. The purification and sanctification of the people of the Lord would take place at a more rapid pace.

52.12 Lyman Wight would prove faithful for many years. With the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, Lyman found himself at odds with the divinely designated leadership of the Church. He was sifted vigorously by the
52.12 *Lyman Wight*—Lyman was a resident of northeastern Ohio when Oliver Cowdery and his missionary companions arrived in Kirtland on their way to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the posterity of father Lehi. He was baptized by Oliver and shortly thereafter ordained an elder in the Church. After his journey to Missouri with the prophet, Lyman Wight returned to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he lifted his voice regarding the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon and of the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He baptized more than one hundred souls into the Church and Kingdom of God at that place, many of whom later settled in Jackson County. Lyman Wight forcefully and diligently maintained his testimony of the Gospel, often under extreme conditions. On 8 April 1841 he was sustained to fill the vacancy in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles occasioned by the martyrdom of David W. Patten. After the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Lyman Wight found himself at odds with his brethren of the Twelve, leading a body of the saints to colonize land south of Austin, Texas, with George Miller. Eventually this venture dissolved completely. Lyman was excommunicated for apostasy and later died in Mountain Valley, Texas, on 31 March 1858.

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52.13 What may we say of those mentioned in this revelation who did remain faithful to all that which the Lord instructed them? What may we say of Joseph and Hyrum Smith? What may we say of John Murdock? These left this life honored and blessed by those who knew them well.

52.14 During the previous month, Parley P. Pratt, John Murdock, and others had been assigned to visit the various branches in and around Kirtland, Ohio. As they met with the saints, they were surprised and concerned by the sundry spiritual manifestations that transpired during their meetings. The brethren inquired of the Lord through the prophet Joseph Smith about the nature of these outbursts and were told in no uncertain terms that they should have been able to sense those things that were not of God because of the power and the influence of the Holy Ghost that operated within them. The Lord here continues His instructions regarding the power of discernment. At the heart of the matter is that the influence of the Spirit of God produces humility and not arrogance, peace and not unseemly conduct. Satan constitutes the full weight and measure of personal pride and his minions fall err to that same spirit of unjustifiable self-esteem. The men and women who professed the “spiritual” experiences in the branches of the Church were in reality elitists, who thought themselves favored of God and felt that they should be especially honored for their holiness and election. This of course, flies in the face of the spirit of Zion.

52.15 Jesus had warned his disciples about the hypocrisy involved with public prayer that drew attention to itself, that drew attention to the one praying instead of God (see *MT-C* 6:5–8). Humility and contrition would accompany the prayers of the righteous, for they would sense by the power of the Holy Ghost that anything that they hoped for in time and in all eternity derived from the atoning sacrifice, the love and mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ and none other. The saints were to be doers of the word and not hearers only. Prayers are little more than sounds, if they are not joined with righteous works inspired by the spirit of the Lord.
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<tr>
<td>52.16</td>
<td>The servant of God is motivated by his deep desire to keep the commandments of God and rejoices in his obedience. There is no vanity involved, just a quiet gratitude for having been blessed with the fullness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. When such a man, graced with humility, testifies to another soul regarding the truthfulness of the Father’s dealings with His children, the Spirit inspires a resonance in the heart and mind of the listener. He becomes a better man for having listened to the words of salvation, and is typically determined to do better in all aspects of his life. He should be able to find an example of piety in the life of him who preached the sermon.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 52:16 MD 608</td>
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<td>52.17</td>
<td>The Shakers and other Pentecostal sects claimed that it was in their swoons and gyrations that the Spirit of the Lord found expression in the lives of the righteous. The Lord utterly rejected that interpretation and instructed the members of the Church of Christ to avoid any such displays of unfettered emotion. The “fear” of God was reverent and the influence of the Holy Ghost was comforting and peaceful. In the gratitude of the repentant heart was to be found the spirit of worship; in the personal life of the saint was to be found the implementation of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.</td>
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<td>52.18</td>
<td>In a quite practical way, the elders of the Church of Jesus Christ could perceive the nature of the expressions of the saints, whether it be of God or inspired by the evil one and his minions. True worship is always accompanied by repentance and obedience.</td>
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<td>52.19</td>
<td>The pattern for which the elders should watch was simple. Those who were inspired by the Lord were humble and obedient, filled with charity. Those who were not empowered by the Holy Ghost tended to arrogance and quibbling about the nature of the guidance and instruction of the servants of God.</td>
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<td>52.20</td>
<td>A new dispensation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ was opening, and men were receiving into their hearts and minds the principles and ordinances of salvation, by which they could rejoice in the companionship of the Holy Ghost, by which they could speak with the tongues of angels and live by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God. Having the mind of Christ, no man could do wrong; the Lord would grant every request of a righteous man.</td>
<td>D&amp;C 52:20 AF 118</td>
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<td>52.21</td>
<td>The elders of the Church were to judge all that transpired among the saints by means of the patterned provided by the Lord. Correcting where appropriate; censuring when needed.</td>
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<td>52.22</td>
<td>Ezra Thayre would hesitate to leave when Thomas Marsh was ready, because of his personal concerns with his property in Thompson, Ohio. He would be severely chastised by the Lord for his pride and selfishness.</td>
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<td>52.22.11–13—Thomas B. Marsh—In 1829 Thomas was given to understand that a young man in western New York had been visited by an angel, the result of which was the translation of a set of gold plates. Thomas Marsh then traveled to Palmyra where he met both Martin Harris and Oliver Cowdery. He obtained a printer’s proof of the first sixteen pages of the Book of Mormon. This he shared with his wife and finding that they both felt that the book was inspired of heaven, they moved to Palmyra in September 1830 where he was baptized by David Whitmer. In the spring Thomas and his family moved with the saints to Kirtland, Ohio, at the command of the Lord. There he was ordained a high priest. After having demonstrated his willingness to live by the</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>He that speaketh, whose spirit is contrite, whose language is meek and edifieth, the same is of God if he obey mine ordinances.</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>And again, he that trembleth under my power shall be made strong, and shall bring forth fruits of praise and wisdom, according to the revelations and truths which I have given you.</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>And again, he that is overcome and bringeth not forth fruits, even according to this pattern, is not of me.</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Wherefore, by this pattern ye shall know the spirits in all cases under the whole heavens.</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>And the days have come; according to men’s faith it shall be done unto them.</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Behold, this commandment is given unto all the elders whom I have chosen.</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>And again, verily I say unto you, let my servant Thomas B. Marsh and my servant Ezra Thayre take their journey also, preaching the word by the way unto this same land.</td>
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word of the Lord, Thomas B. Marsh was called to serve in the first Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on 25 April 1835. He served as the President of that Quorum until he fell into apostasy over a trivial matter. He was excommunicated 17 March 1839. He later returned to the Church of Jesus Christ in July of 1857. He died in Ogden, Utah, in January 1866.

52.22.17–18—Ezra Thayre—Ezra Thayre was born in Randolph, Vermont, moving to the Palmyra, New York, region in the 1820s where he built bridges, dams, and mills. We do not know exactly when he first heard of Joseph Smith and the events that transpired to the boy prophet, but it seems unlikely that Ezra was completely ignorant of the accounts of the First Vision and of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon during that time. Notwithstanding any knowledge he may have gleaned from his acquaintances prior to the organization of the Church, he did not receive baptism until 10 October 1830 after hearing Hyrum Smith discourse on the Book of Mormon. His hesitancy in preparing himself for his mission to Missouri required Thomas Marsh to request another companion which was granted (see 56.3–8). In 1832, however, Thomas B. Marsh and Ezra Thayre serve a mission together in New York. Ezra contracted cholera while travelling with Zion’s camp to Missouri in 1834. He fully recovered from that affliction. His troubles in Missouri were many, suffering periods of distress and turmoil in his personal and ecclesiastical life. He settled in Nauvoo, Illinois, after the saints were driven from Missouri. He was an active participant in Joseph Smith’s campaign for the presidency of the United States. The death of the prophet Joseph Smith in June of 1844 appears to have been too much for what spiritual sensitivity that Ezra possessed. He became affiliated with dissident members of the Church. In 1849 he went to Michigan, formally associating himself with the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ in August 1860. There is some dispute as to when and where Ezra Thayre died.

52.23 During their mission, Ezra and Isaac offended the spirit because of some of their actions and attitude. Ezra Booth immediately rejected his covenants and fell away, become one of the earliest publishers of anti-Mormon literature. Isaac Morley immediately repented of his sin and was freely and openly forgiven.

52.23.6–7—Isaac Morley—Isaac Morley had joined the Church in Kirtland as a result of the missionary labors of Oliver Cowdery and his companions. He was ordained an elder almost immediately. On 3 June 1831 Isaac was ordained a High Priest by Lyman Wight and the same day was set apart as the first counselor to Edward Partridge. He would serve as a counselor until Bishop Partridge’s death in 1840. Isaac Morley served in the Church and Kingdom of God for the rest of his life, moving west with the saints after the death of Joseph Smith, and is considered by some to be the founder of Manti, Utah. He died in Fairview, Utah, 24 June 1865 at age 79.

52.23.11–12—Ezra Booth—Ezra Booth joined the Church of Jesus Christ while living in Hiram, Ohio. He had been a Methodist minister for many years, but when his witnessed the healing of Elsa Johnson’s rheumatic arm by the prophet Joseph Smith in Kirtland, Ohio, an affliction about which Ezra had been familiar for many years, he immediately was baptized. He was subsequently ordained an elder in the Church. While serving with Isaac Morley, the two missionaries were rebuked by revelation for some act committed during their service. Ezra took deep
offense at the censure and soon found himself outside of the Church and Kingdom of God. Ezra Booth went to great lengths to vilify the prophet Joseph Smith, writing and publishing against him. So great did the animosity become in Hiram, Ohio, that Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were taken by a mob and tarred and feathered. Joseph S., one of the Murdock twins, died as a result of exposure during that ill-fated night.

52.24 Joseph Smith’s travelling companions during his first visit to Missouri included Martin Harris, W.W. Phelps, Edward Partridge, Joseph Coe, Sidney Rigdon, A. Sidney Gilbert and his wife.

52.24.6–7—Edward Partridge—Edward Partridge was, as Joseph Smith observed, a pattern of piety and one of the Lord’s great men. A spiritually sensitive seeker of truth, Edward investigated the various sects of his day in an attempt to find the truth manifested in his day as it could be found in the scriptures. In 1828 he came in contact with the Campbellite movement and was an active participant in that movement when Oliver Cowdery and his companions arrived in northeastern Ohio while making their way to the western frontier of the United States in order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites. While many of the Campbellite Baptists eagerly associated themselves with the Church of Jesus Christ at the hands of the four missionaries, Edward Partridge deferred his own baptism. When Sidney Rigdon determined to travel from Mentor, Ohio, to Fayette, New York, to visit the prophet Joseph Smith, Edward went with him. They arrived at Joseph’s home on 10 December 1830. As the two had passed through Manchester, New York, Sidney and Edward asked the residents about the Smith family, and Joseph in particular. The reply that the Smiths were decent people until young Joseph brought forth the Book of Mormon impressed Edward such that his desire to be baptized was amplified considerably. On 11 December, the day following his first meeting the prophet, Edward Partridge was baptized in Seneca Lake by Joseph Smith. Edward Partridge would serve as the first Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation, beginning 4 February 1831. He would suffer great persecution at the hands of the Missourians because of his position in the Church, and ultimately died as a result of the injuries and exposure that he experienced in May 1840 at the age of 47.

52.24.9–10—Martin Harris—Martin Harris was one of the first men to be baptized after the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation. He received that ordinance at the hands of Oliver Cowdery on 6 April 1830. In 1837, due in large part to a disagreement with Sidney Rigdon, Martin was dropped from the High Council of the Kirtland Stake and was purportedly excommunicated. On 7 November 1842, Martin Harris applied for and was received into full fellowship in the Church through baptism. Notwithstanding the various movements of the body of the saints, Martin remained in Kirtland until the summer of 1870, at which time he was persuaded to move to Utah. He died in Clarkston, Utah, on 10 July 1875. Shortly before his death, he bore a fervent and compelling testimony of the experience that he had as one of the Three Witnesses.

52.25 David and Harvey, together with Hyrum Smith and John Murdock, would meet with the prophet Joseph Smith on 13 August 1831 at Chariton, Missouri as the latter was returning to Kirtland, Ohio, after the dedication of the temple site in Independence, Missouri.

24 And again, let my servants Edward Partridge and Martin Harris take their journey with my servants Sidney Rigdon and Joseph Smith, Jun.

25 Let my servants David Whitmer and Harvey Whitlock also take their journey, and preach by the way unto this same land.
52.25.4—David Whitmer—David Whitmer was the fourth child of Peter and Mary Whitmer, born 7 January 1805. David and his brothers, John and Peter, were baptized for the remission of sin during the summer of 1829. It is clear that David also was blessed with the power and authority of God, the Melchizedek priesthood about that same time. David would serve as one of the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon and was one of the six men who formed the nucleus of the Church of Jesus Christ on 6 April 1830. He and the other two witnesses, Oliver Cowdery and Martin Harris, would be commissioned to select the first members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in this dispensation. During a time of heavy persecution, David became disaffected from the Church, he and his family eventually settling in Richmond, Missouri. His brother-in-law and longtime friend, Oliver Cowdery came to visit him in 1850, as he prepared to make his journey west to be with the main body of the saints in the Salt Lake Valley. He apparently encouraged David to do the same. Oliver, however, died in David Whitmer’s home on 3 March 1850. David remained in Richmond, Missouri, until his own death on 25 January 1888.

52.25.7—Harvey Whitlock—Harvey Whitlock was one of those individuals who had a testimony of the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but who also suffered from doubts and suspicion, qualities that led him in and out of the Church of Jesus Christ on several occasions. He suffered great persecution in Jackson county, Missouri, and fell from the faith. In 1835 he petitioned the prophet Joseph Smith in Kirtland, Ohio, and for his efforts was received back into the Church and Kingdom of God. He left the Church again in 1838. He subsequently associated himself with a variety of apostate groups which had disassociated themselves from the Church of Jesus Christ. He died in 1874 bereft of all of the blessings that had been promised to him if he would remain faithful to his covenants.

52.26 Parley and Orson were deeply disappointed in not being present at the dedication of the land of Zion. They arrived in Independence in late September 1831, more than a month after the prophet Joseph Smith and his company had departed for Kirtland, Ohio. But they had been faithful to the commission given to them, having baptized many people along the way.

52.26.5—Parley P. Pratt—Parley Pratt was born 12 April 1807 in Burlington, New York. His early family life was marked by attendance to a strict moral value system coupled with hard work. As a teenager he found himself attracted to the Baptist church. After his marriage to Thankful Halsey in 1827, he settled in the wilderness west of Cleveland, Ohio. In 1829, Sidney Rigdon and others of the Campbellite faith came into his region of country. Rigdon’s teachings being far more consistent with the Old and New Testaments, Parley accepted membership in that religious community and became one of its ministers. In the late summer of 1830, as he was traveling toward his parents’ residence with his wife, he was impressed to stop in Newark, New York. There he saw and read for the first time, the Book of Mormon. He left Newark immediately for Palmyra and from thence to Manchester where he spent time with Hyrum Smith who answered all of his inquiries. Hyrum took Parley to Fayette, New York, where he met with Oliver Cowdery. About 1 September 1830, Parley P. Pratt was baptized in Seneca Lake by Oliver and immediately ordained an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ. Parley then rejoined his family in Columbia county, New York, where he taught and baptized his brother Orson.

26 And let my servants Parley P. Pratt and Orson Pratt take their journey, and preach by the way, even unto this same land.
Shortly thereafter he returned to Fayette for the conference that commenced on the 26th of September 1830. Here he met the prophet Joseph Smith for the first time. He served in the first formal mission of the Church with Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer, Ziba Peterson, and Frederick G. Williams to that land which would be the site for the New Jerusalem. He would serve as the mission’s emissary in reporting back to the Church in Kirtland in the first part of 1831. In February 1835, Parley was called to serve in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, a position that he held until his death on 13 May 1857 at the hands of a murderer.

52.26.9–10—Orson Pratt—The younger brother of Parley P. Pratt, Orson Pratt was raised in the same spiritual and religious atmosphere as his sibling, and in many respects was like-minded. His family circumstances were such that he sought employment at an early age, working mostly as a farm laborer. He was self-educated for the most part, but emphasizing mathematics, bookkeeping, grammar, surveying, and geography he became quite learned in these practical arts and sciences. In his later years he spent considerable time acquainting himself with astronomy, theology, and languages. In the fall of 1829, just as he was turning 18 years of age, Orson frequently sought guidance in prayer, resorting to the fields and woods for private communion with his Father in heaven. After a year of fervent petitioning God for enlightenment, Orson listened to his brother Parley, a newly ordained elder in the Church of Jesus Christ when the latter came to the neighborhood where he was residing. Orson was subsequently baptized on 19 September 1830, his nineteenth birthday, at his brother Parley’s hands in Canaan, New York. Orson’s faithfulness in the Church and Kingdom of God would number him among the first Apostles called and ordained in this dispensation. Except for a five-month period in late 1842, Orson Pratt would serve in the Quorum of the Twelve for 46 years. He died 3 October 1881 as the last surviving member of the original Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. This revelation was given to Orson Pratt when he asked Joseph Smith to inquire of the Lord what his duty was.

52.27 Two of the most faithful Latter-day Saints to have lived upon this planet. They received the Gospel of Jesus Christ and then wore out their lives in taking salvation to the children of men.

52.27.5–6—Solomon Hancock—A resident of northeastern Ohio in the fall of 1830 when Parley P. Pratt, Oliver Cowdery, Ezra Peterson, and Peter Whitmer came to Mayfield. They preached the Gospel and as a result Alta, Solomon’s wife, together with his father and sister were baptized. Solomon received the covenants of the Kingdom of God a few months later in February 1831. He and his family joined the saints in Jackson County, Missouri, in 1832. Solomon Hancock was driven with the rest of the saints from their homes and property in July 1833. As a result of intense persecution Alta died in Clay county, Missouri, in 1835. Solomon continued with his four remaining children to Far West. While serve one of his many missions, Solomon met and married his wife’s niece, Phebe Adams, who had been baptized 18 June 1836. After being driven from Missouri, the Hancocks settled in Nauvoo, where they stayed until the saints departed toward the west. Solomon Hancock died in full faith and fellowship at Winter Quarters 2 December 1847.

52.27.8–9—Simeon Carter—In the fall of 1830, Simeon Carter was living

27 And let my servants Solomon Hancock and Simeon Carter also take their journey unto this same land, and preach by the way.
about fifty miles west of Kirtland, Ohio, when he was visited by Parley P. Pratt who was wending his way toward Missouri. While they were studying the Book of Mormon, Elder Pratt was arrested. The book remained in Simeon’s hands and as a result he was baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ, ordained an elder, and subsequently was instrumental in organizing a Branch of the Church in that place of about sixty members. Simeon faithfully served in many capacities in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois. He moved with his family to settle Brigham City, Utah, where he died 3 February 1869.

52.28 It is unlikely that either of these men embarked upon the mission that the Lord assigned to them. Their short tenure in the Church and Kingdom of God indicates a decided lack of faith.

52.28.4–5—Edson Fuller—A resident of Chardon, Ohio, who joined the Church of Jesus Christ in the fall of 1830. A rather colorful character, Edson is frequently accused of many un-Christian acts against his neighbors and fellow saints. By September 1831 he was rebuked and deprived of his license to preach. Shortly thereafter he disappears from Church history.

52.28.7–8—Jacob Scott—Another early convert to the Gospel of Jesus Christ who in short order separated himself from the fellowship of the saints.

52.29 These men provide two more examples of faithful disciples of Jesus Christ who completely committed themselves to the Church and Kingdom of God.

52.29.4–6—Levi W. Hancock—Levi was the brother of Solomon Hancock above (see 52.27.5–6). He was baptized on 16 November 1830 after hearing the sermons of the missionaries led by Oliver Cowdery. In the course of his service to the Church and Kingdom of God, Levi was a member of both Zion’s Camp and the Mormon Battalion. He was ordained and set apart as one of the seven presidents of Seventy on 1 March 1835, a position that he held at the time of his death on 10 June 1882 in Washington, Utah.

52.29.8–9—Zebedee Coltrin—Zebedee joined the Church of Jesus Christ on 9 January 1831 by Solomon Hancock. He served for a time as a member of the First Quorum of Seventy. He was a member of Zion’s Camp in 1834 and was among the first of the pioneers to enter the Salt Lake Valley in 1847. He settled in Spanish Fork, Utah, where he died on 21 July 1887, having served as a Patriarch for 14 years.

52.30 Two of the finest men to ever walk the surface of this earth.

52.30.4–5—Reynolds Cahoon—Reynolds was baptized by Parley P. Pratt on 12 November 1830 in Kirtland, Ohio, where he had been making a living as a tanner and a cobbler. He was subsequently ordained an elder by Sidney Rigdon and a high priest by Lyman Wight. Along with his various missionary labors, Reynolds also served in the Temple Committees for both the Kirtland and the Nauvoo Temples. He served in various stake organizations and as a counselor to Bishop Newel K. Whitney. He served as one of the Captains of One Hundred that led the saints across the plains in 1845. After removing to the Salt Lake Valley, Reynolds Cahoon settled in South Cottonwood where he died 29 April 1861.

52.30.7–9—Samuel H. Smith—A younger brother of the prophet Joseph Smith. He is often referred to as the third person baptized with proper
authority in this dispensation following Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. He was one of the Eight Witnesses of the Book of Mormon and is credited with being the first formal missionary of the Church. When Joseph and Hyrum were murdered in Carthage, Illinois, Samuel was relentlessly pursued by elements of the mob, which resulted in extreme fatigue and susceptibility to a fever which shortly thereafter took his life on 30 July 1844.

52.31 It appears that neither of these two men was faithful in responding to this call to serve by the Lord God of Heaven.

52.31.4–5—Wheeler Baldwin—Wheeler Baldwin was a farmer living in Strongsville, Ohio, who accepted baptism on 8 January 1831. He was subsequently ordained an elder and a high priest. He served in a variety of capacities during his stint in the Church. After the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Wheeler associated himself with Alpheus Cutler in Mills, Iowa, and then later identified himself with the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint. He died on 11 May 1887 near Stewartsiville, Missouri.

52.31.7–8—William Carter—We know little or nothing about this early member of the Church of Jesus Christ. There is some disagreement among historians as to whether he remained a member of the Church after September 1831.

52.32 When the troubles began to arise in Thompson, Ohio, where the Colesville Branch had settled, Newel Knight was commanded to forgo his mission to Missouri. About that same time, Ezra Thayre, Thomas B. Marsh’s companion, also became embroiled in the controversies in Thompson. Selah J. Griffin was then reassigned by the Lord to Thomas Marsh.

52.32.5–6—Newel Knight—Newel was baptized shortly after the Church of Jesus Christ was organized, in May 1830. He had been directly involved with the events that had led to the translation of the Book of Mormon, his father Joseph Knight, having been instrumental in providing Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery with material blessings which allowed the work to continue without interruption. He was called to serve as the president of the Colesville Branch as it moved from New York to Ohio, and from thence to Jackson county, Missouri. During the winter after leaving Nauvoo for the Salt Lake Valley, Newel Knight died on 9 January 1847 in western Nebraska.

52.32.8–10—Selah J. Griffin—An early member of the Church about whom little is known. He did relocate his family to Missouri after his mission and suffered persecution with the saints there. When the body of the Church moved to the west, Selah remained behind.

52.33 No doubt it was tempting to follow in the footsteps of Joseph Smith and his company who were traveling to Missouri to locate and dedicate the site for the New Jerusalem. Most of the men listed above were faithful to their assignments and for that cause were not present when the foundations of Zion were laid. Some were naturally disappointed, but these were compensated by the knowledge that they had observed to keep all that the Father had commanded them to do and were instrumental in gathering a portion of the House of Israel. The commission here is similar to that in which the Apostle Paul rejoiced (see RM-C 15.20).

52.34 The labors of these missionaries eventually provided practical resting places along the way as the saints from the east made their thousand mile trek

31 Let my servants Wheeler Baldwin and William Carter also take their journey.

32 And let my servants Newel Knight and Selah J. Griffin both be ordained, and also take their journey.

33 Yea, verily I say, let all these take their journey unto one place, in their several courses, and one man shall not build upon another’s foundation, neither journey in another’s track.

34 He that is faithful, the same shall be kept and blessed with
52.35 Examples of two men, one of whom willingly followed the counsel of the Lord’s servant, and one who did not.

52.35.10–11—Joseph Wakefield—Some historians have suggested that Joseph Wakefield was baptized in June 1831, but this clearly cannot be the case given the missionary calling extended to him by the Lord the month before. Joseph faithfully served in the Church of Jesus Christ for a few years, but then apostatized from the faith because of his own biased views regarding the nature of prophets and prophecy. Joseph Wakefield could not abide the conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, who in the midst of his work on the translation of the scriptures, would take time to play with his children. By 1834 he was actively engaged in hostile activity against the saints in Kirtland, Ohio. The irony here is that if Joseph Wakefield had followed the counsel given in the revelation received a few weeks before, he would have petitioned God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ as to whether the prophet’s spiritual conduct was acceptable, and if so that he might be a partaker thereof. He did not do so and therefore so found himself outside of the pale of the Church of Jesus Christ.

52.35.13–14—Solomon Humphrey—An early member of the Church of Jesus Christ who not only fulfilled his duty as described here, but volunteered for Zion’s Camp in 1834. During the journey, Solomon accepted the teachings of the prophet Joseph Smith regarding the unnecessarily taking of animal life by preserving a rattlesnake that had curled up next to him while the aged man slept. Solomon Humphrey died in Clay county, Missouri in September 1834.

52.36 The two missionaries referred to in the previous verse were teaching in accordance with what had been revealed to the apostles and prophets of the Bible and of the Book of Mormon, although one could have easily extrapolated the verse to mean the words of those who were then serving as Apostles and prophets in the Church and Kingdom of God. They were to testify to their own family members regarding all of the personal experiences they had enjoyed as members of the Church of Jesus Christ. Great promises had been extended to the missionaries, according to their faithful obedience to the commandments that the Lord had revealed through the prophet Joseph Smith. They were to observe to do all that been spoken, for that was the only way that the blessings could be bestowed.

52.36.13—prophets—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

52.36.15—apostles—The Greek roots from which the term “apostle” derives, originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were ordained Apostles by Peter, James, and John sometime between 15 May 1829 and 1 June 1829 on the banks of the Susquehanna River near Harmony, Pennsylvania. The Apostles hold the keys of the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world and are entitled to admin-

35 And again, I say unto you, let my servants Joseph Wakefield and Solomon Humphrey take their journey into the eastern lands;
ister the ordinance of baptism for the remission of sins and for membership in the Church and Kingdom of God unto any and every man that believes in Christ and brings forth the fruits of repentance.

52.37 Two examples of men who completely misunderstood the working of the Holy Ghost, having no notion of its power and influence upon the lives of the saints of God.

52.37.11–12—Heman Basset—Heman Basset was one of those individuals who, notwithstanding his submitting to baptism in the Church of Jesus Christ, continued with some of the rather bizarre attitudes and beliefs that he had accepted before the missionaries had arrived in Kirtland. He manifested many outlandish quirks of the “spirit” including behaving like a baboon. He testified that he and two other men received a parchment from heaven which authorized them to preach the Gospel. In February 1831, while living at the Isaac Morley farm, Heman took Levi Hancock’s watch stating that it was all in the interest of the “family”. Heman sold the watch and pocketed the money, much to Levi’s consternation. Heman Basset’s insistence in continuing in such behavior after such was rebuked by the prophet Joseph Smith eventually led to his apostasy.

52.37.23–24—Simonds Ryder—Simonds Ryder came into the Church of Jesus Christ as the result of a “miracle” and left just as easily as the result of a matter of orthography. Simonds had been a Campbellite minister in and around Hiram, Ohio, before hearing of the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. While visiting in Kirtland he reportedly heard a young woman testify of great tribulations which were about to afflict the world. Shortly thereafter, a great earthquake in China was reported in the newspapers which convinced the man that he ought to join the Church. When he received his certificate of ordination to the priesthood, his last name was spelled incorrectly. He took offense and immediately recanted his conversion. He, together with Ezra Booth, became extremely antagonistic toward Joseph Smith and the Church. Simonds was undoubtedly part of the mob that tarred and feathered Joseph and Sidney Rigdon on 25 March 1832, which also brought about the death of one of the Murdock twins in Joseph and Emma’s care. He died in Hiram, Ohio, 1 August 1870.

52.38 Humility, coupled with keeping one’s eye on the prophet of the Lord, would undoubtedly preserve these two men for greater service in the Kingdom of God.

52.38.9–10—Jared Carter—Jared Carter was baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ on 20 February 1831 by Hryum Smith after reading the Book of Mormon and praying about it. On 22 September 1831 he was ordained an elder in the Church. Jared Carter served in many responsibilities in the Church in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois, but he was clearly deeply affected by his own pride and ambition. He was supposedly seduced by Sampson Avard when the latter formed the secret Danite organization bent on destroying the enemies of the saints. He sided with Sidney Rigdon when the latter came out in opposition to the prophet Joseph Smith. To his credit, when Jared was advised of his transgressions, he attempted to repent of them and follow the counsel given to the best of his ability. He died 7 July 1849 in DeKalb, Illinois.

52.38.17–18—George James—Very little is known about this early member of the Church of Christ, save that on several occasions he was called to account for misconduct. He remained in Ohio after the body of the

37 In consequence of transgression, let that which was bestowed upon Heman Basset be taken from him, and placed upon the head of Simonds Ryder.

38 And again, verily I say unto you, let Jared Carter be ordained a priest, and also George James be ordained a priest.
transactions that would be required of them. They were to authorize them to act in the office of their calling legally and lawfully binding. The certificates that they would bear to Missouri were by virtue of their callings in the church and kingdom of God. They would sign contracts and make other arrangements on behalf of the saints that would be legally and lawfully binding. The certificates that they would bear to Missouri would authorize them to act in the office of their calling in all of the temporal transactions that would be required of them.

52.41 Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon, and Edward Partridge were, by virtue of their callings in the Church and Kingdom of God, responsible agents of the body of the Church of Jesus Christ. They would sign contracts and make other arrangements on behalf of the saints that would be legally and lawfully binding. The certificates that they would bear to Missouri would authorize them to act in the office of their calling in all of the temporal transactions that would be required of them.

52.41.6–10—*Joseph Smith, Jun.*—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

52.41.12–13—*Sidney Rigdon*—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled

39 Let the residue of the elders watch over the churches, and declare the word in the regions round about them; and let them labor with their own hands that there be no idolatry nor wickedness practised.

40 And remember in all things the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted, for he that doeth not these things, the same is not my disciple.

41 And again, let my servants Joseph Smith, Jun., and Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge take with them a recommend from the church. And let there be one obtained for my servant Oliver Cowdery also.
in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

52.42 The antagonism of the Missourians toward the Church had been minimal up to this point. There had been some machinations on the part of the Indian agents in the region, but those had not resulted in any extreme measures. The Lord is clear here, however, that the settlement of the land of Zion would not be accomplished without opposition. The enemies of the Kingdom of God would have to be dealt with in a legal and lawful way. The saints could not simply usurp that which had been established by the original settlers. They would have to earn the trust of the Missourians as it was possible to do. Forewarned as they were, the saints should have been extremely careful as to how they interacted with the people in Jackson county. On many occasions they were less than wise.

52.42.23—Missouri—The city of Zion was to be established in Jackson county.

52.43 No doubt the prophet and his companions thought that the establishment of Zion in Missouri would occur in their lifetimes. The Lord, however, hints here that the timing would be of His own design. We wait expectantly for that great day in which the Lord God will command His people and the city of the New Jerusalem will be raised up in an extraordinary way in anticipation of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

52.44 The humble followers of Jesus Christ would suffer great affliction at the hands of their enemies. Some would lose their lives in attempting to lay the foundations of the city of Zion. These, however, would be held in remembrance and would yet receive their promised inheritance in the Holy City as resurrected Celestial companion of the Son of God.

52.44.4—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

52.44.22—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

53.0.1 The establishment of Zion is primarily a spiritual venture. There is to be unity of heart and mind facilitated by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. The saints are to live in righteousness and there is to be no poor among them. On this latter point, the principles of Zion in the temporal world become practically apparent. An absence of poverty, however, is not merely an equality of material means. Want of any kind is anticipated, whether of educational opportunities, social acceptability, or any of those things that might be thought of as having an impact upon quality of life. Having no poverty in a community is generally thought of as having ready access to food, clothing, and shelter. The saints helped one another build homes, barns, and fencing on the various plots of ground that were extended as stewardships. Every man was anxious for the success and comfort of his neighbor. The talents of the sisters were such that much of their clothing was manufactured in the home and frequently the materials from which the clothing was made were prepared locally as well. Social stratification caused by costly or extreme apparel was

Section 53

Date: June 1831
Place: Kirtland, Ohio
To: Algernon Sidney Gilbert

D&C 52:42–43
DS 3 77
MD 532

D&C 52:43
AF 355
DHC 5 (39)
MD 625

D&C 52:44
CR95-A 45

D&C 53
DHC 1 179
EM 1:408
naturally discouraged. Every family was encouraged to provide for their daily wants as much as was possible. The cultivation of family vegetable gardens was one of the outward signs of an obedient people. Clearly, however, especially in the preliminary stages of the community development, goods and equipment were necessary. In order to supply the wants and needs of the inhabitants of Zion, a general store was established, with two branches; one in Kirtland, Ohio, and the other in Independence, Missouri. As a company of settlers made the trip from Ohio to Missouri, the train frequently had large wagons filled with goods to supply the shelves in the Church’s storehouse in Independence. Thus, the transportation costs were borne by the saints as a part of their movement of their own property. This made it possible to distribute the commodities and materials for considerably less. Even the original settlers in Jackson county found it cost effective to purchase from the Church’s store, much to the dissatisfaction of the other shopkeepers.

53.0.2 The Lord’s storehouse in Kirtland was managed by Newel K. Whitney. In many instances, the Whitney store was the agent for all of the general purchases of the Church and acted in conjunction with the needs determined by the Bishop of the Church in Kirtland, Newel Whitney himself. Algrenon Sidney Gilbert had been in the mercantile business for a long time, having been Newel Whitney’s mentor when the later first came to Ohio. Sidney Gilbert was commissioned by the Lord to be the agent for the Church in Missouri, to establish the store and look to the needs of the members of the Church there as directed by the Bishop, Edward Partridge. The store was operated successfully for about two years. In July 1833, the hostilities that had been seething between the saints and the original settlers, erupted in violence, which ultimately resulted in the destruction of the Independence store and the rifling of the goods that had been ensconced there. Sidney Gilbert raised up another store in Liberty, Missouri, across the river from Jackson county. It was on his property that the body of Zion’s Camp rested after their journey from Ohio.

53.0.3 Algrenon Sidney Gilbert became acquainted with the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ late in 1830 or early 1831. We do not know whether or not he met any of the missionaries on their way to teach the Lamanites in the fall of 1830. His niece did acquire a copy of the Book of Mormon from John Whitmer when he visited Kirtland, Ohio, in mid-January 1831, an event that she immediately communicated to her aunt and uncle. By 6 June 1831 Sidney was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ. On that date he received his commission and was ordained an elder by the prophet Joseph Smith. On 19 June 1831, he left Kirtland with his wife in the company of the prophet and his other traveling companions for Missouri. They arrived there a month later. During the next three years A. Sidney Gilbert suffered great trials and tribulations at the hands of the Missourians. At one point, however, he and several others of the leadership of the Church in Jackson county, offered themselves as a ransom for the fleeing saints. The persecutions took their toll on Sidney and there were times when he simply believed that he could not muster sufficient strength to be obedient to the will of the Lord. Finally, he testified that he would rather die than preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. About the 26th of June 1834 he contracted cholera in Liberty, Missouri and died some three days later at age 45. This section appeared as Chapter LV in the Book of Commandments, and as the second Section 66 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

53.1 Much had transpired in the Church and Kingdom of God since the time that Sidney Gilbert had first heard of the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus

1 BEHOLD, I say unto you, my servant Sidney Gilbert, that I have
Christ and of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Having a degree of faith, he was determined to ascertain exactly what he should be about as a disciple of Jesus Christ. To this end he came to the prophet Joseph Smith and petitioned him to ask of the Father how he, Sidney, could participate in the building up of the Zion in the latter days. This section of the Doctrine and Covenants was the direct response to his request.

53.1.9–10—Sidney Gilbert—Algernon Sidney Gilbert became acquainted with the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ late in 1830 or early 1831. We do not know whether or not he met any of the missionaries on their way to teach the Lamanites in the fall of 1830. His niece did acquire a copy of the Book of Mormon from John Whitmer when he visited Kirtland, Ohio in mid-January 1831, an event that immediately communicated to her aunt and uncle. By 6 June 1831 Sidney was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ. On that date he received his commission and was ordained an elder by the prophet Joseph Smith. Sidney Gilbert was commissioned by the Lord to be the agent for the Church in Missouri, to establish the store and look to the needs of the members of the Church there as directed by the Bishop, Edward Partridge. The store is operated successfully for about two years. In July 1833, the hostilities that had been seething between the saints and the original settlers, erupted in violence, which ultimately resulted in the destruction of the Independence store and the rifling of the goods that had been ensconced there. Sidney Gilbert raised up another store in Liberty, Missouri, across the river from Jackson county. Sidney Gilbert suffered great trials and tribulations at the hands of the Missourians. At one point, however, he and several others of the leadership of the Church in Jackson county, offered themselves as a ransom for the fleeing saints. The persecutions to their toll on Sidney and there were times when he simply believed that he could not muster sufficient strength to be obedient to the will of the Lord. Finally, he testified that he would rather die than preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. About the 26th of June 1834 he contracted cholera in Liberty, Missouri and died some three days later at age 45.

53.2 This allusion to the physical sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ should have served as portent for Sidney Gilbert. Needless to say, Sidney’s sufferings would not be to the same degree, but they would be of the same kind. Sidney would be hated, not because of any personality quirks he may have had, but simply because he had embraced the truth in the midst of a wicked world. From the date of this revelation until his death, he would serve as the Lord’s agent among the children of men.

53.3 Algernon Sidney Gilberts was ordained an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ on 6 June 1831 by the prophet Joseph Smith. He was called upon to preach the fullness of the Gospel to all those with whom he came in contact. There would come a time when he could no longer preach the principles of salvation, especially to those who had abused him for no apparent cause. In this he failed to emulate his Master, the Son of God, who was prepared and willing to teach in all manner of extremity.

53.4 When Sidney Gilbert and his wife left Kirtland, Ohio, with the prophet Joseph Smith and his company, they did not know exactly where they were going to set up shop. Once they became acquainted with Independence, Missouri, he and Bishop Partridge settled on a large home which sheltered Sidney and his wife and also provided space for the store. In all of these matters they heard your prayers; and you have called upon me that it should be made known unto you, of the Lord your God, concerning your calling and election in the church, which I, the Lord, have raised up in these last days.

2 Behold, I, the Lord, who was crucified for the sins of the world, give unto you a commandment that you shall forsake the world.

3 Take upon you mine ordination, even that of an elder, to preach faith and repentance and remission of sins, according to my word, and the reception of the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands;

4 And also to be an agent unto this church in the place which shall be appointed by the bishop, according to commandments which shall be given hereafter.
were led by the whisperings of the Spirit of God.

53.4.19—bishop—In this case, Edward Partridge was the man indicated.

53.5 Joseph Smith’s company left Kirtland, Ohio, on 19 June 1831. Along with Sidney Rigdon and the Gilberts, three other men, Martin Harris, Edward Partridge, and Joseph Coe, traveled with Joseph. By way of wagons, stages, and canal boats they made their way to Cincinnati, Ohio, and from thence by steamboat to St. Louis, Missouri. While the others walked by foot across Missouri, the Gilberts and Sidney Rigdon waited until they could travel by boat up the Missouri River to Independence. They arrived a few days after the prophet.

53.5.16–18—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

53.5.20–21—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

53.6 The ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ are for the most part the outward tokens of faith and testimony. Baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost are natural outward consequences of Christian faith and repentance. The laying on of hands by which a man receives the priesthood of God and the various callings therein, is a tangible manifestation of his willingness to bear the burdens that the Lord has suited for him. To the degree that a man willingly carries those burdens and continues to grow in the spirit, other opportunities for service will be proffered.

53.7 It is easy to criticized Sidney Gilbert in the performance of his duties in the Church and Kingdom of God, because there were times when the Lord’s

5 And again, verily I say unto you, you shall take your journey with my servants Joseph Smith, Jun., and Sidney Rigdon.

6 Behold, these are the first ordinances which you shall receive; and the residue shall be made known in a time to come, according to your labor in my vineyard.

7 And again, I would that ye should learn that he only is saved
agent had difficulty accomplishing all that the Lord demanded of him. However, it is a fact that the Lord had no more devoted servant in this dispensation than Sidney Gilbert. He had great difficulty in preaching the Gospel of Christ, but he was willing to sacrifice his life in behalf of his fellowmen.

53.7.21—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

54.0.1 As the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times opened, there were stalwart men and women of faith who sought to aid the prophet Joseph Smith in his endeavors to keep the commandments of the Lord God of Israel. Initially, there were three families who contributed to the progress of the Church and Kingdom of God. In Palmyra, New York, the prophet’s own father and mother, together with his siblings, were determined to support young Joseph in his attempts to bring light and truth into a benighted world. In Fayette, New York, the Peter Whittmer, Senior, family joined together to do all in their power to protect and provide for the prophet and his family. The formal organization of the Church of Jesus Christ took place in their home. In Colesville, New York, the Joseph Knight family likewise sought to bless Joseph Smith and his scribe in their desire to quickly complete the translation of the Book of Mormon. To this end they provided sufficient commodities so that the translators did not have to engage in worldly endeavors into to provide for the daily needs.

54.0.2 Newel Knight was the third of seven children and the second son of Joseph and Polly Knight. Newel was baptized shortly after the Church of Jesus Christ was organized, in May 1830. He had been directly involved with the events that had led to the translation of the Book of Mormon, his father Joseph Knight, having been instrumental in providing Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery with material blessings which allowed the work to continue without interruption. He was called to serve as the president of the Colesville Branch as it moved from New York to Ohio, and from thence to Jackson county, Missouri. During the winter after leaving Nauvoo for the Salt Lake Valley, Newel Knight died on 9 January 1847 in western Nebraska.

54.0.3 In October 1830, the Colesville Branch was organized with Hyrum Smith as its first President, probably the first formally organized branch in the history of the Church in this dispensation. There were approximately sixty-five baptized members in the branch at that time. In March 1831, Newel is called and set apart by Hyrum Smith to preside over the saints in Colesville. In April 1831, the Colesville Branch departed for Kirtland being led by Newel Knight. The saints were delayed in Buffalo, New York, until 11 May 1831 when they took passage on a schooner for Fairport, Ohio, arriving there on 14 May 1831. They settled on land that Leman Copley had consecrated for that very purpose. The property was located in Thompson, Ohio, and the saints who lived upon the land were primarily from Colesville Branch. Both Leman Copley and all of the saints from Colesville entered into the Law of Consecration, the first to do so formally in this dispensation. Some of the Colesville saints thought that the land of their inheritance was in Thompson, that it was to be Zion for them. When Leman Copley apostatized from the Church he broke the covenant of consecration into which he had entered and demanded that the Colesville saints vacate the land. In the midst of the ensuing confusion,
Newel Knight sought counsel from the prophet as to how they should proceed. The present Section of the Doctrine and Covenants was the Lord’s response. Additionally, during the general conference of the Church held on 3 June 1831 in Kirtland, Ohio, the saints were informed that their inheritance lay near the borders by the Lamanites and several of their company were appointed to lead them to Independence, Missouri. On 3 July 1831, the saints of the Colesville Branch departed for Missouri. On or about 25 July 1831, they arrived in Jackson county. This section appeared as Chapter LVI in the Book of Commandments, and as the second Section 67 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

54.1 In essence, the Lord testified to Newel Knight that he was aware of the disconcerting circumstances that had developed in Thompson, Ohio. He had suffered the consequences of the apostasy of Leman Copley and others of the erstwhile saints who were disrupting the peace that should have existed among those who had been chosen to lay the foundation for the city of Zion.

54.1.7—Alpha—The first letter of the Greek alphabet. This constitutes a reprise of the Lord’s imagery used in his revelation to John the Beloved (see RV-C 1.8 and RV-C 21.6).

54.1.9—Omega—The last letter of the Greek alphabet. This constitutes a reprise of the Lord’s imagery used in his revelation to John the Beloved (see RV-C 1.8 and RV-C 21.6).

54.1.11—beginning—An iteration in English of the idea represented by “Alpha”.

54.1.14—end—An iteration in English of the idea represented by “Omega”.

54.1.19—crucified—The Lord Jesus Christ had begun the atoning sacrifice in the garden of Gethsemane, the day before his crucifixion. That suffering for sin culminated on the cross where he died as part of the aftermath of his atonement. The crucifiers did nothing to enhance the redemption of mankind when they drove the nails into the Savior’s hands, wrists, and feet. The act of crucifixion was satanically inspired, designed to distract Jesus from the task assigned to him before the foundations of the earth were laid.

54.2 Newel Knight had been called of God by revelation and the laying on of hands to serve as the President of the Colesville Branch. Notwithstanding the fact that they had relocated to Ohio, Newel still presided. The fact that Leman Copley and Ezra Thayre seemed to be holding all of the authority regarding the properties located at Thompson, this did nothing to directly impact Newel’s presidency. The saints who had entered into the Law of Consecration were to continue in their covenants, loving and supporting one another until the resolution for their circumstances presented itself. In less than a month, the saints would be on their way to Missouri.

54.2.10.11—Newel Knight—Newel was baptized shortly after the Church of Jesus Christ was organized, in May 1830. He had been directly involved with the events that had led to the translation of the Book of Mormon, his father Joseph Knight, having been instrumental in providing Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery with material blessings which allowed the work to continue without interruption. He was called to serve as the president of the Colesville Branch as it moved from New York to Ohio, and from thence to Jackson county, Missouri. During the winter after leaving Nauvoo for the Salt Lake Valley, Newel Knight died on 9 January 1847 in western Nebraska.

1 BEHOLD, thus saith the Lord, even Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, even he who was crucified for the sins of the world—

D&C 54:1
AF 95
MD 77
D&C 54:1–2
AF 343

2 Behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, my servant Newel Knight, you shall stand fast in the office whereunto I have appointed you.
54.3 The Colesville Branch had departed from New York at the command of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that because of the persecutions that were beginning to gather against them at that place. They assumed, and had every right to expect, that when they arrived in Ohio they would be free from oppression. The perfidy of Leman Copley and Ezra Thayre precluded that time of rest which they had anticipated. No doubt the members of the Branch had become irritable and distressed, perhaps treating one another with sentiments not becoming disciples of Jesus Christ. Any animosity or hurt feelings had to be resolved before they could escape the real enemy of their salvation, the spirit of the natural man. In their humility and in the spirit of their eternal covenants, they could enjoy unity of the heart and mind, a preamble to their entering into the rest of the Lord.

54.4 Leman Copley had entered into the covenant of consecration, promising the Lord the constancy of his faith and promising the Colesville saints that they could reside upon his Thompson property for as long as the Lord required. The spirit of covetousness, however, entered into his heart as the saints began to make substantive improvements. Rather than wait upon the Lord’s economy, Leman rescinded his offering, demanding that the members of the Branch cease and desist from their labors. In short order, he demanded that they depart altogether. This act clearly disrupted the spirit of what the Branch was trying to do under their own covenant and disunity began to take its toll.

54.5 This condemnation certainly applied to Leman Copley in substance, and applied to Ezra Thayre in spirit. They had been meddling with matters which in reality no longer concerned them, and like every other apostate in the history of this world, found themselves devoid of the Spirit of God and devoid of love for their fellow men. This lapse caused by selfishness and pride.

54.8—offense—New converts, in their innocence and desire to learn, are susceptible to the example and teachings of those who already have some tenure in the Church and kingdom of God. To destroy the confidence of such a tender repentant soul is to incur the wrath of God. Little children who are abused in any fashion, stand as witnesses of the faithless inconstancy of their abusers. To destroy the innocence and fundamental nature of a child is to heap coals of eternal fire upon one’s own head. To slander or to defy those whom the Father and the Son have chosen to guide and direct the affairs of Their Church and Kingdom on the earth is no less sinful. That those who preside have faults and errors there can be no doubt, but they are seldom those of which they are publicly accused. To deliberately place stumbling blocks in front of the forward progress of the Lord’s servants will do little to hinder the rolling forth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but those guilty of such will be held accountable for every misdeed, every ill-spoken word, and every unworthy thought. As terrifying as it sounds, it would be better to have died an ignominious death than to be found guilty of crimes against the innocent.

54.6 Those who obtain mercy are those who themselves have been merciful. Gratitude is the primary emotion felt by that disciple who has passed through the rigors of coming to a knowledge of his unworthy status before God and Heaven, especially when that awareness has been accompanied by a conscious victory over himself and consequent communion with the infinite. Once the promise of forgiveness has been extended and received, the heart of the penitent soul turns to his peers who have not as yet felt the rich blessings that accompany the remission of sins. Having himself been forgiven of heinous crimes against the innocent.

3 And if your brethren desire to escape their enemies, let them repent of all their sins, and become truly humble before me and contrite.

4 And as the covenant which they made unto me has been broken, even so it has become void and of none effect.

5 And wo to him by whom this offense cometh, for it had been better for him that he had been drowned in the depth of the sea.

6 But blessed are they who have kept the covenant and observed the commandment, for they shall obtain mercy.
54.6.18—mercy—Our English word derives from the Latin “misericordia” which literally means “pain of the heart”; that is to say, the merciful one understands perfectly the distress of the person upon whom his mercy has fallen, most likely because the merciful one has experienced the same suffering that he sees in the other. Is this not true of the Savior’s mercy toward us? Having experienced the weighty burden of the punishment for all sin as the atonement began in Gethsemane, Jesus knows perfectly well the pain of the heart experienced by the sinner. If we are offended by another who then suffers for his wrong-doing, are we not obliged, because of our own redemption from sin, to breathe peace to him whose pain galls his soul?

54.7 Leman Copley resorted to the legal system of Ohio in order to effectually void the written contract that he had made with the Church and Kingdom of God. The courts decided in his favor. On 3 July 1831, the Colesville Branch left for Missouri. All of those who travelled westward had already entered into the Law of Consecration and thus could be represented by a single individual acting as their agent.

54.7.27—leader—At the time this revelation was given, Newel Knight was preparing to serve on his appointed mission with Selah J. Griffin (see 52.33). If he had departed from the saints they would have to appoint another to represent them. With the turmoil that erupted with the apostasy of Leman Copley, the Lord mercifully rescinded Newel’s call in favor of his leading the saints to Zion (see 56.7).

54.8 If there had been any doubt in anyone’s mind regarding the prospective location for the New Jerusalem, that doubt was completely dispelled by the text of this revelation. Some of the Colesville saints had, indeed, thought that they were going to permanently dwell in Thompson, Ohio, and that misperception no doubt led to much of the hard feelings that developed between Leman Copley and the saints. This was not the first time that contention regarding the location of Zion had caused problems within the young Church. It seems clear that many of the revelations that Hiram Page had receive through his “peep stone” treated the same subject, for which he was severely chastised by the Lord (see 28.9).

54.8.16—Missouri—The city of Zion was to be established in Jackson county.

54.8.19—borders—that is to say, the borders of the United States between Missouri and the Unorganized Indian Territory.

54.8.22—Lamanites—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sarah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teachings of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

54.9 The Colesville Branch would leave for Missouri on 3 July 1831 and would arrive there about 25 July 1831. Although they would engage in many criminal acts against eternity, the disciple willingly extends forgiveness to others when they seek it at his hands. As the Savior taught in his discourses on prayer, we are to forgive our debtors in the same fashion that our kind and loving Father has forgiven us. In so doing, we instill a mutual gratitude and humility in one another. Whereas justice requires exacting compensation; mercy is the expression of compassion. This the saints at Thompson, Ohio, had to implement into their daily walk and talk as they overcame the adversities that had befallen them.

7 Wherefore, go to now and flee the land, lest your enemies come upon you; and take your journey, and appoint whom you will to be your leader, and to pay moneys for you.

8 And thus you shall take your journey into the regions westward, unto the land of Missouri, unto the borders of the Lamanites.

9 And after you have done journeying, behold, I say unto you,
ceremonies that dealt with the establishment of the city of the New Jerusalem, yet the reality was that they were but a small group of disciples, no more than seventy persons, who had to conduct themselves in the midst of a people who were not prepared to live in a holy city. Therefore, for all outward intents and purposes, they were to behave as new settlers until there came a time when the saints could effectively raise a standard to the world as the land of Zion.

54.10 The trials of the Colesville Branch would not end once they laid the foundation for the first home in Kaw township in Jackson county, Missouri. For two years they would enjoy a degree of peace. Thereafter there would descend upon them a host of adversities that would shake the hearts and minds of the most faithful among them. Some would fall by the wayside; others would rise to the occasion and garner up salvation to their souls and the souls of all those who followed their example. In all of these things, the saints were purified and sanctified through their suffering.

54.10.36—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

55.0 There are conflicting traditions as to how W. W. Phelps first came into contact with the Church of Jesus Christ and the Book of Mormon. Some have suggested that he received a copy of the Book of Mormon from Parley P. Pratt three days after the Church was organized. This clearly cannot be correct since Parley himself did not join the Church until September 1830. On 24 December 1830, William Phelps met the prophet Joseph Smith for the first time, but was not baptized until 10 June 1831 in Kirtland, Ohio. William Phelps desired to employ his talents and skills in advancing the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. For many years he had been an editor and publisher of newspapers in various communities throughout New York. He was commissioned by the Lord to be the Church’s publisher. He founded the Evening and Morning Star in Independence, Missouri, and on the same press began the printing of the first collection of revelations given to the prophet Joseph Smith, the Book of Commandments. That task was interrupted in July 1933, when a mob destroyed the printing shop together with many copies of the works in progress. Very few of the incomplete Book of Commandments were salvaged from the ruin. Early in 1835, William was called to serve on the committee that would publish the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants in Kirtland, Ohio. He also helped publish the first LDS Hymnal compiled by Emma Smith in 1835, in which several of his own hymns were included. W.W. Phelps sometimes had great difficulty in keeping his eye single to the glory of God, for which he was severely chastised. In the end, however, he proved faithful to his covenants. He journeyed to the west with the saints, settling in Salt Lake City, where he died 7 March 1872. This section appeared as Chapter LVII in the Book of Commandments, and as the Section 68 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

55.1 What could be more gratifying to the heart and mind of a man than to know that the Lord of all creation is familiar with his name and the state of his soul? Perhaps to have that Lord speak peace to him and that He finds the man acceptable.

55.1.10—William—In reference to William W. Phelps. On 24 December 1830, William Phelps met the prophet Joseph Smith for the first time, seek ye a living like unto men, until I prepare a place for you.

10 And again, be patient in tribulation until I come; and, behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, and they who have sought me early shall find rest to their souls. Even so. Amen.

Section 55

Date: June 1831
Place: Kirtland, Ohio
To: William W. Phelps

D&C 54:10
AF 374
DNTC 2 134, 429
MD 809
MLM 33, 522

D&C 55
DHC 1 185
EM 1:408

1 BEHOLD, thus saith the Lord unto you, my servant William, yea, even the Lord of the whole earth, thou art called and chosen; and after thou hast been baptized by water, which if you do with an eye
but was not baptized until 10 June 1831 in Kirtland, Ohio. William Phelps desired to employ his talents and skills in advancing the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. For many years he had been an editor and publisher of newspapers in various communities throughout New York. He was commissioned by the Lord to be the Church’s publisher. He founded the *Evening and Morning Star* in Independence, Missouri, and on the same press began the printing of the first collection of revelations given to the prophet Joseph Smith, the Book of Commandments. That task was interrupted in July 1933, when a mob destroyed the printing shop together with many copies of the works in progress.

55.1.21—*called*—Although we cannot pinpoint the exact hour that William Phelps came in contact with the Church, yet it is clear that he was convinced early on that the Book of Mormon was the word of the Lord God of Israel. He made attempts to join with the saints but was hindered by those who professed his friendship, but could not bear to see him associate with the Mormons.

55.1.23—*chosen*—William Phelps was sincere in his desire to serve in the Kingdom of God. He was possessed of certain skills and abilities which allowed him to uniquely aid the prophet Joseph Smith during his mortal ministry. In addition to his contributions to the publishing of the revelations, he was an able scribe, clerk, and writer for the prophet in venues with which the prophet was not familiar.

55.1.25—*after*—At the time this revelation was given, William Phelps had not as yet been baptized. This would transpire on 10 June 1831.

55.2 Not only were there practical services which W.W. Phelps could perform in behalf of the prophet Joseph Smith and the Church of Jesus Christ, there were spiritual matters to which he could attend once he had been graced with the holy priesthood of God. To this great responsibility William was also called and chosen. Having been commissioned to preach the fullness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, his ability to communicate the principles of salvation to the inhabitants of the earth in written form was greatly enhanced.

55.2.13–15—*Joseph Smith, Jun.*—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

55.2.38–39—*Jesus Christ*—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

55.3 The reception of the gift of the Holy Ghost is dependent upon two principles: the humility of the erstwhile saint and the commission of the man who places his hands upon the head of the faithful in the name of Jesus Christ. A man may presume to emulate the tokens of the priesthood, but the outward action means nothing if there is no priesthood conduit of power that accesses the blessings of heaven.

55.4 As will be seen, this particular assignment anticipated the establishment of Zion in Jackson county, Missouri. As the saints grew in number there would be a pressing need to provide for the education of the children among them. Just as Emma Smith had received the assignment to compile a hymnal for the benefit of Latter-day Saint worshipers, so also William W. Phelps was called upon to help provide manuals of instruction for the schools that would be established. William would be involved in the establishment and improve-

2 And then thou shalt be ordained by the hand of my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., to be an elder unto this church, to preach repentance and remission of sins by way of baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God.

3 And on whomsoever you shall lay your hands, if they are contrite before me, you shall have power to give the Holy Spirit.

4 And again, you shall be ordained to assist my servant Oliver Cowdery to do the work of printing, and of selecting and writing books for schools in this church, that little children also may receive instruction before me as is pleasing...
55.4.11–12—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

55.5 Nine days after his baptism into the Church of Jesus Christ, W.W. Phelps departed from Kirtland, Ohio, with the prophet Joseph Smith and his company, which also included Sidney Rigdon, Sidney Gilbert and his wife, Martin Harris, Edward Partridge, and Joseph Coe. When they arrived at St. Louis, Joseph Smith determined not to wait for steamboat transportation, but walked the two hundred and forty miles across the state of Missouri. William Phelps accompanied him, along with brothers Harris, Partridge, and Coe. On 17 July 1831, the first Sunday that Joseph and his brethren passed in Jackson county, William W. Phelps preached a sermon to a mixed assemblage of saints and sinners. After the meeting, two people presented themselves for baptism. William’s particular stewardship was the publishing of the Evening and Morning Star, the first issue of which appeared in June 1832, after the press and all of the necessary materials arrived in Independence.

55.5.19–21—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

55.5.20–21—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died unto me.

5 And again, verily I say unto you, for this cause you shall take your journey with my servants Joseph Smith, Jun., and Sidney Rigdon, that you may be planted in the land of your inheritance to do this work.
on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

55.6 The list of travelling companions for the prophet Joseph Smith during his first visit to Zion was now complete with the addition of Joseph Coe.

55.6.6–7—Joseph Coe—Joseph Coe joined the Church on 2 January 1831 near Fayette, New York. He made preparations almost immediately to move his family to Kirtland, Ohio, with the aid of Orson Pratt and Samuel H. Smith. He had already been ordained an elder in the Church before the general conference held in Kirtland, Ohio, on 4 June 1831. He accompanied Joseph Smith during the entire trip to Jackson county, Missouri. On 17 July 1831, Joseph Coe is chosen to bear his testimony along with Ziba Peterson during the meeting where W.W. Phelps delivered the sermon. After returning to Kirtland, Joseph is entrusted with several major projects, including the purchase of the French farm for the housing of the itinerate saints and the care of the Egyptian materials that included the Book of Abraham. By December 1837, however, Joseph Coe had inseparably connected himself with the fortunes of Lyman E. Johnson, Luke S. Johnson, John F. Boynton, Leonard Rich, Stephen Burnet, Sylvester Smith, and Cyrus P. Smalling in their opposition against the prophet Joseph Smith. He was subsequently excommunicated. He died on 17 October 1854 after having been trampled by a bull, completely disaffected from the Church of Jesus Christ.

55.6.15—residue—Sidney Rigdon had already been appointed to travel with the prophet (see 52.3), as had Martin Harris and Edward Partridge (see 52.24). Shortly thereafter, Sidney Gilbert received his appointment, which he understood to mean his wife as well (see 53.5). Hence, with the present revelation, all of the prophet’s personal companions had been designated. The “residue”, therefore, must have referred to the specific members of the Colesville Branch who would travel in the wake of these six brethren, those who would leave Kirtland on 3 July 1831, and would arrive in Independence, Missouri a month later.

55.6.25—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

6 And again, let my servant Joseph Coe also take his journey with them. The residue shall be made known hereafter, even as I will. Amen.

Section 56

56.0.1 Earlier in the month, the Lord provided Joseph Smith and many of his fellow servants with specific instructions as to how they should proceed in the establishment of the land of Zion and the importance of laying the foundations of the city of the New Jerusalem. Companionships were appointed, and in some instances the precise track each of the missionaries was to follow as they made their way toward the land of their inheritance. Although they did not understand perfectly what was to transpire in the beginning, the Colesville Branch anticipated receiving their inheritance in Zion, inasmuch as they had already entered into the Law of Consecration. Newel Knight had been serving as their president, but in the revelation given to Church regarding the travelling elders, Newel had been assigned to accompany Selah J. Griffin in their labors toward the land of Zion (see 52.32). Shortly after thereafter, the saints who had settled on the property of Leman Copley in Thompson, Ohio, became embroiled in a series of controversies which eventually led to Leman demanding that the Colesville Branch remove themselves from his property,
effectually breaking the covenant of consecration that he had made with the Lord which allowed the membership of the Church to occupy what had been his land. The turmoil became so incessant that Newel Knight approached the prophet Joseph Smith as to how he should proceed. Newel was instructed that he should stand fast in his calling as the President of the Colesville Branch (see 54.1–2). Thus, he was received of his immediate departure for Missouri, but only for a few weeks. This left Selah J. Griffin, however, without a travelling companion.

56.0.2 Another of the early converts to the Church of Jesus Christ in northeastern Ohio was Ezra Thayre. He had also become somewhat entangled in the disputes in the village of Thompson in connection with the perfidy of Leman Copley. He had been assigned by the Lord to be the travelling companion of Thomas B. Marsh as the elders wended their way to the land of Zion. He was terribly distracted, however, by the things of this world and was not prepared to leave at the time Thomas desired to leave. As a result of these two episodes connected with the Law of Consecration, Selah J. Griffin was assigned to be Thomas B. Marsh’s companion in the ministry. Newel Knight resumed his duties as the President of the Colesville Branch. Ezra Thayre was given time to repent of his selfishness. This section appeared as Chapter LVIII in the Book of Commandments, and as the Section 69 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

56.1 While this should be considered a universal principle, we must certainly consider the circumstances that existed at Leman Copley’s farm in Thompson, Ohio. All of the members of the Colesville Branch had voluntarily entered into the Law of Consecration, as had Leman Copley, and to some extend as had Ezra Thayre. The spirit that should have existed among the saints, being of one mind and one hearts, had begun to dissipate when Leman’s avarice overcame him. There was confusion, malcontent, and despair when there should have been peace, comfort, and love. The faith of the Colesville saints was unnecessarily wasting away in an atmosphere of oppression. Those responsible would be held accountable. At that time, Leman Copley and Ezra Thayre were possessed of the spirit of the world. They were conducting themselves after the spirit of the natural man, the spirit of a lost and fallen world. If they did not repent, they would be condemned with that world and would suffer the consequences of their own actions as the wicked were brought to judgment.

56.2 For Leman Copley and Ezra Thayre, the act of giving up their selfishness and doubt was a cross which they had to bear. They were afraid to trust in the word of the Lord; they fear for their possessions and their station in life. The Colesville saints had to bear the burden of oppression from those whom they thought were their brethren. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is founded on the principle of faith.

56.2.9—cross—At the heart of the matter is the Lord’s counsel that the saints should be completely willing obey the will of God in every venue in which they might find themselves. This must needs be a difficult task, given the nature of the imagery.

56.3 Men like Leman Copley and Ezra Thayre had initially sought to do the will of the Lord, and when they had received counsel, they began to follow their instructions. True principles, however, are not merely to be contemplated, but implemented into one’s daily life. When obedience to the commandments of God began to exact a material price, both Leman and Ezra balked at the inconvenience. When the oppressive conduct of Leman and Ezra
began to negatively impact upon the tenderness of the saints of God in the Colesville Branch, they incurred the wrath of God.

56.4 When a body of disciples of Christ has been commanded to proceed in a collective fashion, the whole of the Church is expected to cooperate together. Disobedience of the few, however, often has an impact upon the righteous remnant. When the faithful cannot complete the commandments of God because of the wickedness of the faithless, the Lord may choose to change the instructions given to the Church. This is precisely what transpired on this particular occasion.

56.5 Thomas B. Marsh and Ezra Thayre had been assigned as missionary travelling companions as part of their entrance into the covenants of the Lord. Ezra consider the status of his property in Thompson, Ohio, however, to be of more importance and he failed to prepare to depart for Missouri as did Thomas. Selah J. Griffin, he who had been assigned to travel with Newel Knight, the President of the Colesville Branch, was appointed in Ezra’s place.

56.12–14—Thomas B. Marsh—In 1829 Thomas was given to understand that a young man in western New York had been visited by an angel, the result of which was the translation of a set of gold plates. Thomas Marsh then traveled to Palmyra where he met both Martin Harris and Oliver Cowdery. He obtained a printer’s proof of the first sixteen pages of the Book of Mormon. This he shared with his wife and finding that they both felt that the book was inspired of heaven, they moved to Palmyra in September 1830 where he was baptized by David Whitmer. In the spring Thomas and his family moved with the saints to Kirtland, Ohio, at the command of the Lord. There he was ordained a high priest. After having demonstrated his willingness to live by the word of the Lord, Thomas B. Marsh was called to serve in the first Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on 25 April 1835. He served as the President of that Quorum until he fell into apostasy over a trivial matter. He was excommunicated 17 March 1839. He later returned to the Church of Jesus Christ in July of 1857. He died in Ogden, Utah, in January 1866.

56.16–17—Ezra Thayre—Ezra Thayre was born in Randolph, Vermont, moving to the Palmyra, New York, region in the 1820s where he built bridges, dams, and mills. We do not know exactly when he first heard of Joseph Smith and the events that transpired to the boy prophet, but it seems unlikely that Ezra was completely ignorant of the accounts of the First Vision and of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon during that time. Norwithstanding any knowledge he may have gleaned from his acquaintances prior to the organization of the Church, he did not receive baptism until 10 October 1830 after hearing Hyrum Smith discourse on the Book of Mormon. His hesitancy in preparing himself for his mission to Missouri required Thomas Marsh to request another companion which was granted (see 56.3–8). In 1832, however, Thomas B. Marsh and Ezra Thayre serve a mission together in New York. Ezra contracted cholera while travelling with Zion’s camp to Missouri in 1834. He fully recovered from that affliction. His troubles in Missouri were many, suffering periods of distress and turmoil in his personal and ecclesiastical life. He settled in Nauvoo, Illinois, after the saints were driven from Missouri. He was an active participant in Joseph Smith’s campaign for the presidency of the United States. The death of the prophet Joseph Smith in June of 1844 appears to have been too much for what spiritual sensitivity that Ezra possessed. He

4 Wherefore I, the Lord, command and revoke, as it seemeth me good; and all this to be answered upon the heads of the rebellious, saith the Lord.

5 Wherefore, I revoke the commandment which was given unto my servants Thomas B. Marsh and Ezra Thayre, and give a new commandment unto my servant Thomas, that he shall take up his journey speedily to the land of Missouri, and my servant Selah J. Griffin shall also go with him.

D&C 56:5–7
EM 2:922
became affiliated with dissident members of the Church. In 1849 he went to Michigan, formally associating himself with the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ in August 1860. There is some dispute as to when and where Ezra Thayre died.

56.5.39—Missouri—The city of Zion was to be established in Jackson county.

56.5.43–45—Selah J. Griffin—An early member of the Church about whom little is known. He did relocate his family to Missouri after his mission and suffered persecution with the saints there. When the body of the Church moved to the west, Selah remained behind.

56.6 The specific commandment given to Newel and Selah had to do with their companionship and the mission to Missouri. The rebellions in Thompson, Ohio, required that Newel Knight return to his flock and steady them in their adversity. He would also be given the challenge of preparing them for the nearly thousand mile journey upon they would embark in a matter of weeks.

56.6.13–15—Selah J. Griffin—An early member of the Church about whom little is known. He did relocate his family to Missouri after his mission and suffered persecution with the saints there. When the body of the Church moved to the west, Selah remained behind.

56.6.17–18—Newel Knight—Newel was baptized shortly after the Church of Jesus Christ was organized, in May 1830. He had been directly involved with the events that had led to the translation of the Book of Mormon, his father Joseph Knight, having been instrumental in provide Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery with material blessings which allowed the work to continue without interruption. He was called to serve as the president of the Colesville Branch as it moved from New York to Ohio, and from thence to Jackson county, Missouri. During the winter after leaving Nauvoo for the Salt Lake Valley, Newel Knight died on 9 January 1847 in western Nebraska.

56.6.26—people—Leman Copley and Ezra Thayre are certainly at the head of the list, but there were also several of the members of the Colesville Branch that were less than admirable in the manner in which they responded to the difficulties that were transpiring.

56.6.30—Thompson—A community located in northeastern Geauga county in Ohio. Many of the saints came from Copleyville, New York, to Ohio at the behest of the Lord, settled temporarily in Thompson before leaving for Zion in Jackson county, Missouri.

56.7 We cannot with certainty cite the exact number of people who had originally camped on Leman Copley’s farm in Thompson, Ohio, but we do know that about sixty of them determined to abide by their covenants and proceed to Missouri under the direction of Newel Knight. While Ezra Thayre did experience a degree of repentance and continued to serve in the Kingdom of God for a time, Leman Copley did not. We cannot speak as to the fate of the other rebellious who remained behind, save that they fell outside of the pale of the Church of Jesus Christ in short order. On 3 July 1831, the saints of the Colesville Branch departed for Missouri. On or about 25 July 1831, they arrived in Jackson county.

56.7.5–6—Newel Knight—Newel was baptized shortly after the Church of Jesus Christ was organized, in May 1830. He had been directly involved with the events that had led to the translation of the Book of Mormon, his father Joseph Knight, having been instrumental in provide Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery with material blessings which allowed the work to continue without interruption. He was called to

6 For behold, I revoke the commandment which was given unto my servants Selah J. Griffin and Newel Knight, in consequence of the stiffneckedness of my people which are in Thompson, and their rebellions.

7 Wherefore, let my servant Newel Knight remain with them; and as many as will go may go, that are contrite before me, and be led by him to the land which I have appointed.
serve as the president of the Colesville Branch as it moved from New York to Ohio, and from thence to Jackson county, Missouri. During the winter after leaving Nauvoo for the Salt Lake Valley, Newel Knight died on 9 January 1847 in western Nebraska.

56.8 Although Ezra Thayre did pass through a time of repentance and then an even longer period of obedience to the laws and commandments of the Lord God of Israel, yet the pressures of persecution that he afterwards experienced in Missouri spiritually depleted him. After the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, he found himself befuddled about where the proper authority of the Kingdom of God lay. The prospect of another flight through the wilderness with the saints was too much for him and he sought solace elsewhere.

56.8.11–12—Ezra Thayre—Ezra Thayre was born in Randolph, Vermont, moving to the Palmyra, New York, region in the 1820s where he built bridges, dams, and mills. We do not know exactly when he first heard of Joseph Smith and the events that transpired to the boy prophet, but it seems unlikely that Ezra was completely ignorant of the accounts of the First Vision and of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon during that time. Notwithstanding any knowledge he may have gleaned from his acquaintances prior to the organization of the Church, he did not receive baptism until 10 October 1830 after hearing Hyrum Smith discourse on the Book of Mormon. His hesitancy in preparing himself for his mission to Missouri required Thomas Marsh to request another companion which was granted (see 56.3–8). In 1832, however, Thomas B. Marsh and Ezra Thayre serve a mission together in New York. Ezra contracted cholera while travelling with Zion’s camp to Missouri in 1834. He fully recovered from that affliction. His troubles in Missouri were many, suffering periods of distress and turmoil in his personal and ecclesiastical life. He settled in Nauvoo, Illinois, after the saints were driven from Missouri. He was an active participant in Joseph Smith’s campaign for the presidency of the United States. The death of the prophet Joseph Smith in June of 1844 appears to have been too much for what spiritual sensitivity that Ezra possessed. He became affiliated with dissident members of the Church. In 1849 he went to Michigan, formally associating himself with the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ in August 1860. There is some dispute as to when and where Ezra Thayre died.

56.8.25–26—former commandment—Whatever the specific commandment the Lord is referring to, it is not presently found in the text of the Doctrine and Covenants. There is, however, a commandment recorded in the Kirtland Revelation Book between Section 50 and Section 51 that has never been printed in the Doctrine and Covenants. It is dated 15 May 1831 and was addressed to Joseph Smith, Senior, and Ezra Thayre regarding properties that had been designated for the Palmyra Branch of the Church of Jesus Christ. There had been some sort of bargain struck in behalf of the Church but complications had apparently set in for some undisclosed reason. In this same revelation, Ezra Thayre is promised that he would be ordained and would be called to serve a mission to the Lamanites. Apparently these real estate issues had not been completely resolved by the time Ezra was supposed to embark on his mission.

56.9 We are not privy as to the exact nature of the divisions spoken of. We certainly can conclude that part of the problem being referred to involved the spiritual divisions that came into the Colesville Branch as a result of the

8 And again, verily I say unto you, that my servant Ezra Thayre must repent of his pride, and of his selfishness, and obey the former commandment which I have given him concerning the place upon which he lives.

D&C 56:8
DNTC 3 109
MD 593, 701

9 And if he will do this, as there shall be no divisions made upon the land, he shall be appointed still

D&C 56:9
DHC 1 188
oppressions caused by both Leman Copley and Ezra Thayre and the covetousness that they exhibited regarding the property that they had submitted for the use of the Colesville saints and others who were making their way from western New York to Kirtland and environs.

56.9.28—Missouri—The city of Zion was to be established in Jackson county.

56.10 It would appear that Ezra Thayre had been given an assignment to act as an agent for the Church in buying property for the saints to dwell upon near the place that Leman Copley had provided. It would appear that Ezra may have been speculating with the land and its value in an unseemly fashion. The Lord commanded that he repent of his perfidy, or he would simply be paid for his expenses and be cut off from further contact with the Colesville saints.

56.11 There would be no respite for the rebellious. If Ezra Thayre continued in his opposition of the Lord’s will and in his duplicity toward the saints, he would fall under the condemnation of the Lord from which there would be no escape.

56.12 If Ezra Thayre demanded to be reimbursed for his expenses, the debt would be liquidated by the prophet Joseph Smith, even though that would be an extreme inconvenience for him just as he was preparing to depart for the land of Zion. Joseph was promised that he would be compensated once he arrived in Jackson county; that there would be faithful who would provide for his wants and needs in this particular instance. All of the blessings that might have been Ezra Thayre’s would be given to others.

56.12.5–7—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

56.12.27—Missouri—The city of Zion was to be established in Jackson county.

56.13 Ezra Thayre’s original covenant had incorporated aspects of the Law of Consecration, by which he would have received an inheritance in the land of Zion. If he demanded to be reimbursed for his expenses in the matter of the Thompson properties, he would lose any and all promised blessings. Only those who were actively engaged in building up the Kingdom of God would find rest in the New Jerusalem. Ezra eventually conformed his life sufficiently to the principles that govern the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and was permitted to make his way to the land of promise.

56.14 As Leman Copley and Ezra Thayre became more insistence in their concerns about their temporal possessions, many of the saints who pertained to the Colesville and Palmyra Branches began to follow suit, exhibiting a spirit of avarice completely inconsistent with the principles and ordinances that they had received from the Lord. That they were undergoing oppression and suffering at the hands of wicked men is certain, but they were the saints of the Most High. Through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost they could have and should have become more intensely devoted to one another. Instead they allowed rebellion and confusion to reign among them for a time.

56.15 The disciples of Christ have need to turn to the Comforter in the midst of their afflictions. Their mutual love and understanding should have bound to go to the land of Missouri;

10 Otherwise he shall receive the money which he has paid, and shall leave the place, and shall be cut off out of my church, saith the Lord God of hosts;

11 And though the heaven and the earth pass away, these words shall not pass away, but shall be fulfilled.

12 And if my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., must needs pay the money, behold, I, the Lord, will pay it unto him again in the land of Missouri, that those of whom he shall receive may be rewarded again according to which they do;

13 For according to that which they do they shall receive, even in lands for their inheritance.

14 Behold, thus saith the Lord unto my people—you have many things to do and to repent of; for behold, your sins have come up unto me, and are not pardoned, because you seek to counsel in your own ways.

15 And your hearts are not satisfied. And ye obey not the truth,
them together. Yet a number of them reverted to a desire to have carnal security, to surround themselves with the things of this world that they might have a sense of safety. They began again to partake of the spirit of the natural man.

56.16 The members of the Colesville Branch had already entered into the Law of Consecration in anticipation of their move to Jackson county, Missouri, where they would receive their inheritance in the land of Zion. It is unlikely that the Lord was chastising any of them for withholding their wealth from the poor. Yet, those who had been wealthy prior to their joining the Church of Jesus Christ may have been having second thoughts, resorting to the sort of thinking that they would have been accustomed to. It seems most likely that the primary targets of this verse were Leman Copley and Ezra Thayre. Additionally, this would serve as a forewarning to all others who contemplated entering into the Law of Consecration in order to be an active part in the establishment of Zion. The Millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ will naturally incorporate much of that which the Lord revealed through the prophet Joseph Smith regarding the relative sacrifices that would be made by both the poor and the rich.

56.17 There is a spirit that frequently appears among those who have endured great poverty for a goodly portion of their lives who then are benefited through their obedience to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Some of the members of the Colesville Branch had received stewardships that placed them in a higher economic rung in society than they had ever before experienced. They also enjoyed an equality with those who had once been considered their betters in the world. Instead of experiencing gratitude and love for those who had clearly been their benefactors, these ingrates became grasping, not being satisfied with sharing equally with the saints, but desiring to excel, to rise above those around them that they might have political and economic superiority. They also must have felt that after their long years of being economically oppressed, the world owed them a great deal of rest and relaxation. They were of a mind to do little for themselves, but expected others to do for them what they once had been compelled to do for others. There is nothing of repentance and humility in these attitudes.

56.18 Broken hearts come as a direct result of sorrow for sin. Having successfully called upon the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, feeling the great remission of sin and guilt that comes through obedience to the ordinances of the Gospel, the true disciple feels to surrender all thanks and honor to the Son of God for the liberty that he enjoys. In his humility, the devoted saint perceives that all men who have ever lived upon the earth suffer the same set of circumstances as himself, and once having received a forgiveness of sins and having received the illumination that comes through the power of the Holy Ghost, he desires that all men might be like unto himself. An inspired man sees beyond this veil of tears, the burdens of temporal life, to the promise of exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom. He contemplates the truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as guides to happiness and true satisfaction. He sees the temptations of this world for what they are.

56.19 No man in time or in eternity will escape the judgment of God the eternal Father. Every man will be held accountable for the deeds done in the flesh and for the very desires of his heart. The humble and the tenderhearted will prosper, having been esteemed and exalted by the Savior; the proud and selfish will suffer an eternal want, a void that cannot be satisfied.

56.20 But have pleasure in unrighteousness.

16 Wo unto you rich men, that will not give your substance to the poor, for your riches will canker your souls; and this shall be your lamentation in the day of visitation, and of judgment, and of indignation: The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and my soul is not saved!

17 Wo unto you poor men, whose hearts are not broken, whose spirits are not contrite, and whose bellies are not satisfied, and whose hands are not stayed from laying hold upon other men’s goods, whose eyes are full of greediness, and who will not labor with your own hands!

18 But blessed are the poor who are pure in heart, whose hearts are broken, and whose spirits are contrite, for they shall see the kingdom of God coming in power and great glory unto their deliverance; for the fatness of the earth shall be theirs.

19 For behold, the Lord shall come, and his recompense shall be with him, and he shall reward every man, and the poor shall rejoice;
56.20 The meek shall inherit the earth. During the Millennium their posterity will be raised up without sin unto exaltation. No less than thirty generations will come upon the earth during the personal reign of the Son of God. Few of those who dwell upon the earth during those many years will fail to enjoy eternal happiness. Those who are successful in overcoming the spirit of the natural man and become as little children, filled with love and gratitude, will find themselves in the presence of the Father and the Son forever, without blemish and without spot. They will have become as the Father is.

56.20—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

57.0.1 In the summer of 1830, the prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery embarked on an enormous project, one that would eventually produce what is known today as the Joseph Smith Translation. They began in June 1830 with the book of Genesis. As a result of their early labors they became acquainted with the detailed account of the missionary labors of the prophet Enoch and his success in establishing the city of Zion. As the narrative indicated, the city and all of its inhabitants were caught up unto God by translation, a process which changed the state of the whole community into a Terrestrial condition. Joseph and Oliver were completely familiar with the promises made to the prophets of the Book of Mormon that in the latter days prior to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, another city like unto that of Enoch’s would be raised up unto the Lord, the result of which would be a people prepared for the Millennial reign of the Son of God. At the beginning of that thousand years, the entire earth would receive a Terrestrial glory, wickedness would be banished, and for thirty generations or more, the children of God would be raised up without sin unto exaltation.

57.0.2 By revelation, Joseph Smith knew that the disciples of Christ of this dispensation would be instrumental in establishing the foundations of the New Jerusalem. Unfortunately, there were those among the early converts to the Church of Jesus Christ who professed to know where the city was to be built. The Lord severely censured those who made such presumptions, clearly indicating that He would reveal the proper place at the proper time, but stating that the place would not be in New York or in Ohio, but by the borders of the Lamanites, meaning the remnant of the House of Israel that might be found among the Native Americans living in the Unorganized Indian Territory. In the fall of 1830, the Lord organized the first formal mission of the Kingdom of God in this dispensation, with Oliver Cowdery as the president thereof. He took with him three companions, Parley P. Pratt, Ziba Peterson, and Peter Whitmer, Junior. As they travelled westward, they visited several of the American Indian reservations that had been established along their track toward Missouri. In their missionary labors, they stopped in Kirtland, Ohio, where they came in contact with Sidney Rigdon and many of his disciples. The reception of these people of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ was extraordinary and in short order, hundreds of residents accepted baptism and were organized into branches of the Church. The four missionaries also picked up a fifth member of their company, one Frederick G. Williams.

57.0.3 The five brethren pushed westward eventually arriving in Independence, Missouri. They went almost immediately to the encampments of the
Native Americans who had been ensconced in the open plains west of the state of Missouri. There they were well received for a time. Parley P. Pratt was sent back to the headquarters of the Church to give their report, but by the time he returned to Ohio, he discovered that the Lord had commanded the prophet Joseph Smith and all of the New York saints to move to Kirtland and environs. As the saints poured into northeastern Ohio, provisions were made for many of them on properties consecrated for that very purpose. It was not long, however, before those who had been initially generous in their covenant-making became covetous of that which they had consecrated and withdrew their offerings. The Coleville Branch was particularly affected by the perfidy of men like Leman Copley, and the saints were forced to find residence elsewhere. In response to the growing negative sentiments in Thompson, Ohio, and elsewhere, the prophet Joseph Smith petitioned God the eternal Father as to what they should do. The Lord commanded Joseph to form a company who would personally accompany him to Missouri where the exact location for the New Jerusalem would be pointed out by the Savior himself. A score of missionaries were also appointed to travel westward preaching the Gospel in every place. The Coleville Branch was granted the first opportunity for an organized body of saints to travel to the land of Zion. On 19 June 1831, Joseph Smith and his companions left for Independence, Missouri, arriving there in the middle of July, having stopped in several locations to preach the Gospel of the restoration. The Coleville Branch left northeastern Ohio on 3 July 1831, arriving there about three weeks later. Needless to say, the meeting of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery after an absence of many months was joyous. Martin Harris, W.W. Phelps, Edward Partridge, and Joseph Coe had made the last leg of the journey from St. Louis, Missouri with the prophet. Oliver Cowdery was accompanied by Frederick G. Williams, Ziba Peterson, and Peter Whitmer, Junior. It was in the company of these nine men that this revelation was received. This section did not appear in the Book of Commandments, but was published as Section 27 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

57.1 The contingents that had accompanied Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery had done so because of the specific commandments of the Lord. Some of the proselyting missionaries together with the members of the Coleville Branch would arrive several days later, but they were in less obedience to the commandments of the Son of God. No doubt many of those in attendance were quite certain that western Missouri would be the immediate gathering point for all those who were willing to consecrate their all for the establishment of Zion and the building up of the Kingdom of God upon the earth. It was not until this moment, however, that their speculations were perfectly confirmed by revelation through the prophet of God.

57.1.30—Missouri—The city of Zion was to be established in Jackson county.

57.2 As Zion had been established among the faithful in the days of Enoch, before the time of the great universal flood, even so would it be established in the latter days prior to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

57.2.15—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the com-

1 HEARKEN, O ye elders of my church, saith the Lord your God, who have assembled yourselves together, according to my commandments, in this land, which is the land of Missouri, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the saints.

2 Wherefore, this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion.

D&C 57:1–2
DS 3 77
EM 1:249
D&C 57:1–3
DS 3 74
MLM 281
EM 1:414
EM 2:537, 605, 679, 710, 804
EM 3:1010
D&C 57:1–5
AF 353
DS 2 237
MD 532
EM 3:1160
D&C 57:2
DS 3 69
EM 3:1010
D&C 57:2–3
EM 2:907, 922
EM 3:1116
mandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

57.3 The location for the Temple of the New Jerusalem was located on a 63 acre plot of land that had once belonged to Jones Hoy Flourney. The deed of transfer was recorded 21 December 1831.

57.2.23—Independence—A frontier town established in March 1827. It is currently the fourth largest community in Missouri and considered part of the greater metropolitan area of Kansas City, Missouri. Much of the commercial and pioneer traffic focused on Independence because of the convergence of the Kansas and Missouri Rivers which was located about six miles west of the town.

57.3.29—30—a spot—It is interesting that the Lord used an indefinite article when referring to the place where the Temple could be built. Bishop Edward Partridge paid $130.00 for the 63.27 acre site of which about three acres is clearly visible today; bounded by Lexington and Walnut on the north and south, and by River and Bowen on the east and west. It is for the most part an open field, except for the headquarters of the Church of Christ located on the northeast corner of the property. Other portions of the original sixty-three acres now have other structures on them such as the United Nations Peace Plaza, the Community of Christ Auditorium, the Truman Railroad Depot, the LDS Visitors Center, the Community of Christ Temple, an LDS Church stake center, and the Six Nations Tree of Peace.

57.3.33—temple—As described by the prophet Joseph Smith in his plat for the city of Zion, the great Temple of Zion was actually a complex of twenty-four buildings, some of them administrative in nature.

57.3.46—courthouse—The original log courthouse was located on Lot 59 in Independence, on the northeast corner of Lyme and Kansas. Sidney Gilbert bought the structure in February 1832 and moved it to Lot 51. The Flourney farm which Edward Partridge bought for the Temple site lay several blocks directly to the west. The new courthouse and public square were located on the northeast corner of Liberty and Lexington, about one block west of the old courthouse.

57.4 The moneys made available to Edward Partridge derived primarily from the consecration of the saints from New York and Ohio. He was acting at their agent as he began establishing a place where they might easily settle. The lands lying westward were primarily the open prairies that defined western Missouri and Jackson county. Had the saints followed the instructions of the Lord in this matter, they would have purchased most of the land that lay south of the Missouri River and on either side of the Blue River, from Independence to the Missouri border with the Unorganized Indian Territory. By 1833 no less than 14 parcels of ground had been purchased, providing inheritances for the Colesville Branch, the Prairie Branch, the Cincinnati Branch, the Whitmer Branch, the Blue River Branch, and the Independence Branch.

57.4.27—Jew—In reference to the Native Americans who lived west of the Missouri border in the Unorganized Indian Territory. The Lamanites were a mixture of the posterity of Lehi and Ishmael, respectively from the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim, and the posterity of Mulek who dwelt in the land of Zarahemla at the time of Mosiah 1. The Mulekites were from the tribe of Judah who escaped the destruction of the Jerusalem at the time of the Babylonian captivity in 589 BC.

57.4.29—Gentile—In reference to the original settlers in western Missouri,
and by extension to the whole of the United States.

57.5 The prairies were open tracts of land without timber. The original settlers favored the lands along the waterways and forested areas for obvious reasons. The saints bought up those farms that had already been established from those who would sell, and obtained access to the streams and rivers where they could. The timber was necessary for the building of homes and other edifices. The members of the Church did make use of the prairie land as well, finding it to be extremely fertile. The object was to buy up all of the land as they had been instructed. By 1833 they had purchased about one-tenth of the land indicated. Much of this land had been bought by Bishop Partridge from the Federal Government Land Office in Lexington, Missouri. When the original settlers discovered the extent of the saints’ purchases and their determination to acquire vast tracts of land, they began to inflate the value of their own property.

57.6 Sidney Gilbert arrived in Independence, Missouri, with his wife and Sidney Rigdon in the company of the Colesville Branch on 25 July 1831. Bishop Edward Partridge in the meantime had been extraordinarily proactive in purchasing land from the federal government, having acquired no less than 275 acres during the two weeks between his own arrival and the appearance of the Colesville Branch. After Sidney Gilbert’s arrival, these sorts of tasks befell him, although Edward Partridge would be intimately involved as well. The holdings of the Church in and around Independence increased, as well as those to the south and west of the town.

57.6.5–6—Sidney Gilbert—Algernon Sidney Gilbert became acquainted with the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ late in 1830 or early 1831. We do not know whether or not he met any of the missionaries on their way to teach the Lamanites in the fall of 1830. His niece did acquire a copy of the Book of Mormon from John Whitmer when he visited Kirtland, Ohio in mid-January 1831, an event that immediately communicated to her aunt and uncle. By 6 June 1831 Sidney was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ. On that date he received his commission and was ordained an elder by the prophet Joseph Smith. Sidney Gilbert was commissioned by the Lord to be the agent for the Church in Missouri, to establish the store and look to the needs of the members of the Church there as directed by the Bishop, Edward Partridge. The store is operated successfully for about two years. In July 1833, the hostilities that had been seething between the saints and the original settlers, erupted in violence, which ultimately resulted in the destruction of the Independence store and the rifling of the goods that had been ensconced there. Sidney Gilbert raised up another store in Liberty, Missouri, across the river from Jackson county. Sidney Gilbert suffered great trials and tribulations at the hands of the Missourians. At one point, however, he and several others of the leadership of the Church in Jackson county, offered themselves as a ransom for the fleeing saints. The persecutions to their toll on Sidney and there were times when he simply believed that he could not muster sufficient strength to be obedient to the will of the Lord. Finally, he testified that he would rather die than preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. About the 26th of June 1834 he contracted cholera in Liberty, Missouri and died some three days later at age 45.

57.7 Edward Partridge was the Lord’s Bishop in the land of Zion. He was responsible for the temporal welfare of the disciples of Christ that were about

5 And also every tract bordering by the prairies, inasmuch as my disciples are enabled to buy lands. Behold, this is wisdom, that they may obtain it for an everlasting inheritance.

6 And let my servant Sidney Gilbert stand in the office to which I have appointed him, to receive moneys, to be an agent unto the church, to buy land in all the regions round about, inasmuch as can be done in righteousness, and as wisdom shall direct.

7 And let my servant Edward Partridge stand in the office to
to arrive in western Missouri. The Colesville saints had already entered into the Law of Consecration while they were residing in Thompson, Ohio, and fully expected that they would receive an inheritance of some kind once they arrived at the site of the New Jerusalem. This, no doubt, was the spur that motivated Edward’s journey to Lexington, Missouri to acquire land from the federal government. Until there was deeded property in hand, there was nothing to divide.

57.7.5–6—Edward Partridge—Edward Partridge was, as Joseph Smith observed, a pattern of piety and one of the Lord’s great men. A spiritually sensitive seeker of truth, Edward investigated the various sects of his day in an attempt to find the truth manifested in his day as it could be found in the scriptures. In 1828 he came in contact with the Campbellite movement and was an active participant in that movement when Oliver Cowdery and his companions arrived in northeastern Ohio while making their way to the western frontier of the United States in order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites. While many of the Campbellite Baptists eagerly associated themselves with the Church of Jesus Christ at the hands of the four missionaries, Edward Partridge deferred his own baptism. When Sidney Rigdon determined to travel from Mentor, Ohio, to Fayette, New York, to visit the prophet Joseph Smith, Edward went with him. They arrived at Joseph’s home on 10 December 1830. As the two had passed through Manchester, New York, Sidney and Edward asked the residents about the Smith family, and Joseph in particular. The reply that the Smiths were decent people until young Joseph brought forth the Book of Mormon impressed Edward such that his desire to be baptized was amplified considerably. On 11 December, the day following his first meeting the prophet, Edward Partridge was baptized in Seneca Lake by Joseph Smith. Edward Partridge would serve as the first Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation, beginning 4 February 1831. He would suffer great persecution at the hands of the Missourians because of his position in the Church, and ultimately died as a result of the injuries and exposure that he experienced in May 1840 at the age of 47.

57.7.31—these—At the very least, Isaac Morley and John Corrill, Bishop Partridge’s counselors, are meant here.

57.8 In February 1832, Sidney Gilbert bought what was called the old log courthouse in Independence, Missouri. This became his primary residence and the Lord’s storehouse until November 1833. Some of the antagonism against Sidney and the store may have been that he was honest in his dealings with his fellow men, selling the goods there without undue profit. His honesty attracted business to his store away from the other merchants who were less scrupulous. He was the primary importer of goods and equipment for the land of Zion.

57.8.11–12—Sidney Gilbert—Algeron Sidney Gilbert became acquainted with the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ late in 1830 or early 1831. We do not know whether or not he met any of the missionaries on their way to teach the Lamanites in the fall of 1830. His niece did acquire a copy of the Book of Mormon from John Whitmer when he visited Kirtland, Ohio in mid-January 1831, an event that immediately communicated to her aunt and uncle. By 6 June 1831 Sidney was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ. On that date he received his commission and was ordained an elder by the prophet Joseph Smith. Sidney Gilbert was commissioned by the Lord to be the agent for the Church in Missouri, to establish the store and look to the needs of the members of the Church there as directed by the Bishop, Edward which I have appointed him, and divide unto the saints their inheritance, even as I have commanded; and also those whom he has appointed to assist him.
Partridge. The store is operated successfully for about two years. In July 1833, the hostilities that had been seething between the saints and the original settlers, erupted in violence, which ultimately resulted in the destruction of the Independence store and the rifling of the goods that had been ensconced there. Sidney Gilbert raised up another store in Liberty, Missouri, across the river from Jackson county. Sidney Gilbert suffered great trials and tribulations at the hands of the Missourians. At one point, however, he and several others of the leadership of the Church in Jackson county, offered themselves as a ransom for the fleeing saints. The persecutions to their toll on Sidney and there were times when he simply believed that he could not muster sufficient strength to be obedient to the will of the Lord. Finally, he testified that he would rather die than preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. About the 26th of June 1834 he contracted cholera in Liberty, Missouri and died some three days later at age 45.

57.9 The Lord was not unmindful of the risks of conducting Church business without the approval of the secular authority of the state of Missouri. Sidney Gilbert was to do everything in his assignment as the Lord’s agent above board, that there could not be any occasion brought to bear against him or the Church of Jesus Christ.

57.9.6–7—Sidney Gilbert—Algeron Sidney Gilbert became acquainted with the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ late in 1830 or early 1831. We do not know whether or not he met any of the missionaries on their way to teach the Lamanites in the fall of 1830. His niece did acquire a copy of the Book of Mormon from John Whitmer when he visited Kirtland, Ohio in mid-January 1831, an event that immediately communicated to her aunt and uncle. By 6 June 1831 Sidney was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ. On that date he received his commission and was ordained an elder by the prophet Joseph Smith. Sidney Gilbert was commissioned by the Lord to be the agent for the Church in Missouri, to establish the store and look to the needs of the members of the Church there as directed by the Bishop, Edward Partridge. The store is operated successfully for about two years. In July 1833, the hostilities that had been seething between the saints and the original settlers, erupted in violence, which ultimately resulted in the destruction of the Independence store and the rifling of the goods that had been ensconced there. Sidney Gilbert raised up another store in Liberty, Missouri, across the river from Jackson county. Sidney Gilbert suffered great trials and tribulations at the hands of the Missourians. At one point, however, he and several others of the leadership of the Church in Jackson county, offered themselves as a ransom for the fleeing saints. The persecutions to their toll on Sidney and there were times when he simply believed that he could not muster sufficient strength to be obedient to the will of the Lord. Finally, he testified that he would rather die than preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. About the 26th of June 1834 he contracted cholera in Liberty, Missouri and died some three days later at age 45.

57.9.10—license—Although we are not told specifically what was indicated, there was certainly some legal matter involved. Some have suggested that a business license was meant, and certainly men were prosecuted in the state of Missouri in the 1830s for selling without a license. Other scholars have suggested that the Lord meant a license to sell to the Native Americans, but this seems somewhat unlikely given the nature and disposition of the existing Indian Agents and the jealousy

9 And also let my servant Sidney Gilbert obtain a license—behold here is wisdom, and whoso readeth let him understand—that he may send goods also unto the people, even by whom he will as clerks employed in his service;
which they frequently exhibited regarding their personal sinecures. Under
Sidney’s license, his clerks could range the county bringing goods to the
saints at their homes if necessary. There may have been occasion to take
goods west of the Missouri border which then would have required a
license from the federal government.

57.10 The establishment of Zion would allow for an increased missionary
force to be sent into all of the world. Those saints who were of one mind and
heart with their fellow disciples would gladly watch over the families and pos-
sessions of the elders who were called to serve missions for extended periods of
time.

57.10.6—saints—In reference to the membership of the Church of Jesus
Christ, those who have covenanted to no longer partake of the wicked-
ness of the world. The Greek word used in the New Testament means
“those not of the earth”.

57.11 The first newspaper published in Independence, Missouri was W.W.
Phelps’ *Evening and Morning Star*. The first issue appeared in June 1832. The
press room and the Phelps’ family residence were located near the southwest
corner of Liberty and Lexington. The press was destroyed on 20 July 1833 by
a mob.

57.11–13—William W. Phelps—On 24 December 1830, William
Phelps met the prophet Joseph Smith for the first time, but was not
baptized until 10 June 1831 in Kirtland, Ohio. William Phelps desired
to employ his talents and skills in advancing the Church and Kingdom
of God upon the earth. For many years he had been an editor and
publisher of newspapers in various communities throughout New York.
He was commissioned by the Lord to be the Church’s publisher. He
founded the *Evening and Morning Star* in Independence, Missouri, and
on the same press began the printing of the first collection of revela-
tions given to the prophet Joseph Smith, the Book of Commandments.
That task was interrupted in July 1933, when a mob destroyed the
printing shop together with many copies of the works in progress.

57.12 The printing establishment was intended to be a profit-making enter-
prise as was Sidney Gilbert’s store. The revenue generated was supposed to be
dedicated to the building up of the Kingdom of God on the earth. The facili-
ties and materials in their businesses were part of the stewardship that each
man had received as part of his participation in the Law of Consecration.

57.13 In addition to the publishing of the *Evening and Morning Star*, W.W.
Phelps was charged with the printing of a goodly number of documents taken
from what would one day be called the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible.
He also had been commissioned to print the Book of Commandments on the
same press, being as it was a collection of the revelations that Joseph Smith
had received as the prophet, seer, and revelator of the Lord. Oliver Cowdery
had been the prophet’s scribe for much of this time and as the Assistant Presi-
dent of the Church of Jesus Christ had been given a particular responsibility
with regard to the preservation and printing of the revelations. Oliver served as
what might be called today the Chairman of the Scriptures Committee.

57.13.5–6—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of
Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the
various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph
Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also extensively involved in
the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph

10 And thus provide for my saints, that my gospel may be
preached unto those who sit in darkness and in the region and
shadow of death.

11 And again, verily I say unto you, let my servant William W.
Phelps be planted in this place, and
be established as a printer unto the church.

12 And lo, if the world receive his
writings—behold here is wisdom—
let him obtain whatsoever he can
obtain in righteousness, for the
good of the saints.

13 And let my servant Oliver
Cowdery assist him, even as I have
commanded, in whatsoever place I
shall appoint unto him, to copy,
and to correct, and select, that all
things may be right before me, as it
shall be proved by the Spirit
through him.

D&C 57:11–13
EM 1:337

D&C 57:13
FWR 29
57.14 On 9 August 1831, Edward Partridge, Sidney Gilbert, W.W. Phelps, Oliver Cowdery, and several other elders left with the prophet Joseph Smith for Kirtland, Ohio. Once they arrived in Kirtland, Oliver Cowdery and William Phelps immediately set about buying the printing press and the materials necessary for the printing business in Missouri. To this end they went to Cincinnati, Ohio. The other brethren soon repaired to their places of appointment according to the command of the Lord.

57.15 As a direct response to this specific commandment, Edward Partridge went to Lexington, Missouri and purchased the 275 acres of land in western Jackson county for the benefit of the Colesville Branch and others who arrived on 25 July 1831. The first of the Colesville saints settled in Kaw township southeast of the hamlet of Westport and about twelve miles southwest of Independence, Missouri. The property was between two tributaries of the Big Blue River. Thus, when the saints arrived, they had their land inheritances provided for them.

57.16 Not all of the elders who had been sent on missions to the west had arrived in Jackson county by the time this revelation was received. Indeed, the prophet would meet with some of these faithful missionaries as he and a few other brethren were making their way back to Kirtland. At least five other Branches would be established in Jackson county, all planted as a result of revelation to those who were given change of the founding of the city of Zion.

57.16.18—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

58.0.1 The Prophet Joseph Smith and his company departed from Kirtland, Ohio, on 19 June 1831 for Independence, Missouri. Their travels were filled with opportunities to teach the Gospel along the way, including a lengthy stop in Cincinnati, Ohio, where they spoke at length with Walter Scott, one of the founders of the Campbellite movement. They also took time to edify and bless one another as they travelled, reading passages from the Bible and praying for understanding of the things that they read. The company of nine arrived in St. Louis, Missouri, waiting three days for passage by steamboat up the Missouri River to Independence. After three days, the prophet Joseph Smith and four of the other brethren decided to pursue their course across Missouri on foot. Sidney Gilbert and his wife, together with Sidney Rigdon, remained behind in St. Louis and after a time were able to find transportation.

58.0.2 On 3 July 1831, the Colesville Branch, a body of saints who had departed New York for Ohio, found themselves on the road again, having been evicted from their residence on the property of Leman Copley in Thompson, Ohio. The members of the branch took the most direct route they could manage, and by so doing arrived in St. Louis, Missouri, after Joseph Smith and his companions had left for Independence on foot, but before Sidney Rigdon and the Gilberts had obtained passage by riverboat. The three remaining traveling companions of the prophet and the Colesville Branch travelled together upriver where they arrived at their destination on 25 July 1831. At
In the prophet’s account of his travels he does not mention the exact date of their arrival in Independence, Missouri, but merely states that he and his companions entered into the town in the middle of July. Section 57 of the Doctrine and Covenants was received on 20 July 1831, shortly after their arrival. He then states that they held a meeting on the first Sabbath Day they were there. The 20th occurred on a Wednesday; the following Sunday would have been the 24th of July, when the meeting was held in the Unorganized Indian Territory; the Colesville Branch arrived in Independence the next day, on Monday the 25th. This present revelation was received a week later on Monday, 1 August 1831. We are not informed as to the nature of their worship services on 31 July 1831. This section appeared as Chapter LXI in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 18 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

The Colesville Branch had forsaken all in order to partake of the blessings that the Lord had offered them as they entered into the Law of Consecration. Sidney Gilbert and William W. Phelps had particular assignments that involved their participation in the laying the foundation of the city of Zion. The missionaries, too, were an integral part of the building up of the Kingdom of God upon the earth.

These would have included Joseph Smith and the six priesthood leaders who had travelled with him, Oliver Cowdery and his three missionary companions who had been in Missouri for several months, the Melchizedek priesthood bearers in the Colesville Branch, and Isaac Morley and Ezra Booth.

That is to say, the lands that lay west of Independence upon which the saints were to receive their inheritances.

Implementing the principles of eternal life into the everyday life of the members of the Church would prove difficult, even for the most faithful. There would be sickness and death among the settlers, there would be opposition from the prejudiced and ignorant, and there would be stress and concern as everyone tried to adjust to living free of untoward emotions, unjustifiable preconceptions, and unwarranted expectations.

On 7 August 1831, the funeral of Polly Knight, the wife of Joseph Knight, Senior, and the mother of Newel Knight, the Branch President of the Colesville saints, passed away after a prolonged illness. Notwithstanding her afflictions, she had been determined to walk upon the land of Zion and be interred therein.

We do not have immediately before us all of the sentiments that must have passed through the minds and hearts of all those who were present when this revelation was received. Many of the saints must have hoped for peace and rest, a condition they would enjoy but for a short time. Others may have perceived the uneasiness of the original settlers of western Missouri and wondered how these new circumstances would be any different from their previous situations in Colesville before they departed, or the rude welcome they received from Leman Copley in Thompson, Ohio. In any event, it was certain that the disciples of Jesus Christ were entering into an undeveloped territory. There were no established homes, barns, pastures, wells, or farmland. All of the infrastructure for their burgeoning society would have to be built by them or not at all, and this in only a few months. The likelihood for any sort of a harvest season was bleak, so late in the year it was. Had their eyes been opened to the
events of the next five or six years, they might have trembled for fear and anxiety. Their sacrifices during this period of time, however, would be instructive for generations to come and would establish a pattern of piety that others would emulate as the Kingdom of Heaven rolled forth into all of the world.

58.4 The saints standing in the presence of the prophet Joseph Smith on 1 August 1831 would know the stings of adversity. They would be driven from their homes and deprived of their personal property in less than two years. They would waver in deprivation for another period of time as the saints were established at Far West, north of the Missouri River. They would face the extermination order of Governor Lilburn Boggs, causing them to flee the state into Illinois for a short time before being forced to make their way across the Great American desert to the midst of the Rocky Mountains where they would find a place from which they could not be extricated. Those who endured well the afflictions and disappointments of their day would eventually find their souls purified and sanctified through their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They would find rest in the world of spirits, and when the day of the first resurrection dawns, they will come forth to meet the Savior in the glory of their eternal Kingdom in the presence of the Father and the Son.

58.5 The Lord God of Israel testifies of the sorrows and distresses that loom on the horizon for His children. He does so that they might be forewarned and not particularly surprised by what appear to be misadventures. The saints must realize that in His love for them, He has prepared a way whereby they might escape the machinations of their enemies. Seldom has the Lord spoken of the great evils that are about to befall the children of men without also testifying of the wonders and blessings which will follow those tribulations. In the midst of affliction, therefore, the saints can look forward in faith to their redemption from all malady.

58.6 The first law of Heaven is obedience. Keeping the commandments is simple when all of the prevailing circumstances favor fulfilling the will of God. It is when the righteous suffer in spite of their willing obedience that the test of a man’s determination and faith takes place. The Coleville saints and those who would join them in Jackson county would pass through a refining fire of distress that would purge out many of the baser sentiments that hindered their spiritual growth. Admittedly, there were those who succumbed to the spirit of the natural man which possessed them insomuch that they fell to the wayside. Those who pressed forward through their trials and tribulations, however, received a refinement of heart and mind that prepared them for the blessings that await the faithful. They would perceive in their own lives, the fulfillment of prophecy, thereby allowing them to comprehend the prophecies that have been made in every dispensation regarding the latter days prior to the second coming of the Son of God.

58.7 In the manifestation of their faith, the Elders and saints who gathered together on 1 August 1831 would proceed to work the work that was required of them. They would symbolically and practically take the first steps toward preparing a people who could inherit the blessings of the city of Zion. On 2 August 1831, the day following the receipt of this present revelation, the prophet Joseph Smith joined with eleven other men in placing the first log for the first home to be built in the land of Zion.

58.7.22—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into

4 For after much tribulation come the blessings. Wherefore the day cometh that ye shall be crowned with much glory; the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand.

5 Remember this, which I tell you before, that you may lay it to heart, and receive that which is to follow.

6 Behold, verily I say unto you, for this cause I have sent you—that you might be obedient, and that your hearts might be prepared to bear testimony of the things which are to come;

7 And also that you might be honored in laying the foundation, and in bearing record of the land upon which the Zion of God shall stand;

D&C 58:4–12
DS 3 19
D&C 58:6–11
DNTC 1 597
MD 469
MLM 347
EM 2:860
D&C 58:7
DS 3 69
MD 532
such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

58.8 The principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, coupled with those that govern the Law of Consecration, were designed to establish a people who would be of one heart and one mind, who would dwell in righteousness, and who would have no poor among them. It is interesting to note that in the Zion societies of the past, there has never been an instance of want, even in times of apparent universal famine. This has ever been the cry of the servants of God, that it is possible to escape the adverse conditions of a lost and fallen world, that there can be plenty and to spare if the children of men would simply put off the spirit of the natural man.

58.8.7—8—*fat things*—In reference to the preparations surrounding the harvest celebrations that would transpire at the second coming of Christ, at which the righteous would all participate regardless of the societal or economic circumstances in the world.

58.8.25—*lees*—When wine is preserved in jars or barrels, it is allowed to rest undisturbed. As it does so, the pulp in the juice settles to the bottom of the container where it contributes to the flavor of the whole. This sediment is called the “lees” of the wine. To serve “wine on the lees” is to open and partake immediately from the original container, suggesting that there is to be no hesitancy in dispensing the whole amount; there is no concern for running out notwithstanding its high quality.

58.8.38—*prophets*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

58.9 Whether speaking literally or figuratively, the effect is the same. The time would come when the city of Zion would shine forth unto all of the world as an example of true principles having been lived in accordance with the will of God, wherein nothing but peace, happiness, and prosperity is generated. The fullness of the Gospel would be taken into all of the world; every man, woman, and child would be given an opportunity to receive it unto themselves through expressions of faith unto repentance and by accepting the invitation to partake of the blessings of the Kingdom of Heaven by covenant.

58.10 This and the following verses constitute an allusion to the parable of the King’s Son that the Savior gave to those who thought of themselves in unjustifiably exalted terms (see MT-C 22.1–14). Those who are innately capable of blessing the inhabitants of the earth, in terms of their character, training, and wealth, are given an opportunity to be received into the Kingdom of God. By doing so, the Lord is offering them the chance to be benefactors rather than oppressors. In the munificent conduct of the rich, the poor and the oppressed would be given cause to extend forgiveness to those who had enjoyed greater privileges than themselves. Hence, the first steps toward the spirit of Zion. In the parable, these are those who were first invited because of their professed loyalty to their king and lord.

58.11 When the king’s erstwhile friends and nobles refused the invitation to 8 And also that a feast of fat things might be prepared for the poor; yea, a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees well refined, that the earth may know that the mouths of the prophets shall not fail;
attend the wedding feast of his son, he commanded his servants to gather up those who would be considered of a lesser quality of citizenry, offering them the same blessings that he had proposed to give those who thought well of themselves (see MT-C 22.8–10). In the latter days, the same will be true. Many of the Colesville saints had been moderately wealthy when they accepted the call to move themselves first to Ohio and then to Missouri. Their consecrations had made it possible for those less fortunate than themselves to accompany them in their journey. Men like Leman Copley and Ezra Thayre had displayed their contempt for the poor and their own unwillingness to contribute to the building up of the Kingdom of God upon the earth.

58.12 In terms of the parable itself, Jesus had indeed spoken it to the people of his day and place. Here, however, the principles governing the salvation of the rich and the poor are reiterated.

58.13 The example of the inhabitants of the city of Zion would serve as a clarion call to the nations of the earth, that they must needs repent of their wickedness and contribute to the building up of the Kingdom of God upon the earth or they would find no place wherein to dwell when the Savior became King of kings and Lord of lords.

58.13.9—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

58.14 The Colesville saints and the others present had been sent to begin what would eventually provide the salvation of mankind in the latter days.

58.14.15–16—Edward Partridge—Edward Partridge was, as Joseph Smith observed, a pattern of piety and one of the Lord’s great men. A spiritually sensitive seeker of truth, Edward investigated the various sects of his day in an attempt to find the truth manifested in his day as it could be found in the scriptures. In 1828 he came in contact with the Campbellite movement and was an active participant in that movement when Oliver Cowdery and his companions arrived in northeastern Ohio while making their way to the western frontier of the United States in order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites. While many of the Campbellite Baptists eagerly associated themselves with the Church of Jesus Christ at the hands of the four missionaries, Edward Partridge deferred his own baptism. When Sidney Rigdon determined to travel from Mentor, Ohio, to Fayette, New York, to visit the prophet Joseph Smith, Edward went with him. They arrived at Joseph’s home on 10 December 1830. As the two had passed through Manchester, New York, Sidney and Edward asked the residents about the Smith family, and Joseph in particular. The reply that the Smiths were decent people until young Joseph brought forth the Book of Mormon impressed Edward such that his desire to be baptized was amplified considerably. On 11 December, the day following his first meeting the prophet, Edward Partridge was baptized in Seneca Lake by Joseph Smith. Edward Partridge would serve as the first Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispen-

12 Behold, I, the Lord, have spoken it.

13 And that the testimony might go forth from Zion, yea, from the mouth of the city of the heritage of God—

14 Yea, for this cause I have sent you hither, and have selected my servant Edward Partridge, and have appointed unto him his mission in the land.
sation, beginning 4 February 1831. He would suffer great persecution at the hands of the Missourians because of his position in the Church, and ultimately died as a result of the injuries and exposure that he experienced in May 1840 at the age of 47.

58.14.23—mission—That is to say, as the Bishop of the land of Zion who was responsible of preparing inheritances for the saints in Jackson county.

58.15 We are not told how or when Edward Partridge manifested these rather negative qualities. It seems clear, however, that he quickly repented of any wrong doing or wrong thinking on his part. No other man could have been as faithful in providing for his fellow men as was Edward Partridge. He did so at the expense of his own life.

58.16 In previous revelations the Lord had made it quite plain as to what Edward Partridge’s duties entailed. Edward could accomplish the tasks without repetition or elaboration.

58.17 The judges of ancient Israel not only decided difficult cases that arose among the saints, but they also were the designated protectors or deliverers of the people from injustice and persecution. As the House of Israel entered into the land of Canaan in the days of Joshua and his successors, there were men who brought about the equitable apportionment of the territories that had come under Israelite control first to the twelve tribes and then to the individual families.

58.17.2—whoso—Whether Edward Partridge or any other man who has held or currently holds the same keys of the ministry.

58.17.14—Israel—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

58.18 Edward Partridge’s responsibilities as the Bishop of Zion did not differ appreciably from the responsibilities of Bishops who serve in the Kingdom of God today. They are responsible for the temporal welfare of the members of the Church of Jesus Christ who dwell in their jurisdiction. When necessary, they provide clothing, food, and shelter to those who are in want. They also are given the responsibility to determine worthiness of those who seek for the blessing of the Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one could obtain an inheritance in the land of Zion without their living lives consistent with the covenants into which they had willingly accepted. Bishop Partridge and his counselors were given the right and power of inspiration to determine that worthiness.

58.18.31—prophets—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

58.19 There were places where the Church was established where an erstwhile member of the Kingdom could dwell while living what might be considered a margin adherence to the principles of the Gospel. But in order to be received into the city of the New Jerusalem, a far greater standard of obedience was demanded.

58.20 It is the nature and disposition of almost all men when they get a little authority, as they suppose, to begin to exercise unrighteous dominion. Even a

| 15 | But if he repent not of his sins, which are unbelief and blindness of heart, let him take heed lest he fall. | D&C 58:15 | MD 184 |
| 16 | Behold his mission is given unto him, and it shall not be given again. | D&C 58:17 | MD 353 |
| 17 | And whoso standeth in this mission is appointed to be a judge in Israel, like as it was in ancient days, to divide the lands of the heritage of God unto his children; | D&C 58:18 | EM 1:119, 329 |
| 18 | And to judge his people by the testimony of the just, and by the assistance of his counselors, according to the laws of the kingdom which are given by the prophets of God. | D&C 58:18 | CR99-A 80 |
| 19 | For verily I say unto you, my law shall be kept on this land. | D&C 58:20 | EM 1:385 |
| 20 | Let no man think he is ruler; but let God rule him that judgeth; | D&C 58:20 | MD 657 |
man as stalwart and faithful as Edward Partridge had need to be reminded of
this principle and be forewarned about the possibility of falling into temptation.
No man in the Church and Kingdom of God can faithful preside without
the full weight and measure of the Holy Ghost resting down upon him.
Without the Spirit of God, he cannot represent the mind and will of God. He,
therefore, in those circumstances, can only dispense words and judgments that
conform to the philosophies of men and the imaginations of his own heart
and mind. The role of the Bishop and the other officers of the Church is to
prepare a people for the administration of the Son of God, whose perfect rule
will last one thousand years upon this earth before it is exalted.

58.21 There is no room for elitism within the Church of Jesus Christ, either
in part or in whole. So long as the world persists in its lost and fallen state, the
governments of men wield power and authority over the children of men. We
may quibble about the relative virtue of these various forms of government,
but we cannot dismiss them with a wave of the hand. Therefore, while the
earth stands in its present condition, the saints of God do all of their business
in conformity to those laws that have bearing on them. The Lord will not
require of us to pursue a course of action that brings us directly in contact
with a legitimate statute of civil law. We may observe that from time to time
certain types of legislation are inconsistent with the main body of accepted
law. The saints as individuals and as a whole may then test the validity of that
particular legislation until it is declared, without redress, that the new law
must be received by all those being governed by the laws of the land. At the
time the saints were beginning to settle in Jackson county, the institution
of slavery was in full effect within the boundaries of the state of Missouri. No
matter how abhorrent servitude may have been for the members of Christ’s
Church, yet that was the state of affairs. The law did not require the members
of the Church to have slaves, but by the same token they could not legally
interfere in the relationship between a slave and his master.

58.22 It is in the matter of slavery that the members of the Church of Jesus
Christ made themselves odious to the Missourians. While the saints may have
been reticent about expressing their personal feelings, it was not long before it
became clear to the original settlers that those who were immigrating to their
region of country had strong sentiments against the practice. The Lord had
counseled patience in this and other matters, yet there were those among
the members of the Church who could not contain themselves and in the process
of expressing their views, put the entire Church in Missouri at risk.

58.23 The inspiration of God had come upon the founders of the Constitution
of the United States as they established the nation. The various states had
followed suit. Needless to say, there were human flaws and weaknesses in the
drafting of the laws of the land, but they were for the most part and expression
of truth and light. The laws governing the city of Zion were from the same
sources but far more refined. Those who loved the principles of truth and
righteousness to be found in civil law, would ultimately find the same in the
laws that governed the disciples of Jesus Christ. By these obvious extensions of
the true principles, the children of men would be attracted to the fullness of
the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

58.24 The reason for this request is so obvious that we need not dwell upon it
at length. Those who represented the Lord in that part of the Kingdom had to
be physically present in order to attend to the tasks that devolved upon them.
There have been times in the history of the Church of Jesus Christ when

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prospective priesthood leaders have been called and set apart in anticipation of
their transferring all that they possess, including the members of their family, to
the place where their new stewardship was located.

58.24.9—10—Edward Partridge—Edward Partridge was, as Joseph Smith
observed, a pattern of piety and one of the Lord’s great men. A spiritu-
ally sensitive seeker of truth, Edward investigated the various sects of his
day in an attempt to find the truth manifested in his day as it could be
found in the scriptures. In 1828 he came in contact with the Campbell-
ite movement and was an active participant in that movement when
Oliver Cowdery and his companions arrived in northeastern Ohio
while making their way to the western frontier of the United States in
order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites. While many of the Camp-
bellite Baptists eagerly associated themselves with the Church of Jesus
Christ at the hands of the four missionaries, Edward Partridge deferred
his own baptism. When Sidney Rigdon determined to travel from
Mentor, Ohio, to Fayette, New York, to visit the prophet Joseph Smith,
Edward went with him. They arrived at Joseph’s home on 10 December
1830. As the two had passed through Manchester, New York, Sidney
and Edward asked the residents about the Smith family, and Joseph in
particular. The reply that the Smiths were decent people until young
Joseph brought forth the Book of Mormon impressed Edward such that
his desire to be baptized was amplified considerably. On 11 December,
the day following his first meeting the prophet, Edward Partridge was
baptized in Seneca Lake by Joseph Smith. Edward Partridge would
serve as the first Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispen-
sation, beginning 4 February 1831. He would suffer great persecution
at the hands of the Missourians because of his position in the Church,
and ultimately died as a result of the injuries and exposure that he
experienced in May 1840 at the age of 47.

58.24.27—counselors—that is to say, Isaac Morley and John Cor-
rill, both of whom followed this counsel.

58.24.44—storehouse—that is to say, Sidney Gilbert, who established his
store in Independence and then later in Liberty on the north bank of
the Missouri River.

58.25 Within six months or so, the families of all four men were ensconced
in the land of Zion. They would be there to deflect the ire of the Missourians
away from the saints to themselves, thus preserving the lives of many.

58.26 The Lord could have been quite specific about the dates by which He
fully expected them to be in a position to enter in upon the labor to which
they had been called. Instead, however, he allowed each man, in consulta-
tion with the members of his family, in the spirit of prayer, to determine the
timetable they would follow. There is no indication that the Lord was disappointed
at the course that each of the four men followed in keeping His commandments.

58.27 One of the major purposes of our having come to earth as mortal
beings, is to begin the process of acquiring all of the attributes and perfections
of our Father in Heaven. He does as He does because He is good. His actions
are a product of his infinite and perfect love for His children. He is not com-
pelled or coerced to bring about the immortality and eternal life of mankind.
He openly and sincerely desires to do so; it is an expression of the nature of
His existence. All of our actions are motivated by what we are, how we think
and how we feel. In the process of putting off the natural man, our desires and
appointed for his counselors; and
also the land of the residence of
him whom I have appointed to
keep my storehouse;

25 Wherefore, let them bring
their families to this land, as they
shall counsel between themselves
and me.

26 For behold, it is not meet that
I should command in all things; for
he that is compelled in all things,
the same is a slothful and not a
wise servant; wherefore he receiveth
no reward.

27 Verily I say, men should be
anxiously engaged in a good cause,
and do many things of their own
free will, and bring to pass much
righteousness;

D&C 58:26
AGQ 1 198
DNLC 2 352
CR96-A 22
CR97-O 8
EM 3:1020
D&C 58:26–27
PM 408
D&C 58:26–28
EM 1:249, 297
EM 2:681
EM 4:1587
D&C 58:26–29
MD 177, 381,
739
our thoughts are fundamentally changed from those that define this lost and fallen world to those which define the nature of the God of Heaven. The transition from the one to the other must be a willing choice.

58.28 There is no greater blessing given to men upon this earth than that of moral agency, except for the breath of life itself. The willing choice of good over evil brings about a fundamental change in the way we look at the world and the sentiments we feel toward all of creation. Every conscious act of righteousness is indelible engraved upon our souls, easily discerned by those who have eyes to see.

58.29 By the power and the influence of the Holy Ghost a man may receive the mind of Christ, by which he can know the will of God at any moment. He need not receive a written message from the Savior or hear the voice of God in order to know what to do. There is no greater act of obedience than that which is motivated by spiritual insight coupled with a love of God and a love for all men. By the same token, a man uninfluenced by the Holy Ghost may act in a manner consistent with the will of God. This may result from happenstance or out of fear of reprisal. While there is a benefit to obedience of any kind, these latter sorts are essentially ineffective in bringing about the great change of heart necessary to enter into the Kingdom of God without shame and without fear.

58.30 One the other hand, disobedience of any kind cannot bring happiness into the lives of the children of men. To consciously act in opposition to the mind and will of God is rebellion and sin. Sin, by its very nature, likewise causes fundamental changes in the character of men, just as righteousness does. If a man chooses to be radically different from the God who made him, he can never receive the blessings that attend the divine nature. The blinding contrast between good and evil will reveal the sinner for what he is and the eternal destiny that lies before him.

58.31 God the eternal Father is constantly aware of the potential of each and every child, and He does all in His power to provide the circumstances necessary to develop the capacities of His children, that they might be like He is. The promises of God are based on eternal and immutable law, that law which based on eternal truth, things as they really are. Truth and law cannot be avoided by any mortal; they are an expression of the nature of existence. Therefore, when God speaks or enters into covenants with the children of men, His words and promises are also a function of truth and an inexorable part of the nature of existence.

58.32 God our eternal Father in Heaven reveals His will unto His servants, that they might learn something of His nature and His love for His children. There are inherent blessings associated with willing obedience; there are also inherent consequences associated with disobedience. God gives His commandments to the children of men, desiring obedience for their sake, but He will not hound them into conformity. If there comes a time when they are no longer willing or able to keep the law, the Lord mercifully adjusts the law so that a degree of obedience is possible. We see this procedure perfectly in the advent of the Law of Moses, which came as the result of an unwillingness on the part of the House of Israel to receive the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

58.33 It is the disobedient and the rebellious who think these sorts of thoughts. It is for their sake that the Lord has not insisted on complete com-

28 For the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves. And inasmuch as men do good they shall in nowise lose their reward.

29 But he that doeth not anything until he is commanded, and receiveth a commandment with doubtful heart, and keepeth it with slothfulness, the same is damned.

30 Who am I that made man, saith the Lord, that will hold him guiltless that obeys not my commandments?

31 Who am I, saith the Lord, that have promised and have not fulfilled?

32 I command and men obey not; I revoke and they receive not the blessing.

33 Then they say in their hearts: This is not the work of the Lord,
pliance, but they perceive the mercy-motivated changes as capriciousness on His part. How can the wicked complain about the absent blessings when they have done little or nothing to receive them? How can they lament the loss of potential blessings when they were unwilling to do what was necessary to fulfill the law upon which the blessings were predicated? To expect something for nothing has been Lucifer's hue and cry since before the foundations of the earth were laid. He wished to usurp the throne of God without performing the patient labor required of tender parents to make kings and priests of the children of God. Satan chose to make war rather than sacrifice himself for the benefit of his brethren. He is, for us, the archetypal rebel and the consummate sinner.

58.34 Several elders had accompanied the prophet Joseph Smith to Missouri from Ohio and they stood in need of immediate counsel. The instruction to Edward Partridge, Isaac Morley, John Corrill, and Sidney Gilbert had already been forthcoming.

58.34.10–11—this land—that is to say, the land of Zion that was to be established in Jackson county, Missouri.

58.35 This was not the first time that Martin Harris had need of counsel directly from the Lord regarding his financial responsibilities to the Church and Kingdom of God. He had been invited to accompany the prophet to Missouri, but in order to receive the blessings of Zion, he would have to enter into the Law of Consecration in a formal way. The saints who pertained to the Colesville Branch had already done so, and there would be many more who would follow them to Zion having entered into this holy covenant. Martin Harris could not afford to pretend to be obedient when in fact he was not. So far as we can tell, Martin Harris did not do as he had been instructed and did not return to Jackson county.

58.35.9–10—Martin Harris—Martin Harris was one of the first men to be baptized after the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation. He received that ordinance at the hands of Oliver Cowdery on 6 April 1830. In 1837, due in large part to a disagreement with Sidney Rigdon, Martin was dropped from the High Council of the Kirtland Stake and was purportedly excommunicated. On 7 November 1842, Martin Harris applied for and was received into full fellowship in the Church through baptism. Notwithstanding the various movements of the body of the saints, Martin remained in Kirtland until the summer of 1870, at which time he was persuaded to move to Utah. He died in Clarkston, Utah, on 10 July 1875. Shortly before his death, he bore a fervent and compelling testimony of the experience that he had as one of the Three Witnesses.

58.36 No individual, regardless of his experience or station in the Church of Jesus Christ, would be exempt from the Law of Consecration if he expected an inheritance in the city of the New Jerusalem.

58.36.29—law—that is to say, the Law of Consecration that was first revealed in Section 42 of the Doctrine and Covenants.

58.37 In February 1832 Sidney Gilbert purchase what was called the Old Log Courthouse in Independence, Missouri, for $371.00. In November 1832, Sidney moved the mercantile operations to the northwest corner of Lexington and Liberty. He in his family continued to live in the Courthouse building on the corner of Lyme and Kansas. The printing house and William W. Phelps' family home was located near the southwest corner of Lexington and Lyme.
Beginning in June 1832, the *Evening and Morning Star* and the sheets for the Book of Commandments were published here. The press and other printing materials had been acquired in Cincinnati, Ohio.

58.37.13—Independence—A frontier town established in March 1827. It is currently the fourth largest community in Missouri and considered part of the greater metropolitan area of Kansas City, Missouri. Much of the commercial and pioneer traffic focused on Independence because of the convergence of the Kansas and Missouri Rivers which was located about six miles west of the town.

58.38 Martin Harris was being encouraged to do many things of his own free will and choice according to the promptings of the Holy Ghost. He had been expressly commanded to enter into the Law of Consecration so that he could be a benefit and a blessing to the saints in Zion, but Martin was possess of many skills and abilities by which he could unify and strengthen the members of the Church. He was given leave to employ them according to the desires of his own heart.

58.38.7–8—Martin Harris—Martin Harris was one of the first men to be baptized after the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation. He received that ordinance at the hands of Oliver Cowdery on 6 April 1830. In 1837, due in large part to a disagreement with Sidney Rigdon, Martin was dropped from the High Council of the Kirtland Stake and was purportedly excommunicated. On 7 November 1842, Martin Harris applied for and was received into full fellowship in the Church through baptism. Notwithstanding the various movements of the body of the saints, Martin remained in Kirtland until the summer of 1870, at which time he was persuaded to move to Utah. He died in Clarkston, Utah, on 10 July 1875. Shortly before his death, he bore a fervent and compelling testimony of the experience that he had as one of the Three Witnesses.

58.39 Martin Harris had passed through great trials and tribulations in his association with the Church and Kingdom of God. He had been privileged to serve as a witness of the Book of Mormon and of the angel Moroni before the Church had been organized. He apparently felt that he should be considered by the saints to be a notable person, one that deserved personal deference. The Lord counseled him that this sort of thinking would make him a liability in a society where the people were to be of one heart and one mind. Elitism is anathema to unity.

58.40 William W. Phelps was a master printer, chosen, called, and ordained to serve with Oliver Cowdery to bring forth the revelations given through the prophet Joseph Smith to the saints and to the world. He was also charged with helping to provide books for the children of Zion that they might be learned and wise. Part of his initial inheritance was the printing house and the equipment that would make his calling possible.

58.40.6–8—William W. Phelps—On 24 December 1830, William Phelps met the prophet Joseph Smith for the first time, but was not baptized until 10 June 1831 in Kirtland, Ohio. William Phelps desired to employ his talents and skills in advancing the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. For many years he had been an editor and publisher of newspapers in various communities throughout New York. He was commissioned by the Lord to be the Church’s publisher. He founded the *Evening and Morning Star* in Independence, Missouri, and on the same press began the printing of the first collection of revelations given

38 And other directions concerning my servant Martin Harris shall be given him of the Spirit, that he may receive his inheritance as seemeth him good;

39 And let him repent of his sins, for he seeketh the praise of the world.

40 And also let my servant William W. Phelps stand in the office to which I have appointed him, and receive his inheritance in the land;
to the prophet Joseph Smith, the Book of Commandments. That task was interrupted in July 1933, when a mob destroyed the printing shop together with many copies of the works in progress.

58.41 The role of an editor in the affairs of men is a powerful one. The *Evening and Morning Star* was the first periodical published in Independence, Missouri, one that would have a ready audience in the saints of the Most High. He would be in a position to persuade the hearts and minds of the people to whom his newspaper would come to believe as he did, to be an instrument in publishing the glad tidings of the restoration of the fullness of the Gospel of Lord Jesus Christ. His zeal to do the Lord’s will was accompanied by a spirit of pride rather than humility and for that reason he is gently censured here for the inappropriate aspects of the desires of his heart. The *Evening and Morning Star* was not to be his personal cudgel.

58.42 Martin Harris and William W. Phelps had cause to change their approach to their service in the Kingdom of God. Only God was to be worshipped, and that in the name of the Savior. Men were called upon to serve one another without expecting to be fawned over.

58.43 The ability to follow this particular counsel is predicated upon the individual recognizing the validity of the Lord’s evaluation. Until a man accepts the fact that he has fallen short of the mark, will he then look about to see how he can improve.

58.44 The growth of the Church in Jackson county was to be moderated. The Colesville Branch and others had been particularly appointed to enter into the Law of Consecration and receive their inheritance in Zion. The others who would make the journey would likewise be called to participate, according to the mind and will of the Lord. The building up of the Kingdom of God on the earth and the establishment of Zion was not for the faint-hearted or for those who had not put off the spirit of the natural man. In addition, there would be many men and women who were otherwise worthy to partake of the blessings, but who were needed elsewhere to bring about the purposes of the Lord God of Israel.

58.44.1—elders—It is clear that the Lord is speaking of the priesthood bears of the Church who were still in New York and Ohio, and others who were willingly serving as active missionaries.

58.45 The allusion here is to the blessing pronounced upon the head of Joseph under than hands of his father Jacob, the son of Isaac.

And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the LORD be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, And for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, And for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof, and for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren. His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh. (Deuteronomy 33:13–17)

41 And also he hath need to repent, for I, the Lord, am not well pleased with him, for he seeketh to excel, and he is not sufficiently meek before me.

42 Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more.

43 By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them.

44 And now, verily, I say concerning the residue of the elders of my church, the time has not yet come, for many years, for them to receive their inheritance in this land, except they desire it through the prayer of faith, only as it shall be appointed unto them of the Lord.

45 For, behold, they shall push the people together from the ends of the earth.
58.46 The day following the reception of this revelation, the elders gathered upon the land which had been purchased for the inheritance of the Colesville Branch and there laid the first log of the first house to be built for the inhabitants of Zion. On 4 August 1831, the elders gathered again in order to hold the first conference in the land of Zion. On 8 August 1831, some of the elders asked for specific instructions as to how they should proceed, the response to which is contained in Section 60 of the Doctrine and Covenants. On 9 August 1831, the prophet Joseph Smith and ten others began their journey back to Kirtland, Ohio. Through extraordinary circumstances, the elders were given to understand that their speedy travel upon the waters negated the counsel that the brethren were to act as missionaries during their return. Many of the brethren then conformed their travel to the will of the Lord.

58.47 There is no more humbling or exalting task in all of eternity than to testify by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, and that through the mercy and love of these two, all things might be accomplished for the benefit of mankind through the power invested in their servants. The covenant of baptism embraces this responsibility to warn all men of the consequences of sin, no matter their station or reputation in the world. All men are capable of improvement and have need to be instructed in the principles of righteousness.

58.48 The establishment of branches of the Church and Kingdom of God eventually leads to a place of resort wherein the honest in heart may find spiritual and temporal refuge. The stakes of Zion support the tabernacle of the Lord, extending the boundaries of the Kingdom of God until all of the earth is within its pale. Thus, will the righteous of the world be prepared for the descent of the Son of God in glory.

58.49 No one serves in the Church and Kingdom of God without the common consent of those whom he serves

58.49.6—agent—When Edward Partridge resided in Kirtland, Ohio, his responsibilities as the Bishop of the Church provided the saints with an agent unto whom they could come in order to enter into the Law of Consecration. Once he moved to Jackson county, Missouri, he became the Lord’s agent there in distributing the lands of inheritance to the faithful. Once Sidney Gilbert was safely ensconced in his inheritance, many of the practical responsibilities of acquiring lands in Missouri and serving as the purser for the Church befall him. Newel K. Whitney served as Sidney Gilbert’s counterpart in Kirtland, Ohio, and had responsibility in particular to maintain the Lord’s storehouse there, a place where the surpluses from the consecrations might be preserved for the benefit of the poorer saints who were to travel to the land of Zion.

58.49.26—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the com-

46 Wherefore, assemble yourselves together; and they who are not appointed to stay in this land, let them preach the gospel in the regions round about; and after that let them return to their homes.

47 Let them preach by the way, and bear testimony of the truth in all places, and call upon the rich, the high and the low, and the poor to repent.

48 And let them build up churches, inasmuch as the inhabitants of the earth will repent.

49 And let there be an agent appointed by the voice of the church, unto the church in Ohio, to receive moneys to purchase lands in Zion.
mandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

58.50 We do not at present have access to the original description of the land of Zion written by Sidney Rigdon. By the end of August 1831, however, whatever Sidney had managed to produce was unacceptable to the Lord, a product of his pride and of his unwillingness to receive counsel (see 63:55–56). Clearly, the problem that occurred was that Sidney Rigdon had somehow distanced himself from the Holy Ghost and therefore was left unto himself to accomplish the task. In the History of the Church, Joseph Smith includes in his narrative a rather winsome description of the lands in western Missouri. Whether or not Sidney Rigdon had anything to do with its composition we cannot say with certainty.

58.50.7–8—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education.

From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

58.50.21—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

58.50.24—statement—At the end of the detailed description is a long paragraph citing passages from the prophet Isaiah and the Psalms as to the word of the Lord on the expected growth and development of Zion.

50 And I give unto my servant Sidney Rigdon a commandment, that he shall write a description of the land of Zion, and a statement of the will of God, as it shall be made known by the Spirit unto him:

D&C 58:50
EM 3:1234
Whether this serves as a statement of the will of God, we should be hesitant to assert.

58.51 Sidney Rigdon was also charged with the responsibility to produce a letter that could be sent to all of the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ, that they be invited to contribute as much as they could for the purchase of land in Jackson county. The intended goal was to buy all of the available land from the federal government which could be obtained for less than two dollars per acre. The developed land was desired as well, even though the cost would be considerably more.

58.52 The purchase of the land of Zion was to be an act of faith and unity, binding the hearts and minds of the people not only to the idea of a prophesied city of holiness, but also to the principles of righteousness which made such a place possible.

58.52.13—disciples—That is to say, the baptized members of the Church.
58.52.16–18—children of men—The subscriptions could also be sought from those who were not yet members of the Church of Jesus Christ. Their contributions could, needless to say, inspire them to learn more about the establishment of Zion and the principles of righteousness that were leading to the founding of the New Jerusalem.

58.52.27–30—whole region of country—The Lord had been quite explicit in an earlier revelation that Independence, Missouri, was to be the center place and the site for the great Temple. All of the land that could be bought west of the courthouse should be purchased by the saints, from Independence to the western border of the state of Missouri. In addition, the Lord counseled that every tract bordering by the prairies should be purchased (see 57.3–5). By the July 1833, when the Missourians rose up against the disciples of Christ in Jackson county, the Church had acquired less than a tenth of the designated land.

58.53 The purchase of the lands of Zion was a far superior manner than any other possible way to acquire property. As it turned out, because of the reticence of the saints to make sacrifices to obtain a financial foothold in the land, the original settlers found it to their advantage to harass the saints who had begun to establish themselves in Jackson county. The saints were attacked openly in July 1833, and the Church then proposed to send a body of armed men to reinstate them. The number proposed by the Lord was for five hundred men to be gathered; in the end only 205 would make the journey, an insufficient number in the face of the obstinacy and avarice of the Missourians. The properties would be lost as the disciples of Christ were driven from their lands and homes, first into the state of Illinois and then into the intermountain west. Beginning in the early part of the nineteenth century, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has invested in great tracts of land in Jackson county, far more than anticipated by the membership of the Church in 1831. All this without the shedding of blood.

58.54 Along with those who would cultivate land and keep herds and flocks, there would be a need for saints with specialized skills. The mercantile and printing needs of Zion had already been provided for by the appointment of Sidney Gilbert and William W. Phelps. Blacksmiths, tanners, weavers, wheelwrights, cooperers, millers, teachers, and the like would ultimately be in demand as the community grew.

58.54.25—saints—in reference to the membership of the Church of Jesus

51 And an epistle and subscription, to be presented unto all the churches to obtain moneys, to be put into the hands of the bishop, of himself or the agent, as seemeth him good or as he shall direct, to purchase lands for an inheritance for the children of God.

52 For, behold, verily I say unto you, the Lord willet that the disciples and the children of men should open their hearts, even to purchase this whole region of country, as soon as time will permit.

53 Behold, here is wisdom. Let them do this lest they receive none inheritance, save it be by the shedding of blood.

54 And again, inasmuch as there is land obtained, let there be workmen sent forth of all kinds unto this land, to labor for the saints of God.
Christ, those who have covenanted to no longer partake of the wickedness of the world. The Greek word used in the New Testament means “those not of the earth”.

58.55 As the needs of Zion were perceived, so then would the specialties be received into the city of the New Jerusalem. The availability and adaptability of the land to those specialties would also have to be determined by the presiding authorities so that there would be no confusion in the society. Clearly some professions required ready access to flowing water, others needs abundant firewood or access to coal. All of these requirements could be foreseen and adequately planned for.

58.56 While it was true that many aspects of the building up of a new community can be anticipated, yet in this particular case, a methodical process was necessary. The saints were beginning to establish a city that would one day serve as one of the capitals of the entire earth, a place from which the administration of the Kingdom of God would be conducted. Those who had the power to gaze into the future were better equipped to know how any given street should be laid out, where certain enterprises should be established, that future development might not be inadvertently impeded. There was a need for places to be prepared for those who would be called to inhabit the land of Zion, lest the saints be worn out by exposure while they waited for necessary shelter, food, or clothing. All of these things had to be coordinated.

58.57 The next day following the receipt of this revelation, 2 August 1831, the members of the Colesville Branch gathered on the property that had been purchased for their inheritance by Bishop Partridge. Sidney Rigdon stood before them and asked whether they were willing as a people to receive that land as the portion of the land of Zion. After having asserted that they would and after having expressed a willingness to live their lives in accordance with the law of God, Sidney dedicated and consecrated the land for the blessing and the benefit of those present and their posterity. On 3 August 1831, Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Oliver Cowdery, W.W. Phelps, Edward Partridge, Martin Harris, Joseph Coe and others gathered at the spot for the Temple in Independence, Missouri, where, after reading Psalms 87, the site was dedicated.

58.57–6—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to

55 Let all these things be done in order; and let the privileges of the lands be made known from time to time, by the bishop or the agent of the church.

D&C 58:55
MD 548

56 And let the work of the gathering be not in haste, nor by flight; but let it be done as it shall be counseled by the elders of the church at the conferences, according to the knowledge which they receive from time to time.

D&C 58:56
EM 2:703

57 And let my servant Sidney Rigdon consecrate and dedicate this land, and the spot for the temple, unto the Lord.

D&C 58:57
DS 2 237
chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

58.58 The conference referred to here was held the day following the dedication of the Temple site, on 4 August 1831 in the home of Joshua Lewis in the presence of the Colesville Branch. Joseph, Sidney, and Oliver departed from Independence, Missouri, on 9 August 1831 in the company of eight of their brethren: W.W. Phelps and Sidney Gilbert were among them.

58.58.14–15—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

58.58.17–19—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

58.58.23–24—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

58.58.30—residue—That is to say, the remainder of the work that had
been appointed unto them before they had made the trip to Missouri.

58.59 There would be those among the prophet’s companions who would think of themselves as exceptions to this general rule. When the near tragedy took place at Mcllwaine’s Bend on the Missouri River, the Lord reiterated his counsel. Only Sidney Gilbert and W.W. Phelps were given leave to travel in haste because of their specific assignment in Cincinnati, Ohio, to obtain a printing press (see 61.7). Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Oliver Cowdery were to travel by land or by canal, but not upon the river courses (see 61.23). These three were not to preach to any congregation until after they had arrived in Cincinnati (see 61.30). The rest of the elders were to preach continually from that geographical point on the river until they arrived back in Ohio (see 61.33).

58.60 Ziba did not lose his membership in the Church, nor was he banished from the company of the saints of the Colesville Branch. On 11 August 1831 he married Rebecca Hopper, a member of a family that he had been instrumental in bringing into the Church while laboring as a missionary in Missouri. He was subsequently restored to his position as an elder in the Church by Lyman Wight on 2 October 1832. When the saints were driven from Jackson county, he left activity in the Church.

58.60.8–9—Ziba Peterson—Ziba Peterson was called along with Parley P. Pratt and Peter Whitmer, Junior, to serve as missionaries under the direction of Oliver Cowdery on 17 October 1830. At some point in his missionary labors he transgressed the commandments of God and was severely rebuke for his sins. The chastisement became public during the conference held 4 August 1831 with the Colesville branch. There he freely confessed his transgression.

58.61 Only two of the traveling elders who had been called by revelation in Kirtland, Ohio, some weeks before had arrived in Jackson county by the time Joseph Smith and his companions departed for home: Isaac Morley and Ezra Booth. On 13 August 1831 on the banks of the Missouri River, Joseph Smith’s company met several other elders who were still making their way to Jackson county. The instructions were the same, that they were to continue to Zion and there it would be revealed to them by counsel and revelation exactly how they should proceed.

58.62 After the departure of Joseph, Sidney, and Oliver, Edward Partridge would be the presiding officer of the Church in Zion. The conduct of the travelling elders would be determined as they met together with the Bishop and the saints.

59 And let no man return from this land except he bear record by the way, of that which he knows and most assuredly believes.

60 Let that which has been bestowed upon Ziba Peterson be taken from him; and let him stand as a member in the church, and labor with his own hands, with the brethren, until he is sufficiently chastened for all his sins; for he confesseth them not, and he thinketh to hide them.

61 Let the residue of the elders of this church, who are coming to this land, some of whom are exceedingly blessed even above measure, also hold a conference upon this land.

62 And let my servant Edward Partridge direct the conference which shall be held by them.

D&C 58:59
EM 4:1569
D&C 58:60
DNB 3 223
FW 10, 56
MD 122
58.63 Although the conference might determine a specific track or a timeframe that applied directly to each pair of missionaries, the general guideline was that they were to return anxiously engaged in preaching the Gospel to the inhabitants of the land. It is to be wondered if they would also return to visit with the many converts that they had taught and baptized along their way to the land of Zion.

58.64 The missionary labors of Oliver Cowdery and his companions had brought about a great harvest, particularly in Kirtland, Ohio, and environs. Many of the companionships that had been appointed by the Lord to preach their way to Zion were likewise successful in their labors. These two early major attempts to announce the restoration of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ were, in fact, harbingers of that which would follow. Eventually, the message would be taken to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people in order to gather up the lost sheep of Israel and to provide a refuge from the storm that would befall the earth prior to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

58.65 There is no more auspicious announcement given unto the children of men in this dispensation.

58.65.8—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

59.0.1 The desire to build up the Kingdom of God upon the earth and to establish Zion in the hearts and minds of the saints have been the objects of every prophet who has lived upon this earth since the days of Adam and Eve. Some of the servants of God, like Enoch and Melchizedek, have been extraordinarily successful, having brought their followers into the presence of God through translation. If the truth be known, the second coming of the Lord...
Jesus Christ will bring about a similar translation, not just of a small portion of the earth, but of the whole planet. The world as we know it will receive its paradisiacal glory, that which pertains to a Terrestrial world. Those things which can only withstand a Celestial glory will be swept away for a thousand years.

59.0.2 At the beginning of this dispensation, the Father and the Son were clear in their instructions to the prophet Joseph Smith that this worthy goal would be placed before the inhabitants of the earth through the restoration of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, by the restoration of the fullness of the power of God invested in the priesthood bearers of the Church and Kingdom of God, and by means of an unprecedented outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon the earth. As part of the Lord’s instructions to his people, great treasure troves of revelation were revealed through the prophet Joseph Smith as he interviewed with the angel Moroni and other ancient servants of the Father and the Son. The principles of Zion were described in some detail within the pages of the Book of Mormon and the inspired translation of the Bible. Wherein these did not provide sufficient instruction as to how the saints should proceed in their labors to lay the foundations of the New Jerusalem, the Lord spoke directly through the prophet Joseph Smith.

59.0.3 One of the fundamental principles of Zion is reflected in the unity of the saints, their willingness to be guided by the word of the Lord and to love one another in perfect charity. This is not easily achieved when the disciples of Christ are at a distance from one another. At first there were three general gathering places. Colesville, Fayette, and Palmyra, all in the state of New York. In large part due to the successful missionary labors of Oliver Cowdery and his companions, a relatively safe haven was established in northeastern Ohio, in Kirtland and environs. The Lord then advised the saints in New York to make their way as soon as they could to join their counterparts in Ohio, where they would be given the Law of the Lord in preparation for the establishment of Zion. Within weeks of having obeyed that commandment, the Colesville Branch that had been situated on the farm of Leman Copley in Thompson, Ohio, was given the blessing of being the first of the membership of the Church to make the journey to the land of Zion in western Missouri, where Oliver Cowdery and his companions awaited them. On 3 July 1831, the saints of the Colesville Branch departed for Missouri. On or about 25 July 1831, they arrived in Jackson county a few days after the prophet Joseph Smith and his entourage. Within a few days the land of Zion was dedicated unto the Lord for the inheritances of the faithful, the Temple site was identified and also dedicated, and the first practical foundation of a home was laid by the leadership of the Church in Missouri.

59.0.4 Once these mighty tasks had been realized, the Lord revealed what the elders should do next, many of whom were to return to Kirtland, Ohio, while fervently preaching the Gospel of Christ to the inhabitants of the land. Others were given specific assignments to develop certain enterprises in Jackson county. The Colesville saints and others who were to remain in the land of Zion wished to know more about what they should be doing to observe the will of God. They perceived their immediate labors to be somewhat daunting. On the very day that this revelation was given, the prophet Joseph Smith and the members of the Colesville Branch buried the remains of Polly Knight, the mother of Newel Knight and the wife of Joseph Knight, Senior, one of the early supporters of the prophet as the Book of Mormon was being translated. The present revelation was, in part, a response to the sentiments and concerns that were beginning to arise in the hearts of the disciples of Christ. This
section appeared as Chapter LX in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 19 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

59.1 The members of the Colesville Branch and others who had travelled with them to Missouri had passed through great tribulations, not the least of which was the betrayal of Leman Copley shortly after their arrival in Thompson, Ohio. The three-week journey from Kirtland, Ohio, to Independence, Missouri, was arduous, many hundreds of miles on poor roads and adverse weather. The saints, however, bore their burdens with grace, aiding and supporting one another as they ventured toward the land of Zion. Their relationships with one another and with their God were enhanced as they labored together to do the will of God.

59.2 The faithful in Christ are received into glory, having been tested and proven in all things pertaining to their salvation and exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom. The righteous dead await the resurrection in the world of spirits in a paradise befitting the sons and daughters of God.

59.2.6—inherit—An allusion to the beatitude in the Sermon on the Mount wherein the Savior testifies that the meek are blessed because they will inherit the earth. The Colesville saints had been the very model of meekness in their suffering.

59.2.9—die—Polly Knight had been well-loved and she had borne her poor health and other afflictions with grace. She desired only to be able to stand upon the site of the New Jerusalem and then she could depart this life fulfilled.

59.3 The afflictions that the Colesville saints had suffered up to this point had purified and sanctified them greatly, and they had drawn near to their eternal Father in Heaven. While they lived, however, there would be other burdens to be borne in spite of the fact that they were attempting to do all that had been commanded of them. Their relative peace would last no more than two years and then they would be forced to leave their improvements and much of their personal property, and establish themselves in other places; first in northern Missouri, then in Illinois, and finally in the intermountain west. They would be blessed in the midst of adversity in lands that others did not initially desire. They would make the desert blossom as the rose to the astonishment of the gainers of the world. Eventually these faithful saints would enjoy an eternal inheritance upon this earth, to dwell in the presence of the Father and the Son forever.

59.3.12—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

59.4 As the saints pressed forward in faithful obedience, they would continue to be the objects of innumerable blessings, both seen and unseen. The powers of the priesthood would distill upon them. The wisdom and comfort of the full weight and measure of the Holy Ghost would be poured out upon them. They would be guided from day to day by inspired counsel, both from their

1 BEHOLD, blessed, saith the Lord, are they who have come up unto this land with an eye single to my glory, according to my commandments.

2 For those that live shall inherit the earth, and those that die shall rest from all their labors, and their works shall follow them; and they shall receive a crown in the mansions of my Father, which I have prepared for them.

3 Yea, blessed are they whose feet stand upon the land of Zion, who have obeyed my gospel; for they shall receive for their reward the good things of the earth, and it shall bring forth in its strength.

4 And they shall also be crowned with blessings from above, yea, and with commandments not a few, and with revelations in their time—they that are faithful and...
hearts and minds, and from those who had been called to preside in the Kingdom of God. They would escape the machinations of men and would be preserved by the hand of the Lord according to His love and wisdom.

59.5 What follows here are the specific instructions given to those who had been invited to enter into the covenants associated with the Law of Consecration. They had been permitted to establish themselves upon lands that had been dedicated and consecrated for the upbuilding of the Kingdom of God upon the earth, upon lands that would one day support the finest community ever perceived by the mind of man. The Lord begins by reiterating the greatest commandment that has ever been revealed to mankind. It was at the heart of the ancient Law of Moses.

Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. (Deuteronomy 6:3–7)

The Lord Jesus Christ sited this passage from the writings of Moses in response to the scribe’s question as to which of all of the commandments of God was the greatest (see MK C 12.28–30). Only by loving the Father in the same manner as did Jesus can we ever hope to obtain salvation and exaltation. All effectual worship and obedience is done in the name of the Son of God.

59.5.12—love—The Hebrew word which is used in Deuteronomy means to have “deep affection for”. The Greek word into which the Hebrew was translated and which is used here in Matthew is “agape”, which is love in the moral or social sense. Unconditional and divine.

59.5.20—heart—The Hebrew word used in Deuteronomy refers to the “innermost organ” of the body. Metaphorically used for the feelings, will, and intellect, the center of everything, courage, and understanding”. The Greek word “kardia” used in Matthew refers to the “heart, thoughts or feelings of the mind, and the middle of things”.

59.5.24—might—The Hebrew word in Deuteronomy is translated as “might” in the King James Version of the Bible and means “vehemently, wholly, speedily, diligently, utterly”. The Greek word employed in Matthew and translated as “mind” derives from roots which mean “deep thought, imagination, understanding disposition”.

59.5.25—mind—The Greek word employed in Mark that is translated as “mind” derives from roots which mean “deep thought, imagination, understanding disposition”.

59.5.27—strength—The Greek word which is translated in Mark as “strength” derives from roots which mean “force, ability, power”. One wonders if this noun had been implied in the Hebrew or at some point lost from the text of Deuteronomy, that Mark feels the necessity to insert it in his account of the Savior’s teachings.

59.5.33–34—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.
59.6 Again, we have a reiteration of the second of the greatest laws of God, frequently cited from the writings of Moses.

And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God. Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another. And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD. Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the LORD. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour. Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the LORD. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD. (Leviticus 19:9–18)

Moses explained at length some of the practical matters which constitute the principles of righteousness under the Law. Were a community to observe all that is contained within these few verses, there would be little of the tumult and turmoil that afflicts mankind. Largesse in favor of the poor and homeless, honesty in dealing with one’s fellow man, tenderness and consideration for the handicapped, fairness in judgment, and mercy coupled with justice (see also MK-C 12.31). At a bare minimum, the saints in Zion must be willing to live the points of the ten commandments provided in the Law of Moses.

59.6.3—love—Both the Hebrew and the Greek words used in Leviticus and Matthew are the same as those use in connection with the first commandment.

59.6.5—neighbor—The Hebrew word translated in Leviticus as “neighbor” means “associate, brother, companion, fellow, friend, husband, lover” and can be understood as anyone else. The Greek cognate employed in Mark’s text derives from roots which mean “near, close, fellow, countryman, friend”.

59.6.11—steal—Theft in the city of the New Jerusalem is anathema. In order to gain access to the blessings of Zion, a man or woman must be willing to consecrate all that they possess, all that they are or ever will be, to the Kingdom of God. A thief in Zion incurs the wrath of God like unto that which transpired as a result of the perfidy of Ananias and Sapphira (see AC-C 5.1–11).

59.6.14—adultery—The unity of Zion is based on mutual love and righteousness. To engage in the deceit and spiritual travesty of sexual immorality in such a setting as the New Jerusalem would be intolerable and ultimately destructive to the entire society.

59.6.16—kill—The fullness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is designed to provide for its observers, an abundant life, a well of living water springing up into eternal life. Denying a prosperous saint of the opportunity to live in accordance with the principles of righteousness in the flesh, it to deprive him of the means of his eternal progression. This
Gratitude is one of the fundamental elements of the perfect love of Jesus Christ. Love without gratitude is purposeless and has no eternal substance. One cannot love God with all of one’s heart without a sense of meekness and humility.

Anciently, the sufferings and humility of the Son of God was represented in the offering of a firstling of the flock, every aspect of the ritual revealing something of the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. The sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit, correctly performed, engraves upon the soul of the worshipper the profound significance and effect of the atoning sacrifice of the Savior.

59.8.17–18—*broken heart*—Representative of a deep and abiding remorse for having violated the will of God, for having flaunted the law.

59.8.21–22—*contrite spirit*—Representative of a deep and abiding humil- ity, viewing oneself as a child, dependent upon the mercy, kindness, and power of a just God.

The inhabitants of Zion had done much to manifest their willingness to keep the commandments of God. By their works they had borne witness of the love for the Father and the Son. Yet before the day of judgment there was much to be accomplished, and no man had cause to rest himself down upon a bed of past deeds. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is a discipline of activity, from morning until night. The structure of the Church of Jesus Christ is intended to bless the saints in their ongoing struggles to put off the natural man and to walk uprightly before the God of Heaven. Observance of the Sabbath Day is not just for those who need constant reminders about the validity of their covenants; it is one of the major means by which the children of men are bound together as the sons and daughters of God.

The Sabbath was made for man, to be a blessing and a benefit to him. Those who have abided by the points of this particular commandment need not have any man explain to them the benefits thereof. They are self-evident to the faithful, as their lives are enhanced and strengthened.

The formal exercise of renewing one’s covenants is accomplished in the congregations of the saints on the first day of the week, according to the commandment. However, the members of the Church of Jesus Christ have need to perform their personal devotions all throughout their waking hours, that they might avoid all sin and temptation to sin. Having a constant awareness of the hand of God in our lives is one of the premier blessings of having received the full weight and measure of the influence and power of the Spirit of God. The saints dwelling in Zion were expected to be of this sort of attitude all of the time, no matter the circumstances they might find themselves in.

The gathering of the disciples of Jesus Christ on the first day of the week, gives them the opportunity to renew and express their sentiments of love and forgiveness to one another, strengthening their unity of heart and mind. All of the saints were to be given opportunity to instruct one another in the spirit of brotherhood, without vanity or rancor. In this spirit of peace and joy, the covenants previously entered into may be renewed and strengthened as each partakes of the emblems of the sacrifice of the Son of God.

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7 Thou shalt thank the Lord thy God in all things.
8 Thou shalt offer a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in righteousness, even that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit.
9 And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unsnared from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day;
10 For verily this is a day appointed unto you to rest from your labors, and to pay thy devo- tions unto the Most High;
11 Nevertheless thy vows shall be offered up in righteousness on all days and at all times;
12 But remember that on this, the Lord’s day, thou shalt offer thine oblations and thy sacraments unto the Most High, confessing thy sins unto thy brethren, and before the Lord.

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D&C 59:7
DNTC 3 38
GD 288
D&C 59:7, 17–19, 21
EM 1:128
D&C 59:7–12
AGQ 1 85
D&C 59:7–13
AGQ 2 59
D&C 59:7–14
AGQ 1 101
DS 2 340
D&C 59:7–24
DS 3 34
D&C 59:8
DS 1 306
MD 161
TSWK 218
CR95-A 91
CR96-O 81
EM 1:283, 309
EM 3:1245, 1248
D&C 59:8–9
CR98-O 50
D&C 59:8–12
DNTC 2 165
MD 542, 825
D&C 59:8–13
AGQ 1 92
D&C 59:9
MD 661
TSWK 221
CR96-O 78
CR02-A 34
EM 1:299
EM 3:1245
D&C 59:9–10
AF 455
FPM 270
D&C 59:9–12
AF 452
MD 662
D&C 59:9–13
MF 47
EM 3:1241
D&C 59:9–14
MD 180
PM 393
D&C 59:9–17
DNTC 1 204,
59.13 Ancient Israel learned from their own experience that the six days prior to the Sabbath were sufficient to prepare for a seventh day devoid of common labor. They learned through the instrumentality of the manna, that their Lord would provide for them abundantly if they would follow His counsel. Clearly there were tasks that could not be avoided, such as the preparing of and the partaking of meals. Yet, the wording of the commandment is such that we should probably understand that the Sunday meals in Zion were to less elaborate than those of any day of the week.

59.13.23—fasting—The implication here is that the food consumed during the Sabbath Day would less complex and perhaps to some people’s thinking, less substantive than that prepared on other days.

59.13.33—joy—The Sabbath Day is a time of contemplation and not one devoted surfeiting one’s appetites. There can be pleasure and physical contentment in gratifying oneself, but little joy is derived there from.

59.14 One of the major purposes of fasting in to obtain a heightened awareness of the spiritual realm. So long as the physical world is preeminent, our ability to sense the delicate and tender promptings of the Spirit of God suffers. Fasting initially produces weakness and hunger, but these may be transcended through prayer, opening conduits of pure communication with the infinite. Inasmuch as God the Father is the most joyful of beings, to come into His presence in any degree and in any manner is to partake of His love and compassion. Hence, faithful fasting and prayer can produce no other effect than joy.

59.15 Conscious obedience to the commandments of God fares best when the saints comprehend that the laws of the Celestial Kingdom have been given for our benefit, that we might learn something of our Heavenly Father, his character, attributes, and perfections. Coupled with that growing awareness is the knowledge that we are His sons and daughters, beings of light and truth, and as such we are capable of acquiring those attributes and perfections ourselves. They are all present within us in embryonic form already and need only to be nourished by the power and the influence of the Holy Ghost. Our humility, gratitude, and happiness should reflect our eternal prospects. As we grow in spiritual awareness, we learn that certain sorts of conduct, those inspired by the spirit of the natural man, hinder our appreciation of the love and mercy of God.

59.16 In the beginning, Adam and Eve were made lords of the entire earth, and while they resided in the Garden of Eden, all life pertained to their kingdom. With the transgression against the counsel of God, the earth suffered a great change, falling from its paradisiacal glory to its present Telestial state. Much of the plant and animal life suffered a similar change, and in many respects followed the example of the lord of their world by refusing to be led and directed by our first parents. After the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the earth will be returned to its former state and the viciousness within the animal world, together with the deleterious changes in plant life, will be reverse, all life being restored to its true nature, that which prevailed in the Garden. The obedience and resultant spirituality of the saints dwelling in Zion would contribute to the restoration.

59.17 In the city of Zion, when all of her inhabitants are abiding by the covenants into which they have entered, there is an abundance of all of those things which bring comfort and contentment to the children of men. There will be no poor in the city of the New Jerusalem because there will be no want

13 And on this day thou shalt do none other thing, only let thy food be prepared with singleness of heart that thy fasting may be perfect, or, in other words, that thy joy may be full.

14 Verily, this is fasting and prayer, or in other words, rejoicing and prayer.

15 And inasmuch as ye do these things with thanksgiving, with cheerful hearts and countenances, not with much laughter, for this is sin, but with a glad heart and a cheerful countenance—

16 Verily I say, that inasmuch as ye do this, the fulness of the earth is yours, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and that which climbeth upon the trees and walketh upon the earth;

17 Yea, and the herb, and the good things which come of the earth, whether for food or for raiment, or for houses, or for barns, or
of any kind. All of nature will participate in the joy and happiness of the Millennium.

59.18 Not only will the produce of the earth be abundant, plenty for all animal and human life, during the thousand years of the Lord’s personal reign, but there will be an abundance of natural beauty, flowers and other glorious species of vegetation that will be provided to inspire the heart and mind of the children of men. All of these existed in the Garden of Eden, and they will prevail upon the earth together with all of the other anticipated blessings of the Terrestrial world.

59.19 We may expect that materials for making cloth, flax, cotton, and other resources will prosper as well. Clothing will be of an unexcelled quality and the abundance thereof will provide all of the inhabitants of Zion with comfort and beauty. Condiments of all kinds will be plentiful continuously to provide a panoply of flavors to enhance meals. Natural scents will fill the air. The act of living upon the earth will be delightful, not just because of the absence of the vile and the troublesome, but for the presence of all that is practically good and beautiful as well.

59.20 In the city of Zion, every man will enjoy the same privileges. There will be no hoarding of precious commodities. There will be no speculative trading of those things which bring happiness and joy into the hearts and minds of men. By the same token, there will be no abuse of the opulence which shall prevail. No man will seek to rise above his neighbors, neither in wealth, comfort, or power. All things will be put to their proper use in moderation, according to the wisdom of God.

59.21 The wrath of the Lord is not kindled against the ignorant, but rather against those who know what is expected of them and chose to follow their own willful spirit of rebellion. The rebellious are fundamentally selfish, seeking nothing but their own comfort, fame, and power. They are the objects of their own devotion. In seeking after the pleasures and lusts of the world to satisfy their carnal desires, they squelch their potential as children of the Most High. They ignore the counsel of God and alienate themselves from His Spirit, thereby sinking into abject misery. If they do not speedily repent, they will find themselves without happiness in time and throughout all eternity.

59.22 The saints had sought the counsel of the Lord in part as a result of the death of Polly Knight. They desired to know how it was possible to be happy in the midst of sorrow, disease, and death. The Lord had reiterated several passage in the scriptures with which they should have already been familiar. In other words, they already had the answers to their questions before them. If they had been diligent in seeking wisdom from those revelations that had been provided, they would have been further along in their eternal progression.

59.22.10—prophets—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

59.23 There is no conscious act of righteousness that does not cause spiritual growth in the hearts and minds of the obedient. Keeping the commandments invites the Spirit of the Lord into the lives of the saints, whereby they are nourished and edified, becoming more like unto their eternal parents. With greater spirituality comes greater awareness of the love of God and an enhanced for orchards, or for gardens, or for vineyards;

18 Yea, all things which come of the earth, in the season thereof, are made for the benefit and the use of man, both to please the eye and to gladden the heart;

19 Yea, for food and for raiment, for taste and for smell, to strengthen the body and to enliven the soul.

20 And it pleaseth God that he hath given all these things unto man; for unto this end were they made to be used, with judgment, not to excess, neither by extortion.

21 And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things, and obey not his commandments.

22 Behold, this is according to the law and the prophets; wherefore, trouble me no more concerning this matter.

23 But learn that he who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward, even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come.
59.24 The Lord Jesus Christ had spoken through his servant, the prophet Joseph Smith. The words of the revelation had been written down. Those who had been present as the revelation had been dictated should have felt the power and influence of the Holy Ghost present with them. Those that did not had cause to repent. Those who would later read the words of the published revelation were assured that the Spirit would likewise testify unto them of the truthfulness of the sentiments contained therein.

59.24.12—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

60.0.1 At the time that Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were commanded to prepare themselves for a visit to the land of Zion, several others were assigned to accompany him. Among them were Edward Partridge, Martin Harris, Sidney Gilbert and his wife, William W. Phelps, and Joseph Coe. They left Kirtland, Ohio, on 19 June 1831, traveling by several different means of transportation, taking occasion from time to time to preach the Gospel to the inhabitants of the lands through which they passed. They arrived in Independence, Missouri, on 20 July 1831, attending to a variety of tasks in anticipation of the arrival of the first party of saints called to inherit the lands set aside for them. The land of Zion was subsequently dedicated and consecrated unto the Lord and His servants, as was the site for the Temple of the New Jerusalem. Although modest in its inception, the first efforts to build up the city of Zion were also accomplished in the company of the Colesville Branch of the Church of Jesus Christ. Several of Joseph’s traveling companions received specific assignments as to how they should proceed. Sidney Gilbert and W.W. Phelps were assigned to travel quickly to Cincinnati, Ohio, in order to make arrangements for the purchase of a printing press and other material needed to establish a publishing house in Independence. Sidney Rigdon, Oliver Cowdery, and Joseph Smith were instructed to make their way to Cincinnati as well in order to preach the Gospel again in that place, and from thence back to Kirtland. The others were commanded to preach the Gospel two by two from St. Louis, Missouri, to Kirtland, Ohio. These brethren left Independence on 9 August 1831; Joseph and his traveling companions arrived in Kirtland in 19 August 1831.

60.0.2 At the time that Joseph Smith was tasked with the journey to Jackson county, thirty other men received missionary calls as well. They were to travel two by two from Kirtland, Ohio, to Independence, Missouri, preaching the Gospel with clarity and by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. Most of them did so, which brought about blessings to the Church of Jesus Christ and to themselves. There were a few, however, who looked upon their callings as merely a way to be in Jackson county when wonderful things were going to transpire. They did not spend much time preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the lands through which they travelled, but quickly passed through the country so as to be in Missouri in the shortest amount of time. Isaac Morley and Ezra Booth, for example, arrived about the same time as the Colesville Branch. It was clear to anyone with eyes to see that they had not been particularly diligent in raising the voice of warning to the people by whom they passed as they made their way to the land of Zion.
60.3 The day before Joseph and several others were to depart for St. Louis on the first leg of their journey home, many of the other missionaries inquired as to how they should about their business. The instructions would be general, simply indicating that once the elders arrived on the shores of the Mississippi River they were to preach the Gospel two by two back to the land of Kirtland. Nothing, however, was said regarding the inhabitants of the land between Independence and St. Louis, and apparently no one was inspired enough to even ask the question. Both the question and the answer would be permanent engraved upon their hearts and minds three days later on the banks of the Missouri River at Melhwaie’s Bend. This section appeared as Chapter LXI in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 70 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

60.1 Note the reference to the five elders that were to return quickly to the east, specifically Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Gilbert, and W.W. Phelps. Sidney Gilbert and W.W. Phelps arrived in St. Louis before the Joseph, Oliver, and Sidney Rigdon, presumably separating from main group sometime after the events at Melhwaie’s Bend. When the five elders took up their journey the following day, five other elders would accompany them. Presumably, these brethren were present when this revelation was given. As a whole they were complimented by the Lord for their willingness to make the arduous trip from Kirtland, Ohio, to Independence, Missouri.

60.2 Some of the missionaries had not perceived the great opportunities that had been presented to them as they made their way from Ohio to Missouri, and as a result had forfeited the blessings that the Lord had in reserve for them.

60.2.20—talent—that is to say, the testimony of the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ, of the Book of Mormon, of the priesthood authority that had been conferred upon them, and of the power and influence of the gift of the Holy Ghost that each of them had received.

60.3 We may easily point to Ezra Booth who had accompanied Isaac Morley in their hasty trip to Missouri. He returned from his mission a lesser man and it was not long before he was in open rebellion against the Church and Kingdom of God. Because he was unwilling to follow counsel, he soon found himself devoid of the Spirit of God and his tender testimony of the truth withered and died within him. There were others who did not fare well because of their hesitancy to speak the truth to a lost and fallen world.

60.4 Ordinary men filled with the Holy Ghost are called upon to testify of the truths of eternity. The inhabitants of the earth who are willing to hearken to their words, being sensitive to the whisperings of the Spirit that accompany the testimonies of the righteous, will respond favorably. If a servant of God falls short of his spiritual privileges so that those listening to him are distracted by the things of this world rather than inspired by the promptings of the spirit, the missionary will find himself without merit or honor in the Kingdom of God.

60.4.13—armies—that is the army of the Lord in the latter days are His chosen servants who have been called and ordained to preach the principles of eternal life to the inhabitants of the earth. Those who are not valiant, will be left without honor in the Kingdom of God.

60.4.28—jewels—that is the prophet Isaiah alludes to this mounting of the gems of the Kingdom of God, the saints of the Most High: “For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, for I, the Lord, rule in the heavens above, and among the armies of the earth; and in the day when I shall make up my jewels, all men shall know what it is that bespeaketh the power of God.”

D&C 60:2
DNCT 2 515
MD 37
MF 204
EM 3:1132
and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.” (Isaiah 62:1–5)

60.4.33—what—That is to say, the manner of men who have been called upon to testify of the truth. The nations will be warned and forewarned of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the latter day, every man, woman, and child who has been warned will know that the witnesses that appeared before them were indeed the sons and daughters of God.

60.5 These particular instructions were given to Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon, W.W. Phelps, and Sidney Gilbert who had been given charge of assignments that required them to move quickly from Independence to St. Louis. The other five elders who ended up traveling with the group had not bothered to ask whether they should be included; they simply assumed that they would. For this lack of spiritual sensitivity, they would be seriously chastised four days later. The travelers were to do as they deemed best. Apparently it did not occur to any of the five that their travel should be more pedestrian than that of the prophet and his four companions.

60.5.22—craft—On 9 August 1831, ten of the elders departed for St. Louis in canoes that they had obtained for the purpose. All went moderately well until 12 August 1831.

60.5.46–47—St. Louis—A city in eastern Missouri near the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers.

60.6 Oliver Cowdery and his missionary companions had preached the Gospel in Cincinnati in the fall of 1830 as part of their mission to testify to the Native Americans of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. They did not have the same success there that they had achieved in Kirtland, Ohio. When Joseph and his party had first passed through Cincinnati on their way to Missouri in the early summer of 1831, they had spent some time in the town preaching the principles of the Gospel to the inhabitants. Joseph and Oliver returned to that community to refresh the saints and to continue their ministry there for a time as they had been instructed. Eventually, a rather large branch would be formed there which would subsequently receive their inheritance in the land of Zion, close by the place where the Colesville Branch had settled.

60.6.7–8—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned

5 But, verily, I will speak unto you concerning your journey unto the land from whence you came. Let there be a craft made, or bought, as seemeth you good, it mattereth not unto me, and take your journey speedily for the place which is called St. Louis.

6 And from thence let my servants, Sidney Rigdon, Joseph Smith, Jun., and Oliver Cowdery, take their journey for Cincinnati;
man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned.

He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph
Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education.

From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became
visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to
chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more
and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding
his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon
the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to
insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply dis-
appointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in
Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually
the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died
on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

60.6.9—11—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the
restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No
one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord
Jesus Christ.

60.6.13—14—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of
Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the
various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph
Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in
the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph
himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his
experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

60.6.19—Cincinnati—A nexus on the banks of the Ohio River in the
southwest corner of Ohio that served river, canal, and ground travelers.

60.7 When Joseph Smith and his company passed through Cincinnati, Ohio,
on their way to Jackson county, Missouri, they had met with Walter Scott,
one of the founders of the Disciples of Christ. Reverend Scott had manifested
a disturbing and antagonistic spirit against certain aspects of the power and
influence of the Holy Ghost and of the priesthood of God. We are not privy
as to exactly what happened on their return visit, but they were commanded
to testify with humility and simplicity of those things which they knew to be
true. They were successful in establishing a small branch of the Church in that
place.

60.8 It is clear from their conduct that these five men were not so much
interested in keeping the commandments of the Lord as they were to justify
their return home as quickly as possible.

60.8.4—residue—that is to say, the other five elders who had proposed to
travel with the prophet and his other companions.

60.8.9—10—St. Louis—A city in eastern Missouri near the confluence of
the Missouri and Mississippi rivers.

60.8.11—13—two by two—At some point, the five brethren should have
taken thought as to how they were to fulfill the Lord’s commandment
to travel two by two if there were five of them.

60.8/32—churches—that is to say, the various branches from which they
had originally been called

60.9 Not only would the Church be benefited by the converts between Kirt-
land and Independence, so also would the branches from which the mission-
aries had been called would be blessed. If the elders had done their duty, they
would have been far more capable priesthood leaders by the time they arrived

7 And in this place let them lift up their voice and declare my word
with loud voices, without wrath or doubting, lifting up holy hands
upon them. For I am able to make you holy, and your sins are forgiven you.

8 And let the residue take their journey from St. Louis, two by
two, and preach the word, not in haste, among the congregations of
the wicked, until they return to the churches from whence they came.

9 And all this for the good of the churches; for this intent have I sent
them.
home, prepared to be a blessing and a benefit to those with whom they dwelt.

60.10 We are not certain as to financial circumstances that the elders found themselves in. Some expenses could have been foreseen and provided for before the brethren had left home. Some may have found that they had not carried sufficient funds with them and wondered how they could possibly proceed. Some of the missionaries who had accompanied Oliver Cowdery to Missouri had taken temporary employment in Independence and elsewhere in order to maintain themselves in the mission field. Evidently some of the elders had raised the question before the revelation was given.

60.10.5–6—Edward Partridge—The Bishop of the Church who had received the funds consecrated for the establishment of Zion.

60.11 Most of the elders had means available to them in Ohio and would have called upon those funds if they had had immediate access to them. Those with resources would essentially be borrowing from the sacred funds until they could return them. Those who had simply given their all and had little or nothing waiting for them upon their return would not be required to repay their travel expenses.

60.12 Most of the thirty missionaries who had been called to preach the Gospel from Kirtland to Independence were still actively engaged in their labors along the way and had not, as yet, reached the land of Zion. What would be their immediate instructions?

60.13 While it seems certain that those who arrived in Independence, Missouri, before Joseph and his companions were ready to depart for home had been somewhat less diligent than others in the same ministry, yet it also seems clear that there were others who had not been particularly diligent notwithstanding the fact that they had taken more time on the road to get there. These later arriving elders were not to be as vagabonds on the streets of Independence or as idlers among the Colesville saints. Additionally, they were expected to be forthright as to who and what they were insofar as the Church and Kingdom of God were concerned. Their missions had not come to an end the moment they crossed the city limits of Independence, Missouri.

60.14 This counsel may have seemed hard to some of the missionaries. Many of them had been particularly devoted to the instructions that they had received in Kirtland, Ohio, before they left on their missions. Yet, by the time they arrived in Jackson county, many of the seminal tasks that had been given to the prophet to do had been accomplished and he and his companions were already on their way back to Ohio. It is clear from their subsequent actions that some of these elders were irreparably disappointed.

60.14.11—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

60.14.19–20—speedily return—That is to say, the elders were not to spend a great deal of time sight-seeing in Jackson county. They were to pay

10 And let my servant Edward Partridge impart of the money which I have given him, a portion unto mine elders who are commanded to return;

11 And he that is able, let him return it by the way of the agent; and he that is not, of him it is not required.

12 And now I speak of the residue who are to come unto this land.

13 Behold, they have been sent to preach my gospel among the congregations of the wicked; wherefore, I give unto them a commandment, thus: Thou shalt not idle away thy time, neither shalt thou bury thy talent that it may not be known.

14 And after thou hast come up unto the land of Zion, and hast proclaimed my word, thou shalt speedily return, proclaiming my word among the congregations of the wicked, not in haste, neither in wrath nor with strife.
their respects to the saints and then make their return journey without much ado.

60.14.32—haste—While the time of the elders in the land of Zion might be necessarily short, yet their return missionary labors were not to be truncated.

60.15 The Lord’s anointed represent the powers of heaven and have bestowed upon them the authority of God to deal with the efforts of the adversary to destroy the souls and eternal future of men. They are given charge to bring unto the Lord Jesus Christ all those who will hearken to the whisperings of the Spirit, who will exercise faith unto salvation. There are in the world, those who may easily be classed as obstructionists, who have taken upon themselves the responsibility to hinder the progress of the Church and Kingdom of God. If and when these oppressors become intolerable in the absolute sense, the servants of God have recourse such as that which is alluded to here in this verse. But let those who bear the Priesthood of God beware, lest they mistake the spirit of the evil one. Not all aversion is the product of sin and degradation. Sometimes our own weaknesses are reflected in the minds, hearts, and actions of those whom we have been called to serve. Let not pride or undue self-esteem hinder our own ability to discern the truth of the matter that we seek vengeance or retribution unworthily.

60.15.2–8—shake off the dust of thy feet—A serious consequence for a community having rejected the servants of God. The Jewish notion regarding the dust of any particular land had to do whether that land was polluted or not. Vile, persistent, wickedness could bring a curse upon the place where a people dwelt. Hence, the valley of Shum became a great wasteland after the people of Canaan destroyed the people who once lived there. The land from which Cain grew his sustenance would no longer produce for him after he had spilled the life blood of Abel upon it. The wickedness of the cities of the plain became so great that only the cleansing fire from heaven would suffice. Jewish orthodoxy thought much in this vein about the land and city of Samaria such that they would make the wide detour to the eastern side of the River Jordan rather than pass through that “defiled” land and be polluted by its dust.

60.16 With the instructions that had been given in previous revelations in conjunction with the present one, the elders had sufficient guidance to direct them in the course of their affairs.

60.17 Any specific guidance that Sidney and Oliver would need in the immediate future would come through the prophet Joseph Smith as they travelled from place to place. They would be instructed as to their duties and evaluated according to their obedience to the commandments that they would receive. The same would be true for the rest of the elders once they returned from their missions.

60.17.8–10—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

60.17.17–18—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ulti-

15 And shake off the dust of thy feet against those who receive thee not, not in their presence, lest thou provoke them, but in secret; and wash thy feet, as a testimony against them in the day of judgment.

16 Behold, this is sufficient for you, and the will of him who hath sent you.

17 And by the mouth of my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., it shall be made known concerning Sidney Rigdon and Oliver Cowdery. The residue hereafter. Even so. Amen.
mately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

60.17.20–21—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

60.17.27—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

61.0.1 On 8 August 1831, the prophet Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon, W.W. Phelps, and Sidney Gilbert were given rather specific instructions as to what their immediate assignments would entail. They were to travel as quickly as possible to the city of St. Louis, and from thence to Cincinnati, Ohio, where they were to continue their ministry in that place which had begun some time earlier. From there the first three were to return to Kirtland, Ohio, where their duties in the presidency of the Church and other tasks would occupy them for a time. Elders Phelps and Gilbert were to continue to pursue their appointed task of obtaining a printing press and all of the accompanying materials to establish the Church’s publishing house in Independence, Missouri. The prophet and his company left Independence the next day by canoe, traveling quickly downstream until 11 August 1831 when they arrived at a location then known as McIlwaine’s Bend, near modern day Miami, Missouri. At that point they were about 192 miles from Independence and 165 miles from St. Louis. During the three days of travel, they had averaged about 64 miles a day by canoe. The evening of the 9th of August, the company camped at Fort Osage, near modern day Sibley, Missouri, having traveled no more than about 20 miles. The following day nothing worthy of note tran-
spired and they apparently travelled a considerable distance down the river. The third day was fraught with dangers that were thought to have been typical of the place and the time of year. William W. Phelps, however, was permitted a vision which prompted this Section of the Doctrine and Covenants to be revealed. The next morning, on 12 August 1831, the prophet Joseph Smith received this present revelation.

61.0.2 Accompanying the prophet Joseph Smith and his immediate company of four brethren, were five other elders who had chosen join in the trip downstream, hoping to return to their families and homes as quickly as possible. The five had apparently interpreted the Lord’s specific council to the leadership of the Church of Jesus Christ as having been directed at them as well. Having the benefit of hindsight to open our eyes, it is clear that the five elders had presumed too much. The Lord, however, was patient and allowed the ten brethren to pass through an extraordinary experience that would not only serve as a mild censure for the five elders, but would also be the means of revealing the powers of the adversary in the latter days. This section appeared as Chapter LXII in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 71 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

61.1 This verse is redolent of the opening verses of Section 19 of the Doctrine and Covenants where the Lord expressly states that He has retained all power unto himself, even to the destruction of Satan and all of his works. Therefore, notwithstanding the vision of W.W. Phelps who saw the destroyer riding upon the waters of the Missouri River in horrible power, the might of the Son of God far exceeded that feeble demonstration designed to inspire fear in the hearts of the servants of God.

61.1.6—everlasting—Before the earth was created, the Lord Jesus Christ was called and anointed to bear the power and authority of the Father. This stewardship is without end, but is as eternal as God Himself.

61.1.20—Alpha—The first letter of the Greek alphabet. This constitutes a reprise of the Lord’s imagery used in his revelation to John the Beloved (see RV-C 1.8 and RV-C 21.6).

61.1.22—Omega—The last letter of the Greek alphabet. This constitutes a reprise of the Lord’s imagery used in his revelation to John the Beloved (see RV-C 1.8 and RV-C 21.6).

61.1.24—beginning—An iteration in English of the idea represented by “Alpha”.

61.1.27—end—An iteration in English of the idea represented by “Omega”.

61.2 The Lord God of Israel is ever merciful and kind to those who are willing to submit to His will and seek His mercy. The events of the previous day had been unnerving, and no doubt each man had been somewhat introspective during the nighttime hours.

61.2.11—elders—Certainly all ten of the elders were being attentive, but we might conclude that five of them were being singled out because of their spiritual blindness.

61.2.19—20—this spot—that is to say, on the banks of the Missouri River at McIwaine’s Bend near Miami, Missouri.

61.2.22—sins—the forgiven sins may have been accumulating for some time. No doubt several of those whose lives had been endangered were wondering if their conduct had somehow exposed the party to the fury of the devil.

1 BEHOLD, and hearken unto the voice of him who has all power, who is from everlasting to everlasting, even Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

2 Behold, verily thus saith the Lord unto you, O ye elders of my church, who are assembled upon this spot, whose sins are now forgiven you, for I, the Lord, forgive sins, and am merciful unto those who confess their sins with humble hearts;
61.3 Five of the elders had been given responsibilities that necessitated their travelling as they had been, traversing nearly two hundred miles in three days. The other five, however, had their hearts elsewhere; they were not attuned to the spirit of their mission. They had been given instruction regarding their course of travel from St. Louis, Missouri, back to their homes in northeastern Ohio. Apparently, no one among them had thought to address the spiritual status of the inhabitants of the land in Missouri between Independence and St. Louis. This censure was doubly valuable to the five brethren because it is clear that they had not been particularly invested in the work of the ministry as they had quickly made their way to Missouri from Kirtland, Ohio.

61.4 When the additional five elders had begun to make preparations to depart with the prophet Joseph Smith and his companions, the Lord could have been proactive in discouraging this breach of the missionary spirit. He allowed them to accompany the prophet, however, that they might have this reflective time, after they had almost suffered death in the waters of the Missouri River. Their vivid remembrances of this episode could be the means of causing each of them to be more spiritually minded while attending to the errands on which the Lord would send them in the future.

61.4.21—hereafter—We may safely say that destruction by water has intensified during the past 180 years. Those who are familiar with the writings of the prophets of God are aware that the circumstances are not going to improve before the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

61.5 The latter days are to be filled with great trials and tribulations as the earth is prepared and cleansed for the coming of the Son of God in glory. At some point one third of all of the life in the sea will perish, together with one third of all of the ships of the children of men. The seas will more frequently heave beyond their bounds and the waterways upon the earth will become far more treacherous than they have been in the past. One does not have to be particularly learned in the sciences to witness many of these kinds of things transpiring.

61.6 Many of the saints would be gathered to Zion by sea and upon the waters of the great rivers. Notwithstanding the expressed promise of protection provided here, they were not to be foolish. They could not afford to be insensitive to the promptings of the Spirit of God as they travelled, for they could be easily forewarned regarding immediate dangers if they would but listen to the whisperings of the Holy Ghost.

61.7 Sidney Gilbert was in haste because of his particular responsibility for the Lord’s storehouse in Jackson county, Missouri. William W. Phelps had been charged to set up a printing establishment as soon as possible. Both men had been counseled to prepare their household for their immediate migration to Independence. William and Sidney were give leave to continue by canoe the rest of the journey to St. Louis, another 165 miles on the river.

61.7.8—Sidney Gilbert—Algernon Sidney Gilbert became acquainted with the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ late in 1830 or early 1831. We do not know whether or not he met any of the missionaries on their way to teach the Lamanites in the fall of 1830. His niece did acquire a copy of the Book of Mormon from John Whitmer when he visited Kirtland, Ohio, in mid-January 1831, an event that immediately communicated to her aunt and uncle. By 6 June 1831 Sidney was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ. On that date he received his commission and was ordained an elder by the prophet Joseph Smith.

3 But verily I say unto you, that it is not needful for this whole company of mine elders to be moving swiftly upon the waters, whilst the inhabitants on either side are perishing in unbelief.

4 Nevertheless, I suffered it that ye might bear record; behold, there are many dangers upon the waters, and more especially hereafter;

5 For I, the Lord, have decreed in mine anger many destructions upon the waters; yea, and especially upon these waters.

6 Nevertheless, all flesh is in mine hand, and he that is faithful among you shall not perish by the waters.

7 Wherefore, it is expedient that my servant Sidney Gilbert and my servant William W. Phelps be in haste upon their errand and mission.
Sidney Gilbert was commissioned by the Lord to be the agent for the Church in Missouri, to establish the store and look to the needs of the members of the Church there as directed by the Bishop, Edward Partridge. The store is operated successfully for about two years. In July 1833, the hostilities that had been seething between the saints and the original settlers, erupted in violence, which ultimately resulted in the destruction of the Independence store and the rifling of the goods that had been ensconced there. Sidney Gilbert raised up another store in Liberty, Missouri, across the river from Jackson county. Sidney Gilbert suffered great trials and tribulations at the hands of the Missourians. At one point, however, he and several others of the leadership of the Church in Jackson county, offered themselves as a ransom for the fleeing saints. The persecutions to their toll on Sidney and there were times when he simply believed that he could not muster sufficient strength to be obedient to the will of the Lord. Finally, he testified that he would rather die than preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. About the 26th of June 1834 he contracted cholera in Liberty, Missouri and died some three days later at age 45.

61.7.13–15—William W. Phelps—On 24 December 1830, William Phelps met the prophet Joseph Smith for the first time, but was not baptized until 10 June 1831 in Kirtland, Ohio. William Phelps desired to employ his talents and skills in advancing the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. For many years he had been an editor and publisher of newspapers in various communities throughout New York. He was commissioned by the Lord to be the Church’s publisher. He founded the Evening and Morning Star in Independence, Missouri, and on the same press began the printing of the first collection of revelations given to the prophet Joseph Smith, the Book of Commandments. That task was interrupted in July 1933, when a mob destroyed the printing shop together with many copies of the works in progress.

61.8 To have a broken heart and a contrite spirit is to suffer godly sorrow for sin that prompts a faithful man unto sincere repentance, and to recognize that all men are completely and mutually dependent upon the Lord Jesus Christ for immortality and eternal life. Not only could the ten elders be unified in their love for the Savior and for each other, they could also be unified in their understanding of the Lord’s will concerning each of them and as a whole. This episode on the Missouri River had brought them closer to that ideal state.

61.9 Imagine the faith of these two men. William W. Phelps had been privy to an open vision of Satan riding in horrible power upon the surface of the waters of the Missouri River. We cannot assume any other frame of mind for William than that of being somewhat unnerved by the experience. Sidney Gilbert would not have been enthused by their prospects except as he exercised faith in the comforting words of promise given through the prophet Joseph Smith. There were increasing dangers to be confronted, but these men would escape them according to their faith. Therefore, in their faith the two men embarked once again in their canoe.

61.9.17–18—Sidney Gilbert—Algernon Sidney Gilbert became acquainted with the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ late in 1830 or early 1831. We do not know whether or not he met any of the missionaries on their way to teach the Lamanites in the fall of 1830. His niece did acquire a copy of the Book of Mormon from John Whitmer when he visited Kirtland, Ohio in mid-January 1831, an event that immediately communicated to her aunt and uncle. By 6 June 1831 Sidney was a
member of the Church of Jesus Christ. On that date he received his commission and was ordained an elder by the prophet Joseph Smith. Sidney Gilbert was commissioned by the Lord to be the agent for the Church in Missouri, to establish the store and look to the needs of the members of the Church there as directed by the Bishop, Edward Partridge. The store is operated successfully for about two years. In July 1833, the hostilities that had been seething between the saints and the original settlers, erupted in violence, which ultimately resulted in the destruction of the Independence store and the rifling of the goods that had been ensconced there. Sidney Gilbert raised up another store in Liberty, Missouri, across the river from Jackson county. Sidney Gilbert suffered great trials and tribulations at the hands of the Missourians. At one point, however, he and several others of the leadership of the Church in Jackson county, offered themselves as a ransom for the fleeing saints. The persecutions to their toll on Sidney and there were times when he simply believed that he could not muster sufficient strength to be obedient to the will of the Lord. Finally, he testified that he would rather die than preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. About the 26th of June 1834 he contracted cholera in Liberty, Missouri and died some three days later at age 45.

61.9.20–22—William W. Phelps—On 24 December 1830, William Phelps met the prophet Joseph Smith for the first time, but was not baptized until 10 June 1831 in Kirtland, Ohio. William Phelps desired to employ his talents and skills in advancing the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. For many years he had been an editor and publisher of newspapers in various communities throughout New York. He was commissioned by the Lord to be the Church’s publisher. He founded the Evening and Morning Star in Independence, Missouri, and on the same press began the printing of the first collection of revelations given to the prophet Joseph Smith, the Book of Commandments. That task was interrupted in July 1833, when a mob destroyed the printing shop together with many copies of the works in progress.

61.10 We should probably assume that the subsequent 165 miles were solemn ones, filled with periods of prayer and meditation, petitioning their Father in Heaven for His protection and comfort while they pursued their course to accomplish His errand.

61.11 The other eight men were to travel with minimal equipment, and for the most part that consisted in clothing that would protect them from the elements. It would appear that from this point on they would be traveling without purse or scrip, which in the wilds of Missouri would provide sufficient opportunities to exercise their faith as well.

61.12 The personal belongings that would be unneeded for the rest of their pedestrian journey would be in the keeping of the agent of the Church of Jesus Christ. Sidney would carry these things in the canoe until they rejoined him in St. Louis.

61.12.4–5—Sidney Gilbert—Algernon Sidney Gilbert became acquainted with the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ late in 1830 or early 1831. We do not know whether or not he met any of the missionaries on their way to teach the Lamanites in the fall of 1830. His niece did acquire a copy of the Book of Mormon from John Whitmer when he visited Kirtland, Ohio in mid-January 1831, an event that immediately communicated to her aunt and uncle. By 6 June 1831 Sidney was a
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61.13 One of the great blessings that befell these eight men as they travelled by foot was their meeting with several of the travelling elders who were just arriving in Missouri as part of their mission to preach the Gospel between Kirtland, Ohio, and Independence, Missouri. The more than chance meeting must have been glorious, given the identity of the four missionaries encountered: Hyrum Smith, John Murdock, Harvey Whitlock, and David Whitmer. At this point, the Lord chooses to elaborate on the history of the earth and the nature of the various decrees that have been pronounced upon the earth and the waters of the earth.

61.14 During the fifth time period of creation, the Lord God blessed the waters in that it was prepared to receive fishes of all kinds, great whales, and other animal life which then found abundant habitations and opportunities for reproduction (see GE-C 1.20-22). In the book of Revelation, the Apostle John rehearsed the various plagues that would befall life on this planet in preparation for the Millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ. At the opening of the seventh seal, which revealed the events of the seventh thousand years of the temporal existence of the earth, John testified that he saw seven angels sounding their trumps, each heralding a destruction of some kind. The second trumpet announced the descent of a burning mountain falling into the sea, as the result of which a full third of all ships upon the sea and one third of all life in the sea perished (RV-CR.8–11). Later the Revelator described an angel pouring out a vial upon the sea which caused death to reign supreme in the oceans of the earth (RV-C 16.3). John the Beloved was permitted to dwell upon the earth past the time when he should have perished of old age. He was transfigured, Terrestrialized as it were, so that he continued as an active servant of God in the flesh. Precisely when and where he became the Lord’s instrument in these matters, we are without definite information.


61.15 The prophet Enoch saw the effects of the destructiveness of the waters of the earth in the latter days.

13 And now, behold, for your good I gave unto you a commandment concerning these things; and I, the Lord, will reason with you as with men in days of old.

14 Behold, I, the Lord, in the beginning blessed the waters; but in the last days, by the mouth of my servant John, I cursed the waters.

D&C 61:14
MM 2 354
D&C 61:14–15
DNTC 3 540
MD 726
D&C 61:14–19
EM 1:380
D&C 61:14–29
DHC 5 56

15 Wherefore, the days will come that no flesh shall be safe upon the waters.
And it came to pass that Enoch saw the day of the coming of the Son of Man, in the last days, to dwell on the earth in righteousness for the space of a thousand years; But before that day he saw great tribulations among the wicked; and he also saw the sea, that it was troubled, and men’s hearts failing them, looking forth with fear for the judgments of the Almighty God, which should come upon the wicked. (Moses 7:65–66)

While it is possible to witness the increasing dangers that traveling by water presents, the prophecy is that there will come a time when such travel will become completely lethal. In addition to the intensifying natural disasters upon the waters, we may also suggest that men have and will make such travel hazardous.

61.16 In other words, those who would receive an inheritance in the city of the New Jerusalem would have to be possessed of the same faith and integrity as Sidney Gilbert and W.W. Phelps. Otherwise, any persons attempting to make the journey would perish in the waters of the sea and in the waters of the navigable rivers.

61.16.21—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

61.17 When the earth was first created, it, like the waters, was blessed in order to be prepared to receive life. In its paradisical state, the earth brought forth fruits and flowers spontaneously. When Adam and Eve partook of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, the whole course of nature changed, the earth’s fall being a literal one from the presence of God and a conditional one, changing its status to a Celestial world. The Lord informed Adam of this fallen condition when He said that the earth had been cursed for his sake, in order to help him and his posterity comprehend the difference between good and evil. It is to be supposed that the curse, the fall from Terrestrial to Celestial, brought about the eventual destruction of the beautiful Garden that the Lord had planted eastward in the land of Eden. A few days before this revelation had been received by the prophet Joseph Smith, both the land of Zion and the Temple site had been blessed, consecrated, and dedicated unto the Lord God of Israel and for the benefit of His saints. The disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ look forward to the second coming of their Savior and the restoration of the earth to its paradisiacal glory. The whole earth, then, will be like the Garden of Eden, every whit.

61.18 Early travel to Jackson county and to other places of gathering was accomplished as much as possible by land. Hence, it is possible to perceive the wisdom of the Lord in having the thirty elders selected preach the Gospel on their way from Ohio to Missouri, in order to prepare places of relative safety where the saints could rest during their travels. It also emphasizes the imperative that the Lord gave to those same elders as they returned home. Having converts to the Church along the entire length of the roads leading to the land of Zion would be necessary, inasmuch as river travel was to be severely limited.
61.9. Disobedience to the counsel of the Lord would lead to disaster. Not only were the waters cursed for travel, dangerous under any circumstances, Satan would also be aware of those who were disregarding the commandments of the Lord and would eventually overcome them if they did not speedily repent. The gathering of Israel would take place on the Lord’s terms or it would not take place at all.

61.20 The prayers of the ten elders, their broken hearts and contrite spirits in the midst of their afflictions, had in part diverted the consequences of their lack of spiritual insight. The Lord freely forgave them.

61.21 Again, the two exceptions at this particular time were Sidney Gilbert and William W. Phelps. It should be noted that neither of these brethren volunteered to be exceptions, nor did they presume to assert that their great faith entitled them to obtain the privilege. The Lord God of Israel Himself had extended the exemption from the general rule that had just been given. This is the pattern that all of those who would be the sons and daughters of God should follow. No man or woman is an exception to the rule unless the voice of the Lord has spoken it.

61.22 Again, the Lord is addressing the circumstances of Sidney Gilbert and W.W. Phelps. Both of these men were in the process of acquiring a considerable amount of material that would be difficult to move to Jackson county under the best of conditions. They were free to decide, according to their needs, whether the press and the commodities that they were purchasing would be more safely and efficiently transported by boat or by wagon.

61.23 Three brethren had been commanded to move quickly back to Kirtland, Ohio, according to the Lord’s economy. They had specific tasks to accomplish in Cincinnati which required a degree of speed, but the circumstances were not so dire that they could not proceed on foot, even from their present position 165 miles from St. Louis. After pursuing their missionary labors, the three brethren may very well have travelled to Portsmouth, Ohio, and travelled by canal boat by to Cleveland.

61.23.6-7—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding

19 I, the Lord, have decreed, and the destroyer rideth upon the face thereof, and I revoke not the decree.

20 I, the Lord, was angry with you yesterday, but today mine anger is turned away.

21 Wherefore, let those concerning whom I have spoken, that should take their journey in haste—again I say unto you, let them take their journey in haste.

22 And it mattereth not unto me, after a little, if it so be that they fill their mission, whether they go by water or by land; let this be as it is made known unto them according to their judgments hereafter.

23 And now, concerning my servants, Sidney Rigdon, Joseph Smith, Jun., and Oliver Cowdery, let them come not again upon the waters, save it be upon the canal, while journeying unto their homes; or in other words they shall not come upon the waters to journey, save upon the canal.
his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

61.23.8—10—Joseph Smith, jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

61.23.12—13—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

61.23.27—canal—The Lord no doubt is speaking of the Ohio and Erie Canal which began near Cleveland, Ohio, and ran 195 miles south to the Ohio River, near Portsmouth, Ohio. This route would have been completed by 1832. Portsmouth is about 85 miles east of Cincinnati on the Ohio River.

61.24 The saints that had gathered to Kirtland and environs would undoubtedly have taken the Ohio and Erie Canal during the first leg of their journey to the land of Zion, which would have saved them considerable hardship that the public roads would have inflicted, particularly during certain times of the year. From Portsmouth, Ohio, if they chose to travel that far, they would have taken what developed roads there were across the southern reaches of the state, and from thence across the southern part of the state of Indiana to Vincennes. They would have continued on to what is now known as East St. Louis, Illinois, on the east bank of the Mississippi River. They would then have obtained passage by ferry across the Mississippi River to St. Louis, the beginning of their final leg across the state of Missouri to Independence.

61.24.8—way—What is intriguing here is that there were other canal routes that could have been used to transport the members of the Church. The Miami and Eire Canal ran from Toledo, Ohio, to Cincinnati on the western side of the state. The Wabash and Erie Canal began at Toledo, Ohio, with the Miami and Erie Canal, and then split off to the west just south of Defiance, Ohio, crossing northern Indiana through Ft. Wayne, Peru, and Lafayette where it turned due south to Evansville, Indiana. These two routes are interesting inasmuch as Hyrum Smith and John Murdock, of all of the missionaries, were specifically instructed to make their way to Detroit, Michigan, as part of their missionary labors. They would have become quite familiar with the developing canal systems that began in Toledo, Ohio, only a few miles away.

61.24.14—saints—in reference to the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ, those who have covenanted to no longer partake of the wickedness of the world. The Greek word used in the New Testament means “those not of the earth”.

61.24.46—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to
prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

61.25 Some of the saints would have had wagons of their own, but in some instances they would have hired teamsters to carry them from place to place. When the Gilbert and Whitney Store made a transportation of goods to Missouri, the saints would accompany them as well. The Colesville Branch had set the pattern from the very beginning.

61.25.10—Israel—In reference to the covenant people, traditionally the posterity of the patriarch Jacob. There are those, however, who have been adopted into the House of Israel through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

61.26 Until the Lord would provide other instructions, the saints of the Most High were to comply with these directions.

61.27 The elders of the Church of Jesus Christ held the authority of the Melchizedek priesthood, the very authority that Moses had used to divide the waters of the Red Sea. That same priesthood was used by Joshua and his companions to stay the waters of the Jordan River so that the children of Israel could cross over dry foot into the promised land. Jesus used his priesthood to calm the water of the Sea of Galilee in the midst of the raging tempest that threatened to swamp the ship in which the Savior and his Apostles were travelling. This was the very same priesthood by which John the Beloved had cursed the waters. Elders with faith could what was necessary to protect and preserve the disciples of Christ.

61.28 A man with sufficient faith, gifted with the power and authority of the Son of God, would also be a man who was sensitive to the whisperings of the Spirit of the Lord. If the dangers of the waters were to be braved in a given instance, the servant of God would know by the spirit of revelation how he and his companions should proceed. A general commandment may be suspended by the Lord Himself, if needs be. The responsibility and duty of all men is to follow the immediate counsel of the God of Heaven.

61.29 Those who held the keys of the priesthood, who served as the presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ, were entitled to designate which path any given body of saints should follow in order to be protected and facilitated on their way. This has been true since the beginning of time, as the scriptural record bears witness.

61.29.10—saints—In reference to the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ, those who have covenanted to no longer partake of the wickedness of the world. The Greek word used in the New Testament means “those not of the earth”.

61.30 Joseph and his two brethren would nonetheless walk the 165 miles to St. Louis, and after crossing the Mississippi River would travel by land across Illinois and Indiana, would take up their public ministry when they arrived in Cincinnati, Ohio. It seems doubtful that they held their peace as they encountered individuals along the way, but the Lord was quite specific about their

25 And they shall do like unto the children of Israel, pitching their tents by the way.

26 And, behold, this commandment you shall give unto all your brethren.

27 Nevertheless, unto whom is given power to command the waters, unto him it is given by the Spirit to know all his ways;

D&C 61:27
DNCT 1 307
MM 2 278

28 Wherefore, let him do as the Spirit of the living God commandeth him, whether upon the land or upon the waters, as it remaineth with me to do hereafter.

29 And unto you is given the course for the saints, or the way for the saints of the camp of the Lord, to journey.

30 And again, verily I say unto you, my servants, Sidney Rigdon, Joseph Smith, Jun., and Oliver Cowdery, shall not open their mouths in the congregations of the
staying in any one place long enough until a public meeting could be held.

61.30.10–11—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

61.30.12–14—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

61.30.16–17—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

61.30.33—Cincinnati—A nexus on the banks of the Ohio River in the southwest corner of Ohio that served river, canal, and ground travelers.

61.31 We may perhaps have some difficulty in identifying the exact manner in which the residents of Cincinnati, Ohio, had offended the Spirit of the Lord, but it is a singular fact that they had already done so by the time that Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and Oliver Cowdery arrived there. It is clear that the people stood in need of repentance, and that from some rather grievous sins. There were great upheavals brewing between abolitionists and those who supported slavery during the early years of the city, and the spirit of contention may very well have spilled over into other matters as well, stifling the spiritual development of the community.

61.32 It is clear that there were pressing needs in the communities of the saints in northeastern Ohio, and that Joseph, Sidney, and Oliver were the

wicked until they arrive at Cincinnati;

31 And in that place they shall lift up their voices unto God against that people, yea, unto him whose anger is kindled against their wickedness, a people who are well-nigh ripened for destruction.

32 And from thence let them journey for the congregations of
Lord’s anointed to resolve the problems that had arisen in their absence. The bulk of the missionary labor that had been proposed several months before was to fall upon the shoulders of the missionaries who had left Kirtland, Ohio, about the time that Joseph and Sidney and their companions had departed for Missouri in June 1831.

61.33 The five elders were to testify to those who would listen to them, in every place that would receive them. When the prophet and his immediate travelling companions were in no position to tarry in any given location long enough in order for a gathering to be assembled, yet these five were. Their commission was to lift up their voices in Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. If they did their duty, it would be some time before they arrived at their homes.

61.33—residue—That is to say, the other five elders who were sitting on the banks of the Missouri River at McIlwaine’s Bend listening to the Spirit of the Lord manifest the Savior’s will through the prophet Joseph Smith.

61.34 We should probably assume that the five elders knew wherein they had offended their God and were at that moment prepared to do as He might bid them. If they fulfilled the mission that they were then receiving, the Lord would not hold them accountable for their transgressions and slothfulness that had transpired in their journey to the land of Zion.

61.35 We have no idea as to exactly when Reynolds Cahoon and Samuel H. Smith arrived in Jackson county, Missouri, but we should probably assume that it was some time after Ezra Booth and Isaac Morley who had at some point joined the Colesville Branch in their travels from St. Louis to Independence. The former two had apparently been far more faithful in their missionary labors.

61.35,18—19—Reynolds Cahoon—Reynolds was baptized by Parley P. Pratt on 12 November 1830 in Kirtland, Ohio, where he had being making a living as a tanner and a cobbler. He was subsequently ordained an elder by Sidney Rigdon and a high priest by Lyman Wight. Along with his various missionary labors, Reynolds also served in the Temple Committees for both the Kirtland and the Nauvoo Temples. He served in various stake organizations and as a counselor to Bishop Newel K. Whitney. He served as one of the Captains of One Hundred that led the saints across the plains in 1845. After removing to the Salt Lake Valley, Reynolds Cahoon settled in South Cottonwood where he died 29 April 1861.

61.35,23—25—Samuel H. Smith—A younger brother of the prophet Joseph Smith. He is often referred to as the third person baptized with proper authority in this dispensation following Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. He was one of the Eight Witnesses of the Book of Mormon and is credited with being the first formal missionary of the Church. When Joseph and Hyrum were murdered in Carthage, Illinois, Samuel was relentlessly pursued by elements of the mob, which resulted in extreme fatigue and susceptibility to a fever which shortly thereafter took his life on 30 July 1844.

61.36 Here the Lord testifies against the fear of every man who finds that he is a sinner. So long as we are willing to confess our sins and seek for forgiveness according to his word, he will not, he cannot forsake that man to his enemies.

61.36,22—23—little children—Those who accept the Gospel of the Lord their brethren, for their labors even now are wanted more abundantly among them than among the congregations of the wicked.

33 And now, concerning the residue, let them journey and declare the word among the congregations of the wicked, inasmuch as it is given;

34 And inasmuch as they do this they shall rid their garments, and they shall be spotless before me.

35 And let them journey together, or two by two, as seemeth them good, only let my servant Reynolds Cahoon, and my servant Samuel H. Smith, with whom I am well pleased, be not separated until they return to their homes, and this for a wise purpose in me.

36 And now, verily I say unto you, and what I say unto one I say unto all, be of good cheer, little children; for I am in your midst,
Jesus Christ with all of their hearts are begotten sons and daughters unto Christ, and are his children. Those who are received into his family are born again, first by water through baptism, and then by the Spirit through the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost. By so doing we take upon ourselves his name, and by this association we become heirs of salvation, joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

61.36.29—mids—In reference to the promise made by the Lord Jesus Christ to his disciples when he said, “Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (Matthew 18:19–20)

61.37 The elders had feared for their lives as they had been accosted by the turbulent waters of the Missouri River. These fears had intensified as W.W. Phelps recounting his vision of the devil riding upon the waters in horrible power. These things had sobered the men and during the nighttime hours they had prayed fervently for protection and assurance.

61.38 Whether the brethren thought that the coming of the Lord was to transpire immediately or at some time in the distant future was irrelevant. They could not and would not know until the very hour that the trumpets sounded. In the meantime, any of them could depart mortality in the blink of an eye, effectively coming into the presence of the Lord to be assayed in the balance of judgment. They therefore ought to be prepared at all times. These facts, of course, have not changed in the slightest since 1831.

61.38 When the Millennial reign begins in earnest, the inhabitants of the earth will be sorted out. Those who have entered into the covenants of the Lord and who have attempted to live by every word that has proceeded forth from the mouth of God will find rest, happiness, and comfort in his company. The honorable men of the earth who have not waged war against the saints, will find that their opportunities for growth and salvation will be laying before them during that thousand years of peace and harmony. Those who have qualified themselves for no more than the glory of the Celestial Kingdom will find themselves elsewhere during the Savior’s personal rule upon the earth. They will pass through the justifiable pangs of having rebelled against their God and having quenched the spirit of the Lord in their lives. At the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory, the fullness of the first resurrection will begin and the righteous dead from the days of Adam and Eve will be given an opportunity to come forth to inherit immortality and eternal life.

61.38.26—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

61.38 And inasmuch as you have humbled yourselves before me, the blessings of the kingdom are yours. 37 And inasmuch as you have humbled yourselves before me, the blessings of the kingdom are yours.

61.38 Gird up your loins and be watchful and be sober, looking forth for the coming of the Son of Man, for he cometh in an hour you think not. 39 Pray always that you enter not into temptation, that you may abide the day of his coming, whether in life or in death. Even so. Amen.

Section 62

Date: August 13, 1831
Place: Bank of the Missouri River
To: Several Elders

62.0.1 In the fall of 1830, Oliver Cowdery and three companions left Fayette, New York, to begin their mission to preach the Gospel to the inhabitants of the land that lay westward, especially to those who constituted the posterity of Lehi. In their travels they were particularly successful with the settlers, especially those who dwelt in and around Kirtland, Ohio. Once several hundred people had been received into the Church and Kingdom of God, they moved on to other ripening fields until they arrived in western Missouri and
the Unorganized Indian Territory. There they labored until joined by the
prophet Joseph Smith and his company who arrived in Independence, Mis-
souri, in the middle of July 1831.

62.0.2 On 19 June 1831 Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Martin Harris, Edward
Partridge, William W. Phelps, Sidney Gilbert and his wife, and Joseph Coe
left Kirtland, Ohio, in response to the commandments of the Lord that they
travel to western Missouri in order to identify and dedicate the land of Zion
unto the Lord for an inheritance for the saints. About the same time, the
Colesville Branch which had migrated from New York to Thompson, Ohio,
was given the opportunity to enter into the Law of Consecration and make
their way to Independence, Missouri, to receive their formal stewardships in
the city of New Jerusalem. They left for the land of Zion on 3 July 1831,
arriving on or about 25 July 1831, shortly after the prophet’s company.

62.0.3 On 7 June 1831, the day following a general conference of the Church
of Jesus Christ held in Kirtland, Ohio, the prophet Joseph Smith received a
revelation regarding the calling of thirty men to serve as missionaries during
during their trek to Jackson county, Missouri, each of the men being formally assigned
to a travelling companion to aid them in their ministry. Because of a few men
who failed to prepare themselves for their service, a couple of assignments were
changed. It is clear from the historical record that there were a small number
who failed to embark on this particular mission, but the majority of them
made the journey. Some of the elders were more diligent than others in
preaching the Gospel with clarity and by the power of the Holy Ghost, and
therefore were far more pedestrian in their progress to the land of Zion. At
least two of the erstwhile missionaries became suspect when they arrived in
Independence, Missouri, at the same time as the Colesville, Branch. For their
reticence to open their mouths in testimony of the fullness of the Gospel they
were severely chastened. After the Temple site had been located and dedicated,
Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Oliver Cowdery, W.W. Phelps, and Sidney
Gilbert were commanded to return as quickly as they could to the east so that
they might pursue their individual assignments. Five other brethren, mission-
aries who had arrived in Jackson county while the prophet continued in the
land of Zion, accompanied them in their canoe trip down the Missouri River
to St. Louis. On the third day of their voyage, 11 August 1831, the brethren
were terrified by a series of events which left them shaken on the banks of the
river near McIlwaine’s Bend. The day following, they received a revelation
from the Lord that explained their circumstances, comforted them, and gave
them specific instructions as to how they should proceed. As a result, Sidney
Gilbert and William W. Phelps continued by canoe to St. Louis on their way
to Cincinnati, Ohio. Joseph Smith and the other seven men continued on foot
for about 20 miles until they reached Chariton, Missouri. At that place, they
met four of the missionaries who were making their way to Independence. It
was a joyful reunion for all, inasmuch as the prophet’s brother Hyrum was one
of the four. Hyrum Smith, John Murdock, Harvey Whitlock, and David
Whitmer had been faithful in their labors, as is reflected in the revelation that
follows. This section appeared as Chapter LXIII in the Book of Command-
ments, and as Section 72 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

62.1 The prophet Joseph Smith was in the company of eleven other men, five
of whom had been somewhat tentative in their missionary labors and four who
had been particularly faith in making their way to Missouri. Those who had
been a little slothful in opening their mouths in testimony to the inhabitants
of the land were again comforted by the word of the Lord. He was mindful of

1 BEHOLD, and hearken, O ye
eleders of my church, saith the Lord
your God, even Jesus Christ, your
advocate, who knoweth the weak-
ness of man and how to succor
them and would do much to alleviate their grief for having made a poor showing. The Lord Jesus Christ suffered the pain and suffering for sin; he knew from his personal experience from having been afflicted by the punishment that was due for every sin those men had committed, including their failure to do as He had commanded on their missions.

62.1.16–17—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

62.2 Hyrum Smith, John Murdock, Harvey Whitlock, and David Whitmer were still wending their way to Jackson county. They had been faithful thus far, but notwithstanding the fact that they had not been present for the dedication of the land of Zion and the Temple site, they were still expected to continue their journey to Independence as they had been originally instructed. There they would be informed by Edward Partridge what they should be about as they were making their way back to Kirtland.

62.2.19—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

62.3 A missionary who is faithful in his calling as a minister to the nations is purified and sanctified as he brings the principles of righteousness and eternal life to the children of men. As a man teaches the plan of salvation, his own faith is increased and his confidence in the presence of God is secured. He forsakes the spirit of the natural man and becomes a child of Christ through repentance, taking upon himself the divine attributes that he has been taught through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. How can the angels of heaven not rejoice in the obedience of the sons and daughters of God? How can they not be affected by our faithfulness and diligence?

62.4 The four elders are commanded to continue in their journey to Jackson county where they might witness for themselves the blessings that had been poured out upon the saints of the Colesville Branch, that they might partake of the spirit of the Lord which dwelt among them. Also, they would serve as willing verbal ambassadors of the goodness of the land and the prospects which awaited the saints of the Most High.

62.4.12—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

62.5 The manner of their return to Kirtland, Ohio, was left to the four elders to determine. They would decide on the route they would take, and the means by which they would travel. The journey would be long and arduous, but the blessings that awaited them were great. They would return to the place of their calling, to the service of their Lord, and to the work of eternal salvation.
faithful missionaries. They four could travel together, preaching to the congregations of the wicked, or they might travel in pairs, according to the promptings of the Spirit of the Lord that would accompany them in their travels. These four would be successful no matter what they decided. Their faith and obedience had made them effective servants and like Nephi of old, they would not err in their decisions. The wicked of the earth are miserable and need the principles of the Gospel in order to find any degree of happiness in this lost and fallen world.

62.6 All of the elders who had been called on 7 June 1831 who managed to make their way to Missouri, did find company with whom they could rejoice. As time passed, more of these reunions would take place, even in the midst of trial and tribulation. These men of faith, filled with the Holy Ghost, could only feel joy in one another’s company.

62.6.11—promise—In part, this is an allusion to the closing verses of Section 52, where the Lord testified to the brethren that they would assemble upon the land of Missouri if they were faithful (see 52.42). There would be other instances that would qualify as well.

62.6.30—Missouri—The city of Zion was to be established in Jackson county.

62.7 For those who had expended all of their means to arrive in Missouri on their missions, there had been means made available through Bishop Partridge to aid some of these brethren to return home. It may have seemed extravagant to the elders to travel in any other manner than by foot. The Lord was giving them leave to use their own judgment, so long as they were grateful for their blessings.

62.7.20—chariots—As odd as this term may seem to twenty-first century ears, the primary meaning of the English word “chariot” in the United States in the early nineteenth century was “a half-coach, a carriage with four wheels and one seat behind, used for convenience and pleasure”.

62.8 It is clear that the four elders who were still on their way to Jackson county were men of intelligence and grace. They were also knowledgeable in the things of the Spirit of God. They had been taught correct principles and were living by them, therefore they could govern themselves without having to be commanded in all things.

62.9 The righteous must persist in their attempts to draw the children of men unto Christ in a spirit of love and gentle invitation. They are to be clear, however, raising the cry of repentance in no uncertain terms. To this there will be great opposition, the servants of Satan engaging in a war for the souls of the children of men. The saints of God, however, will emerge triumphant over the efforts of the adversary to frustrate the mind and will of the Father. This last Kingdom, this final dispensation prior to the second coming of the Savior will not fail. There will be no general apostasy; there will be no overwhelming scourge of dissipation to destroy the Church and Kingdom of God established in our day.

62.9.18—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

bear record, yea, even altogether, or two by two, as seemeth you good, it mattereth not unto me; only be faithful, and declare glad tidings unto the inhabitants of the earth, or among the congregations of the wicked.

6 Behold, I, the Lord, have brought you together that the promise might be fulfilled, that the faithful among you should be preserved and rejoice together in the land of Missouri. I, the Lord, promise the faithful and cannot lie.

7 I, the Lord, am willing, if any among you desire to ride upon horses, or upon mules, or in chariots, he shall receive this blessing, if he receive it from the hand of the Lord, with a thankful heart in all things.

8 These things remain with you to do according to judgment and the directions of the Spirit.

9 Behold, the kingdom is yours. And behold, and lo, I am with the faithful always. Even so. Amen.

EM 4:1570
D&C 62:6
MD 441

D&C 62:9
DNCTC 1 537
DS 1 229
MD 415
D&C 62:64
DNCTC 1 869
63.0.1 The prophet Joseph Smith and his traveling companions left Independence, Missouri, on 9 August 1831, traveling by canoe down the Missouri River toward St. Louis. When they arrived at McIlwaine’s Bend, they were confronted with increasing dangers upon the waterway, which the Lord revealed to the brethren was part and parcel with the developing circumstances of the latter days. Sidney Gilbert and W.W. Phelps were given leave to continue by canoe to the confluence of the Missouri with the Mississippi and from thence to Cincinnati, Ohio, where they both had extensive business dealings to conduct for and in behalf of the Church. The remaining members of the company proceeded on foot. On 13 August 1831, Joseph met his brother Hyrum and three other elders who were making their way toward Jackson county in fulfillment with the commandment that they had received several weeks before. After a joyful reunion, the two parties went their separate ways. Shortly thereafter, the elders returning home entered into St. Louis where they found Brothers Phelps and Gilbert waiting passage across the Mississippi River. Inasmuch as they had been given leave by the Lord to travel by water, they took passage in a river boat that would take them from St. Louis, Missouri, to Cincinnati, Ohio. Joseph, Oliver, and Sidney Rigdon crossed the river and then proceeded by stage to Cincinnati where they began their active ministry as they had been commanded by the Lord. After many interesting and stimulating experiences, they arrived in Kirtland, Ohio, on 27 August 1831, having enjoyed a sojourn of a little more than two months.

63.0.2 During the three days following Joseph and his companions’ arrival home, many questions began to manifest themselves as to how the Church of Jesus Christ ought to proceed with regard to the land of Zion. The brethren had already been given specific instructions regarding the lands which ought to be purchased, but there remained the problem of how to fund the acquisitions. The Coleville Branch had been the first to receive inheritances in the land of Zion. Which of the saints would be the next to make their way to Independence? The Lord in his inimitable fashion, however, provided his disciples with counsel that went far beyond the initial questions that the saints were raising. The Savior chose to focus on the spiritual heart of their endeavors. They could not hope to inherit the promised blessings unless they were far more righteous than they had been. The world was worsening and would not get any better before the second coming of the Son of God. Therefore, the sons and daughters of Christ could not compare themselves with the children of men and assume that because they were apparently better they would succeed in raising up the New Jerusalem. They had to put aside the desires and lusts of the natural man; they had to strive toward acquiring the divine nature, to overcome the Telestial world and embrace the efforts needed to transcend the wickedness that could be seen all around them. If they did not, they would suffer for their recalcitrance, being driven from place to place until their experiences and adversities had purified and sanctified them. According to the text of the Kirtland Revelation Book, this Section was received on 30 August 1831. This revelation appeared as Chapter LXIV in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 20 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

63.1 The act of finding the truth is a wondrously stimulating event. It is invariably accompanied by great elation and enthusiasm. Implementing the principles embodied by the truth into one’s personal life is far more complex, inasmuch as there is an anticipated transformation of heart and mind involved.

1 HEARKEN, O ye people, and open your hearts and give ear from afar; and listen, you that call yourselves the people of the Lord, and
The membership of the Church of Jesus Christ looked upon the establishment of Zion as a glorious manifestation of the power and wisdom of God. Some, however, thought of themselves as already having been prepared for the blessings that the Lord was extending. They viewed themselves in a superficial comparison with the lost and fallen world in which they lived. While they may indeed have overcome some aspects of the spirit of the natural man, there yet remained a great deal to do before the blessings would come as expected. A man must live by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God in order to become a worthy receptacle for the power and influence of the Holy Ghost.

63.2 A man cannot hope to please God the Father if he is only marginally better than his fellow men on the earth. There must be a concerted effort, a fixed determination to walk uprightly before the Lord God of Israel. We cannot look at the sinners of the world to draw our comparisons; we are expected to become perfect in the eyes of God, even as His Son achieved perfection through his personal obedience to the will of his Father. As part of the ushering in of the Millennial reign, the earth will be cleansed of all things that are incompatible with the paradisiacal state.

63.3 The judgment of God is not after the thinking of the natural man. His standard is far more lofty than the most astute among the children of men. There are, indeed, eternal laws that determine the quality of life a man must live in order to dwell in the presence of the Father and the Son. These are inescapable. Those who are brought forth to dwell upon the earth during the thousand year reign of the Lord Jesus Christ, will be chosen on the basis of that which the Father has given in the inhabitants of the earth through His chosen servants. To ignore the voice of the Lord as provided through His holy prophets is to risk all favorable prospects in the eternities. Both mortality and immortality, and the quality of each, are founded in immutable law, the embodiment of which may be found in the persons of the Father and the Son.

63.4 All that the Father proposes is in absolute harmony with eternal law. His will and His pleasure derive from a complete and perfect awareness of things as they really are, an awareness that the sons and daughters of men cannot begin to fathom at this stage of their progression. Success and failure in this world are evaluated by men according to their limited insight as inhabitants of a Telestial world. The Lord does all that He does, however, in accordance with His understanding of the laws governing the eternal prospects of His children. All that He does is in the best interest of His children, both as individuals and as a collective whole.

63.5 The vast majority of those elements which constitute physical existence hearken to the voice of the Lord God of Heaven. He spoke and the elements obeyed, being organized out of chaos according to His will into this planet and all things that pertain to it. Men have moral agency, by which they can choose to live or die. They are limited, however, to the degree and extent of their rebellion and willful disregard of the truth. Regardless of the sophisticated machinations of the children of men, all conduct will be evaluated according to the mind and will of God, and both the rewards and punishments for that conduct will be brought to fruition. No man can escape the judgment of God.

63.6 Those who have managed to quench the light of Christ in their hearts and minds, a blessing that was given to every man and woman when they hear the word of the Lord and his will concerning you.

2 Yea, verily, I say, hear the word of him whose anger is kindled against the wicked and rebellious; D&C 63:2
MD 619
MLM 499
D&C 63:2–21
EM 2:747

3 Who willeth to take even them whom he will take, and preserveth in life them whom he will preserve; D&C 63:3
MD 443

4 Who buildeth up at his own will and pleasure; and destroyeth when he pleaseth, and is able to cast the soul down to hell. 4

5 Behold, I, the Lord, utter my voice, and it shall be obeyed. 5

6 Wherefore, verily I say, let the wicked take heed, and let the rebel- D&C 63:6
MLM 499
came into this world, frequently lash out at the whole notion of the divine intervention in the affairs of men. Not content with their own lack of faith, they verbal and otherwise attack those who remain spiritually attuned to the truths of eternity. In the latter days, those things which once could only be discerned by the light of Christ or by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost will become apparent in the natural world, providing an irrefutable cloud of witnesses as to the existence of God the Father and of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. How does an unbeliever deal with incontrovertible proof? We might suppose that it will not go well with them, neither emotionally nor intellectually.

63.7 The spiritually defunct almost invariably desire to see spiritual manifestations in the physical realm. In the latter days this ill-advised desire will be granted. Once a man knows that his position is completely without merit, how does he then move on to the truth? His lot is even more dire than it was before. He has been compelled to believe and the exercising of his primitive faith has become considerably more difficult.

63.8 Sign seekers are beleaguered by enormous spiritual liabilities which have rendered them almost incapable of sensing any spiritual influence that might be directed at them. These liabilities have come as the result of transgression, some of them extraordinarily grievous. Such sins do not come all at once, but are accumulated through a gradual subjection of one’s heart and mind to unworthy desires. Sign seekers have indulged themselves in conduct that surpasses the abominable in the eyes of God the Father, spiritually cauterizing their ability to sense the whisperings of the Spirit of God.

63.9 Faith is a gift from God, and one that is communicated by spiritual means rather than physical. It is the faith of a righteous man or woman that opens the eyes of the spirit whereby he or she can perceive the forces of eternity in operation in the world in which we live. The signs, then, exist to confirm the existence of faith. Their appearance in any other atmosphere produces deleterious effects.

63.10 Signs unto salvation are produced through the exercising of one’s faith. Faith is a spiritual gift bestowed by a loving Father in Heaven. Faith becomes a reality in one’s life when one is attempting to learn and do the will of God with a broken heart and a contrite spirit. A man with a broken heart and a contrite spirit demands nothing of his God, but is content to receive whatever his Father is minded to provide him. This willingness, this humility, is the seedbed of faith.

63.11 A man filled with faith is able to do whatsoever the Lord may command him to do. The natural man, seeing only with his physical eyes, does not comprehend how it is that the servant of God is able to do as he has done. He typically will not allow that the mighty work has been accomplished by the power of God that is within the prophet, and therefore tries to explain it away in any other terms other than the truth. This, of course, results in ridiculous accusations and surmising which reveal a total lack of spiritual acuity on the part of the unbelieving sinner. When the wicked have ripened in their iniquity, they demand signs of the servant of God, frequently in a taunting and mocking fashion. In extreme cases, the sinner is revealed for what he is by having a sign of debilitating attributes descend upon him, a result of having asked for a physical manifestation of the power of God.

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<td>And he that seeketh signs shall see signs, but not unto salvation.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Verily, I say unto you, there are those among you who seek signs, and there have been such even from the beginning:</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>But, behold, faith cometh not by signs, but signs follow those that believe.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Yea, signs come by faith, not by the will of men, nor as they please, but by the will of God.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Yea, signs come by faith, unto mighty works, for without faith no man pleaseth God; and with whom God is angry he is not well pleased; wherefore, unto such he sheweth no signs, only in wrath unto their condemnation.</td>
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63.12 The powers and blessings of the priesthood of God have been bestowed upon the sons of men in order that they might learn to be as God is, that they might learn to be compassionate and merciful unto those who are ailing in any degree. Sign seekers desire only to be carnally satisfied, that they might be stimulated in an extraordinary way that demands nothing of them. Sign seekers are fundamentally selfish.

63.13 Notwithstanding the perfidy and obstinacy of the children of men, the Father and the Son have continued to labor with them, that they might repent of their willfulness and seek the blessings that derive from a spiritual orientation to existence. Keeping the commandments of God enhances one’s susceptibility to the Spirit of God. To reject the invitation extended with the revelation of a commandment, is to refuse to be led by the light of Christ and the Holy Ghost. This produces an increasing blindness to the truth.

63.14 In this lost and fallen world, a man or a woman who has succumbed to the desires of the natural man does not lack much in the way of wickedness to turn to sexual immorality as a carnal comfort. Once in the grasp of this monster of perversion, it is extremely difficult to extricate oneself. There is only one sin greater than sexual debauchery. The Spirit of the Lord is offended by sexual incontinence and will not long abide in a tabernacle thus defiled. The early saints were not free of this problem; no people throughout all time have entirely escaped its tainting effects. This desire for conduct unworthy of a disciples of Christ would lay at the heart of some of the most egregious apostasies of this dispensation.

63.15 The Savior gave similar counsel to the saints while he yet dwelt in mortality.

Let my disciples therefore take heed to themselves, lest at any time their hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come upon them unawares. For as a snare it shall come on all them who dwell on the face of the whole earth. And what I say unto one, I say unto all, Watch ye therefore, and pray always, and keep my commandments, that ye may be counted worthy to escape all these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man when he shall come clothed in the glory of his Father. (JST, Luke 21:34–36)

The day of judgment is hardly more than heartbeat away for any individual dwelling in mortality. No matter how circumspect a sinner may have attempted to be while committing sin, yet if he does not repent, the results of his sin will be made manifest for all to see and his hypocrisy will be laid out before the world. Just as a trapped animal is not aware of the snare that is about to spring, so too will the sinner be brought to judgment in a time he did not foresee.

63.16 In our generation it is possible to look upon a woman with desire and lust without even being in the same time and place with her. Needless to say, such conduct sears the spiritual sensitivity of the soul and offends the Spirit of the Lord. The strongest testimony will suffer great debilitating damage with such abuse. Without the Spirit of their Lord there is no comfort, and there remains nothing more than abject fear.

63.16.11—before—In the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere (see MT-C 5.27–29)

12 Wherefore, I, the Lord, am not pleased with those among you who have sought after signs and wonders for faith, and not for the good of men unto my glory.

13 Nevertheless, I give commandments, and many have turned away from my commandments and have not kept them.

14 There were among you adulterers and adulteresses; some of whom have turned away from you, and others remain with you that hereafter shall be revealed.

15 Let such beware and repent speedily, lest judgment shall come upon them as a snare, and their folly shall be made manifest, and their works shall follow them in the eyes of the people.

16 And verily I say unto you, as I have said before, he that looketh on a woman to lust after her, or if any shall commit adultery in their hearts, they shall not have the Spirit, but shall deny the faith and shall fear.
63.17 Sign seekers, by definition, have already passed through increasing degrees of degradation including the soul destroying act of sexual immorality. The Savior here cites the declaration of the Apostle John regarding the inhabitants of the earth in the latter days.

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. (Revelation 21:7–8)

The disciples of Jesus Christ must needs put aside the desires of the natural man if they ever hope to dwell with the God of Heaven.

63.17.9—fearful—The Greek word which is translated in the book of Revelation as “fearful” derives from roots that mean “dread, timid, faithless”. These are those who have become so corrupt, that in the face of the pure love of God they are still afraid.

63.17.12—unbelieving—The Greek word which is translated in the book of Revelation as “unbelieving” derives from roots that mean “disbelieving, without faith, heathen, untrustworthy, incredible”. These are they who cannot be entrusted with the powers of godliness.

63.17.15—liars—The Greek word which is translated in the book of Revelation as “liars” derives from roots that mean “untrue, erroneous, deceitful, wicked”. No one has been more pernicious in his deceptions than Lucifer, who was a liar from the beginning.

63.17.20—maketh—The act of adultery is a heinous lie. The offender makes his covenant with his wife a lie and, if the truth be known, she with whom he has sinned is also a receiver of a lie of the worst dye.

63.17.25—whoremonger—The Greek word which is translated in the book of Revelation as “whoremonger” derives from roots that mean “to sell, prostitution, debauchee, libertine”. The word “pornography” derives from the same roots. Those who would foul the fountains of eternal life for any purpose will not and cannot enjoy the blessings that derive from eternal increase.

63.17.28—sorcerer—The Greek word which is translated in the book of Revelation as “sorcerer” derives from roots that mean “drug, potion, poisoner, magician”. At the heart of the word is the association with disguised assassins, those who operate in conjunction with secret combinations. These are inevitably satanically inspired.

63.17.35—lake—Representative of the depths of hell.

63.18 Those who come forth in the first resurrection will be those who will partake of the Celestial and Terrestrial Kingdoms in eternity. The sons of perdition and those who pertain to the glory of the Celestial Kingdom will come forth in the second resurrection. Needless to say, those who are not worthy of the glory of the Terrestrial Kingdom will not have a place on the earth during the Millennial reign, but will find themselves ushered into the world of spirits, to reside in spirit prison in company with the wicked of all ages.

63.19 The Church of Jesus Christ in 1831 could not claim all that under the Law pertained to them, because they were not abiding by the terms of that Law, particularly in those matters that had been articulated above. We find it difficult to believe that the names of those thus tainted by the world could be found on the records of the Church. Because of the hidden sinners, the progress of the Kingdom of God upon the earth was being hindered.

17 Wherefore, I, the Lord, have said that the fearful, and the unbelieving, and all liars, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie, and the whoremonger, and the sorcerer, shall have their part in that lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

18 Verily I say, that they shall not have part in the first resurrection.

19 And now behold, I, the Lord, say unto you that ye are not justified, because these things are among you.
63.20 Maintaining a spiritual demeanor in a lost and fallen world is not an easy prospect, but it is possible to press forward in faith through the mists of darkness until one arrives at the Tree of Life and is found worthy to partake of the fruit and find rest beneath its branches.

63.20.25–27—day of transfiguration—That is to say, at the point in the world’s temporal history when the earth will be restored to its paradisiacal glory, when it will cease being a Celestial world and become a Terrestrial one.

63.21 In the midst of his mortal ministry, the Lord Jesus Christ with his three chief Apostles, ascended Mount Tabor, a beautiful, conical prominence located east of Nazareth and Nain in southern Galilee. There the Savior was transfigured before them; that is to say, they saw him as he would be in his glorified, exalted state. Elijah and Moses were also present, they two having been translated many centuries before; that is to say, their bodies had been changed from a Celestial state to a Terrestrial one. The three Apostles were also translated, as well as the earth itself. Thus, Peter, James, and John beheld in vision the destiny of the earth and its inhabitants who would receive and live the Gospel of Jesus Christ. (see MT-C 17.1–8).

63.21.23—account—As far as can be surmised from the extant documents, the Joseph Smith Translation of the New Testament had continued apace from 8 March 1831 until 19 June 1831 when Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon left Kirtland, Ohio, for their visit to the land of Zion. By that time, the text had progressed to the 26th chapter of Matthew. The Translation resumed in September 1831 with Matthew 26:1 and continued until 31 July 1832 when the prophet and his scribes arrived at the end of the book of Revelation. What is interesting about this simple chronology is that by 30 August 1831 they had already passed the point in Matthew where the account of the transfiguration was recorded (Matthew 17:1–8). Clearly this first pass through the text of the New Testament was not definitive. It is informative that Joseph Smith went through the New Testament a second time, between July 1831 and February 1833. What we do not have available to us is the Lord’s estimation of the revised account and whether or not that product constituted a fullness. It is likely that it did not even then. We may safely assume, however, that the fullness was revealed before the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, and much of what may be lacking in the Joseph Smith Translation may be found incorporated into the ordinances of the Temple.

63.22 The original questioned raised by the prophet and his companions had to do with how they should proceed now that they had visited the land of Zion. They could see some apparent difficulties in doing all that the Lord had instructed them, and they wished not to err in so delicate a task. Several months before, the Lord had given specific commandments to his servants as to how they should act and how they should proceed. Had all of the men involved been completely obedient to His instructions, no doubt the Lord would have been far more forthcoming in His reply here. For the sake of the disobedient, so that they need not be condemned for continual rebelliousness, that they might instead repent of their evil doing, the Lord provided general instructions rather than commandments. By this means the faithful would know what to do and the truculent would not be further distanced from the Church and Kingdom of God.

63.23 Any man of faith would recognize the mind and will of the Lord in any
counsel provided for the sake of the saints, and would obey out of respect and love for the God of Heaven. Such an insightful man would be a willing and worthy receptacle for further light and knowledge. As he continued to conform his life to the instructions provided through the servants of God, he would find that the power and influence of the Holy Ghost had increased in his life. His life would become more and more in tune with the mind of Christ and there would come a time in which the Savior would withhold nothing from him.

63.24 By 30 August 1831, the date given to this particular revelation, only the members of the Colesville Branch and a few other individuals had received their inheritances in the land of Zion. They had settled on what should be considered virgin territory where there were no improvements of any kind. While it is true that the first log of the first home was laid while Joseph Smith and his companions were still in Missouri, yet it would take some time before the seventy men women and children were properly housed. At the same time it would be necessary to get as much land as was possible under cultivation. In order to be independent from the affairs of the world, that they be not taken advantage of, other elements if the infrastructure would need to be put in place. Hence, the importance of establishing the Gilbert store in Independence, Missouri, and the printing house. Additionally, there would have to be grist mills, blacksmith shops, and other skill-based establishments erected so that the community might grow holistically. As the population grew, a greater number of sanitary facilities would have to be built, lest the saints be infected with otherwise common maladies like cholera and amoebic dysentery.

63.24.26—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

63.25 The settlement of the land of Zion and the building of the New Jerusalem could move forward in what might be considered a pedestrian fashion because the Savior would preserve their inheritances in the meanwhile. They need not be precipitous.

63.25.5—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

63.26 The reference here, of course, is to the Savior’s response to the chief priests and scribes when they queried him whether it was lawful to pay tribute to the Romans. They provided a penny which had the image of Caesar on it. His response was, essentially, “If you wish to enjoy all of the economic benefits commandments I will give the mysteries of my kingdom, and the same shall be in him a well of living water, springing up unto everlasting life.

24 And now, behold, this is the will of the Lord your God concerning his saints, that they should assemble themselves together unto the land of Zion, not in haste, lest there should be confusion, which bringeth pestilence.

25 Behold, the land of Zion—I, the Lord, hold it in mine own hands;

26 Nevertheless, I, the Lord, render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s.
associated with the Roman empire, you should be willing to pay for the services.” (see *LC-C 20.19–26*) In the case of the land of Zion, there was already a constituted law in place; that of the United States in general and the state of Missouri in specific. The Lord had seen fit to work within the political and economic framework of the land, rather than usurp the authority of men. The Lord Jesus Christ did indeed have the land of Zion in his hand, but he would not simply deliver it into the hands of the saints without their investment in the project.

63.26.7—Caesar—The title taken by the supreme rulers of the Roman empire at the time of the Savior’s mortal ministry.

63.27 The Lord had instructed the prophet Joseph Smith and others in this matter once before. They were to purchase all of the land that lay west of the village of Independence, Missouri, to the western border of the state of Missouri. Edward Partridge had bought a parcel of land about twelve miles southwest of Independence upon which the Colesville saints were settling, but much more needed to be done. The saints were to have legal title to all of the lands, that they might have just cause if the ire of the original inhabitants were to rise up against them. In the end, the saints would purchase no more than ten percent of the land they were instructed to obtain in this legal fashion.

63.28 The saints had been in the land of Zion for no more than five weeks, and yet the Lord testified that all will not be sweetness and light as the Kingdom of God began to be established. Persecution would be more than verbal abuse.

63.29 The saints had a clear choice. They could either gather all of their financial resources and commit totally to the building up of the city of the New Jerusalem or they could engage in hand to hand combat with the original settlers. If they refused to do both, there would be no inheritance for them in the land of Zion. The necessary funds would not be forthcoming. When the saints were forcibly driven from Jackson county, the Lord called for an army of 500 men to reinstate the inhabitants of Zion back into their lawful possessions. Only 200 or so actually committed to that alternative method of obtaining their property in the land. Therefore, for that generation there was no inheritance in the land of Zion for the saints.

63.29.5—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

63.30 As it would turn out, the only reasonable course of action was to do that which the Lord had instructed originally; that is, to purchase all of the land that had been indicated by revelation.

63.31 The building of the Kingdom of God upon the earth is as much of a spiritual exercise as it is a temporal one. The establishment of Zion was to be, by definition, an act of peace. To make war to establish a city of peace seems counterintuitive; and thus it is. David, the King of Israel, desired to build a

27 Wherefore, I the Lord will that you should purchase the lands, that you may have advantage of the world, that you may have claim on the world, that they may not be stirred up unto anger.

28 For Satan putteth it into their hearts to anger against you, and to the shedding of blood.

29 Wherefore, the land of Zion shall not be obtained but by purchase or by blood, otherwise there is none inheritance for you.

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30 And if by purchase, behold you are blessed;

31 And if by blood, as you are forbidden to shed blood, lo, your enemies are upon you, and ye shall be scourged from city to city, and
House of the Lord in Jerusalem, but was forbidden to do so because he had been a man of blood. The task was left to his son Solomon. If the saints were to fight a bloody war in order to establish a land for the city of the New Jerusalem, they would not have been allowed to raise an inch of the walls of the great Temple that is to be constructed there. The saints were forcibly expelled from Jackson county, and were later driven from other parts of Missouri until they found themselves on the banks of the Mississippi River in western Illinois. In less than ten years they would face another terrible exodus across the Great Plains into the valleys of the intermountain west. There the saints would be far more obedient to the instructions of the Lord than they had been in the past.

63,31,29—synagogue—The word in Greek derives from a conjoining of two words which literally mean “I bring together.” Most Biblical scholars have concluded that the synagogue system began in Babylon as a direct result of the destruction of the Temple and the subsequent exile of the Jews from the land of Israel. Even with the return to Palestine and the rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem, the synagogue remained at the center of daily worship.

63,32 Without the Spirit of the Lord operating upon the hearts and minds of the children of men, there is division and irritability on every hand. The spirit of contention quickly begins to motivate the conduct of the children of men. War and all of the attendant evils soon follow.

63,33 The latter days are marked with horrific cruelties and abominations. Natural affection has in many instances dissipated from the hearts of the inhabitants of the earth, especially among those who are in positions of power and authority. Before the Millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ, the earth will be cleansed from its current wickedness. All those vices and perversions that have come to define a Celestial world will be swept away. If this does not occur because of a willingness on the part of the children of men to repent of their manifold sins, then the wickedness of men will be poured out upon the nations and they will wage war against each other until none remain but the righteous who have been preserved by the hand of the Lord.

63,34 As the time of the second coming draws near, the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ will witness these judgments executed upon the children of men. Many of the saints will be threatened, but at the moment of greatest alarm, the Savior will descend from heaven in glory, which glory will be so intense that the wicked will pass out of mortality to dwell in the spirit prison prepared for them for a thousand years.

63,34,3—saints—In reference to the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ, those who have covenanted to no longer partake of the wickedness of the world. The Greek word used in the New Testament means “those not of the earth”.

63,35 The time is far spent and there is little remaining. In the meantime, the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ have the responsibility to raise the standard of truth and in every land, among every kindred, tongue, and people. In the days of the prophet Joseph Smith, the membership of the Church were to proceed as they had been instructed.

63,36 The most efficient and prosperous way for the saints to proceed was to follow the counsel that the Lord had already given them. The most ideal circumstances would be produced when the lands designated were purchased, the various locations prepared for the faithful members of the Church, and the

from synagogue to synagogue, and but few shall stand to receive an inheritance.

32 I, the Lord, am angry with the wicked; I am holding my Spirit from the inhabitants of the earth.

33 I have sworn in my wrath, and decreed wars upon the face of the earth, and the wicked shall slay the wicked, and fear shall come upon every man;

34 And the saints also shall hardly escape; nevertheless, I, the Lord, am with them, and will come down in heaven from the presence of my Father and consume the wicked with unquenchable fire.

35 And behold, this is not yet, but by and by.

36 Wherefore, seeing that I, the Lord, have decreed all these things upon the face of the earth, I will that my saints should be assembled
rest of the Church do all in their power to advance the cause of Zion in all of the world by inviting the children of men to partake of the blessings that attend the covenants of the Almighty.

63.36.22—saints—In reference to the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ, those who have covenanted to no longer partake of the wickedness of the world. The Greek word used in the New Testament means “those not of the earth”.

63.36.30—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

63.37 If all that a man does with his hands is done with the advancement of the Church and Kingdom of God in mind, there would be little room left for works of wickedness. If this man were girded about on every side with the power of his faith, neither man nor devil could penetrate the divine protection that would prevail. A righteous man, testifying to the world by the power of his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ would be as Enoch of old who prepared his people for translation before the destructive days of the universal flood. The wicked will perish, either through complete repentance or by physical death. None who pertain to the Celestial world will survive the second coming of the Savior in glory.

63.38 The Colesville Branch had for a short time resided upon land dedicated unto the Lord by Leman Copley. Leman apostarized from the Church soon thereafter and demanded that the saints from New York find another place of residence. The Lord appointed them to be the first to receive their inheritance blessings in the land of Zion. They departed on 3 July 1831, arriving in Jackson county about 25 July 1831. Ezra Thayre had become involved with the purchase of lands in and around Kirtland, Ohio, for the temporary settlement of the Palmyra Branch of the Church of Jesus Christ. The farm spoken of here is clearly different from the other two. Whatever the facts are concerning this place, those who were living there were going to have to take their leave, since it was going to be sold. The funds were undoubtedly going to be used in the purchase of lands in Jackson county.

63.38.6—Kirtland—A community in northeastern Ohio that served as the headquarters of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from 1831 to 1838. It was the home of many of the early faithful members of the Church.

63.38.14–15—this farm—We cannot at this point speak definitively about the location, ownership, and purpose of the farm mentioned here, save that it was under the stewardship of Titus Billings, the brother-in-law of Isaac Morley. Because of this later fact and that in the text of the passage Titus did not seem to be the owner thereof, but rather the caretaker, many scholars have assumed the farm originally belonged to Isaac.

63.39 There is every reason to believe that Titus Billings did precisely as he had been instructed, travelling to Jackson county in the spring of 1832. There he suffered with the saints, being driven eventually into Clay county, north of upon the land of Zion;

37 And that every man should take righteousness in his hands and faithfulness upon his loins, and lift a warning voice unto the inhabitants of the earth; and declare both by word and by flight that desolation shall come upon the wicked.

38 Wherefore, let my disciples in Kirtland arrange their temporal concerns, who dwell upon this farm.

39 Let my servant Titus Billings, who has the care thereof, dispose of the land, that he may be prepared
the Missouri River.

63.39.4–5—*Titus Billings*—Titus was the second person baptized in Kirtland, Ohio, when Oliver Cowdery and his missionary companions passed through the region on their way to western Missouri in the fall of 1830. In April of 1832 he led a company of saints from Kirtland, Ohio, to Independence, Missouri. He was called to serve as second counselor to Edward Partridge on 1 August 1837. He suffered through the ongoing persecutions heaped upon the saints throughout Missouri, Illinois, and the trek west. He was among the first pioneer settlers in Manti, Utah. He died 6 February 1866 in Provo, Utah.

63.39.33—*Zion*—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

63.40 Edward Partridge was the Bishop in the land of Zion whose commission it was to see that the purchase of lands for the saints was funded in a timely fashion. Sidney Gilbert had been appointed to serve as the Church agent in these sorts of matters. All of their resources, however, were to be derived from the consecrations of the saints who were to receive an inheritance in the New Jerusalem, through the liquidation of properties owned by the Church in Ohio and New York, and from the revenue generated by the business ventures that were being established by the corporation of the Church. All others who could contribute to this enterprise were invited to do so, be it a great or a small amount.

63.40.28—*Zion*—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

63.41 Whereas the assignment given to the Colesville Branch to go to the land of Zion could have been construed as a matter of expediency, the Lord clearly states here that all those who would receive an inheritance would so as a direct result of revelation through the prophet Joseph Smith. No one could presume to travel to the New Jerusalem according to their desires or sentiments of personal righteousness. There were needs, both temporal and spiritual, that had to be taken into consideration. Such deliberations were beyond any man living at the time, so therefore, the task fell to the Father of all. That a man was called up and appointed to gather to Jackson county would be a mark in his favor, to be sure, but because another was to remain in Kirtland and environs for a time did not necessarily reflect poorly upon him.

63.41.10–12—*Joseph Smith, Jun.*—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No

in the coming spring to take his journey up unto the land of Zion, with those that dwell upon the face thereof, excepting those whom I shall reserve unto myself, that shall not go until I shall command them.

40 And let all the moneys which can be spared, it mattereth not unto me whether it be little or much, be sent up unto the land of Zion, unto them whom I have appointed to receive.

41 Behold, I, the Lord, will give unto my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., power that he shall be enabled to discern by the Spirit those who shall go up unto the land of Zion, and those of my disciples who shall tarry.

D&C 63:41
MD 197
EM 1:384
one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

63.41.33—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

63.42 The ultimate goal was for all of the faithful to make their way to Jackson County where they would receive their inheritance. Newel and his family would have pressing assignments in the land of Kirtland to attend to before they were given leave to depart.

63.42.4—Newel K. Whitney—When Oliver Cowdery and his three missionary companions arrived in Kirtland, Ohio, they proceeded to do a great work among the members of the Disciples of Christ who worshipped with Sidney Rigdon. Newel K. Whitney was one of the congregants. In November 1830, Newel and his wife Elizabeth were received into the Church and Kingdom of God. In February 1831, the prophet Joseph Smith, his wife Emma, Edward Partridge, and Sidney Rigdon arrived in Kirtland from New York. Newel and Emma had been praying for further light and knowledge regarding the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As Joseph entered the store he said, “Newel K. Whitney, thou art the man!” The Whitneys were astonished initially, but Elizabeth noted that the coming of the prophet was a fulfillment of a promise that they had received in vision a short time before. For the next several weeks the Whitneys provided board and room for the Smiths. By revelation, the Whitney store was designated the Bishop’s Storehouse in Kirtland, where the surplus material from the consecrating saints was kept until needed by those who were in want. Edward Partridge had been ordained as the first Bishop of the Church and Newel Whitney was set apart as his agent in Kirtland. Sidney Gilbert was selected to be Edward’s agent in Missouri. On 4 December 1831 Newel K. Whitney was ordained the second Bishop of the Church with specific responsibility in Kirtland and environs. Ever after Newel K. Whitney was faithful to his covenants and calling. He suffered through the trials and tribulations in Missouri and Illinois, making the trek westward with the saints to what would become Salt Lake City, where he died 23 September 1850.

63.42.8—his—The Whitney store in Kirtland had belonged to Newel, but he had allowed it to become the Bishop’s Storehouse in Kirtland.

63.42.14—the—The Lord simply was clarifying a fait accompli.

63.43 The store in Kirtland was a prosperous one and the means for generating revenue for the building up of the Kingdom of God upon the earth. Cash was needed in Zion in order to purchase property for the inheritance of the saints.

63.43.20—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to

42 Let my servant Newel K. Whitney retain his store, or in other words, the store, yet for a little season.

43 Nevertheless, let him impart all the money which he can impart, to be sent up unto the land of Zion.
prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

63.44 Every business has need of a certain amount of liquidity, whereby stocks can be replenished and other incidentals. Newel Whitney knew the margin upon which the store operated and it was left to him to decide how much of his surplus he might be able to release to his counterpart in Independence, Missouri.

63.45 Newel had already been functioning as an agent for the Church, but specifically with regard to the consecrations of the saints who were preparing to journey to the land of Zion. This new calling extended his responsibilities to include the welfare of the disciples who were waiting upon the word of the Lord before they embarked on their trek to the New Jerusalem. Within a few short months, his responsibilities would be further expanded when he was called to serve as the Bishop of Kirtland.

63.46 The message to the saints in Kirtland and in the surrounding communities was that there was an immediate need for funds so that the lands in Missouri which had been designated by the Lord might be legally and lawfully purchased. Oliver had spent nearly a year in Jackson county and was the ideal spokesman for the building up of the land of Zion. There were hundreds of thousands of acres to be obtained; this would require many hundreds of thousands of dollars.

63.46.15–16—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

63.47 It should probably be understood that the faithful here certainly included those who would be forthcoming in their financial support of the Lord’s enterprise in Zion. An inheritance in Zion faithfully administered would ultimately lead to being part of a society that had transcended this Celestial sphere in which we presently live.

63.48 Providing funding for a labor being conducted in a distant land required a degree of faith that most of the saints had to acquire before they were willing to participate. None of the disciples were particularly well off. Any contribution would be considered a sacrifice. As the membership of the Church invested in the future of the Kingdom of God, they would be blessed by the Spirit of the Lord, furthering their determination to keep the commandments that had been given them through His appointed servants. Every act of obedience would cause them to draw closer to their Father in heaven, in spirit and in truth. All of these points of righteousness would testify in their favor when they were ushered into the presence of the Lord.

63.48.10—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into
such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

63.49 The faithful, like Polly Knight, who die before they are able to reap the full temporal benefits for their material sacrifices, will not be bereft of all that had been promised to them in their covenants with the Lord. They will rise from the tomb as participants in the first resurrection, at the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory. Their resurrection to a Celestial state will not only give them citizenship in the Kingdom of God during the Millennial reign, it will also guarantee them a place in the Celestial Kingdom of God when the earth is exalted and prepared for the faithful who have overcome all ill and every temptation. There they will have an inheritance for eternity.

63.50 When the dawn of the Millennium breaks forth upon the children of men, those who have been faithful to their covenants will be honored in the Church and Kingdom of God, inasmuch as they will serve as exemplars to the mass of humanity who will remain after the earth is restored to its paradisiacal state. Even though they will receive a state of existence similar to that of Enoch, Moses, Elijah, and John the Beloved, they nonetheless will live as mortals for what might be considered a normal period of time. The scriptures testify that during the Millennium, men will live to be the age of a tree, or about a hundred years, and then they will pass through an experience equivalent to death and resurrection, receiving their Celestial glory.

63.51 The implication of this verse is that all children born during the Millennium will survive infancy and will live out their lives in peace and righteousness. Infant mortality will cease to exist. Neither will men suffer death through accident or disease, but will enjoy good health all of the days of their lives until at last their bodies are renewed through almost instantaneous death and resurrection.

63.52 The testimony of the ancient Apostles flew in the face of the common Celestial experiences that the children of men suffered in this lost and fallen world. Little children perished, young men and women passed out of mortality sometimes without apparent cause, and the dead were buried to not be seen again. The ancient disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ knew that they would live out their mortal lives without participating in the blessings promised by the servants of the Lord. The Apostles, however, assured the saints that when the Lord came again, the righteous dead would come forth from the earth as resurrected beings to rule with him for a thousand years, and thereafter in eternity.

63.52.—apostles—The Greek roots from which the term “apostle” derives, originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were ordained Apostles by Peter, James, and John sometime between 15 May 1829 and 1 June 1829 on the banks of the Susquehanna River near Har-

49 Yea, and blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth, when the Lord shall come, and old things shall pass away, and all things become new, they shall rise from the dead and shall not die after, and shall receive an inheritance before the Lord, in his holy city.

50 And he that liveth when the Lord shall come, and hath kept the faith, blessed is he; nevertheless, it is appointed to him to die at the age of man.

51 Wherefore, children shall grow up until they become old; old men shall die; but they shall not sleep in the dust, but they shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye.

52 Wherefore, for this cause preached the apostles unto the world the resurrection of the dead. 

D&C 63:49
DS 1 91
FPM 101
MD 493, 625
D&C 63:49–51
AF 370
D&C 63:49–52
DS 3 58
MD 185, 638, 807
EM 3:1161
D&C 63:49–53
MLM 630
D&C 63:49–54
DS 3 19, 55
D&C 63:50–51
AF 371
DNTC 1 865
DNTC 2 402
JC 790
MD 497
MM 4 390
D&C 63:50–54
MLM 555
D&C 63:51
JC 791
MD 209, 515
MLM 646
EM 2:703, 907
EM 3:1223
mony, Pennsylvania. The Apostles hold the keys of the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world and are entitled to administer the ordinance of baptism for the remission of sins and for membership in the Church and Kingdom of God unto any and every man that believes in Christ and brings forth the fruits of repentance.

63.53 Notwithstanding the fact that Joseph Smith had been the instrument in the hands of the Lord to open this final dispensation prior to the second coming of the Savior, the blessings might not come to the living saints as quickly as they might have hoped. So far as we know, none of the early disciples of the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times has survived to this day. Neither do we know how many of those who are presently dwelling in a mortal state will be alive when the Lord Jesus Christ makes his appearance in heaven. Therefore, all of the faithful must simply anticipate that they will be the beneficiaries of the will of God when the Savior comes, whether they be among the living or among the dead at the time.

63.54 This, of course, is an allusion to the parable of the Ten Virgins that is recounted in the 25th chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew. Five of the virgins were unwise, not having brought with them sufficient oil as they waited for the coming of the wedding party. The Savior related a second parable in the same venue which we call the parable of the Talents, in which each of three men is given material blessings that they are to improve upon. Two of the servants did moderately well, but one did not employ his wealth in a profitable way and earned the displeasure of his lord. The third parable in chapter 25 had to do with the sheep and the goats and the separation that would take place in the latter days. The apparent distinction between the two sorts of animals had to do with their service to their fellow men. Those who fed the hungry, visited the sick, and generally provided for those who were in want of some kind, would be found on the right hand of the Father and the Son at the time of judgment. The fate of the unwise virgins, the profitless servant, and the goats on the left hand of the Lord was the same. They were to have no place in the Church and Kingdom of God. When these parables are seen in conjunction with the Lord’s request to provide funding for the land of Zion, they become poignant indeed.

63.55 The learned are susceptible to unwarranted self-esteem. Sidney Rigdon was no exception, even though for a time he made extraordinary contributions to the advancement of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. In the parable of the Ten Virgins, the five wise were those who had taken the Holy Ghost for their guide. Sidney frequently leaned upon his own arm rather than that of the Father and the Son.

63.55.18–19—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he

53 These things are the things that ye must look for; and, speaking after the manner of the Lord, they are now nigh at hand, and in a time to come, even in the day of the coming of the Son of Man.

54 And until that hour there will be foolish virgins among the wise; and at that hour cometh an entire separation of the righteous and the wicked; and in that day will I send mine angels to pluck out the wicked and cast them into unquenchable fire.

55 And now behold, verily I say unto you, I, the Lord, am not pleased with my servant Sidney Rigdon; he exalted himself in his heart, and received not counsel, but grieved the Spirit;
would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned
man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned.
He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph
Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education.
From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became
visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to
chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more
and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding
his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon
the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to
insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply dis-
appointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in
Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually
the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died
on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

63.56 In an earlier revelation Sidney Rigdon had been commanded by the
Lord to write a description of the land of Zion and a statement of the will of
God as he would be inspired by the Holy Ghost. It is clear that Sidney
attempted to fulfill this assignment according to his own wisdom and not
according to the Spirit of the Lord. If a man does not speak and write by the
power and influence of the Holy Ghost, of what value is he to the building up
of the Kingdom of God upon the earth and the establishment of Zion? There
can be no divine unity among the saints of God without the Spirit of God
binding them together. Sidney’s document was unacceptable because it did
not reflect the will of the Lord, not having been influenced by His Spirit. His
second attempt was apparently founded in the humility of his heart.

63.57 A man cannot call himself into the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ; he
must be called and ordained through a process that involves revelation and
the authority of the presiding priesthood. Sincerity and willingness are admirable
qualities, as are humility and love, but the commission of the Lord Jesus
Christ must be bestowed by those who hold the keys of the priesthood.

63.58 Many ministers who pertain to traditional Christianity are noted for
their eloquence and verbal persuasiveness. They have their own idiosyncratic
ways of testifying of the truth as they understand it. The Church of Jesus
Christ, however, is not a collection of personality cults. Those who are engaging
in this sort of self-aggrandizing are dabbling in priesthood and cannot be
found acceptable before the Lord. The minister of Christ invites the children
of men to come unto Christ by the spirit of the Holy Ghost, the same spirit
that would be enjoyed in the presence of the Father and the Son. Anything
more or less than this is out of harmony with the will of the Lord.

63.59 Through the power and authority of the priesthood of God vested in
the Lord Jesus Christ, the worlds have been created. Though he presently
dwells in the heavens, he has gained the power to redeem both the living and
the dead, from every time and place. His authority has been bestowed upon
his servants on the earth, and in order for them to wield it properly and effec-
tively, they must invite the influence of the Holy Ghost into their lives and
partake of the divine nature as they have been instructed. Eventually every eye
will see, every knee shall bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus is the
Christ. That event in the eternal existence of every sentient being who has
lived upon the earth is inescapable.

56 Wherefore his writing is not acceptable unto the Lord, and he
shall make another; and if the Lord receive it not, behold he standeth
no longer in the office to which I have appointed him.

57 And again, verily I say unto you, those who desire in their
hearts, in meekness, to warn sinners to repentance, let them be ordained
unto this power.

58 For this is a day of warning,
and not a day of many words. For
I, the Lord, am not to be mocked
in the last days.

59 Behold, I am from above, and
my power lieth beneath. I am over
all, and in all, and through all, and
search all things, and the day cometh that all things shall be
subject unto me.
63.60 Jesus the Christ has taken the responsibility for all creation, even as many as will receive him. He is the beginning and end of all things, his influence permeating all of existence.

63.60.4—Alpha—The first letter of the Greek alphabet. This constitutes a reprise of the Lord’s imagery used in his revelation to John the Beloved (see RV-C 1.8 and RV-C 21.6).

63.30.6—Omega—The last letter of the Greek alphabet. This constitutes a reprise of the Lord’s imagery used in his revelation to John the Beloved (see RV-C 1.8 and RV-C 21.6).

63.60.8—Jesus—The Anglicized form of the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew name, Oshea or Joshua. At its root, “Jesus” means “Savior”.

63.60.9—Christ—The Greek form of the Hebrew “Messiah”, essentially meaning, “the anointed one”.

63.61 Men in this mortal state, particular those who feel themselves somehow especially gifted in body or mind, wish to rise above all power and authority vested in their fellow men, preferring elitism over truth. They are filled with spiritual blindness and ignorance. They delight in mocking the faith of the disciples of Jesus Christ, those who have taken the Holy Ghost for their guide, who have learned for themselves of the lost and fallen nature of this world in which we live and the eternal prospects for those who embrace the fullness of the Gospel of Christ.

63.62 In addition there are those who through ignorance or rebellion, have presumed to act in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ without having first sought guidance and direction from the Savior of mankind. The Lord must formally choose them, even though they may have already chosen Him. Those who pretend to exercise divine authority are subverting the Gospel, weakening the faith of the honest in heart. They will be held accountable.

63.63 Sinning is an act of rebellion, a rebellion against the unity that is sought for in the establishment of Zion. A sinner is not of one heart and one mind with the righteous. Repentance is the act of reconciliation, a harmony that defines the Kingdom of God. An unrepentant soul cannot hold communion with the God of heaven nor can he find solace among the disciples of Jesus Christ. They effectively cut themselves off from the body of Christ.

63.64 We should probably assume that Sidney Rigdon’s circumstances and conduct are still being considered in this verse. Sidney’s task of describing the land of Zion and stating the will of the Lord by the power of the Spirit had not received the approbation of the Lord in the first attempt. We should probably see as well in this passage some rather candid counsel regarding the manner in which he was to preach the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Only through obedience and prayer may a man receive the blessings of the Spirit of God. Only by the power of the Holy Ghost may we speak with the tongue of angels. To not speak with the tongue of angels when addressing the principles of righteousness is to incur the displeasure of God.

63.65 Although we cannot speak with absolute certainty in this matter, these instructions may very well foreshadow the move of Joseph and his family, together with Sidney Rigdon, to the little community of Hiram, Ohio, about 30 miles southeast of Kirtland. Joseph and Emma were guests in the home of John Johnston. They continued their work on the Joseph Smith Translation and in the midst of that endeavor received several significant revelations, including those which are not found in the Doctrine and Covenants such as

60 Behold, I am Alpha and Omega, even Jesus Christ.

61 Wherefore, let all men beware how they take my name in their lips—

62 For behold, verily I say, that many there be who are under this condemnation, who use the name of the Lord, and use it in vain, having not authority.

63 Wherefore, let the church repent of their sins, and I, the Lord, will own them; otherwise they shall be cut off.

64 Remember that which cometh from above is sacred, and must be spoken with care, and by constraint of the Spirit; and in this there is no condemnation, and ye receive the Spirit through prayer; wherefore, without this there remaineth condemnation.

65 Let my servants, Joseph Smith, Jun., and Sidney Rigdon, seek them a home, as they are taught through prayer by the Spirit.
63.65.4–6—*Joseph Smith, Jun.*—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

63.65.8–9—*Sidney Rigdon*—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

63.66 Any man’s native mortal weaknesses may be overcome and supplanted by the divine nature. Sidney Rigdon’s pride and excessive self-confidence could be forsaken and replaced by loving humility, but it would require a concerted effort. This transformation would not and could not transpire in a day, but would gradually take place as Sidney persisted in righteousness to do the will of the Lord. The act of conscious improvement would eventually be rewarded, primarily in the character of the repentant one. What may said of Sidney Rigdon may be said of all men who desire to be as the Father and the Son.

63.66.24—*Amen*—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

66 These things remain to overcome through patience, that such may receive a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, otherwise, a greater condemnation. Amen.

Section 64

Date: September 11, 1831
Place: Kirtland, Ohio
To: Elders of the Church

D&C 64
DHC 1 211
MF 281
EM 1:408, 409
Indian Territory, preaching the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ to the inhabitants of the land along the way. For the next two months, John Whitmer and Emma Smith served as Joseph’s scribes. During that period another two chapters or so were reviewed and amended according to the Spirit of the Lord. With the arrival of Sidney Rigdon from northeastern Ohio, the translation process began to move forward with greater expediency. By 7 March 1831, Joseph and Sidney had completed the first 24 chapters of Genesis. On this last date, the Lord commanded the pair to focus their efforts on the New Testament, beginning with the Gospel according to Matthew. By the time the prophet and his company left for Independence, Missouri, on 19 June 1831, Joseph and Sidney had made their way almost to the end of Matthew. The translation process would not begin again until 26 September 1831 in Hiram, Ohio, with John Whitmer as scribe. By 20 November 1831, the first review of the New Testament had arrived at the ninth chapter of the Gospel according to Mark. At that point Sidney Rigdon resumed his role as scribe. By the end of July 1832, the first review of the New Testament by the prophet Joseph Smith was mostly complete. Thus, Hiram, Ohio, in the home of John Johnson, some of the most sublime revelations regarding the life and ministry of Jesus and his Apostles were revealed to the Church of Jesus Christ.

64.0.2 The journey to Jackson county, Missouri, had been particularly inspirational to those who had accompanied the prophet. Daily readings from the scriptures, together with animated discussions regarding the teachings of the Savior and his disciples graced the waking hours of the little company. They arrived in Missouri in the middle of the month of July 1831. The first revelation received in Zion was received on 20 July 1831. On the following Sunday, 24 July 1831, the brethren travelling with the prophet preached for the first time in the Unorganized Indian Territory. The next day, 25 July 1831, the Colesville Branch arrived in Independence, Missouri, with Isaac Morley and Ezra Booth. The land of Zion was dedicated unto the Lord as an inheritance for the saints, as was the site for the temple of the city of the New Jerusalem. On 9 August 1831, Joseph Smith and several of his brethren left for Kirtland, Ohio. After harrowing experiences, joyful reunions, and various proselyting adventures, the prophet and his travelling companions arrived home on 27 August 1831. Shortly after his arrival home, Joseph and Emma Smith were invited to live in the large home of John Johnson in Hiram, Ohio, a community about thirty miles to the south east of Kirtland. The prophet’s family moved there on 12 August 1831, where Joseph was able to attend to his assigned tasks in relative peace for a time.

64.0.3 About the time the prophet Joseph Smith and his companions were preparing to make their journey to Independence, Missouri, the Lord revealed that there were to be missionaries selected to travel westward preaching the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the inhabitants of the land that lay between Kirtland and Independence. Many of the appointed elders were diligent in their efforts to keep the commandments of the Lord. Some were slothful; others were selfish in their approach to their missionary labors; still others neglected the words that had been addressed to them, with varying results. This particular revelation was the Lord’s offer of reconciliation to the entire company, that any and all of them might be liberated from any sense of guilt that troubled them because of what might be considered as untoward behavior. The first 35 verses and half of the 36th of this Section appeared as Chapter LXV in the Book of Commandments, and as Section 21 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. The Church’s press in Independence, Missouri, was destroyed in July 1833 as the text of this Section was being printed.
64.1 Those of the elders of the Church who had previously hearkened to the Lord’s commandments would willingly do so again because of the many blessings they had received for being obedient. Those who had been neglectful or disobedient were being given another opportunity to be as blessed as their brethren.

64.2 We have all been born into a lost and fallen world. We are continually confronted with opposing forces that press us in directions of conduct that differ from that which our Father in Heaven and our eternal intelligence incline us towards. Our particular susceptibility to the negative aspects of mortality is understandable. We are, because of our life here in a Celestial world, subject to the spirit of the natural man; a portion of our being desiring to adopt the temptations and lusts of the flesh as a matter of course. The spiritual influence from the light of Christ, the Holy Ghost, and even the most inward sentiments of our own soul, testify to us that there can be greater happiness enjoyed by the children of men than what is presently being experienced. Therefore, those who put off the natural man and become saints through the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ will invariably be happier than they have ever been before, because they will be more like unto their Father which is in Heaven, He who is the embodiment of eternal felicity. God has no desire for us to be unhappy or miserable. He therefore has prepared means whereby we can overcome every deleterious effect of mortal life that can hinder our opportunities for joy.

64.3 In the narrow perspective of the historical context of this revelation, there were those who had utterly refused to accept the missions that had been placed before them. There had been others who had thought to ignore certain aspects of the Lord’s counsel that they might fulfill their own perceived plan of happiness. Others of the brethren had simply not performed as well as they thought that they should have and therefore had begun to devalue all that they had attempted to do while on the Lord’s errand. Here the Lord promises that He is determined to not press the issue with them. This he does as an example to them.

64.4 The elders to whom this revelation was directed had entered into a covenant with the Lord God of Israel, including the power of the holy priesthood by which the Church of Jesus Christ had been established in this dispensation. They had been instruments on the hands of the Lord to lay the foundations of the Kingdom of God on the earth. He had no desire to begin anew. In fact, the promise from the beginning had been that this was the last dispensation prior to the second coming of the Son of God, he who was to descend in glory to be received by a people who had been prepared in all things to meet him at his coming.

64.5 From the time that the prophet Joseph Smith had been called to his ministry in the spring of 1820, he had been a fountain of light and truth to all those with ears to hear and eyes to see. He had been called upon as well to bear off the Kingdom of God upon his shoulders, and had been strengthened by the power of the priesthood to do that great labor. John the Baptist had bestowed upon him the keys of the Aaronic priesthood; the Apostles Peter, James, and John placed their hands upon Joseph’s head and bestowed upon him the fullness of the holy priesthood of God after the Order of the Son of God. No manner of apostasy by the membership of the Church of Christ nor persecutions by the faithless could ever deprive the prophet of those keys and the authority by which the world was to be prepared to dwell in the Celestial

1 BEHOLD, thus saith the Lord your God unto you, O ye elders of my church, hearken ye and hear, and receive my will concerning you.

2 For verily I say unto you, I will that ye should overcome the world; wherefore I will have compassion upon you.

3 There are those among you who have sinned; but verily I say, for this once, for mine own glory, and for the salvation of souls, I have forgiven you your sins.

4 I will be merciful unto you, for I have given unto you the kingdom.

5 And the keys of the mysteries of the kingdom shall not be taken from my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., through the means I have appointed, while he liveth, inasmuch as he obeyeth mine ordinances.
realms. No man could presume to take Joseph Smith’s place, not even those who had been with him from the very beginning. Were Joseph Smith himself to fall into apostasy, there were provisions in place by which the Church and Kingdom of God would continue uninterrupted.

64.17–19—*Joseph Smith, Jun.*—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

64.6 Some of the early members of the Church thought themselves better prepared and better equipped to guide and direct the affairs of the Kingdom. They thought to impose themselves upon the disciples of Christ. Others took offense because of some of the actions and teachings of the prophet Joseph Smith, and because of their own wrongheaded biases and the false traditions of their fathers. These erstwhile critics of the Lord’s anointed ripened into rebellion as a result of their own pride and arrogance.

64.7 Joseph Smith was not without fault, as anyone knows who is familiar with the early history of the Church and especially with the first revelations that appear in the Doctrine and Covenants. Generally speaking, however, the criticisms of the prophet seldom hearkened back to the true events of the prophet’s life, but rather pointed to imaginary faults and weaknesses fabricated by men who were themselves laden with grievous sins. Joseph’s sins were forgiven him because he had passed through the eternal process that provides for the remission of sins.

64.7.32—*death*—The death spoken of here is the second death which befalls the sons of perdition. These are they who have shed innocent blood and have denied the Holy Ghost.

64.8 The spirit of contention is not of the Lord and, therefore, when such sentiments arise, the Spirit of the Lord withdraws from the disputants. A man devoid of the influence of the Almighty cannot be happy and unless he repents, he will be miserable forever.

64.8.4–6—*days of old*—We need not specify any particular dispensation during which this sort of conduct manifested itself, for it is a universal problem that has existed since the days of Adam and Eve. There has been a constant war between good and evil that has been waged since the beginning of time, in which the personalities and sentiments of men and women have come into contact one with another. Until Zion has been established in the hearts and minds of all mankind, the potential for mutual offense is ever present.

64.9 The offended party can be as culpable as the offending party, particularly if the former is avoiding the entreaties of the latter for reconciliation. The example of the servants of God from the beginning as been to extend forgiveness even before adequate restitution has been made. The repenting sinner has great need of being assured that the difficult path he has undertaken is well worth the effort that he is expending. The kindness and generosity of those against whom he has sinned does much to speed him on his way to complete recovery. Those who extend forgiveness at the earliest opportunity partake of the spirit of the atoning sacrifice and are blessed beyond expression.

64.10 The repenting soul has to pass through a gauntlet that the principles of justice and mercy establish. The journey through that personal narrows is fraught with doubt and sometimes even despair. The forgiveness of one’s
fellow men encourages the hearts of those who are seeking release from spiritual bondage, and anticipates the forgiveness of Him who has the power to save.

64.11 The true disciples of Jesus Christ do not and cannot seek for revenge for the wrongs done unto them. They must ever be ready to let go of the trials and tribulations of the past in favor of the joy and happiness that lies before them. Without this shedding of harsh feelings, the offended parties can never feel completely at one with those who have taken advantage of them. The possibility of divine forgiveness is based on the relationship between the sinner and his God. One can either facilitate the reconciliation or hinder it. The latter option cannot be a blessing to the unforgiving heart and mind.

64.12 In addition to any personal conflicts that might exist among brethren, there are the laws and commandments of the Lord God of Israel to take into consideration. All members of the Church and Kingdom of God are to be held accountable for the manner in which they observe to do all that the Savior has appointed unto them. Those who are found to be at cross purposes with the principles and ordinances of the Gospel have need to be disciplines, for the sake of the sinner and for the sake of the body of Christ. Judgment in these cases, however, cannot be the result of personal opinion or philosophy. All must be determined by that which the Lord has revealed to his chosen servants, those revelations that have been received by the membership of the Church to be binding upon them.

64.13 The rationale for bringing the unrepentant sinner before the disciplinary councils of the Church is not to heap vengeance upon the heads of the recalcitrant. The intent is to protect the Church from spiritual decay and to place the sinner on the path of righteousness, that he might find his way back to the state of innocence, that he might once again be subject to the salvation of the Son of God. Even though forgiveness of the offended party may have already been extended, yet in those cases where the commandments of God have been broken, further action is necessary in order to establish the manner in which a straying disciple might return to full fellowship. Additionally, it must be manifestly clear that the law of God cannot be abused with impunity; there are consequences for wickedness, both in time and in eternity.

64.14 The Lord’s house is a house of order; a disciple’s life ought not to be one of personal, chaotic conduct. Therefore, there are checks and balances by which the children of men might be disciplined during mortality so as to limit the influence of the wicked upon the hearts and minds of the righteous and the innocent.

64.15 Other commentators have long since pointed out the grammatical distinction being made between Isaac Morley and Ezra Booth, that the latter is clearly stated as having once been a servant of the Lord, but no longer qualified. Isaac, on the other hand, is still within the pale of the Church and Kingdom of God.

64.15.13-14—Ezra Booth—Ezra Booth joined the Church of Jesus Christ while living in Hiram, Ohio. He had been a Methodist minister for many years, but when he witnessed the healing of Elsa Johnson’s rheumatic arm by the prophet Joseph Smith in Kirtland, Ohio, an affliction about which Ezra had been familiar for many years, he immediately was baptized. He was subsequently ordained an elder in the Church. While serving with Isaac Morley, the two missionaries were rebuked by reve-
lation for some act committed during their service. Ezra took deep offense at the censure and soon found himself outside of the Church and Kingdom of God. Ezra Booth went to great lengths to vilify the prophet Joseph Smith, writing and publishing against him. So great did the animosity become in Hiram, Ohio, that Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were taken by a mob and tarred and feathered. Joseph S., one of the Murdock twins died as a result of exposure during that ill-fated night.

64.15.19–20—Isaac Morley—Isaac Morley had joined the Church in Kirtland as a result of the missionary labors of Oliver Cowdery and his companions. He was ordained an elder almost immediately. On 3 June 1831 Isaac was ordained a High Priest by Lyman Wight and the same day was set apart as the first counselor to Edward Partridge. He would serve as a counselor until Bishop Partridge’s death in 1840. Isaac Morley served in the Church and Kingdom of God for the rest of his life, moving west with the saints after the death of Joseph Smith, and is considered by some to be the founder of Manti, Utah. He died in Fairview, Utah, 24 June 1865 at age 79.

64.15.26—law—Most likely in reference to the Law of Consecration and the other principles governing the establishment of Zion.

64.15.29—commandment—Most likely in reference to the commandment given to the thirty elders to take up their missionary labors about the time that Joseph Smith and his company left for Jackson county for the first time. From what can be discerned from the historical record, Ezra Booth and Isaac Morley could not have been particularly dedicated to their labors as missionaries along the route from Kirtland, Ohio, to Independence, Missouri, inasmuch as they arrived in the latter community less than week after the prophet. We cannot speak as to their diligence during their return, but it is clear that somewhere along the line they deeply grieved the Spirit of God.

64.16 We may only speculate as to where Isaac Morley and Ezra Booth went astray spiritually. We may probably assume correctly that they had improperly and unjustly condemned some aspect of their experiences in going to and returning from the land of Zion, if not the prophet Joseph Smith directly. Although they had not been mentioned by name in any of the ensuing revelations until this one, it is clear that they were the objects of the Lord’s censure as He evaluated the conduct of the missionaries. Ezra Booth would not recover from his apostasy; Isaac Morley, however, would.

64.16.32–33—Isaac Morley—Isaac Morley had joined the Church in Kirtland as a result of the missionary labors of Oliver Cowdery and his companions. He was ordained an elder almost immediately. On 3 June 1831 Isaac was ordained a High Priest by Lyman Wight and the same day was set apart as the first counselor to Edward Partridge. He would serve as a counselor until Bishop Partridge’s death in 1840. Isaac Morley served in the Church and Kingdom of God for the rest of his life, moving west with the saints after the death of Joseph Smith, and is considered by some to be the founder of Manti, Utah. He died in Fairview, Utah, 24 June 1865 at age 79.

64.17 We do not know in what way Edward Partridge had been affected, but it is clear as well that he had found fault in something that had transpired during the Missouri excursion. Whether this was a criticism of the prophet or of the revelations given in connection with the land of Zion we cannot tell. Ezra Booth, himself an unreliable witness, was willing to articulate Edward’s
transgressions for him, doing so at great length in his many letters written after his own apostasy.

64.17–6—Edward Partridge—Edward Partridge was, as Joseph Smith observed, a pattern of piety and one of the Lord’s great men. A spiritually sensitive seeker of truth, Edward investigated the various sects of his day in an attempt to find the truth manifested in his day as it could be found in the scriptures. In 1828 he came in contact with the Campbellite movement and was an active participant in that movement when Oliver Cowdery and his companions arrived in northeastern Ohio while making their way to the western frontier of the United States in order to bring the Gospel to the Lamanites. While many of the Campbellite Baptists eagerly associated themselves with the Church of Jesus Christ at the hands of the four missionaries, Edward Partridge deferred his own baptism. When Sidney Rigdon determined to travel from Mentor, Ohio, to Fayette, New York, to visit the prophet Joseph Smith, Edward went with him. They arrived at Joseph’s home on 10 December 1830. As the two had passed through Manchester, New York, Sidney and Edward asked the residents about the Smith family, and Joseph in particular. The reply that the Smiths were decent people until young Joseph brought forth the Book of Mormon impressed Edward such that his desire to be baptized was amplified considerably. On 11 December, the day following his first meeting the prophet, Edward Partridge was baptized in Seneca Lake by Joseph Smith. Edward Partridge would serve as the first Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation, beginning 4 February 1831. He would suffer great persecution at the hands of the Missourians because of his position in the Church, and ultimately died as a result of the injuries and exposure that he experienced in May 1840 at the age of 47.

64.18 Sidney Gilbert and his wife had travelled with Joseph Smith in the latter’s first sojourn to the land of Zion. His primary responsibility was to serve as the Lord’s agent in Zion, and to establish a store comparable with that which already existed in Kirtland, Ohio. Together with William W. Phelps he had travelled to Cincinnati, Ohio, during his return trip from Independence, Missouri, in order to make arrangements to purchase a printing press and to acquire other materials in connection with the business ventures which would support the saints in their settlement of Jackson county. In February 1832 Sidney bought the old log courthouse in Independence for $371.00 and that structure was used as the Lord’s storehouse for a time. In November 1832, Sidney moved the mercantile operations to the northwest corner of Lexington and Liberty. He in his family continued to live in the Courthouse building on the corner of Lyme and Kansas.

64.18.15–16—Sidney Gilbert—Algernon Sidney Gilbert became acquainted with the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ late in 1830 or early 1831. We do not know whether or not he met any of the missionaries on their way to teach the Lamanites in the fall of 1830. His niece did acquire a copy of the Book of Mormon from John Whitmer when he visited Kirtland, Ohio in mid-January 1831, an event that immediately communicated to her aunt and uncle. By 6 June 1831 Sidney was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ. On that date he received his commission and was ordained an elder by the prophet Joseph Smith. Sidney Gilbert was commissioned by the Lord to be the agent for the Church in Missouri, to establish the store and look to the needs of the members of the Church there as directed by the Bishop, Edward Partridge. The store is operated successfully for about two years. In July

18 And now, verily I say that it is expedient in me that my servant Sidney Gilbert, after a few weeks, shall return upon his business, and to his agency in the land of Zion;
1833, the hostilities that had been seething between the saints and the original settlers, erupted in violence, which ultimately resulted in the destruction of the Independence store and the rifling of the goods that had been ensconced there. Sidney Gilbert raised up another store in Liberty, Missouri, across the river from Jackson county. Sidney Gilbert suffered great trials and tribulations at the hands of the Missourians. At one point, however, he and several others of the leadership of the Church in Jackson county, offered themselves as a ransom for the fleeing saints. The persecutions to their toll on Sidney and there were times when he simply believed that he could not muster sufficient strength to be obedient to the will of the Lord. Finally, he testified that he would rather die than preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. About the 26th of June 1834 he contracted cholera in Liberty, Missouri and died some three days later at age 45.

64.18.34—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

64.19 During his travels with the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Gilbert had been privy to many of the marvelous experiences that transpired, not the least of which were the daily periods of scriptural instruction. He had been present at the dedication of the land of Zion and then later at the dedication of the Temple site. His familiarity with the plans for Zion that had been revealed through the prophet would also enable him to breathe continuing confidence into the hearts and minds of the members of Church who were beginning to establish the infrastructure of the city of the New Jerusalem. They would have difficult days, but Sidney Gilbert was in a position to edify, bless, and strengthen them.

64.20 When the New York saints had first been commanded to gather to northeastern Ohio, some preparations were made for them, that they might have a place to dwell for a time. Leman Copley consecrated his farm in Thompson, Ohio, for the benefit of the members of the Church from Colesville, New York. Ezra Thayre apparently invested in property for and in behalf of the Palmyra Branch. Both of these brethren had great difficulty in maintaining their covenantal relationship with the Lord and with the Church as a result of their personal weaknesses of the flesh and the cares of this lost and fallen world. The sale of the Morley farm was intended to avoid any further apostasy in the part of other prominent men in the Kingdom.

64.20.10—Isaac Morley—Isaac Morley had joined the Church in Kirtland as a result of the missionary labors of Oliver Cowdery and his companions. He was ordained an elder almost immediately. On 3 June 1831 Isaac was ordained a High Priest by Lyman Wight and the same day was set apart as the first counselor to Edward Partridge. He would serve as a counselor until Bishop Partridge’s death in 1840. Isaac Morley served in the Church and Kingdom of God for the rest of his life, moving west with the saints after the death of Joseph Smith, and is considered by some to be the founder of Manti, Utah. He died in Fair-
view, Utah, 24 June 1865 at age 79.

64.20—The Isaac Morley farm lay just off the Painesville Road about a mile east for the center of Kirtland, Ohio. The prophet and his wife lived there from March to September 1831 after their short stay in the home of Newel K. Whitney. Isaac Morley’s farm is not mentioned by name in any of the previous revelations printed in the Doctrine and Covenants. There was, however, a farm that the Lord had commanded to be sold which was under the care of Titus Billings, the brother-in-law of Sidney Gilbert. It is likely that these two are the same piece of property (see 63.38.14–15).

64.21 The Church’s holdings in Kirtland were consolidated primarily in two large tracts of land. The Frederick G. Williams farm and the Peter French farm, the latter lying directly north of the former. Several of the Church’s improvements were located at the southern end of the French farm.

64.21.7—Frederick G. Williams—When Oliver Cowdery and his missionary companions arrived in Kirtland, Ohio, in the fall of 1830, they found in Frederick G. Williams a receptive mind and hearts for the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. After his baptism and ordination to the priesthood, he petitioned his benefactors with a request to join them in their travels to the Unorganized Indian Territory. His desire was granted. He was present when the land of Zion was dedicated in August 1831 as well as the dedication of the temple site in Independence. He served for a time as the prophet’s scribe and then later as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. On 17 March 1839, Frederick was excommunicated in company with W.W. Phelps, George M. Hinkle, Sampson Avard, Thomas B. Marsh, and John Corrill. On 8 April 1840 he formally asked for forgiveness from the Church then located at Nauvoo, Illinois, Hyrum Smith being his advocate. On 10 October 1842 Frederick died in Quincy, Illinois in full fellowship with the saints.

64.21.13—The Frederick G. Williams farm lay south and west of the center of Kirtland, Ohio. It was west of the Chillicothe Road and straddled what was called Joseph Street (about 55 acres). The rest of the property ran north and then west comprising another thirty acres or so. The homes of Vincent Knight, Joseph Fielding, and Hyrum Smith were located on the farm.

64.21.28—A community in northeastern Ohio that served as the headquarters of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from 1831 to 1838. It was the home of many of the early faithful members of the Church.

64.21.32—The Church of Jesus Christ prospered in Kirtland from September of 1831 until 1837 when the majority of the saints were forced to depart the city, especially those who continued to sustain the prophet Joseph Smith. During the intervening time the membership of the Church was strengthened, particularly by the blessings that devolved from the building of the Kirtland Temple. During the time of the dedication of the Temple, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery received the keys of the priesthood from Elijah, Elias, and Moses, which opened the door for eternal blessings associated with Celestial marriage, the salvation of the dead, and the gathering of Israel from every corner of the world.

64.22 This is an extraordinary statement on the part of the Lord which implies rather unusual circumstances in the land of Zion. In 1831 the only

21 I will not that my servant Frederick G. Williams should sell his farm, for I, the Lord, will to retain a strong hold in the land of Kirtland, for the space of five years, in which I will not overthrow the wicked, that thereby I may save some.
way that any member of the Church of Jesus Christ would be entitled to travel
to the site of the New Jerusalem was to be called by revelation, to willingly
enter into the Law of Consecration, and to covenant to live by every word that
proceeded forth from the mouth of God through his anointed servants. Any-
one who attempted to make their way without those elements in place would
be in danger of losing his soul for rebellion and impertinence. In July of 1833,
the saints in the land of Zion would be driven from their homes and the lands
of their inheritance by the original settlers of the land. They would find refuge
first in Clay county, and then later in Davies and Caldwell counties. Far West
would be built up as a resort for the members of the Church. The covenants
that had been in place in Jackson county were no longer in effect to the same
degree as they had been earlier. The saints would leave Missouri altogether in
1839 and would settle on the banks of the Mississippi River in Nauvoo, Illi-
nois. For a man to desire to go up to the land of Zion after the great tribu-
lations of 1833 would have required extraordinary faith in the Church and
Kingdom of God, and great confidence in the protecting power of the Father
and the Son.

64.22.25—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every
prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a
few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into
such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to
prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent
in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a
thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the
commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their
midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this
goal of the latter days.

64.23 We may speak of the blessings associated with the voluntary giving of
one-tenth of one’s annual interest to the Church and Kingdom of God for the
establishment of Zion. We may also speak of the contributions of one’s time
and talents as a reflection of the same principle. One of the great labors of this
last dispensation has been and will continue to be the building of the Houses
of the Lord among every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Those who
have been engaged in the salvation of the dead will find that they have been
prepared for the work of the ministry during the Millennium.

64.23.6—today—In this declaration, the Lord is simply defining terms for
the saints of the Most High. “Today” was in reference to the Dispens-
ation of the Fullness of Times, from the time of the vision of the
Father and the Son by the prophet Joseph Smith in the spring of 1820
until the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory, ushering in the
Millennial reign.

64.23.22—sacrifice—The sacrifice of the saints since that performed by the
Son of God has been that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. All
other supposed sacrifices of material means are mere shadows of the
truth.

64.23.30—tithing—The Law of God in September of 1831 was that of
Consecration. The principle of tithing as it is understood today would
not be revealed to the Church until 8 July 1838 at Far West, Missouri.
Although we cannot speak with certainty on the matter, the tenth here
referred to may have been in conjunction with the building of the
Kirtland Temple. At the time the Nauvoo Temple was raised up, the
men of the city were committed to donating every tenth day at the site.
This may have been a reprise of that which had happened earlier

23 Behold, now it is called today
until the coming of the Son of
Man, and verily it is a day of sacri-
fice, and a day for the tithing of my
people; for he that is tithed shall
not be burned at his coming.
64.24 The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ will be terrible for those who have not prepared themselves to dwell in his presence. At his coming the wicked will be destroyed, some through death and others through abject repentance.

64.24.54—Babylon—The ancient city of Babylon has become the scriptural archetype for materialism, dependence upon the flesh, the quintessential representation of carnal security. It is, in short, the name that embraces all of the untoward effects of a lost and fallen world. The children of men who have not fled Babylon for Zion will have remained in their sins and will have succumbed to the spirit of the natural man. They will not abide the glory of the coming of the Lord, but will perish in the flesh as the earth is restored to its paradisiacal state, even that of the Terrestrial world.

64.25 How does one sustain one’s faith and testimony in the midst of a lost and fallen world? By continually serving one’s fellow men in truth and righteousness.

64.26 Newel Whitney had learned the mercantile business from Sidney Gilbert when he had first come to Ohio in 1820. Seven years later Sidney joined Newel in the latter’s business enterprise in Kirtland. The formal name of their stores, both in Ohio and Missouri was “Gilbert and Whitney”. Needless to say, with the establishment of the storehouse in Independence, Missouri, there was a natural desire for Newel Whitney and his family to join Sidney Gilbert and his wife in Zion. The properties mentioned here would not be sold until 1838. By that time, most of the saints had already departed from Kirtland. In the meantime, however, the saints would be greatly benefited by having the financial strength that the store represented.

64.26.9–11—Newel K. Whitney—When Oliver Cowdery and his three missionary companions arrived in Kirtland, Ohio, they proceeded to do a great work among the members of the Disciples of Christ who worshipped with Sidney Rigdon. Newel K. Whitney was one of the congregants. In November 1830, Newel and his wife Elizabeth were received into the Church and Kingdom of God. In February 1831, the prophet Joseph Smith, his wife Emma, Edward Partridge, and Sidney Rigdon arrived in Kirtland from New York. Newel and Emma had been praying for further light and knowledge regarding the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As Joseph entered the store he said, “Newel K. Whitney, thou art the man!” The Whitneys were astonished initially, but Elizabeth noted that the coming of the prophet was a fulfillment of a promise that they had received in vision a short time before. For the next several weeks the Whitneys provided board and room for the Smiths. By revelation, the Whitney store was designated the Bishop’s Storehouse in Kirtland, where the surplus material from the consecrating saints was kept until needed by those who were in want. Edward Partridge had been ordained as the first Bishop of the Church and Newel Whitney was set apart as his agent in Kirtland. Sidney Gilbert was selected to be Edward’s agent in Missouri. On 4 December 1831 Newel K. Whitney was ordained the second Bishop of the Church with specific responsibility in Kirtland and environs. Ever after Newel K. Whitney was faithful to his covenants and calling. He suffered through the trials and tribulations in Missouri and Illinois, making the trek westward with the saints to what would become Salt Lake City, where he died 23 September 1850.

64.26.13–14—Sidney Gilbert—Algernon Sidney Gilbert became acquainted
with the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ late in 1830 or early 1831. We do not know whether or not he met any of the missionaries on their way to teach the Lamanites in the fall of 1830. His niece did acquire a copy of the Book of Mormon from John Whitmer when he visited Kirtland, Ohio in mid-January 1831, an event that immediately communicated to her aunt and uncle. By 6 June 1831 Sidney was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ. On that date he received his commission and was ordained an elder by the prophet Joseph Smith. Sidney Gilbert was commissioned by the Lord to be the agent for the Church in Missouri, to establish the store and look to the needs of the members of the Church there as directed by the Bishop, Edward Partridge. The store is operated successfully for about two years. In July 1833, the hostilities that had been seething between the saints and the original settlers, erupted in violence, which ultimately resulted in the destruction of the Independence store and the rifling of the goods that had been ensconced there. Sidney Gilbert raised up another store in Liberty, Missouri, across the river from Jackson county. Sidney Gilbert suffered great trials and tribulations at the hands of the Missourians. At one point, however, he and several others of the leadership of the Church in Jackson county, offered themselves as a ransom for the fleeing saints. The persecutions to their toll on Sidney and there were times when he simply believed that he could not muster sufficient strength to be obedient to the will of the Lord. Finally, he testified that he would rather die than preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. About the 26th of June 1834 he contracted cholera in Liberty, Missouri and died some three days later at age 45.

64.26.46—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

64.27 We are hard-pressed to find another passage anywhere in the Standard Works of the Church of Jesus Christ that states this principle in such clarity. No doubt, however, the prophet Joseph Smith and his associates had been counseled in this matter before. The saints would learn to their hurt time and again that those who are opposed to the teachings of the faithful have no scruples about destroying the saints in financial matters. They were not to go into debt in acquiring the properties needed in Jackson county, Missouri.

64.28 For those who had formally entered into the Law of Consecration, the notion of personal possessions had taken on a rather sublime meaning. One was a steward of the Lord’s blessings rather than a possessor or owner of them. The sale of consecrated properties and the use of the resultant funds were in the hands of the Lord, His servants acting as they had been directed. Therefore, the Morley farm might be sold and the proceeds used to advance the Church and the cause of Zion in another venue, while the property that had belonged to Frederick G. Williams could be retained for the same reasons. These were matters dictated by the Lord God of Israel.

27 Behold, it is said in my laws, or forbidden, to get in debt to thine enemies;

28 But behold, it is not said at any time that the Lord should not take when he please, and pay as seemeth him good.
64.29 The men who had been called to serve as the Lord’s agents should have no fear doing as He asked, particularly in those delicate issues involving properties that had once belonged to members of the Church. There may have been some residual concern about conducting the Lord’s business, because of the perfidy of men like Leman Copley and Ezra Thayre, both of who became covetous of that which they had consecrated to the Church and Kingdom of God.

64.29.3—ye—That is to say, Newel K. Whitney and Sidney Gilbert.

64.30 One of the major purposes at that time for selling selected properties was to have sufficient funds whereby lands could be purchased in the land of Zion and the appropriate improvements made. While the saints could labor together to accomplish much, there were some things that could only be obtained through monetary means. Newel and Sidney were charged with that responsibility.

64.30.9—saints—In reference to the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ, those who have covenanted to no longer partake of the wickedness of the world. The Greek word used in the New Testament means “those not of the earth”.

64.30.24—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

64.31 Newel K. Whitney and Sidney Gilbert were solemnly assured that the task that the Lord had given to them could be accomplished. That promise is still in place and the city of the New Jerusalem will yet be raised up unto the Son of God in anticipation of his coming in glory.

64.31.19—they—That is to say, the saints.

64.31.22—it—that is to say, the inheritance in the land of Zion.

64.32 Even if everything had gone as planned in 1831, without any opposition from the Missourians, the progress of the establishment of Zion would have been necessarily pedestrian simply because of the enormity of the task.

64.33 Even under the best of circumstances, the responsibilities that devolved upon Newel and Sidney were taxing in the extreme. They could wear out their lives attending to the needs of the saints in Missouri and caring for the assets of the Church that remained in Ohio. Yet, one day, the entire earth would become the Lord’s Zion, the prosperity and unity of the citizens thereof complete. There would come a time when the meager labors which they had provided would bear fruit far beyond anything that they could have imagined.

64.34 The building up of Zion upon the earth in the latter days requires what such tasks have always required. Zion is a place where the people are of one heart and one mind, a condition brought about by the presence of the Holy Ghost in their lives. The power and influence of the Holy Ghost can only be felt by those who are striving to keep the commandments of God, particularly those having to do with the mutual welfare of the children of men. As the
history of the Church of Jesus Christ has continuously demonstrated, when the saints live by that which they know to be true, there is no lack of any kind among them.

64.34.24—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

64.35 Certainly there would come a point in the early history of the latter day Zion that the rebellious would be cut off, driven from the lands which once pertained to them. The members of the Church in Jackson county did not live up to their privileges and as a result came in direct conflict with their neighbors, both the Gentiles that preceded them into that country and their own brethren upon whom they did not have sufficient compassion. There will come a time, however, when the work that began 180 years ago will be fulfilled every whit, by those who are willing to have a pure heart and a willing mind.

64.35.13—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

64.36 The Lord Jesus Christ taught his disciples that the Kingdom of Heaven was like unto a fisherman’s net that indeed gathered in all kinds of fish, but subsequent to the catch, the various fish would have to be separated one from another. So also we may speak of the establishment of Zion. The Lord will have a cleansed, purified, and sanctified people. Those individuals who have not honored their heritage as sons and daughters of God, will find themselves outside of the pale of the city of Zion.

64.36.14—Ephraim—Prior to this reference, the name of the second son of Joseph who was the son of Jacob, was only mentioned in connection with the publishing of the Book of Mormon, when it is referred to as the stick of Ephraim, a symbolic allusion made by the prophet Ezekiel (see 27.5.63–65 and EZ-C 37.15–17). The significance of the name, however, has to do with the role of the tribe of Ephraim as the firstborn of the House of Israel, a position that came first to Joseph as the heir his father Jacob. Jacob when upon his death bed, blessed Ephraim over Manasseh, testifying that Ephraim would be the greater of the two, virtually making him equal to Joseph. The posterity of Ephraim in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times has been particularly responsive to the principles of truth and salvation and will be the means by which the Gospel will be taken into every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. They are to take the lead in laying the foundations for the city of the New Jerusalem.

35 And the rebellious shall be cut off out of the land of Zion, and shall be sent away, and shall not inherit the land.

36 For, verily I say that the rebellious are not of the blood of Ephraim, wherefore they shall be plucked out.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64.36.15</td>
<td>—wherefore—This word would have appeared on page 161 of the Book of Commandments had the printing press in Independence, Missouri, not been destroyed by a mob in July 1833.</td>
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<td>64.37</td>
<td>The Church of Jesus Christ in these last days is fully engaged in preparing the children of men for the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and for the ushering in the Millennial reign. Metaphorically, the hill upon which the Church sits to judge the nations is one that derives from its comprehension of the Terrestrial law that will given during the thousand years of peace and harmony that will prevail upon the earth. Judgment, it should also be understood, it not simply a passive evaluation of the evil that presently afflicts this planet and its inhabitants. It is primarily the instrument by which the nations of the earth may be delivered from all evil, from every enemy, in time and in eternity.</td>
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<td>64.38</td>
<td>The inhabitants of Zion will be a people who will have become of one heart and one mind, who will have learned to dwell in righteousness, and who will have eliminated poverty of every kind from among them. Those who dwell in such a society can easily determine who among the nations are fit to dwell in like circumstances. This is not necessarily because they are particularly astute in and of themselves, but because they are filled with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost.</td>
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<td>64.38.11</td>
<td>—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.</td>
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<tr>
<td>64.39</td>
<td>Those who are enlightened by the Spirit of God can easily discern any darkness of deception that dwells in the hearts and minds of men. A man may receive great authority from God, but he may also falter in his progress as a servant of Heaven, perhaps even fall from the grace that has been placed upon him. Such a man, notwithstanding his outward credentials, could be easily recognized for what he is and would not be allowed to partake of the blessings of Zion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>64.40</td>
<td>Edward Partridge and his counselors had already been deemed worthy to receive and inheritance in the land of Zion. This, however, could be revoked if they fell into apostasy.</td>
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<td>64.40.4—bishop—At this particular time, only Edward Partridge had been ordained to this specific office in the priesthood.</td>
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<td>64.40.8—judge—Every Bishop who presides among the saints, hold the keys of the priesthood and is empowered to determine the worthiness of those for whom he has charge. His also blessed so that he might counsel appropriately those who are attempting to overcome sins and transgression in their lives.</td>
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<td>64.40.11—counselors—At this point in the history of the Church, Bishop Partridge’s counselors were Isaac Morley and John Corrill.</td>
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<td>64.41</td>
<td>Zion will flourish in spite of any and all of those who might forsake</td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Behold, I, the Lord, have made my church in these last days like unto a judge sitting on a hill, or in a high place, to judge the nations.</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>For it shall come to pass that the inhabitants of Zion shall judge all things pertaining to Zion.</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>And liars and hypocrites shall be proved by them, and they who are not apostles and prophets shall be known.</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>And even the bishop, who is a judge, and his counselors, if they are not faithful in their stewardships shall be condemned, and others shall be planted in their stead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>For, behold, I say unto you</td>
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their covenants and responsibilities, because others of more faith will be raised up in their stead so that the work might go forward. One does not have to look very far into the history of the Church before this principle is illuminated by the lives of the citizens of the Kingdom of God.

64.41—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

64.42 The gathering of the House of Israel is only the beginning of the salvation of the posterity of Adam and Eve. Every man, woman, and child who has ever lived upon this earth will be given the opportunity to either accept or reject the salvation of Jesus Christ. The saints will be astonished at the percentage of those who will respond positively, both among the living and among the dead.

64.42.6—ensign—An ensign is a flag, a standard of some sort, that represents a cultural entity. In this case, the ensign represents the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the fullness of the priesthood of God, and the impending fulfillment of every promise that has ever been extended unto the children of men.

64.43 The righteous will rejoice in the truths and principles that will be displayed before the inhabitants of the world. The wicked will fear exceedingly because they will begin to comprehend that the truth of their own lives are about to be revealed before the world. The nations of the earth, particularly those whose conduct has been less than admirable, will find that their powers are diminished. Their ability to intimidate will dissipate and they will fear reprisals from those whom they have abused, or rather, from Zion who will have become the defender of the innocent and the oppressed.

64.43.23—terrible ones—Zion will be a Kingdom of priests like unto Enoch, Melchizedek, Abraham, Moses, Elijah. These will be men empowered with the authority of God to deal with the rebellious and the recalcitrant. They will be feared, not because of any inclination on their part for retribution or oppression, but because they will know and understand the innermost thoughts of their enemies.

64.43.30—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 65

Date: October 1831
Place: Hiram, Ohio

Due to persecution and other unavoidable circumstances, Joseph and Emma Smith had not been privileged to remain in one place very long during their married life. On 18 January 1827, the couple travelled to South Bainbridge, New York, from Harmony, Pennsylvania, in order to be married by one Squire Tarhill. Even though both Joseph and Emma were of age, the bride’s parents were opposed to the marriage because of the rumors and false stories that had been circulating regarding the prophet’s vision of the Father that Zion shall flourish, and the glory of the Lord shall be upon her; EM 2:703 D&C 64:41–43
MD 228
EM 2:461
42 And she shall be an ensign unto the people, and there shall come unto her out of every nation under heaven.

43 And the day shall come when the nations of the earth shall tremble because of her, and shall fear because of her terrible ones. The Lord hath spoken it. Amen.

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and the Son, and the several interviews he had had with the angel Moroni. Shortly after their marriage, Joseph and Emma went to Manchester, New York, to live with his parents where they stayed for nearly a year.

650.2 On 22 September 1827, Joseph was commanded to go once again to the hill Cumorah where he was at last, given permission to take the plates upon which was recorded the text of the Book of Mormon. At the same time he also retrieved the breastplate and the Urim and Thummim which were attached to it. During the subsequent three months almost every stratagem known to man, together with considerable violence, was used in order for the enemies of the prophet to separate him from the ancient Nephite record. In December 1827, in order to more adequately protect the plates, Joseph and Emma left Manchester, New York, and made their way once again to Harmony, Pennsylvania, where they dwelt in the home of Emma’s parents for a time. After a short time in the Hale home, it became clear to Isaac Hale, Emma’s father, that he was not going to be permitted to see the Nephite record with his own eyes. He then demanded Joseph and Emma go elsewhere with the plates. The young couple then moved into a shanty provided by Jesse Hale, Emma’s brother, which had been placed upon a small parcel of land next to the Hale farm. There they lived until late May 1829, after Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery had received the keys of the Aaronic priesthood from John the Baptist. Persecution in the neighborhood intensified, however, and Joseph, Emma, and Oliver were retrieved by one of Oliver’s close friends, one David Whitmer from Fayette, New York. The four arrived at the Whitney home on 1 June 1829, where the last portion of the Book of Mormon was translated.

650.3 When the translation was complete, Oliver Cowdery made a complete copy of the original manuscript. Then he, in August 1829 in the company of Martin Harris, went to Palmyra, New York, to arrange for the publishing of the Book of Mormon by E.B. Grandin. The supervision of the printing was conducted by Hyrum Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Joseph and Emma returned to Harmony, Pennsylvania, for a time. The first copies of the Book of Mormon were made available in Palmyra, New York in March 1830. On 6 April 1830, a number of believers met in the Whitney home in Fayette, New York, where the Church of Jesus Christ was formally organized in this dispensation. During the ensuing months, Emma and Joseph resided in various homes, with friends and relatives, when they were not working the land of their small farm in Harmony, Pennsylvania.

650.4 The persecution in Harmony continued apace and it was not long before Peter Whitmer, Senior, once again invited the prophet and his wife to live with his family in Fayette, New York. This move took place in August 1830. In October 1830, Oliver Cowdery and three others were called by revelation to preach the principles of salvation as contained in the Book of Mormon to the inhabitants of the land that lay westward from Fayette, New York, and more especially among the Native Americans. As part of their missionary labors, many of the citizens in and around Kirtland, Ohio, were received into the Church of Jesus Christ. In December 1830, the Lord revealed to the prophet Joseph Smith that the conditions in and around Fayette, New York, and even in other places where the Church had been established, were going to worsen. The commandment was therefore given for the saints in New York and Pennsylvania to resort to northeastern Ohio where they would be blessed and edified, particularly with regard to the Law of the Lord. On 1 February 1831, Joseph and Emma appeared at the home of Newel K. Whitney in
Kirtland, Ohio, where they were received with open arms. The Smiths spent several weeks enjoying the hospitality of the Whitneys. In the early spring of 1831, Isaac Morley invited the prophet’s family to live with him on his farm a short distance to the east of Kirtland.

65.0.5 From 19 June 1831 to 27 August 1831, Joseph Smith and several other elders in the Church participated in the journey to western Missouri where the land of Zion was dedicated and the site for the temple of the New Jerusalem was selected. When the brethren returned to Kirtland in late August, the Lord revealed that the Morley farm was to be sold in order that funds might be raised to purchase additional lands in Jackson county, Missouri. Joseph and Emma still had their residence at the Morley home. It was at that point that John Johnson, a wealthy farmer in Hiram, Ohio, invited the prophet and his family to dwell in his home. On 12 September 1831, Joseph and Emma made the move thirty miles to the southeast of Kirtland. It was there that Joseph renewed his work on the Translation of the Bible. This revelation was received just as the translation process resumed. It was first published in the September 1832 issue of the *Evening and Morning Star*. This Section does not appear in the Book of Commandments because of the destruction of the W.W. Phelps’ press in July 1833, but is printed as Section 24 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

65.1 Six months before the beginning of the mortal ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ took place, John the Baptist raised this very cry on the banks of the Jordan River, that the inhabitants of the land might repent of their sins and receive the mortal Messiah when he appeared among them. We are not privy as to the identity of the angel whose voice is referenced here, and perhaps it does not matter. At the heart of the issue, are the place and responsibility of the Church and Kingdom of God in the latter days, the place and responsibility of the priesthood, to signal to a lost and fallen world that the time is short. The Telestial world would come to an end, and the earth would be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory, a glory like unto the Terrestrial Kingdom. Those who were unprepared would find themselves enmeshed in a thousand-year exile in the world of spirits. Isaiah and a good many others of the Lord’s servants knew of the coming of John the Baptist as a precursor to the advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. And by association the preparations that would be required of the children of men just prior to the second coming of Jesus Christ. Isaiah’s facility for evoking multiple times and places in a moment is illustrated clearly in the fortieth chapter of his prophecy where he speaks of the coming of Christ in glory to usher in the millennial reign, and at the same time revealing the spirit of the mortal ministry of the Savior. The House of Israel had waited upon the Lord God for centuries for deliverance. It is disappointing that the Jews during the Meridian of Time were so obsessed with the circumstances of their world that they failed to realize the wonderful promises that were extended to them by John, Jesus, and the rest of the Christian Church, one of the major fulfillments of the articulated blessings revealed through the ancient prophets. The citation, in context, is as follows:

1 HEARKEN, and lo, a voice as of one sent down from on high, who is mighty and powerful, whose going forth is unto the ends of the earth, yea, whose voice is unto men—Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made
straight, and the rough places plain. And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. (Isaiah 40:1–5)

Notwithstanding all of the perversions that the Jews had embraced as they were ruled by the various empires of the world, the Lord in his mercy was prepared to forgive them, and facilitate their entrance into the Kingdom of God on the earth and ultimately bring them to salvation and exaltation. In order to receive these blessings, the children of the covenant would need to flee the world, that world so aptly represented by ancient Babylon, and come to a newness of life which ironically was represented by the wilderness, the desolate places where John’s bright and burning testimony pierced the dark night of personal and national apostasy. The same was required of the saints of the latter days as they were commanded to gather to Zion.

65.2 On 15 May 1829, John the Baptist appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, bestowing upon them the keys of the Aaronic priesthood, by which effectual baptisms for the remission of sins could be performed. They were also entitled to ordain others to the offices of the Aaronic priesthood and perform any other ordinances that pertained to the Levitical order. Within two weeks after the appearance of John the Baptist, the ancient Apostles, Peter, James, and John appeared to Joseph and Oliver on the banks of the Susquehanna River and bestowed upon them the keys of the greater priesthood, that which had been called the Melchizedek priesthood anciently. By this authority, the prophet and his friend were entitled to ordain men to serve in the various callings of the priesthood which were more of a spiritual nature. They were also authorized to organize the Church of Jesus Christ when that time came. On 6 April 1830, the Kingdom of God was formally organized in this dispensation with six elders as the charter members, the smallest number necessary to effect an organization of that type in the state of New York.

65.2.17—thence—Certainly in reference to the banks of the Susquehanna River, but could also refer in part to time when further power, authority, and keys would come, when the Savior, Moses, Elijah, and Elias appeared to Joseph and Oliver in the Kirtland Temple on 3 April 1835.

65.2.31—stone—This is in reference to the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon in the days of Daniel the prophet, who saw a great image made of various metals which was struck by a small stone that had rolled down from when it had been quarried. The image, which represented all of the various nations of the earth from the days of Babylon to the period just prior to the second coming of Jesus Christ, would be broken up by the stone, which would then continue to roll on until it had become a great mountain itself, filling up the entire earth (see DA-C 2.1–44).

65.3 Those who are invited to the marriage feast of the Lamb are metaphorically of two kinds. There is the bride herself, which is the Church of Jesus Christ in every dispensation. The faithful membership of the Church and Kingdom of God are those who find a fullness of joy immediately as the Millennial reign begins. The others at the feast are those who have been invited to partake of the blessings of that great day because they are sufficiently wise and honorable that they can dwell in a Terrestrial world. Needless to say, every effort will be made for these to qualify as covenantal members of the Church, a labor that will involve many of the saints as the personal reign of Jesus Christ begins. Not everyone who is alive during the Millennium will be members of the Church, but all will acknowledge Jesus Christ as their Lord and King upon

2 The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth.

3 Yea, a voice crying—Prepare ye the way of the Lord, prepare ye the supper of the Lamb, make ready for the Bridegroom.
the earth. Those without the fullness of the Gospel will be given the opportunity to receive it through faith, repentance, and the saving ordinances.

65.4 Through prayer, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, men may come to a sure knowledge of the truth as it has been revealed in this last dispensation prior to the coming of the Savior in immortal glory. Having come to an awareness of the eternal truth of these matters, it is incumbent for every man to purify himself, to prepare himself to be a receptacle for the power and influence of the Holy Ghost by which he may testify to the nations of those things which he has learned by the Spirit of God.

65.5 In the end, every man is his brother’s keeper. For that reason, the Gospel has been taken into the world by the hands of the faithful, that the children of men might have an opportunity to receive the principles and ordinances thereof. As the inhabitants of the earth receive and keep the commandments of the Father and of the Son, they are cleansed from the blood and sins of this generation, are purified of the remnants of the influence of the natural man, and are sanctified sufficiently in order to be able to stand in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ when he returns to this planet to initiate a thousand-year reign of righteous, peace and joy. The company of saints who will receive him at his coming will be those who are worthy citizens of the Church and Kingdom of God. The official beginnings of that Kingdom commenced on 6 April 1830.

65.6 The Spirit of the Lord whispers to us what we ought to pray, as it does on this particular occasion to the prophet Joseph Smith. The Kingdom of God will roll forth; there is nothing in time or eternity that can keep it from happening, since the Lord God of Israel has so decreed. As participants in the latter days, it behooves us to be at one with the Father and the Son, and at one with the saints of the Most High. This is accomplished in part as we seek the spiritual and temporal welfare of the children of men through prayer. This is not merely the utterance of similar words, but a union of mind and heart that strengthen us in our own determination to walk uprightly before the Lord. It also provides us with a solemn witness that we are not alone in this enterprise. As we draw nearer to the Lord, we perceive the hearts and minds of the faithful who are seeking the same blessings as ourselves. There will come a time when the prayers of the faithful will be fulfilled every whit. Every sorrow will be turned into joy, every opposition will dissipate, and every desire for evil will be forsaken.

65.6.45—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

66.0.1 The prophet Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon had arrived back in Kirtland on 27 August 1831 from their journey to western Missouri. Two major challenges lay before them. First was finding a quiet place where the translation of the Bible might continue uninterrupted. Before leaving for Missouri, Joseph and Emma had been living in the home of Isaac Morley, located at his farm a short distance to the east of Kirtland. With the growing needs for the saints in Zion mounting somewhat unresolved, the decision was made that the Morley farm ought to be sold. The prophet, then, was without residence. About that same time, John Johnson, a prosperous farmer living Hiram, Ohio,
a small community located about 30 miles southeast of Kirtland, invited the prophet and his family to live with him. Sister Johnson had been the beneficiary of a miraculous healing some months before when she and her family were visiting in Kirtland. Joseph and Emma would live with the Johnsons for several months. Unfortunately, Hiram, Ohio, was also the home of Ezra Booth, one of the men called to serve a mission among the inhabitants of the land on a track from Kirtland, Ohio, to Independence, Missouri. He and his companion were not particularly faithful in their labors and were severely chastised for their negligence. Ezra Booth returned home disgruntled and not long afterwards fell into an apostasy so virulent that he participated in some of the most unjust and violent activities that the saints experienced during the first five years of its existence.

66.0.2 On 12 September 1831, the prophet and his family moved to Hiram, Ohio. The translation of the New Testament resumed on 26 September 1831, John Whitmer acting as the prophet’s scribe until about 20 November 1831. During that time they finished the last three chapters of Matthew and the first eight chapters of Mark. Thereafter, Sidney Rigdon became the primary scribe for the prophet until about 24 March 1832. The two brethren nearly finished the New Testament during that time, having arrived at the eleventh chapter of the book of Revelation. The translation process was interrupted by the assault on Joseph and Sidney by a mob led by another apostate, Simonds Ryder. The translation process would not begin again until late July 1832 with Frederick G. Williams acting as scribe.

66.0.3 The second of the challenges presented to the fledgling Church of Jesus Christ was the increasing need for funds to provide for the saints going to Zion. The sale of the Morley farm would aid in that process, but it would not be sufficient. As a result, conferences were held throughout the various branches of the Church in Ohio inviting the saints to participate in the Law of Consecration as part of their preparation to receive their inheritance in the land of Zion. Several elders of the Church were instructed in the manner in which the congregational services of the branches were to be conducted, with a charge that they would teach the correct principles to the widespread membership of the Kingdom of God. There was an appeal made also for limited commodities and funds that would allow the prophet and his scribes to continue their work in the ministry uninterrupted.

66.0.4 During the month of October 1831, three conferences were held to resolve several of the issues mentioned above. The first was held at the Johnson farm in Hiram; the second was held in Kirtland; and the third was held in Orange, Ohio, a small community about 14 miles southwest of Kirtland and about 20 miles northwest of Hiram. It was at this latter conference that William E. McLellin approached the prophet for a revelation as to what he should be about. William had first heard of the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ in Paris, Tennessee, at the hands of Samuel H. Smith and Reynolds Cahoon as the latter were making their way from Kirtland, Ohio, to Independence, Missouri in the summer of 1831. He followed the brethren to Independence where he was baptized 10 August 1831 and was ordained an elder four days later on 24 August 1831. He travelled in the ministry with Hyrum Smith on a return trip that took him through Paris, Tennessee. He arrived in Kirtland, Ohio, on 18 October 1831. On 25 October 1831 he found himself in the company of the prophet in Orange, Ohio. This Section did not appear in the Book of Commandments because of the destruction of the W.W. Phelps’ press in July 1833, but was printed as Section 74 in the first edition of the
66.1 William E. McLellin began well, listening to the words of eternal life, receiving the principles and ordinances of the Gospel with his own heart. As a result he had been blessed beyond measure.  

66.1.9–11—William E. McLellin—William E. McLellin was born in Smith County, Tennessee on 18 January 1806. He was taught the first principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Paris, Tennessee where he was employed as a school teacher. He traveled to Independence, Missouri, where he was baptized and ordained an elder in the Church on 20 August and 24 August 1831, respectively. He served several missions before being called to serve as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on 15 February 1835. For all of his good intentions and the degree of service that he had tendered the Church and Kingdom of God, William McLellin suffered from deep spiritual and temporal weaknesses that he never managed to conquer in his life. His severe criticism of the prophet Joseph Smith and other leaders in Kirtland precipitated his disfellowshipment for a time, but upon sincere repentance he was received back into the Kingdom. William continued, however, to express a lack of complete confidence in the leadership in the Church. In 1838, he came out in open rebellion against Joseph Smith. He was excommunicated 11 May 1838. He participated in the in the looting of property in Far West, Missouri, and threatened to physically engage the prophet in combat, so long as Joseph Smith were chained and William McLellin were allowed to wield a club. After the death of the prophet in June 1844, William associated himself with several different splinter groups. He died 24 April 1883 in Independence, Missouri.

66.2 The fullness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ consists in having faith in the Son of God unto salvation. This requires a proper understanding regarding the nature of God the Father and an awareness as to how one is progressing toward eternal life. William McLellin was in possession of this order of faith. The principle of repentance is also part of the fullness of the Gospel, a change of heart, mind, and conduct that reflects progress toward partaking of the divine nature. William had, for the time being, turned away from those aspects of his life that would have hindered his eternal progression. He had traveled a great distance, from Paris, Tennessee, to Independence, Missouri, in order to receive baptism by immersion for the remission of sins at the hands of those whom he knew held the keys of the priesthood. He also received the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands by those same priesthood bearers. He had in turn preached the principles and ordinances of salvation to the children of men. He had become a willing instrument in the hands of God to help open the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times, about which the Apostles and prophets of God had spoken since the days of Adam and Eve.

66.2.54—prophets—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.  

66.2.56—apostle—The Greek roots from which the term “apostle” derives, originally signified “I send a message”. In Greek political language it referred to an envoy sent by a king to negotiate any affair between himself and any other power or people. In this sense, John the Baptist was the Herald sent to announce the coming of the Messiah,
the King of Israel; the Apostles were sent to conduct the business of the rising Kingdom. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were ordained Apostles by Peter, James, and John sometime between 15 May 1829 and 1 June 1829 on the banks of the Susquehanna River near Harmony, Pennsylvania. The Apostles hold the keys of the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world and are entitled to administer the ordinance of baptism for the remission of sins and for membership in the Church and Kingdom of God unto any and every man that believes in Christ and brings forth the fruits of repentance.

66.3 As William E. McLellin had received the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ into his life, he had been readily forgiven of his sins and transgressions against the law of God. We cannot speak with certainty, but it seems likely that William was under the impression that since he had been forgiven of some things in his life, he had been forgiven of everything that he had done contrary to the will of God. There were many sectarian Christian denominations of his day that taught that when a soul has been “born again” that everything was resolved. The truth is, that the salvation of men is a progressive enterprise, beginning with the most outward and blatant acts of disobedience and then moving on to the unworthy thoughts and desires of the mind and heart. William had achieved much, but there was much more to accomplish before he could rest assured in his personal salvation.

66.3—William—In reference to William E. McLellin. William E. McLellin was born in Smith county, Tennessee on 18 January 1806. He was taught the first principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Paris, Tennessee where he was employed as a school teacher. He traveled to Independence, Missouri, where he was baptized and ordained an elder in the Church on 20 August and 24 August 1831, respectively. He served several missions before being called to serve as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on 15 February 1835. For all of his good intentions and the degree of service that he had tendered the Church and Kingdom of God, William McLellin suffered from deep spiritual and temporal weaknesses that he never managed to conquer in his life. His severe criticism of the prophet Joseph Smith and other leaders in Kirtland precipitated his disfellowship for a time, but upon sincere repentance he was received back into the Kingdom. William continued, however, to express a lack of complete confidence in the leadership in the Church. In 1838, he came out in open rebellion against Joseph Smith. He was excommunicated 11 May 1838. He participated in the in the looting of property in Far West, Missouri, and threatened to physically engage the prophet in combat, so long as Joseph Smith were chained and William McLellin were allowed to wield a club. After the death of the prophet in June 1844, William associated himself with several different splinter groups. He died 24 April 1883 in Independence, Missouri.

66.4 William E. McLellin had come to Orange, Ohio, from Kirtland for this very purpose. He was as humble and receptive as he could be at that point, and he wished to do nothing save that which was pleasing to God the eternal Father. He desired to be an active participant in the Church and Kingdom of God.

66.5 In some respects, this present mission was a foreshadowing of that which would come in February 1835 when he was called to serve in the first Quorum of Twelve Apostles in this Dispensation. William was an articulate advocate of

3 Verily I say unto you, my servant William, that you are clean, but not all; repent, therefore, of those things which are not pleasing in my sight, saith the Lord, for the Lord will show them unto you.

4 And now, verily, I, the Lord, will show unto you what I will concerning you, or what is my will concerning you.

5 Behold, verily I say unto you, that it is my will that you should proclaim my gospel from land to
the truth, both by disposition and talent. His ministry, an agrarian terms, was
to plow unworked soil, where no servant of the Lord Jesus Christ had preached
before. He embarked on a mission that took him throughout western Ohio
and into Pennsylvania, a territory that was not precisely unaffected by the
preaching of the Gospel.

66.6 William McLellin had left Paris, Tennessee, somewhat precipitously in
July 1831. He did take a little time to settle his affairs. We cannot say at this
point as to what his personal assets were in October 1831, but the Lord coun-
seled him not to be preoccupied about his material wants, but do what he
could to build upon the foundation that had been laid in Jackson county,
Missouri. There was no greater material need in the Church at the time.
66.6.6—this place—No doubt in reference to Orange, Ohio, where the
conference was being held.

66.6.15—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every
prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a
few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into
such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to
prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent
in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a
thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the
commandments of God and eliminating poverty of all kinds from their
midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this
goal of the latter days.

66.6.26—think—If one were to required to point to William’s greatest
weaknesses, the ones that would eventually lead him into apostasy, one
would have to consider the difficult financial problems through which
he passed, and the ease with which he blamed others for those diffi-
culties. He suffered at the hands of William Parrish and other wicked
men with the failure of the Kirtland Safety Society. He, however, chose
to blame the prophet Joseph Smith. Similar accusations would take
place when William’s property was rifled through by the Missourians
while he was serving one of his missions. Had he not been excessive
concerned with the deprivations we was experiencing, it is likely that he
would have fared considerably better.

66.7 William made a foray into Pennsylvania, but that mission was short-
lived. He returned to Kirtland, Ohio, apparently due to illness, but he would
have to endure the censure of the Lord for his apparent negligence during this
and subsequent missionary labors.
66.7.4—eastern lands—That is to say, lands to the east of Kirtland,
Ohio. William did manage to make his way into parts of Pennsylvania,
but no doubt the Lord had other fields in mind.
66.7.17—synagogues—Not just the congregations of the Jews, but in the
chapels and congregations of all faiths.

66.8 William E. McLellin was a year younger than the prophet Joseph Smith
and two years older than Samuel. Samuel would prove to be the faithful one in
this instance.
66.8.4—Samuel H. Smith—A younger brother of the prophet Joseph
Smith. He is often referred to as the third person baptized with proper
authority in this dispensation following Joseph Smith and Oliver Cow-
dery. He was one of the Eight Witnesses of the Book of Mormon and is
credited with being the first formal missionary of the Church. When
Joseph and Hyrum were murdered in Carthage, Illinois, Samuel was

land, and from city to city, yea, in
those regions round about where it
has not been proclaimed.

6 Tarry not many days in this
place; go not up unto the land of
Zion as yet; but inasmuch as you
can send, send; otherwise, think
not of thy property.

7 Go unto the eastern lands, bear
testimony in every place, unto
every people and in their syna-
gogues, reasoning with the people.

D&C 66:7
MD 787

8 Let my servant Samuel H.
Smith go with you, and forsake
him not, and give him thine
instructions; and he that is faithful
shall be made strong in every place;
and I, the Lord, will go with you.

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relentlessly pursued by elements of the mob, which resulted in extreme fatigue and susceptibility to a fever which shortly thereafter took his life on 30 July 1844.  

66.8.11—forsake—We must suppose that William did this very thing. Samuel would have a more faithful companion in Orson Hyde with whom he went to the eastern lands indeed, successfully preaching in Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Maine.

| 66.9 | William E. McLellin forsook his mission on account of illness on at least two occasions; once while traveling with Samuel H. Smith toward the east, and once while travelling toward the south with Luke Johnson. It is ironic that William had the power to heal others, but did not have sufficient faith to be healed. William was not patient in his afflictions, but returned to Kirtland without the permission of the Lord. His disobedience cost him the approbation of the Lord and enhanced some of his fundamental flaws that otherwise might have been corrected. |

| 66.10 | William’s first wife, Cynthia Ann, had died within the first three years of their marriage, probably sometime before his conversion to the Gospel in August 1831. He married again after returning home early from his second mission. His second wife, Emiline Miller, whom he married in Hiram, Ohio, on 26 April 1832, provided him with four sons and two daughters. In his autobiography, William speaks of the time between his first wife’s death and his remarriage as being filled with lonesome and sorrowful hours. No doubt during these troubling times, lurid thoughts had possessed him. These had not gone unnoticed. |

| 66.11 | Had William E. McLellin received the word of the Lord, nothing doubting, he would have fulfilled all of the requirements for exaltation in this life. His name would have been remembered from generation to generation with fondness among the saints of the Most High. The promises of God would have been poured out upon his head without measure. With the death of Orson Hyde in November 1878, William would have been the senior Apostle in the Church and Kingdom of God. |

| 66.12 | Every conceivable blessing known to mankind since the days of Adam and Eve were placed before William E. McLellin on 25 October 1831. All he had to do was to overcome his penchant for material acquisitiveness and press forward through his momentary physical afflictions to take hold of eternal life and exaltation. The path of righteousness could not have been more clearly marked. Much the same could be said of all of the saints in these latter days. Every man has been taught to some degree as to how he should proceed to salvation. Obedience and diligence brings about salvation from every weakness. |

| 9 | Lay your hands upon the sick, and they shall recover. Return not till I, the Lord, shall send you. Be patient in affliction. Ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. |

| 10 | Seek not to be cumbered. For-sake all unrighteousness. Commit not adultery—a temptation with which thou hast been troubled. |

| 11 | Keep these sayings, for they are true and faithful; and thou shalt magnify thine office, and push many people to Zion with songs of everlasting joy upon their heads. |

| 12 | Continue in these things even unto the end, and you shall have a crown of eternal life at the right hand of my Father, who is full of grace and truth. |
66.13 The testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ should be sufficient for any man to bring him to full repentance and obedience to the commandments of God. The Savior had provided the means by which we can be forgiven of all of our weaknesses, the power by which we can emerge victorious from both death and hell.

66.13.11–12—Jesus Christ—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

66.13.13—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

67.0.1 From the spring of 1820 until March 1831, the prophet Joseph Smith received numerous revelations, many of which were set down in writing. The account of the first vision and of the initial appearance of the angel Moroni in September 1823, have been recorded in what is now known as Joseph Smith—History in the Pearl of Great Price. These two were composed in their present form in 1838 as the prophet was dictating his history of the Church of Jesus Christ. Nearly fifty of the revelations to be found in the Doctrine and Covenants today were received and recorded by the prophet and his scribes, usually Oliver Cowdery or John Whitmer, preserved probably on loose pieces of foolscap, much like that which was used for the original translation of the Book of Mormon. On 8 March 1831, John Whitmer was called and set apart to be the Church historian and recorder, officially replacing Oliver Cowdery who had labored that capacity since April 1829 when he first came to aid Joseph in the translation of the Nephite record. At some point shortly after his appointment, John Whitmer began transcribing the various revelations that had been received into what is now known as the Kirtland Revelation Book, a simply bound book having approximately 108 leaves (216 pages) measuring 13 inches by 8 inches. This book contains many revelations received by the prophet Joseph Smith up to June 1834, including that which is now published as Section 105 of the Doctrine and Covenants.

67.0.2 One of the pending tasks that had been assigned prior to the prophet’s journey to western Missouri in June 1831, was the appointment of a Church printer, in the person of William W. Phelps. Once the site for the New Jerusalem had been selected and dedicated, William Phelps was commanded by the Lord to purchase a printing press that would be housed in Independence, Missouri. These arrangements were made on his way back to Kirtland as he and Sidney Gilbert passed through Cincinnati, Ohio. The first issue of the Evening and Morning Star, the Church’s journal in Missouri, appeared in June 1832.

67.0.3 As the Church began to grow in numbers it was perceived that publishing selected revelations would be a benefit to the saints. In the late fall of 1831, during a conference of the Church of Jesus Christ, a committee was formed to select and organize various of the revelations which would first be printed in the Church’s newspaper in Independence, Missouri, and then as a small book which the elders of the Church could carry with them as they pursued the missionary work that had been assigned to them, a small volume to be called “A Book of Commandments”. The Lord approved this project and determined to provide His own preface to the whole. Section 1 is the
result. As a preface, it naturally appears at the first revelation printed, even though there are sixty-six other Sections included in the Doctrine and Covenants which were received prior to 1 November 1831. The printing of the text to be included in the Book of Commandments began in the *Evening and Morning Star* in June of 1832. Sections 20 and 45 were printed in their entirety. The second issue in July 1832 included portions of Section 42, and the whole of Sections 59 and 76. And thus the Church continued to announced to the world the mind and will of the Lord God of Israel in the latter days. Included in the first fourteen issues of the *Evening and Morning Star* were large portions of or the whole of 26 sections of what we have now as the Doctrine and Covenants. The text of Section 1 appeared the tenth issue, published in March of 1833. In addition, scores of direct citations were made from various of the Lord's commandments to His servants throughout the publication. In July 1833, the Church publishing house in Independence, Missouri, was destroyed by a mob. The printing of the *Evening and Morning Star* would be continued in Kirtland, Ohio. During the same time that the *Evening and Morning Star* was being produced, W.W. Phelps and his assistants had typeset and printed several signatures of the Book of Commandments. When the printing house was attacked by the mob, much of the work was destroyed. A few copies of the signatures were spirited away through the bravery of some of the Latter-day Saint children in Independence, copies that would later be bound and treasured by the early members of the Church. Facsimiles of that early text containing the first sixty-seven Sections and a portion of the sixty-eighth have enjoyed circulation even unto the present day.

67.0.4 The present Section of the Doctrine Covenants was received shortly after that which is now called Section 1. Some of the elders at the conference, many of whom were privy to all of the revelations that had been received by the prophet Joseph Smith, had reservations about publishing the texts as they were, primarily because Joseph Smith’s manner of speaking was clearly reflected in the wording and grammar. The Lord God of Israel, however, had chosen His man, and took umbrage with the critics who were casting aspersion upon the servant of God because of his perceived weaknesses. If the men who had doubts thought they could do better than what the Lord and Joseph had produced together, they were free to make the attempt. This Section did not appear in the Book of Commandments because of the destruction of the W.W. Phelps’ press in July 1833, but was printed as Section 25 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

67.1 After the prophet’s return from Independence, Missouri, final arrangements were made for the purchase of the press in Cincinnati, Ohio, and other materials that would be needed to establish both the printing shop and the Gilbert and Whitney Store. These were accomplished during the first of several conferences that were held in and around Kirtland, Ohio. After Joseph and his family moved to Hiram, Ohio, where they had been invited to live by John Johnson, another conference was held where several of the elders were given instructions that would be delivered to the various branches of the Church of Jesus Christ. A third conference was held in Kirtland in late October 1831 and a fourth in Orange, Ohio. The conference held on 1 November 1831 assembled in the large home of John Johnson. Those who had gathered there were enthusiastic about the prospect of having easy access to the revelations that had been received by Joseph Smith. Many of the brethren only had hand written copies of them. At the outset, it was determined that W.W. Phelps would print 10,000 copies of the Book of Commandments.

1 BEHOLD and hearken, O ye elders of my church, who have assembled yourselves together, whose prayers I have heard, and whose hearts I know, and whose desires have come up before me.
67.2 The challenges that lay before the saints were enormous. Thousands of the members of the Church had to be prepared and equipped, both temporally and spiritually, to travel to the land of Zion and continue the great work that had begun there. Considerable financial resources would be required, together with deep wells of spiritual strength. The Lord had these in reserve for the faithful. In addition, those who actively fostered the growth of the Church and Kingdom of God would have the blessings of eternity waiting for them at the judgment seat of Jesus Christ.

67.3 We may only speculate about the nature of the blessing which the Lord had promised to the faithful elders, but which many of them had not as yet received. Certainly some of the brethren there had been commissioned to preach the Gospel at the time that Joseph Smith and his company were making their way to Missouri for the first time. They had been promised that they would be laden with much fruit, but some had not enjoyed any success at all because they had been unwilling to open their mouths. In short, the Lord could not be held accountable for their failure to magnify their callings.

67.4 At least sixty recorded revelations had been brought forward by Oliver Cowdery and John Whittmer, commandments that they had recorded with their own pens at the dictation of the prophet Joseph Smith. They had already borne witness as to the nature of their experiences acting as the prophet’s scribes. Others of those in attendance could speak much the same. Yet, they were also men, as flawed and unskilled as all men are who dwell upon this earth. The Lord, however, was generally satisfied with the product of His servants’ labors; He accepted their willingness to do as He had instructed them. He gave His witness as well that He had inspired the mind and heart of Joseph Smith, speaking through him in a fashion that all men could plainly understand the Lord’s intent.

67.5 Joseph Smith formal education amounted to no more than three years, about that which an eight year old would receive in today’s society. He lacked linguistic sophistication by nineteenth century standards. Oliver Cowdery was far more articulate than Joseph, but the prophet’s vocabulary and grammar were simple and straightforward. The wisdom of the Lord’s choice can be best observed in the subsequent need to have all of the prophet’s writings translated into scores of foreign languages. The Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price are, for the most part, just as readable in Spanish and German as they are in English. Had Joseph Smith been abundantly equipped rhetorically, the present readability of his works would have been drastically limited, and even more proscribed in other languages. In the early years of this Church, Joseph’s lucid narratives were considered a liability; in the present day, they are a blessing beyond measure.

67.5.8–10—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

67.6 This was a task perfectly applied to the criticism. If one of the detractors could do better, then let him do so.

67.6.7–9—Book of Commandments—The precursor to the Doctrine and Covenants which was published in Independence Missouri in 1833. The press and many of the unbound copies of the text were destroyed by a mob. Some few samples of the scriptures escaped in the hands of the faithful and were subsequently bound. No more than 50 copies

2 Behold and lo, mine eyes are upon you, and the heavens and the earth are in mine hands, and the riches of eternity are mine to give.

3 Ye endeavored to believe that ye should receive the blessing which was offered unto you; but behold, verily I say unto you there were fears in your hearts, and verily this is the reason that ye did not receive.

4 And now I, the Lord, give unto you a testimony of the truth of these commandments which are lying before you.

5 Your eyes have been upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and his language you have known, and his imperfections you have known; and you have sought in your hearts knowledge that you might express beyond his language; this you also know.

6 Now, seek ye out of the Book of Commandments, even the least that is among them, and appoint him that is the most wise among you;
survived the destruction. The revelations were republished in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1835 in conjunction with the Doctrine and Covenants.

67.6.12—least—What would motivate the selection? Brevity? Simplicity of topic? Which of the revelations would have been considered the weakest of all the commandments? Which was considered the most egregious in composition?

67.6.19—him—In this particular instance, William E. McLellan was the designated writer. He was the obvious choice among those who may have expressed grave doubts about the quality of the writing.

67.7 From a worldly point of view, William E. McLellan was head and shoulders above any man in the room. Academically speaking, he was all that Joseph Smith was not. If any man had the faintest possibility of success in the endeavor, it was William. Were William McLellan to produce anything as winsome as the least of the revelations that Joseph Smith had received, then the disidents would have some cause for alarm for the composition of the revelations.

67.8 Logically speaking, if one assumes that Joseph Smith was composing the revelations on his own, then William McLellan should have been able to have conjured up a "revelation" that would have stunned everyone concerned. Many of the men in the room were witnesses to the manner in which the revelations had been received through the instrumentality of the prophet. William’s attempt was an utter failure, moving those gathered to repent of their folly and give their names as witnesses to the divine origin of the commandments that lay before them, ready to be published. When the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants appeared in 1835, the members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles gave their witness as to the verity of the words that were contained within its pages. William E. McLellan subscribed to that witness.

67.9 The weakness or strength of human language is not the standard by which truth is measured. All language is flawed to one degree or another, but expressions of truth can be formulated in them nonetheless. Rhetorical styles and techniques may enhance the charm of a piece of prose, but the truth of a matter is not discerned linguistically; the truth is a gift from God the Father as communicated by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost.

67.10 Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery had been graced with one extraordinary experience after another. The restoration of the priesthood, the appearances of the angel Moroni, and other divine messengers had become, if not commonplace, certainly were frequent enough for any man’s taste. Some of the saints had experienced related sorts of miracles in their lives, particularly with respect to the power of the priesthood and the influence of the Holy Ghost. Most of them, like most of us today, did not live up to their privileges. They were easily distracted by meaningless things, such as word choice and marginal grammatical questions. They became covetous of the experiences of others, complaining that they had not been as favored as they had hoped to be. Obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, however, would increase their spiritual awareness, develop their capacity for faith unto salvation, and would aid them in drawing close to the God of Heaven. Jesus had promised his disciples the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, that would bring all things to their minds that he had taught them. He promised them also a Second Comforter, even his own presence and that of the Father, were they to continue faithfully in their labors to advance the Kingdom of

7 Or, if there be any among you that shall make one like unto it, then ye are justified in saying that ye do not know that they are true;

8 But if ye cannot make one like unto it, ye are under condemnation if ye do not bear record that they are true.

9 For ye know that there is no unrighteousness in them, and that which is righteous cometh down from above, from the Father of lights.

10 And again, verily I say unto you that it is your privilege, and a promise I give unto you that have been ordained unto this ministry, that inasmuch as you strip yourselves from jealousies and fears, and humble yourselves before me, for ye are not sufficiently humble, the veil shall be rent and you shall see me and know that I am—not with the carnal neither natural mind, but with the spiritual.
God upon the earth. The promise given here is similar.

67.11 The only way for a mortal being to see God the eternal Father is to be filled with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. Inasmuch as the Spirit of God cannot and will not dwell in unclean tabernacles, a wicked man is left unto himself in ignorance.

67.12 The natural man is an enemy of God and has been since the beginning. A believing disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ is expected to put off the nature man and become a saint through the principles and ordinances of the Gospel. To the degree that a man is a worthy receptacle of the Spirit of God, to that same degree can he bear the glory of the Kingdom of God.

67.13 The clarion call here, as it has been in every dispensation since the days of Adam and Eve, is to repent of all wickedness. The brethren in that room in Hiram, Ohio, had not been participants in the open revelations that others had enjoyed, simply because they had not been willing to do what was necessary to receive those blessings. The cost of perfection is high to the natural man, but those who can resort to the principles of righteousness will soon find their ability to commune with the infinitely enhanced.

67.14 The promises that had been made when the prophet Joseph had ordained and set these men apart would be forthcoming, for the Lord Jesus Christ was the author of them. Salvation did not come in a moment; their personal experience with sincere repentance should have taught that. They would continue to grow, increasing in spiritual stature, just as a young and tender plant may grow into a great tree. Their progress toward eternal life would be spiritually based, but it would be a gradual and ultimately compelling process, for the which they would be eternally grateful.

67.14.34–36—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

67.14.37—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

11 For no man has seen God at any time in the flesh, except quickened by the Spirit of God.

12 Neither can any natural man abide the presence of God, neither after the carnal mind.

13 Ye are not able to abide the presence of God now, neither the ministering of angels; wherefore, continue in patience until ye are perfected.

14 Let not your minds turn back; and when ye are worthy, in mine own due time, ye shall see and know that which was conferred upon you by the hands of my servant Joseph Smith, Jun. Amen.

Section 68

Date: November 1831
Place: Hiram, Ohio

D&C 67:11
AF 235
DS 1 92
MD 803
EM 2:551
EM 4:1485
D&C 67:11–12
FPM 86
PM 602
TSWK 4
D&C 67:11–13
MM 4 425
D&C 67:13
DNTC 3 272
CR95-O 119
EM 3:1074

D&C 67:14
MD 851

D&C 68
DHC 1 227
FWR 51, 57
EM 1:408, 409

527
The mind and will of God, the things that they were hearing and witnessing were true and according to the testimony of the holy host which testified to his audiences that the principles being taught in this Section of the Doctrine and Covenants may be applied to any of the servants of God, in this particular instance they are directed at men who would one day be numbered among the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord Jesus Christ.

After the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ took place in April 1830, preparations were made to form a small cadre of missionaries to take the Book of Mormon and the fullness of the Gospel to the descendants of father Lehi, some of whom could be found in the various Native American reservations scattered throughout the land from Fayette, New York, to the Unorganized Indian Territory west of the state of Missouri. During the execution of their mission to the Lamanites, Oliver Cowdery and his companions taught the residents of Kirtland, Ohio, and environs, bringing a goodly number of the faithful into the Kingdom of God. In December 1830, the saints in New York were commanded to gather to northeastern Ohio where they would receive the Law of God which pertained to the establishment of Zion. This promise was in part fulfilled when the prophet Joseph Smith received what is now known as Section 42 of the Doctrine and Covenants. From time to time, additional information was provided to the Church regarding how the practical aspects of the Kingdom would operate in Jackson county, Missouri. The second half of this section of the Doctrine and covenants constitutes part of the growing body of counsel regarding the establishment of Zion. This Section did not appear in the Book of Commandments because of the destruction of the W.W. Phelps’ press in July 1833, but was printed as Section 22 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

As a bearer of the Melchizedek priesthood, whether as an elder or as a high priest, Orson Hyde was authorized to teach the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and to perform the accompanying ordinances of salvation in behalf of the faithful. At the heart of his effectual ministry was the testimony of the Holy Ghost which testified to his audiences that the things that they were hearing and witnessing were true, and according to the mind and will of God the Father.

As a young man of fourteen years of age, Orson Hyde migrated from Connecticut to northeastern Ohio where he became involved with the Campbellite movement led by Sidney Rigdon. Orson initially resisted the preaching of Oliver Cowdery and his companions, but having been persuaded by Sidney Rigdon, he investigated the claims of the missionaries in great detail. As a result he became convinced of the truthfulness of the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ and of the veracity of the Book of Mormon. He was baptized on 30 October 1831. He married the sister of Luke and Lyman Johnson. Nancy Mirinda

| 1 MY servant, Orson Hyde, was called by his ordination to proclaim the everlasting gospel, by the Spirit of the living God, from people to people, and from land to land, in the congregations of the wicked, in their synagogues, reasoning with and expounding all scriptures unto them. | D&C 68:1  
DHC 4 439  
PM 25  
CR00-A 108  
EM 3:1284  
D&C 68:1–4  
DNTC 2 30  
DNTC 3 113  
MD 234, 644  
PM 296  
D&C 68:1–5  
DNTC 1 55  
D&C 68:1–6  
FPM 41  
EM 2:845 |
Johnson, on 4 September 1834 in Kirtland, Ohio. Orson Hyde served several successful missions for the Kingdom of God before his call as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. As an Apostle he travelled extensively throughout the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. In the latter assignment, he was instrumental in dedicating the Holy Land for the return of the Jews as part of his effectual prayer on 24 October 1841, while kneeling on the Mount of Olives near Jerusalem. During the trials and tribulations of 1838 in Missouri, Orson became momentarily disaffected from Joseph and the saints, but soon recovered his senses. After the prophet’s death in 1844, Orson Hyde was charged with the responsibility of seeing to the completion of the Nauvoo Temple. For several years thereafter, he had direct responsibility for overseeing the camps of Israel as they made their way across the plains to the Salt Lake Valley. Once he and his family were located in the intermountain west, Brigham Young called him to lead a body of saints to Carson Valley, Nevada, and then another colony that would settle in the Sanpete region of Utah. He died a faithful priesthood leader in Spring City, Utah, on 28 November 1878.

68.1.9—ordination—Orson Hyde was ordained an elder of the Church of Jesus Christ on 2 October 1831, the day of his baptism, by the prophet Joseph Smith. Three weeks later on 25 October 1831, he was ordained a High Priest by Oliver Cowdery while in Orange, Ohio.

68.1.39—synagogue—Not just the congregations of the Jews, but in the chapels and congregations of all faiths.

68.2 The servants of God who have been ordained and set apart to be witnesses of the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ are authorized to speak the mind and will of the Lord to the inhabitants of the earth, according to the degree to which they have received the power and influence of the Holy Ghost into their hearts and minds.

68.2.8—en/sample—A variant spelling of the English word "example" which specifically means "a pattern or model form imitation or warning".

68.3 Those who are thus commissioned to preach the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ must have the Holy Ghost as their companion as they teach or they can in no way be effective in their ministry.

68.4 When one is filled with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost he or she speaks with the tongue of angels. The words enter into the ears of the audience and are comprehended as the Spirit of God operates upon their minds and hearts. To the degree that the faithful are attentive, they will know within themselves that the truth has been spoken to them. In that sense, the words that have been spoken will be binding upon them, as if they had been uttered by the voice of the Father or the Son in open vision. Those who hearken to the teachings delivered by the servants of God in this fashion, who incorporate the truths into their daily walk and talk, will be unavoidably blessed and nourished in their lives. They will find temporal happiness as they continue their sojourn throughout their mortal lives. They will be that much more prepared for salvation and exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom of God.

68.5 How could any man take upon himself the mantle of the priesthood of God without being assured that his actions would serve his fellow man in a positive man? The burden would be too great, the responsibility far too staggering to be borne without the comfort and support of the Spirit of God.

2 And, behold, and lo, this is an ensample unto all those who were ordained unto this priesthood, whose mission is appointed unto them to go forth—

3 And this is the ensample unto them, that they shall speak as they are moved upon by the Holy Ghost.

4 And whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation.

5 Behold, this is the promise of the Lord unto you, O ye my servants.
68.6 Although this comforting counsel may be applied to the calling of every
man who has received the priesthood of God, it is particularly true of those
who have been called and ordained to be especial witnesses of the Lord Jesus
Christ. An Apostle of the Son of God serves as an eye witness of the life and
ministry of the Savior of mankind, enabled to testify clearly of those events in
the life of Jesus of Nazareth that contributed to the atoning sacrifice for the
sins of the world, and the power and authority by which Jesus Christ broke
the bonds of physical death, whereby every man, woman, and child may come
forth from the tomb raised up unto immortality.

68.7 These four men were commissioned to go into all of the world, a com-
mandment that served as a foreshadowing of the call that would come to them
in February 1835. Needless to say, many tens of thousands of elders have been
called to go into all of the world during the subsequent 180 years.

68.7.12–13—Orson Hyde—As a young man of fourteen years of age,
Orson Hyde migrated from Connecticut to northeastern Ohio where
he became involved with the Campbellite movement led by Sidney
Rigdon. Orson initially resisted the preaching of Oliver Cowdery and
his companions, but having been persuaded by Sidney Rigdon, he
investigated the claims of the missionaries in great detail. As a result he
became convinced of the truthfulness of the restored Gospel of Jesus
Christ and of the veracity of the Book of Mormon. He was baptized on
Nancy Mirinda Johnson, on 4 September 1834 in Kirtland, Ohio. Orson
Hyde served several successful missions for the Kingdom of God before
his call as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. As an
Apostle he travelled extensively throughout the United States, Europe,
and the Middle East. In the latter assignment, he was instrumental in
dedicating the Holy Land for the return of the Jews as part of his
effectual prayer on 24 October 1841, while kneeling on the Mount of
Olives near Jerusalem. During the trials and tribulations of 1838 in
Missouri, Orson became momentarily disaffected from Joseph and the
saints, but soon recovered his senses. After the prophet’s death in 1844,
Orson Hyde was charged with the responsibility of seeing to the com-
pletion of the Nauvoo Temple. For several years thereafter, he had
direct responsibility for overseeing the camps of Israel as they made
their way across the plains to the Salt Lake Valley. Once he and his
family were located in the intermountain west, Brigham Young called
him to lead a body of saints to Caron Valley, Nevada, and then
another colony that would settle in the Sanpete region of Utah. He
died a faithful priesthood leader in Spring City, Utah, on 28 November
1878.

68.7.19–20—Luke Johnson—Luke S. Johnson was one of the sons of John
and Elsa Johnson, stalwart supporters of the prophet Joseph Smith as
the saints were gathering to northeastern Ohio. Luke was baptized on
10 May 1831 by Joseph Smith. Shortly after his baptism, he was
Johnson was ordained a high priest. Luke served several missions
throughout Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Kentucky before being
called to serve in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on 15 February
1835. Luke became disaffected from the prophet and others of the
saints because, in part, over his disappointment in the failure of the
Kirtland Safety Society. As he sank into apostasy in Missouri, he even-
tually was excommunicated on 13 April 1838. For eight years Luke
lived independent from the Church of Jesus Christ, but in March 1846
he sought the saints, asking for forgiveness. On 8 March 1846, he was baptized by his brother-in-law Orson Hyde. He served as a captain of ten in the pioneer company that entered the Salt Lake Valley with Brigham Young and Wilford Woodruff. He returned east to travel with his family to Utah in 1853. He settled in Tooele county in the community of Clover where he served as the Bishop of the ward for several years. He died a faithful member of the Church of Jesus Christ on 9 December 1861.

68.7.25–26—Lyman Johnson—Lyman Johnson was one of the sons of John and Elsa Johnson, stalwart supporters of the prophet Joseph Smith as the saints were gathering to northeastern Ohio. He was baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ in February 1831 by Sidney Rigdon. On 25 October 1831 Lyman was ordained an elder by Oliver Cowdery and then a high priest on 2 November 1831 by Sidney Rigdon. Before being ordained an Apostle on 14 February 1835, Lyman served missions throughout Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Upper Canada. Like his brother, Lyman became disaffected from the Church during the difficult years following the failure of the Kirtland Safety Society and the atrocities perpetrated against the saints in Missouri. He was excommunicated on 13 April 1838. He thereafter practiced law in Iowa, He died on 20 December 1859 as the result of a boating accident near Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin.

68.7.31–33—William E. McLellin—William E. McLellin was born in Smith county, Tennessee on 18 January 1806. He was taught the first principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Paris, Tennessee where he was employed as a school teacher. He traveled to Independence, Missouri, where he was baptized and ordained an elder in the Church on 20 August and 24 August 1831, respectively. He served several missions before being called to serve as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on 15 February 1835. For all of his good intentions and the degree of service that he hadrendered the Church and Kingdom of God, William McLellin suffered from deep spiritual and temporal weaknesses that he never managed to conquer in his life. His severe criticism of the prophet Joseph Smith and other leaders in Kirtland precipitated his disfellowshipment for a time, but upon sincere repentance he was received back into the Kingdom. William continued, however, to express a lack of complete confidence in the leadership in the Church. In 1838, he came out in open rebellion against Joseph Smith. He was excommunicated 11 May 1838. He participated in the in the looting of property in Far West, Missouri, and threatened to physically engage the prophet in combat, so long as Joseph Smith were chained and William McLellin were allowed to wield a club. After the death of the prophet in June 1844, William associated himself with several different splinter groups. He died 24 April 1883 in Independence, Missouri.

68.8 The first phrase of this verse iterates the commandment which the Savior gave to his Apostles after his resurrection from the dead. Unto all those who have received the fullness of the priesthood and who have received the keys by which that priesthood is administered is this commandment given, and to none else. Those possessing and administering the authority of God, however, are given leave to call others into the ministry, bestowing upon them the priesthood and those keys which they might require. The Apostles selected by Jesus during his mortal ministry did their utmost to fulfill the commandment given to them. Long-standing traditions attribute great journeys and voyages

8 Go ye into all the world, preach the gospel to every creature, acting in the authority which I have given you, baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

D&C 68:8
AF 168, 196
AF 51
DS 1 234
EM 2:910
EM 3:1156
D&C 68:8–9
AF 133
D&C 68:8–12
to those holy men by which the Gospel was taken into every quarter of the
domains to the Apostles as recorded in Mark 16:16.
6.9.10—saved—The Greek word which is translated in Mark as "saved"
derived from roots which mean "safe, deliver, protect, heal, preserve, be whole". Salvation, in the ultimate Christian sense, includes faith, repentance, and complete immersion in the water and in the Spirit. To believe otherwise is to endanger one's own soul.
6.9.18—damned—The Greek word which is translated in Mark as "damned" derives from roots which mean "precipitate down, cast down headlong, adverse sentence, adverse verdict, condemnation". Clearly, if a person does not have faith in Christ, he or she will not perform all that is supposed to follow faith; i.e. repentance, baptism, and the reception
of the Holy Ghost.
6.9.11 The reference to Mark's account of the Savior's counsel to his disciples continues. The progress of the Church would bring opportunities for growth which the disciples could not as yet imagine. But the power of the Father and the Son would be with them in all of their trials and tribulations and they would be successful.
6.9.10.9—signs—The Greek word which is translated in Mark as "signs"
derived from roots which signify "mark, indication, token, wonder, miracle". The word "sign" in English derives from Latin roots which mean "mark, figure, image". Both suggest an outward manner of identification. These will not be manifestations that will be asked by the wicked to satisfy their idle curiosity, but the natural consequences of the power of God, the priesthood, having been bestowed upon the sons of God.
6.11 The prophets, seers, and revelators of every generation have seen eye to eye. They have witnessed the same scenes pertaining to the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times. They have understood them according to the power and influence of the Holy Ghost that has been upon them as they wrote of their open visions of the latter days. Any man filled with that same spirit may peruse the sacred writings that they left behind and comprehend precisely what it was that they experienced. Such an inspired man could then look about himself, at the events transpiring in his world, and easily identify those things that correspond to the prophecies of the servants of the Lord. The events are the same, the spirit is the same. The Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ are not to be trifled with.
6.12 The faithful in Jesus Christ are blessed progressively, from one grace to another, until they begin to have the mind of the Son of God. That is to say, their views have become like his, their compassion, mercy, and willing sacrifices are in harmony with the love of God. When a man or woman has been proven true and faithful, the Father may then bear witness to his or her soul
that they have overcome the world and have a place within the Kingdom of God in eternity. Some have called this blessed state, having one’s calling and election made sure. If the economy of God is best served by such an action, the blessings of eternity may be formally bestowed while the man or woman still dwells in mortality. Any ordinances that may be wanting would be indicated by the Father and the Son to those servants of God who have the responsibility to perform them. The keys of those blessings are solely in the hands of the Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. No other man can pretend to this authority.

68.12.24—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

68.13 In the headnote of this revelation as it was entered into the Kirtland Revelation Book, two distinct topics were to be addressed. The first was in conjunction with the desires of Orson Hyde, Luke and Lyman Johnson, and William E. McLellin to know the will of the Lord concerning them. The second part, which begins here, was to provide further instruction regarding the laws and commandments that had already been given to the Church. Many of the issues addressed had to do with the relationship between the land of Kirtland and the land of Zion, but taken as a whole, it looked forward to the ever expanding structure of the Church of Jesus Christ. Only a portion of that which would one day be in place had been revealed. As each component was added, that piece had to be explained in terms of what already existed, but also had to be presented in a fashion that anticipated that which would one day follow. In this sense, it was vital that the progress that was being made should be explained by someone who could see the end from the beginning. The Savior was eminently qualified to do so.

68.14 As the saints contemplated their inheritances in the land of Zion, it became clear that someone would need to be appointed to attend to the practical matters associated with receiving consecrations, appointing stewardships, seeing to land acquisition for the New Jerusalem, and a myriad of other details that impinged upon the temporal welfare of the disciples of Jesus Christ. Edward Partridge was called by revelation, sustained by the Church, and ordained by those who held the keys of the priesthood to serve as Bishop of the Church. It became clear, however, that while in Jackson county, it would be difficult for him to conduct the temporal business of the Church in northwestern Ohio. Newel K. Whitney was then called and ordained to serve as Bishop in Kirtland. In addition, the ever expanding body of the Church in Missouri would eventually be so large that Bishop Whitney would not be able to attend to their needs on his own. Here the Lord reveals that there would come a time when two Bishops, no matter what their capacities, would not be able to attend to all of the tasks that would be required of them.

68.15 The records of the Church of Jesus Christ indicate that Isaac Morley and John Corrill who had been serving as Edward Partridge’s counselors in Zion were themselves called and ordained to serve as Bishops in Zion. Isaac Morley chose Christian Whitmer and Newel Knight to be his counselors. John Corrill chose Daniel Stanton and Hezekiah Peck. The First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the only ecclesiastical body on the earth that can effectively appoint a bishop in this dispensation.

68.15.5—high priests—A bishop is actually an office of the Aaronic priesthood and anciently only those who were direct descendants of the

13 And now, concerning the items in addition to the covenants and commandments, they are these—

14 There remain hereafter, in the due time of the Lord, other bishops to be set apart unto the church, to minister even according to the first;

15 Wherefore they shall be high priests who are worthy, and they shall be appointed by the First Presidency of the Melchizedek Priesthood, except they be literal descendants of Aaron.
brother of Moses could serve in that capacity. A high priest of the Melchizedek priesthood, however, can be called and ordained as a high priest of the Aaronic priesthood regardless of his lineage, but he must serve with counselors.

68.15.9—worthy—From this point until verse 22, the material presented in this section did not appear in the Kirtland Revelation Book. From 1831 until 1835, considerable growth in the Church had taken place and further refinements were necessary to the text of this Section. This should neither be distressing or disturbing.

68.15.17–18—First Presidency—The quorum of the First Presidency did not exist in November of 1831 and therefore the wording of this verse differs slightly in the Kirtland Revelation Book. By the time of the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants in 1835, both the wording of this revelation and the structure of the Church of Jesus Christ were completely consistent. The First Presidency of the Melchizedek priesthood is the presiding quorum of the Church of Jesus Christ.

68.15.22—Melchizedek—Melchizedek was a great high priest during the days of Abraham. Before his mortal sojourn upon the earth, the official title of the priesthood of God was the Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God. Out of reverence toward the name of deity the ancient Church began calling this priesthood the Melchizedek Priesthood. This was the only order of the priesthood presented to mankind until the days of the rebellion of the children of Israel at the foot of mount Sinai. With the loss of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, at that time, came also the general loss of the Melchizedek priesthood. The lesser priesthood, sometime called the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood was divinely devised to direct and instruct the children of Israel so as to prepare them for the greater or Melchizedek priesthood. This goal was somewhat achieved during the mortal ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

68.15.25—Aaron—The brother of Moses who was given the keys of the presidency of the priesthood bestowed upon the tribe of Levi. Technically, the Aaronic priesthood is the presiding body of the Levitical priesthood. The presidency of this lesser priesthood was inherited through the righteous sons of Aaron, even down until the time of John the Baptist who was the last to hold the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood. On 15 May 1829, John the Baptist appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on the banks of the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania and bestowed upon them the keys of the priesthood which he had inherited from his father and then had confirmed upon him by an angel of the Lord God of Israel. From that point on the power to ordained and set apart high priests of the Aaronic priesthood resided in these two men and their successors.

68.16 From the days of Moses to the time of the beginning of the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, the keys of the Aaronic priesthood were passed from one generation to the next through Aaron’s posterity. In times of righteousness, the bearers of those keys were duly recognized and honored. In times of wickedness they were frequently vilified or even ignored. In the days of John the Baptist, the high priests of Israel were selected by the prevalent secular power of the world; that is to say, the procurators of the Roman empire. Had all things been as they should have, Jesus of Nazareth would have been King of Israel and John the son of Zacharias would have been the high priest. We should probably expect that there will come a time when the righteous descendants of Aaron will have an opportunity to accept their rightful place in the

16 And if they be literal descendants of Aaron they have a legal right to the bishopric, if they are the firstborn among the sons of Aaron;
Church and Kingdom of God.

68.16.8—Aaron—The brother of Moses who was given the keys of the presidency of the priesthood bestowed upon the tribe of Levi. Technically, the Aaronic priesthood is the presiding body of the Levitical priesthood. The presidency of this lesser priesthood was inherited through the righteous sons of Aaron, even down until the time of John the Baptist who was the last to hold the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood. On 15 May 1829, John the Baptist appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on the banks of the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania and bestowed upon them the keys of the priesthood which he had inherited from his father and then had confirmed upon him by an angel of the Lord God of Israel. From that point on the power to ordain and set apart high priests of the Aaronic priesthood resided in these two men and their successors.

68.17 We should not underestimate the powers associated with the rights that pertain to the firstborn of any family. Before the foundations of the earth were even laid, the Firstborn Son of God the eternal Father was anointed and foreordained to come into the earth to provide redemption from both death and hell for all of his siblings, even as many as would desire to be so blessed. Firstborn sons throughout the history of the world have been placed in positions of wealth and opportunity that they might also be a blessing to those around them. In the latter days prior to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the House of Ephraim has been given the rights, powers, and privileges of the firstborn son of Israel so that they might effectively seek out the righteous wherever they may be found and gather them to Zion. The pattern in no less meaningful with regard to the Aaronic priesthood. The righteous posterity of Aaron have a right to the keys and presidency of the lesser priesthood.

68.18 A man must be called of God by revelation and the laying on of hands by those who hold the keys of authority in any given dispensation. Aaron himself was appointed by the voice of the Lord God of Israel and ordained by his brother Moses.

68.18.5—legal—that is to say, according to the law of God. The laws of men have no jurisdiction in this or any other ecclesiastical matter.

68.18.8–9—this office—that is to say, the office of bishop or high priest of the Aaronic priesthood.

68.18.13—keys—that is, the keys of the priesthood differ from the powers of the priesthood, in that the keys constitute the authority to direct the affairs of the priesthood, how those powers are to be administered, and to whom they should be given.

68.18.27—Aaron—The brother of Moses who was given the keys of the presidency of the priesthood bestowed upon the tribe of Levi. Technically, the Aaronic priesthood is the presiding body of the Levitical priesthood. The presidency of this lesser priesthood was inherited through the righteous sons of Aaron, even down until the time of John the Baptist who was the last to hold the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood. On 15 May 1829, John the Baptist appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on the banks of the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania and bestowed upon them the keys of the priesthood which he had inherited from his father and then had confirmed upon him by an angel of the Lord God of Israel. From that point on the power to ordain and set apart high priests of the Aaronic priesthood resided in these two men and their successors.

17 For the firstborn holds the right of the presidency over this priesthood, and the keys or authority of the same.

18 No man has a legal right to this office, to hold the keys of this priesthood, except he be a literal descendant and the firstborn of Aaron.

D&C 68:18–20
AF 211
68.19 We may only speculate as to why a Melchizedek priesthood holder must be ordained to the office of a high priest in order to serve as the president of the Aaronic priesthood. An elder holds the same fundamental priesthood authority, but apparently there are some limitations as to how he can function within the Kingdom of God. The fact that the Lord has decreed it to be so should, however, be sufficient for those of faith. Every bishop who serves in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints receives his appointment from the presiding quorum of the Church. The First Presidency may authorize other officers to act as voice at the time of the ordination. These also would hold the necessary keys that need to be bestowed. The President of the Melchizedek priesthood in a local area, generally the Stake President, is frequently given the responsibility to ordain bishops within his jurisdiction. This policy reflects the great growth in the Kingdom of God upon the earth, a growth that necessitates the delegation of priesthood keys.

68.19.8—Melchizedek—Melchizedek was a great high priest during the days of Abraham. Before his mortal sojourn upon the earth, the official title of the priesthood of God was the Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God. Out of reverence toward the name of deity the ancient Church began calling this priesthood the Melchizedek Priesthood. This was the only order of the priesthood presented to mankind until the days of the rebellion of the children of Israel at the foot of mount Sinai. With the loss of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, at that time, came also the general loss of the Melchizedek priesthood. The lesser priesthood, sometime called the Aaronic or Levitical priesthood was divinely devised to direct and instruct the children of Israel so as to prepare them for the greater or Melchizedek priesthood. This goal was somewhat achieved during the mortal ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

68.20 A direct descendant of Aaron has been foreordained to hold the keys of the priesthood of his ancestors. In order for him to serve in the Church and Kingdom of God, however, he must be called up and ordained in the same fashion as was his progenitor. No man can take this honor upon himself, no matter what his heritage may be. Any man who holds the priesthood of God is free to exercise that priesthood within the sphere where he presides. A husband and father can operate within the realm of his own home by virtue of the priesthood. The Church and Kingdom of God is another entity altogether. Those who hold the keys in the Church specify how the priesthood will be exercised within the Church. No man holding lesser keys or no keys at all can usurp the authority of those who have been called to preside.

68.21 We may not declare how difficult this task might prove to be. Do the descendants of Aaron have accurate records that would demonstrate their direct lineage from the brother of Moses? These may indeed have been preserved against such a day when the services of these faithful men may be required. A man may know that he is descended from priests that served the House of Israel through long-standing family traditions. While indicative of his possible call to serve as a high priest of the Aaronic priesthood, the tradition would need to be confirmed by revelation. Again, those holding the keys of the priesthood would be properly informed before any ordination took place.

68.22 The jurisdiction of the priesthood is, again, clearly stated. If a descendant of Aaron or any high priest of the Melchizedek priesthood who is serving as a bishop falls into transgression, no other body of the priesthood may discipline him save for the Presidency of the Melchizedek priesthood. Again,

20 And a literal descendant of Aaron, also, must be designated by this Presidency, and found worthy, and anointed, and ordained under the hands of this Presidency, otherwise they are not legally authorized to officiate in their priesthood.

21 But, by virtue of the decree concerning their right of the priesthood descending from father to son, they may claim their anointing if at any time they can prove their lineage, or do ascertain it by revelation from the Lord under the hands of the above named Presidency.

22 And again, no bishop or high priest who shall be set apart for this ministry shall be tried or condemned for any crime, save it be
the President of the Melchizedek priesthood of a particular geographical area may be called upon to assemble the disciplinary council necessary.

68.23 Disciplinary councils are convened in order to determine the nature of the transgressions that may have been committed by an officer of the Church. The testimony that cannot be impeached should probably be understood as the testimony of the Holy Ghost that has worked upon the hearts and minds of those brought together to render judgment. There would be calm unity under the influence of such a spirit.

68.24 The repentance of an officer of the Church would be as acceptable as the repentance of any other disciple of Jesus Christ. The individual may be released from his particular calling, however, as he recovers from the effects of his transgressions of the law of God.

68.25 The unity of heart and mind of the inhabitants of Zion, their righteousness, and their deep and abiding concern for those in want, are not generationally specific. These are divine attributes that are to be passed on from father to son, from mother to daughter. When one contemplates that the personal reign of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the earth will span one thousand years, it is easy to perceive that the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of salvation and exaltation will have to be transmitted through thirty generations without fail. If the saints of God cannot bring themselves to instruct their little children in the truths of eternity, they simply have no place in the Zion of our God.

68.25.9—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

68.26 There is a standard of conduct that qualifies a man or a woman to receive an inheritance in the New Jerusalem. Many of these qualifications were laid out in Section 42 of the Doctrine and Covenants. The willingness to consecrate all that one possesses and is, to the building up of the kingdom of God on the earth constitutes the initial sacrifice. The turning of the hearts of the fathers to their posterity in diligence is another.

68.26.11—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

68.27 The age of accountability had been established at the very beginning of time upon this earth. Adam and Eve understood what was required of them before the First Presidency of the church;

23 And inasmuch as he is found guilty before this Presidency, by testimony that cannot be impeached, he shall be condemned;

24 And if he repent he shall be forgiven, according to the covenants and commandments of the church.

25 And again, inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized, that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, when eight years old, the sin be upon the heads of the parents.

D&C 68:24
MD 167

D&C 68:25
AF 136
MD 87, 204, 744
MF 258
CR98-0 30
CR99-A 95
CR01-O 87
EM 1:13, 283
EM 2:496, 558
EM 4:1764
D&C 68:25, 27
CR01-O 49
D&C 68:25, 28
CR99-A 40
EM 1:267
EM 2:488, 503, 682
D&C 68:25-26
MD 764
D&C 68:25-26, 28
CR95-A 8
D&C 68:25-27
AF 125
DNDC 1 421, 551
DNDC 2 110
MD 631
CR00-O 5
EM 1:268, 310
EM 3:1341
D&C 68:25-28
AGQ 2 89
DNDC 2 521
DS 1 316
MF 151
TSWK 111
CR96-O 87
CR99-A 53, 80

26 For this shall be a law unto the inhabitants of Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized.

27 And their children shall be baptized for the remission of their
with regard to the teaching of their children. That most of their children did not heed their counsel is tragic but does not, in the end, reflect poorly on them. To Abraham was given the principle of circumcision, an ordinance that was to be performed when a male child was eight days old, as a reminder that when his children reached eight years of age they should receive another more enduring ordinance. The Nephites were also clearly taught that their children should be accountable before they entered into the waters of baptism. A child is innocent of transgression until he or she can discern between that which is good and that which is evil. The age of innocence is capped with implementation of the teachings of faith in Jesus Christ and repentance from all sin. Then the gift of the Holy Ghost is bestowed as a warden of the child’s soul, that he or she might have another witness as to the truth of that which they have been taught by their righteous parents.

68.28 Without guidance, without instruction, the children of Zion would be no more prepared to carry on the work of salvation in their own lives, much less the lives of the children of the world. The children of Zion should be able to recognize the voice of their God when He speaks to them. They should be receptive and obedient to the whisperings of the Spirit of God that will direct them in the paths of righteousness.

68.29 This was to serve as a reminder of the clear instructions that the inhabitants of Zion had received many months before when the Law of the Lord was first given. Observance of the Sabbath Day is that which entitles every inhabitant of Zion to be refreshed in the spirit, to fill one’s lamp with the oil of gladness, that the rest of the week may be traversed in light and peace.

68.29.5—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

68.30 The inhabitants of the land of Zion were expected to do all that was in their power to provide for themselves and for those around them. It would be a shameful mockery for a man to take advantage of his loving brother by doing less than he was capable so that he might be at ease while his neighbor labored. This is a type of theft; this is a type of covetousness; this is a type of idolatry; this is, without question, self worship.

68.30.5—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

68.31 The Colesville saints had been in the land of Zion less than six months
and yet there were problems among them. Other settlers from the Church were being ensconced in other lands that had been purchased by Bishop Partridge and his agents. No doubt there were differences in the various pieces of property and some may very well have thought themselves imposed upon when they received an inheritance that was in their estimation of lesser quality than their neighbor’s. Also, the saints were to band together to raise up homes, barns, fencing, and the like for each other. It would appear that some of those who had been provided for were hesitant in coming to the aid of their unhoused brethren, causing dismay and concern in the community as a whole. It would appear that the children of the saints in Zion were not receiving the sort of education that they should have expected, but were allowed to run rampant.

68.31.13—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

68.32 During the several conferences that were held in Ohio in the month of October 1831, it was determined that Oliver Cowdery and John Whitmer were to return to Independence, Missouri. A few days after this revelation was given, the details of their mission were provided, which included the preparation of the revelations that would be published in Jackson county as the Book of Commandments. Oliver and John left Kirtland on 20 November 1831, arriving there on 5 January 1832. This present Section was to be carried with them as well, that the faltering saints might be appropriately chastised for their negligence.

68.32.19–20—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

68.32.28—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

68.33 Prayer, generally speaking, is a private matter and whether or not a man offers up his soul to the God of Heaven is usually not easily discerned by his neighbors. But once in a week, the saints were to gather to worship as a body, to unify themselves in heart and mind as they sought the blessings of the Lord. Any inhabitant of Zion that did not gather at the appropriate time was a pleased with the inhabitants of Zion, for there are idlers among them; and their children are also growing up in wickedness; they also seek not earnestly the riches of eternity, but their eyes are full of greediness.

32 These things ought not to be, and must be done away from among them; wherefore, let my servant Oliver Cowdery carry these sayings unto the land of Zion.

33 And a commandment I give unto them—that he that observeth not his prayers before the Lord in the season thereof, let him be had in remembrance before the judge of
Whitmer was called to serve as the church historian in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Church of Jesus Christ was now being organized.

68.33.30—judge—that is to say, the Bishop of Zion.

68.34 The sons and daughters of God are not at liberty to pick and choose among the commandments that the Lord God has provided them for their welfare. The Lord in His mercy had given instruction that was calculated to bless and strengthen the disciples of Christ. How could they not embrace them all?

68.35 Not only is the time of the Lord’s appearance in the heavens drawing much closer than ever before, but from the moment of that appearance until the time of the separation of the righteous from the wicked will be quite short as well. If one is not keeping the commandments as the great signs of his coming are manifested, there will not be enough time to fully prepare to be among those who dwell with him upon the earth during the Millennium.

68.35.4—Alpha—The first letter of the Greek alphabet. This constitutes a reprise of the Lord’s imagery used in his revelation to John the Beloved (see RV-C 1.8 and RV-C 21.6).

68.35.6—Omega—The last letter of the Greek alphabet. This constitutes a reprise of the Lord’s imagery used in his revelation to John the Beloved (see RV-C 1.8 and RV-C 21.6).

68.35.11—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 69

Date: November 1831
Place: Hiram, Ohio
To: Oliver Cowdery

69.0.1 As the Church of Jesus Christ pursued its charge to bring the blessings of Heaven to the saints in the midst of a wicked world, two compelling tasks came to the forefront in 1831. The first had to do with the gathering of the disciples of Christ to the land of Zion where they were to receive their inheritances. In order to provide places where the saints might settle, the agents of the Church, notably Edward Partridge and Sidney Gilbert were required to purchase property from the state and federal governments. Even at two or three dollars an acre, the mandate to buy all of the land west of the town of Independence, Missouri, to the border with the Unorganized Indian Territory was an enormous challenge. The whole of that portion of Jackson country covered more than two hundred and fifty square miles. At 640 acres per square mile, the Church would have to raise more than five hundred thousand dollars just to begin to accomplish the primary mandate. Establishing the infrastructure for the New Jerusalem would prove to be even more costly. Hence the importance of obeying the Law of Consecration, the liquidation of some of the real property owned by the Church in Ohio, New York, and Pennsylvania, and the conservation of what few resources were available to the saints during those initial months of laying the foundation for the city of Zion. Oliver Cowdery and John Whitmer were charged with transmitting what available funds the Church was able to provide in November 1831 to the Bishop in Zion.

69.0.2 The second task bestowed upon the presiding counsels of the Church and Kingdom of God was to prepare the various revelations given through the prophet Joseph Smith for publishing. The project had begun in earnest when John Whitmer was called to serve as the Church historian in March 1831. It is
likely that the Kirtland Revelation Book was initiated about that time when
John began to transcribe all of the written revelations on to its pages. Emenda-
tions and editorial notes were continually being made by the committee in
charge of the final product. The task was somewhat complicated primarily
because revelations were being received on a regular basis. The formal decision
to print the Book of Commandments had been made during the conference
held in Hiram, Ohio, on 1 November 1831. From that time until Oliver
Cowdery and John Whitmer left Ohio for Missouri on 20 November 1831,
several major revelations were received, including Sections 1, 67, 68, 133, 69,
and 70. By the time the companions arrived in Jackson county, the prophet
and his scribes had recorded two more. By the time W.W. Phelps published
the first edition of the *Evening and Morning Star* in Independence, Missouri,
in June of 1832, no less than 12 additional revelations had been received by
the prophet Joseph Smith. The 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants
has 102 revelations. During the subsequent nine years, no less than thirty
revelations would be formally added to the present text of the Doctrine and
Covenants. It was vital that there be publishing benchmarks along the way so
that the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ could have easy access to
the mind and will of the Lord concerning them and so that there might be
multiple copies of the revelations of the Lord to preclude any attempt to
effectively destroy the spiritual history of the saints by destroying their original
records. Had Oliver Cowdery travelled along from Kirtland to Independence,
he might have been easily waylaid by the servants of Satan. Having a travelling
companion as faithful as John Whitmer made that eventuality far less likely.
This Section did not appear in the Book of Commandments because of the
destruction of the W.W. Phelps’ press in July 1833, but was printed as Section

69.1 It is tempting to allow the wording of this verse to cast aspersions on the
character of Oliver Cowdery. This, however, should not be the case. The
counsel given here was designed to protect the reputation of Joseph Smith’s
closest associate. The goal of having John Whitmer accompany Oliver was to
avoid the very appearance of evil in the eyes of any who might have had cause
to doubt the manner in which the business of the Church of Jesus Christ was
being conducted. Similar policies are in place even today with regard to the
counting and depositing of tithes and offerings each week throughout the
world.

69.12–13—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of
Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the
various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph
Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in
the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph
himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his
experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

69.140—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every
prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a
few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into
such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to
prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent
in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a
thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the
commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their
midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this
goal of the latter days.

1 HEARKEN unto me, saith the
Lord your God, for my servant
Oliver Cowdery’s sake. It is not
wisdom in me that he should be
entrusted with the commandments
and the moneys which he shall
carry unto the land of Zion, except
one go with him who will be true
and faithful.
69.2 On 18 December 1832 Oliver Cowdery and Elizabeth Ann Whitmer would marry, formalizing a long standing relationship between Oliver and the Whitmer family. Oliver and John participated in many projects together, not the least of which was the preservation of the revelations given through the prophet Joseph Smith.

69.2.9–10—John Whitmer—John Whitmer was the third child of Peter and Mary Whitmer, born 27 August 1802. With his brothers David and Peter, Junior, he was baptized for the remission of sins in June 1829. As the publishing of the Book of Mormon commenced, John was selected to serve as one of the Eight Witnesses, men who personally handled the plates from which the translation of the Book of Mormon was made. John Whitmer never deviated from his testimony. John Whitmer was among the first to join the Church of Jesus Christ after it was organized on 6 April 1830. He was ordained an elder on 9 June 1830 and within a few months was called upon to be the Church Historian. On the third of July 1834 John Whitmer and W.W. Phelps were called to serve as counselors to David Whitmer as the presidency of the Church in Missouri. After he and several others were excommunicated from the Church for apostasy, John Whitmer settled in Far West, Missouri, where he died 11 July 1878.

69.2.16–17—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

69.3 This is an iteration of an assignment that had been given to John Whitmer many months before on 8 March 1831 (see 47.1–4). John Whitmer’s assignment as Church Historian was not a passive one, insofar as the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ was concerned. John’s acquaintance with of the events that had transpired from the opening of this dispensation, his experiences as one of the Eight Witnesses of the Book of Mormon, and his intimacy with the recorded revelations of the Lord made him a powerful advocate of the truth. So long as John Whitmer remained true and faithful to the principles and covenants of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, he would be guided in all that he committed to paper. There would come a time, however, when the burdens and cares of this world would distract him and lead him away from the fellowship of the saints.

69.4 It is clear that the history of the Church of Jesus Christ that what John Whitmer was to compile was not to be the ruminations of his own heart, but that he was to counsel with other members of the Church who were as well or better acquainted with the events that led to the opening of the Dispensation of the Fullness of Time. In this particular aspect of his effort, John could have been more diligent.

69.4.12–13—Oliver Cowdery—As the Assistant President of the Church of Jesus Christ, Oliver had the primary responsibility of preparing the various revelations that had been received through the prophet Joseph Smith for publication. John Whitmer was also intensively involved in the preparatory process as was Sidney Rigdon and the prophet Joseph himself. William W. Phelps contributions came in concert with his experience and knowledge as an editor and printer.

2 Wherefore, I, the Lord, will that my servant, John Whitmer, should go with my servant Oliver Cowdery;

3 And also that he shall continue in writing and making a history of all the important things which he shall observe and know concerning my church;

D&C 69:3
EM 2:589

4 And also that he receive counsel and assistance from my servant Oliver Cowdery and others.
69.5 John Whitmer was neither omniscient nor omnipresent. In order to account for the growth of an organization that already embraced portions of four states, John would have to consult the priesthood leadership of the Church and Kingdom of God in diverse places in order to have as definitive a history as was possible. Again, it is clear from that which is extant of John Whitmer’s writings, that little was done in this arena.

69.5.23—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

69.6 This constitutes the beginnings of what would now be referred to as the Church Historian’s Office and Library. It would be some time before a formal location for all of the documents of the Kingdom of God would be established. It is astounding that we have as much as we do of the early history of the Church of Jesus Christ given the many forced marches that the saints were to endure.

69.6.5—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

69.7 One of the tasks which accompanied John Whitmer’s call to serve as the Church Historian was to directly solicit accounts from the early members of the Church. John was an excellent scribe, took dictation well, and could serve as a practical resource when the time came to publish any sort of narration regarding the establishment of Zion in the latter days. Any such labor was not as forthcoming as this revelation would lead us to believe.

69.7.5–6—John Whitmer—John Whitmer was the third child of Peter and Mary Whitmer, born 27 August 1802. With his brothers David and Peter, Junior, he was baptized for the remission of sins in June 1829. As the publishing of the Book of Mormon commenced, John was selected to serve as one of the Eight Witnesses, men who personally handled the plates from which the translation of the Book of Mormon was made. John Whitmer never deviated from his testimony. John Whitmer was among the first to join the Church of Jesus Christ after it was organized on 6 April 1830. He was ordained an elder on 9 June 1830 and within a few months was called upon to be the Church Historian. On the third of July 1834 John Whitmer and W.W. Phelps were called to serve as counselors to David Whitmer as the presidency of the Church in Missouri. After he and several others were excommunicated from the Church for apostasy, John Whitmer settled in Far West, Missouri, where he died 11 July 1878.

5 And also, my servants who are abroad in the earth should send forth the accounts of their stewardships to the land of Zion;

6 For the land of Zion shall be a seat and a place to receive and do all these things.

7 Nevertheless, let my servant John Whitmer travel many times from place to place, and from church to church, that he may the more easily obtain knowledge—
John Whitmer’s ministry could have been glorious; his labors might have been substantive; his writings might have been a blessing to generations to come. Alas, he fell short of that which had been hoped for. The Kingdom of God has need of firsthand accounts of those who have been instrumental in bringing forth the cause of Zion. The saints have need of a Church history, in lieu of tradition and myth. Accurate documentation of historical events has done much to dismiss the fallacious attacks that have been made by the ignorant and the perverse on the character of Joseph Smith and the other servants of God in this dispensation. There will come a time when we will have a detailed account of the rise of the Church and Kingdom of God that is worthy of all acceptance.

Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the spring of 1820, the boy Joseph inquired of the Lord how he should proceed in order to receive a remission of his sins, inasmuch as the sectarian of the world were at odds with one another in their counsel. In response to his solemn prayer, God the eternal Father and the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him in a grove of trees near his father’s home. He was promised that not only would he receive a direct answer to his prayer, but that he would be instrumental in bringing the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ once more into the world. Within three years, Joseph entertained the angel Moroni at his bedside who testified to him that there was an ancient record preserved by the prophets who dwelt in the Americas hundreds of years before in which was contained the Gospel of Christ, including an account of the visit of the resurrected Savior to the ancestors of the Native Americans. In September 1827, Joseph was permitted to remove the sacred record from its resting place, together with the means by which the record would be translated. In the midst of persecution and other hostilities, Joseph Smith at last was able to begin the translation in the spring of 1828, with Martin Harris as his scribe. The 116 pages of manuscript generated during the several weeks that followed, however, were ultimately lost. Joseph and Martin were held accountable for their part in the loss of the book of Lehi, as it was called. The translation would not begin in earnest again until April 1829 when Oliver Cowdery became the prophet’s scribe. Within two months the Book of Mormon was translated. Oliver then made what was to be called the printer’s copy of the manuscript, so that in the fall of 1829, E.B. Grandin would begin the printing of the book. It would appear at Grandin’s bookstore in March 1830, a few weeks before the Church of Jesus Christ was formally organized. On 6 April 1830, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, together with four of their close associates and about fifty interested parties, met in the home of Peter Whit-
mer, Senior. Through the power of the priesthood that had been revealed by
John the Baptist, Peter, James, and John, during the time of that the trans-
lation was progressing, the foundation of the Church of Christ was laid. Any
man desiring to receive a remission of his sins through the atoning sacrifice
now had a people to whom he could resort for that blessing.

70.0.2 The appearance of the Father and the Son in the spring of 1820
signaled the opening of a new dispensation, the last prior to the second
coming of the Savior. Joseph Smith received continual guidance during the
following years, much of which was written down for him by his various
scribes. Martin Harris and Oliver Cowdery were actively engaged from the
very beginning of the young prophet’s ministry. When Oliver Cowdery was
assigned other tasks, John Whitmer was selected to serve as the prophet’s
scribe. In December 1830, a prominent Campbellite minister, Sidney Rigdon,
joined the Church of Jesus Christ and was soon employed as Joseph’s scribe,
particularly with regard to the production of what has come to be known as
the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. Throughout that three and a half
year period, Sidney also was frequently given the privilege of transcribing the
revelations as they were dictated by the prophet. John Whitmer was then
charged with entering the several revelations into the Kirtland Revelation
Book which in turn served as the source for the Book of Commandments and
then for the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

70.0.3 On 1 November 1831, during a conference of the Church of Jesus
Christ held in Hiram, Ohio, the Lord indicated that the revelations ought to
be published, He Himself providing a preface to the collection. William W.
Phelps had already been selected as the printer in Zion, and was fully engaged
in obtaining a press that would be housed in Independence, Missouri. On
3 November 1831, Oliver Cowdery and John Whitmer were instructed to
carry the revelations to Zion. The prophet and his scribes spent the next two
weeks or so preparing the revelations for publishing. On 12 November 1831,
the revelations, Oliver Cowdery, and John Whitmer were blessed and dedi-
cated unto the Lord in anticipation of the journey to western Missouri. The
companions departed from northeastern Ohio on 20 November 1831, arriv-
ing in Independence, Missouri on 5 January 1832. The six men named in this
revelation were to form a committee which would administer the publishing
and distribution of the Book of Commandments. For their labors they would
be compensated from the proceeds of the book. Any surplus would be put into
the general fund used in establishing the saints into the land of Zion. This
Section did not appear in the Book of Commandments because of the destruc-
tion of the W.W. Phelps’ press in July 1833, but was printed as Section 26 in
the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

70.1 It was clear that these six men could not continue very long as they had.
It would not be long before all of them, together with their families, would be
completely destitute. They had devoted their lives to the building up of the
Kingdom of God on the earth and to the establishment of Zion. The forma-
tion of this scriptures committee was designed to alleviate some of their tem-
poral burdens.

70.1.8—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every
prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a
few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into
such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to
prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent
in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a
thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

70.1.33–35—Joseph Smith, Jun.—Joseph had received little or no formal compensation for his labors in the Church and Kingdom of God, except as a result of the largess of the disciples of Christ who frequently were motivation by the spirit of Christian charity to provide for the temporal needs of his family.

70.1.41–42—Martin Harris—Martin had borne the expense of publishing the Book of Mormon from the proceeds that came from the sale of a large section of his farm in Palmyra, New York.

70.1.48–49—Oliver Cowdery—Oliver had received little or no formal compensation for his labors in the Church and Kingdom of God, notwithstanding his many travels and missionary labors. For the most part he had borne the expense from what little means he had garnered up during his life.

70.1.55–56—John Whitmer—John had received little or no formal compensation for his labors in the Church and Kingdom of God. Most of his expenses had been borne by members of his immediate family.

70.1.62–63—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney had received little or no formal compensation for his labors in the Church and Kingdom of God, notwithstanding the considerable amount of time that he devoted to the Joseph Smith Translation and other responsibilities.

70.1.69–71—William W. Phelps—William had received little or no formal compensation for his labors in the Church and Kingdom of God. While it is true that the funds required to purchase the press and the printing house in Independence, Missouri, were drawn from consecrated funds destined for the establishment of Zion, his personal expenses were another matter altogether.

70.2 We cannot say exactly how these men might have reacted to the Lord’s recommendation had it not been given to them and to the Church as a commandment. They certainly did not wish to be viewed as those who profited by their membership in the Church and from the leadership positions which they held. The Savior clearly indicates that these six men deserved some compensation for their labors, inasmuch as they were devoting their whole time to the tasks that had been assigned to them. The publishing of the Book of Commandments, and later the Doctrine and Covenants, would generate revenue. How should those moneys be employed? In the Lord’s own words, the laborer is worthy of his hire. The surplus would be devoted to the establishment of Zion.

70.3 The revelations had been given by the Lord through the prophet Joseph Smith. They were, in the end, His revelations. He commanded them to be published and distributed to the faithful in the manner that He had dictated. There would be a profit that would eventually accrue. They as stewards were also commissioned to determine how they would disperse the funds. The Lord commands them that they are to provide for their immediate families. Six families would draw from the common fund; they would do so with equity, being of one heart and one mind in the enterprise. This was a practical training ground for the Law of Consecration in their own lives. It would instill in them a mutual love for one another, a mutual love that would forbid fraud of any kind. So long as they were abiding by the covenants that they had each made with the Lord, their union would continually prosper.

2 For I give unto them a commandment; wherefore hearken and hear, for thus saith the Lord unto them—

3 I, the Lord, have appointed them, and ordained them to be stewards over the revelations and commandments which I have given unto them, and which I shall hereafter give unto them;

D&C 70:3
AF 310
MD 766
CR99-A 47
70.4 A man of faith would be adequately forewarned here. Any deception of any kind in conducting the business of the scriptures committee would be brought to the forefront at some point. If not during the temporal existence of the project, then certainly when all of the men were hailed before the judgment bar of the Lord Jesus Christ.

70.5 Other members of the Church might choose to kibitz about the procedures outlined in this revelation, but frankly it was none of their business. The Lord Jesus Christ leads and directs the affairs of the Church and Kingdom of God on the earth. Only covetousness, greed, and jealousy would motivate the detractors of the prophet and his five companions in this matter.

70.6 The benefits from the publishing of the Book of Commandments were to be restricted. The immediate families of the committee members would be supported, and then the surplus would be devoted to the affairs of the saints of Zion as it was moving forward in Jackson county, Missouri. The surplus was not to be used for the affairs of the Church in any other location. These would be eternally viewed as moneys generated in Zion and could not be employed in any other venue.

70.6.13–14—these things—That is to say, the proceeds from the sale of the copies of the Book of Commandments that would be printed on the Church’s press in Independence, Missouri.

70.7 As the Church grew and as the demand for Church publications increased, there would come a time when there would be plenty to spare. The excess funds were to be deposited with the Church’s agent in Missouri. 70.7.22—storehouse—Speaking specifically of the storehouse managed by Sidney Gilbert in Independence, Missouri.

70.8 When viewed properly, these instructions are completely consistent with the Law of the Lord as it had been given to the saints. Only those faithful members of the Church who had entered into the Law of Consecration would be permitted to make their homes in the New Jerusalem. The press and accompanying materials that had been purchased for the printing house in western Missouri had been bought using those consecrated funds. The press and all things produced on that press belonged to the inhabitants of Zion as a community. The covenant established among the six members of the scriptures committee was patterned after that which already existed in Zion. Therefore, the Book of Commandments was a publication that was held in trust for the disciples of Christ who had received a portion of their inheritance in the land of Zion.

70.8.11—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

70.9 The spirit of the covenant entered into by these six named men was one of mutual love and provision. None of the six families was to prosper over the others, nor could any of them be neglected. They would labor together in

4 And an account of this stewardship will I require of them in the day of judgment.

5 Wherefore, I have appointed unto them, and this is their business in the church of God, to manage them and the concerns thereof, yea, the benefits thereof.

6 Wherefore, a commandment I give unto them, that they shall not give these things unto the church, neither unto the world;

7 Nevertheless, inasmuch as they receive more than is needful for their necessities and their wants, it shall be given into my storehouse;

8 And the benefits shall be consecrated unto the inhabitants of Zion, and unto their generations, inasmuch as they become heirs according to the laws of the kingdom.

9 Behold, this is what the Lord requires of every man in his stewardship, even as I, the Lord, have

D&C 70:7–10
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D&C 70:9
MD 766
righteousness and unity for the benefit of Zion or they could not be successful. This principle was to inspire every man who received an inheritance in Zion. His labors in the field, in the shop, in the school, or in the Church would be the best that he could do because he had a deep and abiding love for all those with whom he dwelt that motivated his works.

70.10 The desire of every saint was to be called to his or her inheritance in the land of Zion. They could not receive it fully on any other principles other than those that had already been articulated by the Lord. A man provided for his family with his stewardship, and then he provided for the others around him with no desire for acquiring more than his fellow servants. There would be no avarice, no pride or vanity, just an abiding desire to bless the faithful to the best of his ability.

70.11 There was to be no elitism of any kind in the land of Zion. There was to be no exceptions to the rules, to the Law of Consecration as it had been given. Such social stratification would destroy the spirit of Zion.

70.11.4—bishop—That is to say, Edward Partridge, at that particular time.
70.11.7—agent—That is to say, Sidney Gilbert, at that particular time.
70.11.20—stewardship—That is to say, any particular task to which any of the saints had been set when they had arrived in Missouri. Many were farmers, but there would be other employments as well, including millers, blacksmiths, teachers, teamsters, and other vital specialists that would be required as the community expanded.

70.12 Although all of living humanity has temporal concerns, some of the servants of the Lord have assignments that require spiritual sensitivity. The prophet Joseph Smith, for example, knew how to manage a farm, but his labors in the Kingdom of God required him to be particularly sensitive to the voice of the Spirit of God. He was a prophet, a seer, a revelator, and a translator, a service which he rendered to the disciples of Jesus Christ as they sought for the blessings of Heaven. Other officers of the Church would fall into the same category, although at that particular time there were not very many of them. Therefore, it is possible that Joseph Smith might have been criticized for not being an active participant in Zion because he did not hew logs or grind flour, but Lord testified that there was no one better qualified to do the things that he had been commissioned to do.

70.13 The body without the spirit is dead. So also, the land of Zion could not prosper without the inspiration of the Almighty. Those who had been designated to provide the spiritual counterpart to the physical or temporal efforts of the saints were in a position to bring illumination and edification to the entire community. The more that Joseph and others like him could magnify their callings in the Church and Kingdom of God, to that same degree would those who were assigned the temporal stewardships of the land of Zion find happiness and contentment in their labors.

70.14 Those who were charged with spiritual stewardship were to see to it that there was no spiritual poverty among the saints. The prophet could not be an elitist, but rather one that encouraged and instructed his brethren in the things of the spirit, so that they might too rejoice in the outpouring of the spirit of God in their own lives. By the same token, those with temporal stewardships were to bless and benefit those around themselves with equanimity. The saints could not afford to neglect the temporal needs of those who were charged with spiritual matters.
70.15 The inhabitants of Zion could not be blessed separately. They had to be blessed as a whole or they could not be blessed at all. Hence, it was vital that they loved and supported one another as the foundations of Zion were established. The saints working to build the New Jerusalem needed to have their spiritual eyes opened, so that they could see the hand of the Lord laboring in their behalf. This would come as they diligently observed to do all that the Lord commanded them. Obedience would deliver them from the hands of their enemies. Had the disciples of Christ done these things, they never would have been driven from the state of Missouri.

70.16 At the conference held 12 November 1831, several families were noted who were acceptable before the Lord to receive an inheritance in the land of Zion who had not been previously indicated. Among them were Joseph and Hyrum Smith. The brothers Peter, Christian, Jacob, and David Whitmer were also named. Peter Whitmer, Senior’s family was designated, as well as the families of Hiram Page, Samuel H. Smith, William Smith, and Don Carlos Smith. Most of these men had been supportive of the prophet from the very beginnings of his ministry; several had served as witnesses to the Book of Mormon. Some had been extremely supportive with their material means in order that the Book of Mormon and the Church might come forth in the latter days. In other words, they had consecrated themselves before the Law of Consecration had been revealed.

70.17 Some of the prophet’s closest companions would eventually fall away from the Church and Kingdom of God, yet in November 1831 all of these had proven themselves worthy to receive the blessings that they Lord had in store for them.

70.18 One hundred and eighty years after the fact we can point to certain men who did not endure to the end of their natural lives faithful and true to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel. It is to be hoped, however, that the Lord has been merciful to them in the spirit world and that they will have an opportunity to be received into both the temporal and the Celestial Zion prepared for the faithful in Christ Jesus.

70.18.23—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

71.0.1 In March of 1830, the first copies of the Book of Mormon appeared in E.B. Grandin’s bookstore in Palmyra, New York. On 6 April 1830 the Church of Jesus Christ was once more formally organized upon the face of the earth. In June 1830, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery embarked on a project that would consume the better part of 3 years: that which would come to be known as the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. The prophet and his scribe began with the Old Testament. By 21 October 1830, the day that Oliver left on his mission to the Lamanites, they had transcribed about five and a half chapters of the book of Moses. At that point John Whitmer took over the scribal duties. In December 1830, Joseph met Sidney Rigdon for the first time and soon the latter volunteered his services. This offer was sustain by the voice of the Lord. The two brethren continued working on the Old Testament until 8 March 1831 when they were instructed to switch their focus for a time on the New Testament, beginning with the Gospel according to Matthew. Most
of Matthew had been completed by 19 June 1831 when Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and several other elders of the Church Kirtland, Ohio, left for the land of Zion in western Missouri. Joseph Smith returned from Missouri to Kirtland on 27 August 1831, but due to extenuating circumstances did not renew the translation process until 26 September 1831 with John Whitmer acting as his scribe. By 20 November 1831, when John left for Missouri with Oliver Cowdery, they had arrived at the first verse of Mark 9. At that point Sidney Rigdon assumed his duties as scribe. After about ten days of labor, Joseph and Sidney received this present revelation. From 4 December 1831 until about 9 January 1832, Joseph and Sidney preached throughout the region, illuminating the minds and hearts of the inhabitants of the land that had been darkened by the efforts of Ezra Booth to discredit the prophet Joseph Smith and the Church of Jesus Christ. When they returned to Hiram, they set themselves to labor on the New Testament again. By 24 March 1832, they had arrived at the middle of the book of Revelation.

71.0.2 Ezra Booth joined the Church of Jesus Christ while living in Hiram, Ohio. He had been a Methodist minister for many years, but when his witnessed the healing of Elsa Johnson’s rheumatic arm by the prophet Joseph Smith in Kirtland, Ohio, an affliction about which Ezra had been familiar for many years, he immediately was baptized. He was subsequently ordained an elder in the Church. While serving with Isaac Morley, the two missionaries were rebuked by revelation for some act committed during their service. Ezra took deep offense at the censure and soon found himself outside of the Church and Kingdom of God. Ezra Booth went to great lengths to vilify the prophet Joseph Smith, writing and publishing against him. In November 1831, Ezra Booth persuaded the editor of the Ohio Star, a newspaper published in Ravenna, Ohio, to print the first of nine scandalous letters against the prophet and the Church. One of the purposes of the mission indicated here was to ameliorate the effects of those first letters. By 24 March 1832, however, so great did the animosity become in Hiram, Ohio, that Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were taken by a mob and tarred and feathered. Joseph S., one of the Murdock twins died as a result of exposure during that ill-fated night.

This Section did not appear in the Book of Commandments because of the destruction of the W.W. Phelps’ press in July 1833, but was printed as Section 90 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

71.1 Three days after receiving this revelation, Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon began their five week mission throughout the northeastern sector of the state of Ohio. The prophet in his history specifically mentions Shalersville and Ravenna as places where they spent some time reflecting much of the negative sentiment that had been generated by Ezra Booth’s published letters. No more effective men could have been set to the task than Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon.

71.1.10–12—Joseph Smith, Jun.—The prophet, seer, and revelator of the restoration of the Church and Kingdom of God upon the earth. No one has done more for the salvation of mankind except for the Lord Jesus Christ.

71.1.14–15—Sidney Rigdon—Sidney Rigdon was a well-educated man who had taken to the Christian ministry at an early age. At age 26 he received a license to preach the Gospel as a Baptist minister. His rather candid demeanor coupled with his prodigious understanding of the scriptures set him at odds which some of his fellow Baptist, but ultimately he found success as a Campbellite minister in eastern Ohio. There was probably no one in the Church of Jesus Christ in December 1

1 BEHOLD, thus saith the Lord unto you my servants Joseph Smith, Jun., and Sidney Rigdon, that the time has verily come that it is necessary and expedient in me that you should open your mouths in proclaiming my gospel, the things of the kingdom, expounding the mysteries thereof out of the scriptures, according to that portion of Spirit and power which shall be given unto you, even as I will.
of 1830 more knowledgeable in the writings of the ancient Apostles and prophets except for the prophet Joseph Smith. Having accepted the truths of the Gospel, Sidney had been the instrument by which many hundreds of his former congregation had entered into the Church of Jesus Christ. In March of 1832, Sidney would be called to serve as the second counselor in the First Presidency of the Church. A year later he would be called to serve as the first counselor. Sidney was a learned man, insofar as his opportunities for formal education were concerned. He was taken with the illuminated conduct of the prophet Joseph Smith, however, notwithstanding the latter’s lack of formal education. From time to time, Sidney was susceptible to vanity which became visible when he preached. Although he was able to respond well to chastisement, there came a point where his pride could bear no more and he became somewhat disaffected from the saints, notwithstanding his position of leadership in the Church and Kingdom of God. Upon the death of the prophet Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon attempted to insinuate himself into the presidency of the Church. He was deeply disappointed in the results. He and a few other disaffected saints settled in Pennsylvania where they seemingly prospered for a season. Eventually the whole of his church fragmented and wandered away. Sidney died on 14 July 1876 in Friendship, New York.

71.1.47—mysteries—The mysteries of the Kingdom of God are those true principles which cannot be easily perceived by the spirit of the natural man. They are to be understood by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. That which is taught by the power of the Spirit of God and received by that same power is no longer mysterious.

71.2 Joseph and Sidney were called upon to strengthen the membership of the Church as well as disabuse the public mind of the misrepresentations of the restored Gospel that had been made by Ezra Booth. The saints had suffered under his withering rhetoric.

71.2.22–25—space of a season—The mission lasted from 4 December 1831 to about 9 January 1832.

71.3 No one ought to be concerned about what appear to be modest deviations from the course that had been given to Joseph and his companions. The Lord God of Israel is a skillful navigator, aware of the currents and tides, and mindful of the shoals that lurk beneath the surface of the water. He moves the tiller slightly to avoid countless disasters. In his wisdom we are protected; we need only follow His tender guidance to arrive at the safe harbor.

71.4 Dozens of comprehensive revelations would be presented to the world through the prophet Joseph Smith, in addition to those already received. By 1 December 1831, the Lord had only begun to clarify the eternal truths that had suffered at the hands of uninspired men over a very long period of time. As the principles of eternal life were revealed, line upon line, and precept upon precept, the saints would have to exercise their faith and call upon the Spirit of the Lord to help them receive the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ into their hearts and minds, that they might be capable of doing all that the Father and the Son would require of them in the latter days. All of the inhabitants of the earth would be called upon to exercise their faith in Jesus Christ as well, by repenting of their manifold sins and seeking forgiveness at his hand.

71.5 Even though this revelation was given to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon at a specific time, at a specific place, for a specific set of reasons, yet the
overall rationale for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost has remained the same. There must needs be a people prepared to receive the Son of God at his coming. This is the divinely mandated mission that has been given to the sons and daughters of Christ, that all of the spirit children of our Father in Heaven might have the opportunity to accept or reject the blessings associated with discipleship.

71.6 The obedient are always blessed beyond their expectations, and generally in surprising ways. Many revelations had been provided to the saints, and a goodly number were about to be published to the world by means of the press that William W. Phelps was about to establish in Independence, Missouri. Revelation is a continuing blessing, not only to the living prophet, but to those who hearken to his voice.

71.7 The enemies of the prophet Joseph Smith and the Church of Jesus Christ were men and women who were devoid of the spirit of God or those who had been duped by the faithless. No man can stand against the truth when it is preached by the power and authority of the priesthood of God, accompanied by the confirming witness of the Holy Ghost. The antagonists become as furtive shadows before the rising sun; ultimately they cannot prevail against the truth. Men of faith need not fret at the arguments of the wicked.

71.8 Who would presume to counsel the Lord God of Israel? Who would attempt to overthrow his wisdom or power? Only a fool or a devil.

71.9 This is not to say that the wicked will never gain a point in the war of words and ideas. The saints are not always perfectly prepared to respond to the efforts of the wicked to destroy them. But the faithful will press forward through the mists of darkness, by holding on to the rod of iron. They will not be denied the blessings of heaven and the prosperity of exaltation.

71.10 Ezra Booth’s nine letters were printed in the Ohio Star, beginning in November 1831, the ninth being published in the 6 December 1831 edition. They were subsequently compiled by E.D. Howe in his anti-Mormon book, Mormonism Unveiled. Time has demonstrated in no uncertain terms the lengths to which these two men went, to mercilessly slander the character of Joseph Smith and the Church which he had been commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ to found upon the earth in these last days. Their bigotry and prejudice derived primarily from personal sin, of which they chose not to repent.

71.11 Abiding by the truth allows a man to partake of the divine nature, for every commandment given from God is intimately connected to some aspect of His perfection. When we obey, we become more like unto Him. While obedience does require a degree of faith, the act of obedience ultimately allows the obedient to tap into the wellsprings of faith which the Lord has provided to those who hearken to His voice.

71.11.12—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

72.0.1 On 1 December 1831, the prophet Joseph Smith and his companion Sidney Rigdon were called by the Lord Jesus Christ to enter in upon a short

whoso readeth, let him understand and receive also;

6 For unto him that receiveth it shall be given more abundantly, even power.

7 Wherefore, confound your enemies; call upon them to meet you both in public and in private; and inasmuch as ye are faithful their shame shall be made manifest.

8 Wherefore, let them bring forth their strong reasons against the Lord.

9 Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you—there is no weapon that is formed against you shall prosper;

10 And if any man lift his voice against you he shall be confounded in mine own due time.

11 Wherefore, keep my commandments; they are true and faithful. Even so. Amen.

Section 72

Date: December 4, 1831
Place: Kirtland, Ohio

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mission that would take them throughout the northeastern quarter of the state of Ohio. This mission was designed to ameliorate the effects of the perfidy of men like Ezra Booth who had apostatized from the Church of Jesus Christ and who had become fervent detractors of the prophet and the doctrines of the Kingdom of God. The effectual mission would begin on 4 December 1831 and would continue until about 9 January 1832. On 3 December Joseph and Sidney left Hiram, Ohio, for Kirtland where they were greeted by several members of the Church who were anxious about their present responsibilities. They were naturally concerned about the growth of Zion and their possible participation in the establishing the city of the New Jerusalem. The prophet and the members discussed the temporal and spiritual welfare of the saints for some time and then joyfully received the following revelation.

72.0.2 The origins of the Church of Jesus Christ were in three principal communities in the State of New York, in Palmyra, Colesville, and Fayette, the headquarters of the same being in the latter. In the fall of 1830, Oliver Cowdery and his missionary companion worked a marvelous work and a wonder among the inhabitants of Kirtland, Ohio, and vicinity, the result of which was the conversion of hundreds of the honest in heart to the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Sidney Rigdon and his friend, Edward Partridge, were among those who found comfort in the teachings of the prophet as he was inspired by the Holy Ghost. Sidney soon became one of Joseph Smith’s scribes. Edward Partridge was soon called to serve as the first bishop of the Church, the purpose for which became readily apparent as the Law of Consecration was revealed after the saints immigrated to northeastern Ohio. Edward was ordained on 4 February 1831 and began in earnest to work with the members of the Church who would be the first to receive their stewardships in the land of Zion, once that location was identified and dedicated. The leadership of the Church resorted to western Missouri in the summer of 1831 where both the temple site and the appointed lands were dedicated and consecrated unto the Lord God of Israel. From that point on, Edward Partridge’s duties would require him to remain in close contact with the membership of the Church who had been appointed to lay the foundation of Zion.

72.0.3 As Edward Partridge’s responsibilities became more closely identified with Independence, Missouri, it became clear that additional priesthood authority would be required in Kirtland, Ohio. The duties of preparing the saints for their move to Missouri were increasing dramatically and Edward could not attend to them as he once had. At this point, the prophet was commanded to ordain a second bishop to serve in the Church and Kingdom of God. The Lord selected Newel K. Whitney, a faithful man who had already been serving as the Lord’s agent in Ohio, just as Sidney Gilbert had been serving in the same capacity in Missouri. This was the last recorded revelation received in 1831. This Section did not appear in the Book of Commandments because of the destruction of the W.W. Phelps’ press in July 1833, but was printed as Section 89 in the first edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.

72.1 We cannot at this point present the names of all those who were in attendance with the prophet Joseph Smith when this revelation was given. It is certain, however, that inasmuch as part of the conversation that preceded this revelation had involved the temporal welfare of the saints. that Newel Whitney, the Lord’s agent in Kirtland, was one of those present.

72.1.21—22—high priests—On 1 June 1831, twenty-three elders of the Church were ordained high priests in Kirtland, Ohio, the first to hold this specific office of the Melchizedek priesthood in this dispensation. We are
not privy as to which of those high priests were present in this particular meeting, except for Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon.

72.2 Edward Partridge had been called as the first bishop of the Church in February 1831, some ten months before this present revelation was received. During that period of time, Edward’s overall responsibilities had increased dramatically, and the distance between Kirtland, Ohio, and Independence, Missouri, was far too great for him to be able to attend to all of those duties by himself. In fact, his labors were so great in the land of Zion that his two counselors, Isaac Morley and John Corrill, would soon be called as bishops in Missouri in order to lighten the burdens with which Edward Partridge had been laden. The need for similar authority in Kirtland had become critical, and it was no doubt these circumstances that had prompted the brethren to ask counsel of the Lord in this matter.

72.2.18–19—unto you—The preposition here implies an imposition of outside authority.

72.2.21–22—of you—The preposition here implies that the bishop was to come from among them.

72.2.27–28—this part—that is to say, in Kirtland, Ohio, and environs.

72.3 It may very well have been that Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, and the others had settled on this particular solution before they had inquired of the Lord as to whether this would be acceptable to Him. The prophet Joseph Smith and his companions had been given the overall responsibility of implementing the Law of Consecration and promoting the establishment of Zion in western Missouri. They had perceived an impending impasse resulting from Edward Partridge’s inability to be in two places at once. In their capacities as stewards of the Church and Kingdom of God they had proposed a solution, having first reviewed with the Lord all that they had done up to that point. Returning to the Lord and reporting the situation in which the servants of God found themselves is a pattern that has been followed since the days of Adam and Eve.

72.4 The children of God have been sent to this earth to acquire a physical body and while in that body, learn how to partake of the divine nature through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Much of this process is accomplished by having the power and influence of the Holy Ghost work upon the minds and hearts of the children of men, refining and perfecting their character as sons and daughters of Jesus Christ.

72.5 One of the preliminary steps in acquiring an inheritance in the land of Zion was the willing entrance of the membership of the Church into the Law of Consecration. The Lord’s representative in this transaction was to be the bishop of the Church. Complete harmony and agreement was to prevail both in the completeness of the consecration and in the nature of the stewardships of the consecrating saints that was to be assigned to them. Without agreement, the process could proceed no further; the saints would have to remain in Kirtland and other locations until unity prevailed between the membership of the Church and the Lord.

72.6 The exacting details of the consecrations made and the stewardships assigned were to be meticulously recorded, and a copy of the specific covenant sent to Edward Partridge so that he might be fully informed as to what had transpired in Kirtland.

72.6.16—Zion—as it was then located in western Missouri.

2 For verily thus saith the Lord, it is expedient in me for a bishop to be appointed unto you, or of you, unto the church in this part of the Lord’s vineyard.

3 And verily in this thing ye have done wisely, for it is required of the Lord, at the hand of every steward, to render an account of his stewardship, both in time and in eternity.

4 For he who is faithful and wise in time is accounted worthy to inherit the mansions prepared for him of my Father.

5 Verily I say unto you, the elders of the church in this part of my vineyard shall render an account of their stewardship unto the bishop, who shall be appointed of me in this part of my vineyard.

6 These things shall be had on record, to be handed over unto the bishop in Zion.
72.7 Several revelations had already been given, and there would be others that would follow, that dealt specifically with the principles that would govern the implementation of the Law of Consecration and the assignment of stewardships. In addition, there would be policies that would be provided for specific times and places as the development of Zion continued. Those policies and any changes thereto would be presented at the several conferences that would be held for the membership of the Church affected by them.

72.8 With this verse, the dictation of the revelation paused for a time, during which Newel K. Whitney was ordained the bishop for Kirtland. The remainder of this section was given after, no doubt at the request of the new presiding officer. Newel chose as his counselors Reynolds Cahoon and Hyrum Smith on 10 February 1832.

72.8.10–12—Newel K. Whitney—When Oliver Cowdery and his three missionary companions arrived in Kirtland, Ohio, they proceeded to do a great work among the members of the Disciples of Christ who worshipped with Sidney Rigdon. Newel K. Whitney was one of the congregants. In November 1830, Newel and his wife Elizabeth were received into the Church and Kingdom of God. In February 1831, the prophet Joseph Smith, his wife Emma, Edward Partridge, and Sidney Rigdon arrived in Kirtland from New York. Newel and Emma had been praying for further light and knowledge regarding the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As Joseph entered the store he said, “Newel K. Whitney, thou art the man!” The Whitneys were astonished initially, but Elizabeth noted that the coming of the prophet was a fulfillment of a promise that they had received in vision a short time before. For the next several weeks the Whitneys provided board and room for the Smiths. By revelation, the Whitney store was designated the Bishop’s Storehouse in Kirtland, where the surplus material from the consecrating saints was kept until needed by those who were in want. Edward Partridge had been ordained as the first Bishop of the Church and Newel Whitney was set apart as his agent in Kirtland. Sidney Gilbert was selected to be Edward’s agent in Missouri. On 4 December 1831 Newel K. Whitney was ordained the second Bishop of the Church with specific responsibility in Kirtland and environs. Ever after Newel K. Whitney was faithful to his covenants and calling. He suffered through the trials and tribulations in Missouri and Illinois, making the trek westward with the saints to what would become Salt Lake City, where he died 23 September 1850.

72.8.38—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

72.9 The narrative of this revelation continued after Newel K. Whitney was ordained and set apart to be the bishop of the Kirtland area.

72.9.10—latter—The law pertaining to the establishment of Zion in the latter days had been provided by the Lord nearly a year before. It is presently published as Section 42 of the Doctrine and Covenants.

72.9.21—bishop—Meaning, of course, Newel K. Whitney.

72.10 At that time two storehouses had been established. Sidney Gilbert had been given the responsibility of that which would be needed in Jackson County, Missouri. Newel K. Whitney’s mercantile store in Kirtland had served for some time as a depository for surplus commodities and other consecrated materials,

7 And the duty of the bishop shall be made known by the commandments which have been given, and the voice of the conference.

8 And now, verily I say unto you, my servant Newel K. Whitney is the man who shall be appointed and ordained unto this power. This is the will of the Lord your God, your Redeemer. Even so. Amen.

9 The word of the Lord, in addition to the law which has been given, making known the duty of the bishop who has been ordained unto the church in this part of the vineyard, which is verily this—

10 To keep the Lord’s storehouse; to receive the funds of the church in this part of the vineyard;
resources were expended, it was possible to seek aid from the bishop in Kirtland. Presently, the bishops of the Church of Jesus Christ are responsible to receive the tithes and offerings of those whom they serve in a particular geographical area.

72.11 From time to time, elders in the Church had been sent on errands for the Lord. In these duties they were expected to cover their own expenses. Once in a while, the nature and complexion of the missionary labors changed while the missionaries were serving, in matters which they could not foresee and therefore could not prepare for. In those cases, the bishop was permitted to extend aid to the servants of the Lord that they might complete their errands. If it were possible for the missionary to repay that which had been expended from the coffers of the Church, then he was instructed to do so. If the expenses were beyond him, then he and the bishop could come to an understanding regarding the matter.

72.12 All of those concerned had to understand that the general funds of the Church were not to be frittered away on frivolous items or activities. This—That is to say, the consecrated funds of the Church of Jesus Christ. Only poverty could excuse a man from remitting what he had expended.

72.13 In addition to the expenses referred to above (see 72.11), the assignment of certain stewardships required specialized equipment and other tools. If a man had the wherewithal to purchase that which he needed before he was fully consecrated, he should do so. There could be a case, however, that a man with specialized skills did not have sufficient funds to establish himself in his profession in the land of Zion. In that situation, the bishop of Kirtland would so indicate that fact in his detailed account to the bishop in Zion who would fund the necessary items there.

72.14 Certain members of the Church of Jesus Christ had been called to serve in positions which did not require land, barns, pastures, or equipment, but were dedicated completely to bringing forth blessings to the saints on a spiritual level. Certainly there were aspects of that which W.W. Phelps did in his role as the Church printer that were more of a spiritual nature than temporal. The same might be said for Joseph Smith’s scribes, the scriptures committee, or general authorities of the Church and Kingdom of God. Their roles and service were no less essential to the prosperity of Zion than the laborers in the field, the shops, and the schools. A missionary of modest means might be called upon to serve in exotic lands over a long period of time. Once his own resources were expended, it was possible to seek aid from the bishop in Zion.

72.14.37—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

11 To take an account of the elders as before has been commanded; and to administer to their wants, who shall pay for that which they receive, inasmuch as they have wherewith to pay;

12 That this also may be consecrated to the good of the church, to the poor and needy.

13 And he who hath not wherewith to pay, an account shall be taken and handed over to the bishop of Zion, who shall pay the debt out of that which the Lord shall put into his hands.

14 And the labors of the faithful who labor in spiritual things, in administering the gospel and the things of the kingdom unto the church, and unto the world, shall answer the debt unto the bishop in Zion;
72.15 In every instance when the concepts of Zion have been fully implemented by the saints of God, the inhabitants thereof have prospered exceedingly, with plenty and to spare. Much of that prosperity derives from the unity that exists in the hearts and minds of the disciples of Jesus Christ. The unity is practically initiated and symbolically represented in the act of consecration.

72.15.19—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

72.16 As herein instructed, every man who desired to receive an inheritance in the land of Zion would have to lay his all before the bishop in Kirtland, Ohio. Newel K. Whitney and the families who had been called to Zion would come to a written agreement; an exchange of titles for real and personal properties would be recorded so that when a family arrived in western Missouri, there would be no misunderstanding on anyone’s part as to what was to transpire.

72.17 The written documents, of course, prevented common fraud. A man or a family could not merely appear on Edward Partridge’s doorstep in Independence, Missouri, and hope for an inheritance. Only those saints who had in their hands the certificates signed by Newel K. Whitney would be binding. The exact details regarding a particular piece of property in Jackson county could not be delineated in Kirtland, but a promissory note regarding the general description of what was needed would be recognized and honored once the family arrived in the land of Zion.

72.17.18—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

72.18 Nothing could be simpler. The procedure here could be likened unto the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Before a man could receive the blessings associated with the gift of the Holy Ghost, he must first exercise faith in the Son of God, which faith bears fruit in a man’s life as he repents and seeks forgiveness. Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, prepares the man as a vessel is prepared to receive the companionship of the Spirit of God.

72.18.11—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

15 Thus it cometh out of the church, for according to the law every man that cometh up to Zion must lay all things before the bishop in Zion.

16 And now, verily I say unto you, that as every elder in this part of the vineyard must give an account of his stewardship unto the bishop in this part of the vineyard—

17 A certificate from the judge or bishop in this part of the vineyard, unto the bishop in Zion, rendereth every man acceptable, and answereth all things, for an inheritance, and to be received as a wise steward and as a faithful laborer;

18 Otherwise he shall not be accepted of the bishop of Zion.
thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

72.19 It is possible that a man could go through all of the outward motions of consecration. He might lay all that he possesses temporally before the bishop in the land of Kirtland so as to be legally prepared to receive a stewardship in Zion. However, the material trappings of Zion do not constitute the spirit of Zion. A man must be like unto his fellow men, of one heart and mind with them, in order that Zion might prosper. The saints in Kirtland, those who were sufficiently spiritually minded, could recognize in others a kindred spirit. Those who were selected to go to the land of Zion should be sustained by those who know them best.

72.20 The primary literary concerns of the Church of Jesus Christ at this time were the continuing distribution of the Book of Mormon, the preparation of the revelations as the Book of Commandments, and the ongoing work on what would come to be known as the Joseph Smith Translation. We may assume that at least five men were accountable as stewards for the literary productions of the Kingdom of God at that time: Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon, John Whitmer, and W.W. Phelps. As time passed, there would be others called to serve in this capacity.

72.21 The costs for printing the Book of Commandments were to be borne by the Bishop of Zion. The surplus revenue, by the same token, was to revert to the bishop of Zion so that the saints might continue to be blessed and benefited, as more and more of the faithful were allowed to receive their inheritance in the city of the New Jerusalem.

72.22 The members of the Literary Firm, as the committee would be called, were to labor diligently in the tasks that were assigned to them. Their expenditure of energy and time would be like unto any other inhabitant of Zion.

72.23 Several branches of the Church of Jesus Christ were established in Jackson County before the saints were driven from their inheritances. Coleville, Independence, Cincinnati, Prairie, Whitmer, and Big Blue were among the more prominent. The principles of Zion that were to operate in one part of the land of inheritance were to operate in all of them. By the same token, no matter from whence the prospective stewards were received into the Church, the method for obtaining an inheritance would be consistent throughout. That is to say, whether from Maine, Vermont, New York, or Pennsylvania, the saints would have to be received into the law of Consecration by the designated authorities in the designated place. At this time, Newel K. Whitney in Kirtland, Ohio, was the only man who could receive the consecrations in preparation for the blessings to be obtained in the land of Zion.

72.24 This is clearly another revelation that was appended to the general instructions given to Newel K. Whitney in the preceding verses. No man would be privileged to go to the land of Zion to receive an inheritance there unless he was called to do so, by revelation, by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost. The time of their journey was also a subject of revelation. This because of the nature of the project in western Missouri. Everything must be done in order, according to wisdom.

72.24.30—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every

19 And now, verily I say unto you, let every elder who shall give an account unto the bishop of the church in this part of the vineyard be recommended by the church or churches, in which he labors, that he may render himself and his accounts approved in all things.

20 And again, let my servants who are appointed as stewards over the literary concerns of my church have claim for assistance upon the bishop or bishops in all things—

21 That the revelations may be published, and go forth unto the ends of the earth; that they also may obtain funds which shall benefit the church in all things;

22 That they also may render themselves approved in all things, and be accounted as wise stewards.

23 And now, behold, this shall be an ensample for all the extensive branches of my church, in whatsoever land they shall be established. And now I make an end of my sayings. Amen.

24 A few words in addition to the laws of the kingdom, respecting the members of the church—they that are appointed by the Holy Spirit to go up unto Zion, and they who are privileged to go up unto Zion—
prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

72.25 The additional material here has to do with a possible alternative to having a certificate signed by Newel K. Whitney. A document signed by three elders of the Church would also suffice. We are not told who the three could be, but we should assume that Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and a couple of others would be authorized to do so if necessary. Once the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ was formally organized in 1833, the notion of the three elders would be made perfectly clear.

72.26 Simply put, a man who went up to the land of Zion without the proper documents would not and could not be received by the bishop there as a steward of any kind, wise or not. Such a man would either be ignorant beyond belief, self-willed to the point of distraction, or a usurper of arrogant proportions. In any case, such a man would not qualify spiritually to dwell among the saints.

72.26.11—Zion—The establishment of Zion has been the desire of every prophet since the days of Adam and Eve. Enoch, Melchizedek, and a few others have been notably successful in bringing their people into such a state of grace. One of the missions of this dispensation is to prepare a people to receive the Lord Jesus Christ at his glorious advent in the flesh to reign upon the earth unopposed by devil or man for a thousand years. Zion will be unified in heart and mind, keeping the commandments of God and elimination poverty of all kinds from their midst. Oliver Cowdery would join with Joseph Smith to realize this goal of the latter days.

72.26.25—Amen—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

25 Let them carry up unto the bishop a certificate from three elders of the church, or a certificate from the bishop;

26 Otherwise he who shall go up unto the land of Zion shall not be accounted as a wise steward. This is also an ensample. Amen.
### Alphabetized List of Specifically Noted Words and Phrases
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